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NME

Hello...



A WEEK LATER AND OUR heads are still banging after a particularly triumphant and raucous NME Awards. You probably know Bring Me

The Horizon singer Oli Sykes jumped on to Coldplay's table and pretended to take a sh*t. You've probably seen pictures of Thurston Moore handing out the Inspiration Award to Yoko Ono. You might even have been there and seen the amazing live performances from Foals, Maccabees and a wild-eyed Rat Boy (and if you weren't, check out the videos on NME.com). But in this week's mag you can see all the things that went on backstage where no cameras were rolling except NME's...

Peering out from behind his excellent Aviators on the cover is Richard Ashcroft, the ex-Verve frontman, who returned from the wilderness this week with his first new music in over five years. Ashcroft holds an almost mythical status in rock'n'roll usually reserved for the likes of Keith Richards and Jimi Hendrix. He's revered by not just his fans but his peers too. His late manager Jazz Summers once described him as a "spiritual shaman"; Noel Gallagher dedicated 'Cast No Shadow' to "the genius of Richard Ashcroft"; Chris Martin introduced him on stage at Live8 as "the best singer in the world"; The press called him 'Mad Richard' because he said he could fly.

A world with a productive Richard Ashcroft is a better one because he inspires everyone else to raise their games too.

MIKE WILLIAMS
Editor-in-Chief
@itsmikelike

NME Awards p22



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Richard Ashcroft

The former Verve frontman is back with a new album, and he's got a few things he'd like to get off his chest...

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NME Awards

Coldplay were Godlike. Kylie Minogue was small. Bring Me The Horizon were lairy. Here's the story of the night in pictures.

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AGENDA

WHAT EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT THIS WEEK

#FreeKesha

The music world unites behind pop singer Kesha in her lawsuit against Dr Luke

IN OCTOBER 2014, KESHA filed a lawsuit against her producer Dr Luke – real name Lukasz Gottwald – for “mental manipulation, emotional abuse and sexual assault”. Dr Luke responded by suing Kesha for defamation and says the claims are “outright lies”.

On February 19, Kesha was denied in her attempt to get an injunction to exit her recording contract with Dr Luke's Kemosabe Entertainment, part of Sony Records. Various celebrities have since come out in support of the singer.

WORDS: LEONIE COOPER. PHOTO: GETTY

LORDE

“Standing with @KeshaRose through this traumatic, deeply unfair time. Send good vibes her way.”

ARIANA GRANDE

“My heart is with @KeshaRose.”

GRIMES

“Empathy 4 Kesha. The worst.”

LADY GAGA

“There are people all over the world who love you @KeshaRose. I am in awe of your bravery.”

LILY ALLEN

“My thoughts are with @KeshaRose today. I'm sorry you've had to endure this experience.”

A TAYLOR SWIFT SPOKESPERSON

“In a show of support, Taylor Swift has donated \$250,000 to Kesha to help with any of her financial needs during this trying time.”

JACK ANTONOFF FROM THE BAND FUN

“Hey @KeshaRose – don't know what the legal specifics are, but if you want to make something together & then leak it I'm around...”

Follow the story on
NME.com

Meet the cast (l-r): Joe Thomas, Zawe Ashton, Kimberley Nixon, Greg McHugh, Charlotte Ritchie and Jack Whitehall



The last supper

The final series of *Fresh Meat* is on Channel 4 now. Its stars – Jack Whitehall (JP), Kimberley Nixon (Josie), Zawe Ashton (Vod) and Charlotte Ritchie (Oregon) – are weepy about the student comedy's last hurrah

How did you feel when you read the final scripts?

Charlotte: "I got goosebumpy. It's a significant ending."

Kimberley: "And I got moist-eyed in the read-through."

Jack: "When we graduated on the show, we all got photos taken in our gowns and a certificate, so I got one printed and sent it to my parents. They said it was the proudest day of their lives and they've hung it next to my sister's – but hers is a real degree from Manchester and mine is from a fictional university."

Will posh boy JP end up working for the family firm after he graduates from uni?

Jack: "JP's destiny is very much laid out for him. My brother Tomothy (Richard Goulding) turns up and tells me it's time to pull my finger out, put on my dad's suit and get a job in the City at this firm he's lined up for me. The whole series is about me either trying to escape or embrace my destiny of being a City banker."

Kimberley: "JP and Tomothy are very funny together. There are scenes where they're having these unbelievably posh back-and-forths together and I have no idea what they're saying. I don't need to act."

There've been murmurings of a *Fresh Meat* film since 2012. Any chance of it happening?

Zawe: "I don't know why we haven't done a film. You can put these characters anywhere – in comic book form, a film, or 30-second Vine scenelets."

Jack: "Having been in meetings where you're trying to get money for a film, I can understand how hard it is to fund one."

Can you imagine revisiting your roles in the future?

Kimberley: "You want to see Josie and Vod meet in 10 years' time and not recognise each other. I think in 10 years, Josie and Kingsley (Joe Thomas) could still be good friends and be like, 'Remember when we used to shag at uni?' Either that, or they're on a housing estate with three kids and Josie knocking back Chardonnay all day."

For more *Fresh Meat*, go to NME.com



Drake

The human meme went viral again after being filmed performing 'Hotline Bling' at a young fan's Bat Mitzvah in New York.



Rihanna

The Barbadian will join Justin Bieber in headlining V Festival this August. Pack your umbrella-ella-ella.



Hannah Spearritt

The singer revealed she made just £600,000 from her time in S Club 7.



The X Factor

Hosts Caroline Flack and Olly Murs follow Nick Grimshaw in leaving the talent show.



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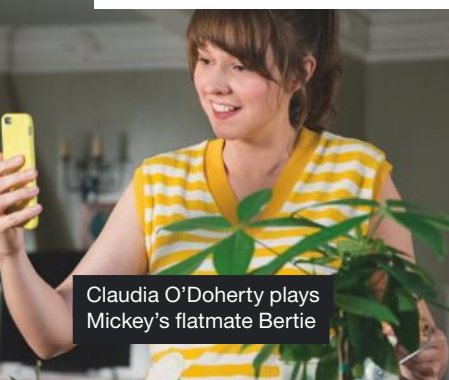
Paul Rust and Gillian Jacobs in *Love*, out now on Netflix

An indie love-in

Judd Apatow's ace new Netflix show *Love* follows the exploits of wayward thirtysomethings Mickey (Gillian Jacobs) and Gus (Paul Rust). Based in LA, it's peppered with appearances by cult heroes past and present

E FROM EELS

Episode: *Party In The Hills*
What happens: Gus turns up early at a party Mickey's invited him to, which just so happens to be hosted by E from Eels – Mark Everett – who plays middle-aged muso Brian. Gus spots his guitar collection and before you know it, they're jamming out to Wings' 'Jet'.



Claudia O'Doherty plays Mickey's flatmate Bertie

JENNIFER HERREMA FROM ROYAL TRUX

Episode: *Party In The Hills*
What happens: Fans of '90s guitar sleaze will notice another familiar face. In among the LA trendies (Gus says everyone at the party looks like a grown-up version of the cast of skater-slacker flick *Kids*) is Royal Trux frontwoman Jennifer Herrema, resplendent with just-dragged-out-of-CBGB's shaggy blonde hair.

SKATEBOARDING LEGEND JASON DILL

Episode: *Party In The Hills*
What happens: Skateboarding icon Jason Dill is also working the room. Sitting topless next to a tattoo gun, he offers Gus the chance to ink him. "It's my way of connecting with people," he explains. Gus screws up big time, by scrawling "sarcoma" next to a mole on Dill's back.

CIRCLE JERKS

Episode: *It Begins*
What happens: Brilliant American stand-up comic Kyle Kinane has a recurring role as Mickey's

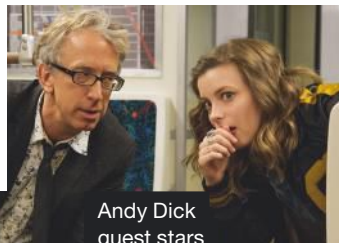
cokehead ex-boyfriend. His character Eric offers a subtle shout-out to LA hardcore punk trailblazers Circle Jerks by sporting one of the band's t-shirts in the first episode. Mickey later rocks a Beach Boys t-shirt. Not as niche, but just as cool.

FIDLAR

Episode: *Andy*
What happens: As well as LA's punk past, there's a nod to the LA's punk present, as FIDLAR's 'No Waves' acts as a soundtrack to a drug bender by Mickey and new pal Andy (cult US comic Andy Dick) on the subway.

TWIN PEAKS

Episode: *It Begins, Tested*
Gus works as on-set tutor in *Love*'s show-within-a-show *Witchita*. And look, who's that playing the mum on the supernatural series? Why it's Mädchen Amick, who was waitress Shelly in David Lynch's legendary *Twin Peaks*.



Andy Dick guest stars

Last W33K IN NUMBERS



£3m

Amount Disney is spending on drones, guards and security to prevent leaks from the set of *Star Wars: Episode VIII*.



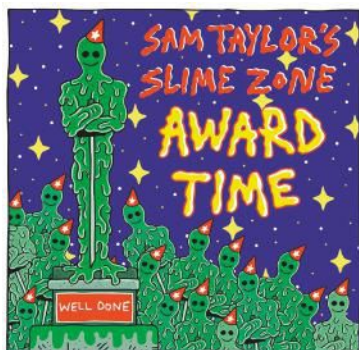
24

Number of hours Shia LaBeouf spent in a lift in Oxford, during which time he played a game of "c**k or ball" with a student. Readers, it was a c**k.



50

The age, in years, of a lock of John Lennon's hair sold for £24,000 at an auction in Dallas, Texas. Imagine!





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Katherine Ryan

OFF THE TV AND IN YOUR FACE

THIS WEEK

Do I hate women?

LAST WEEK, I WAS thrilled to see Taylor Swift setting a new record as the first woman to win a Grammy for Best Album twice. Upon hearing her name called, she leapt up and shared a fancy handshake with producer Jack Antonoff, and then, with the wingspan of a wandering albatross, enveloped the boy warmly before inviting him and other contributors to join her onstage. I have huge admiration for Taylor Swift. She's tall, talented, young, thin and beautiful. More importantly, she seems focused, generous, vulnerable and kind. But if Spotify, Katy Perry, Kanye, or anyone else dares to mess with her, the world stands with Taylor. She's powerful. Want to date a Victoria's Secret lingerie model? You'd better start sending Swiftly fruit baskets. They're her gorgeous army. She is the gatekeeper of all the most exquisite p'ssy in America. Her friends listen – the WORLD listens – to Taylor Swift.

So that's why, when she addressed young women directly during her Grammy acceptance speech, it stuck out as notably odd to me that there were no women standing behind her. One hundred per cent of the people who helped

make that album and who were present on the night were men. (Imogen Heap was in South Africa). They knew it would be on TV! Yet Team Swift decided it would be a good idea for the quintessence of millennial feminism to deliver a sermon to her congregation while looking like a bombshell Margaret Thatcher in a sea of 20 suits. Can't a lady get a job at Taylor Swift Inc? "I want to say to all the young women out there...". That's every single one of us on Earth apart from you, Tayoncé. Oh, and that babe handing you the trophy.

Then there was the time Nicki Minaj questioned whether she'd have been nominated for more awards if the women featured in her videos were 'slim' (and essentially, I think; white). Taylor, who was nominated, responded by inviting Nicki to join her on stage if she won. That's, um, nice, but missed the point Ms Minaj was making. Would Taylor Swift be satisfied if she were overlooked but asked to tag along as an afterthought? No. Nicki suggested Taylor 'speak on this' issue instead.

Ms Swift hasn't said a word about Kesha losing her legal battle to be freed from her contract with Sony after claiming she was sexually assaulted by her producer there. Instead, Taylor gave her \$250,000. What's that? A donation? Is this a fight for a woman's freedom or The London-f***ing-Marathon?! There are people who don't believe Kesha. Can you imagine – God forbid – Taylor were in her shoes? There'd be flooding and bush fires for months.

Criticising such an incredible woman makes me feel like sh*t. It's not my place to tell anyone what kind of feminist she should be. I love her music, so why can't I let this stuff slide? I guess I talk about her because I'm interested; I'm listening. Taylor Swift's words are so valuable to so many young people, not just her #GirlSquad. *Sends apology fruit basket*

"Can't a lady get a job at Taylor Swift Inc?"

And another thing...

KANDI BURRUSS IS MOST famous for appearing in US TV series *The Real Housewives of Atlanta* which showcases rich women arguing in different gowns. For years, I've watched the show unaware of what she's known for. They say Kandi used to be in a girlband and works as a songwriter/producer. Turns out she wrote *No Scrubs* for TLC and *Bills, Bills, Bills* for Destiny's Child, both nominated for a Grammy. She went

on to work on Pink's *There You Go* and is the first African-American woman to win the American Society of Composers, Authors & Publishers' Songwriter of the Year award in 2000. WHAT?! How come this genius only became a mainstream celeb through reality TV? We are gross.

Kandi Burruss, actual genius



Taylor Swift and lots of men at the Grammys, Feb 2016

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THINGS WE LIKE

THIS WEEK'S OBJECTS OF DESIRE



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Caps lock

A classic cap from a classic company. Every wardrobe needs one.

£20 neweracap.co.uk



Totally tropical

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£18 collectif.co.uk



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Modern life is rubbish

The ever-lolz Get In The Sea Twitter account gets its very own book.

£9.99 amazon.co.uk



Top of the crops

Calvin Klein's stripy, stretchy top offers some serious '90s throwback vibes.

£55 urbanoutfitters.com



Green fingers

Hope for all you lazy gardeners comes in the shape of an easy-to-keep-alive cactus.

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Hat's entertainment

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Vinyl countdown

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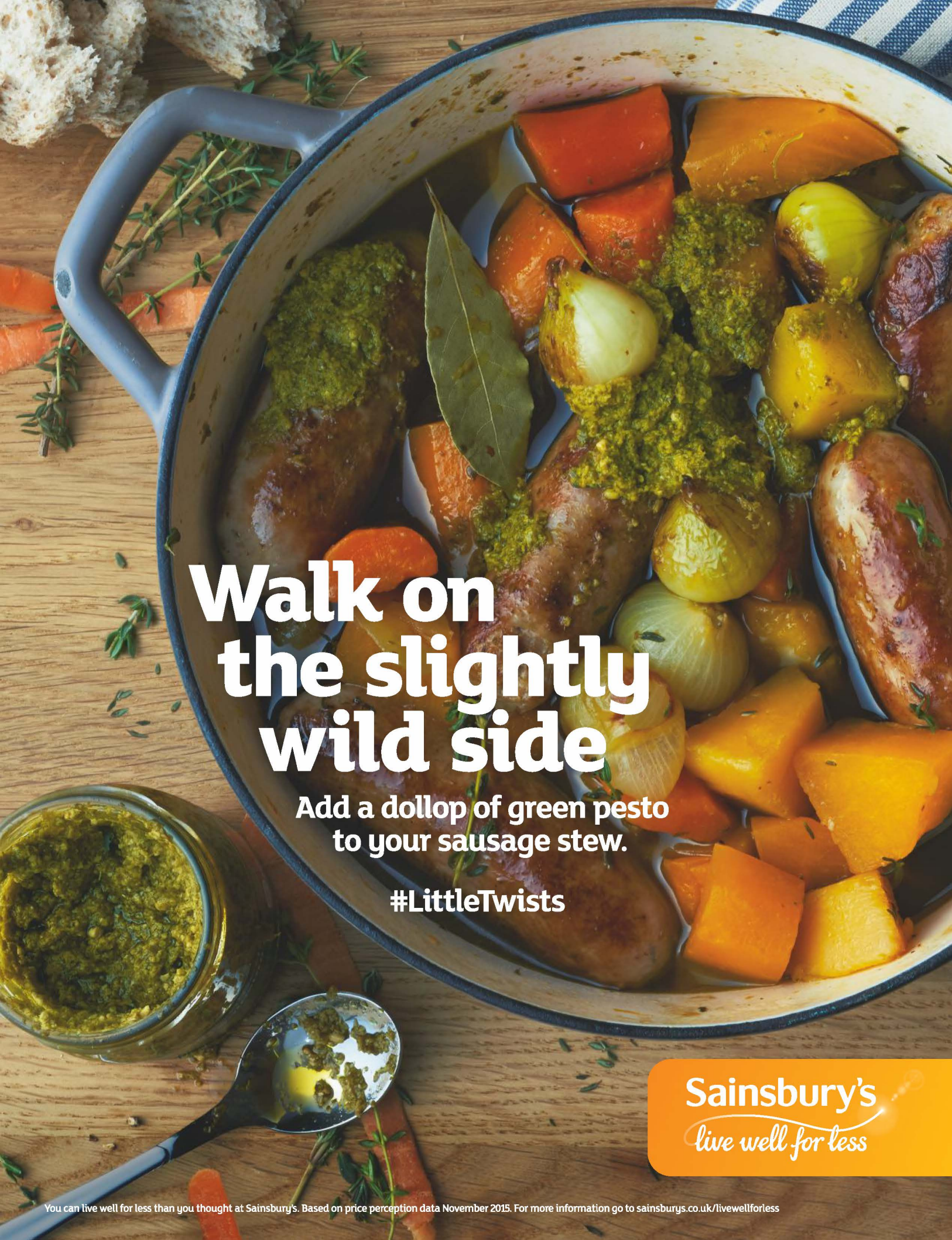
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#LittleTwists

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What's ON your Headphones?

THIS WEEK

Hackney

LICENCE & GROCERY



◀ **Connie Hatt**
18, student

Listening to:
AURORA
Life On Mars
“A really beautiful cover of the David Bowie song. So topical for recent events.”

Wearing: Coat from Ebay, Topshop jeans.
Best thing about Hackney:
“It’s got great fashion and the people are amazing.”

“It’s such an arty place. You meet interesting people every day”

Michael Tamble >
31, city worker

Listening to:
RICK ROSS
Free Enterprise
“I’m getting more familiar with the new music he’s got out there.”

Wearing: Hugo Boss coat, Zara jeans, Nike trainers, Nero cap.
Best thing about Hackney:
“The diversity. It’s an incredible melting pot.”



◀ **Roberta Dolinska**
24, drummer

Listening to:
IGGY POP
Gardenia
“Finally Iggy’s released something new!”

Wearing: Vivienne Westwood dress, Dita Von Teese sunglasses, vintage beret.
Best thing about Hackney:
“It’s such an arty place. You meet interesting people on an everyday basis.”



Remi Waters >
20, student

Listening to:
STORMZY
Shut Up
“Who doesn’t love a really fresh grime track?”

Wearing: Supreme jacket, Topman jeans, IPATH shoes.
Best thing about Hackney:
“The skate culture.”



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head to NME.com

CRAIG GIBSON



You mild daredevil

Sprinkle desiccated coconut
into your vegetarian chilli.

#LittleTwists

Sainsbury's
live well for less

RICHARD ASHCROFT





The shamanic Richard Ashcroft fronted one of the most iconic – and successful – bands of the '90s, The Verve. Then he went solo, then disappeared. After six years in the wilderness he's back – and he's pumped, finds Mark Beaumont

Photography by Dean Chalkley

WHEN

ROCK STARS DISAPPEAR INTO

their wilderness period, they might barricade themselves in remote drug shacks, suffer breakdowns in expensive celebrity rehabs or backpack around the world saving endangered mealworms. But few go as off-grid as Richard Ashcroft.

"I didn't have a mobile phone for four years," says the conductor of 'Bittersweet Symphony', choirmaster of The Verve's 10 million-selling 'Urban Hymns' and rock's eternal cosmic question mark. "I'd become a slave to it," he says. "The amount of times you find yourself wondering why you just opened that mobile device up. Are you actually doing anything or is it just a habit that's out of control?"

Six years on from his last major interview and with barely a handful of solo acoustic shows under his belt since he stopped touring 2010's critically maligned (but quite intriguing) rap-rock fourth album 'United Nations Of Sound', Richard is bursting out of the woods like a wolf attack. He arrives at this west London photo studio as if fresh from lobbing Molotovs – hair shaven, eyes shaded, scarf across his craggy features and jabbering like an enlightened monk finally breaking his vow of silence.

He is, after all, released from years of self-imposed solitary confinement in Josef Fritzl's idea of a recording session. His brilliant new album 'These People', a slice of classic Verve song craft with modernist electronic touches, was pieced together in his home basement studio in bursts over the past six years, in between "being a dad and living a standard-ish kind of life with dogs and school runs". Having discarded the distraction of his mobile, he tinkered at length with "new old keyboards", learning new crafts and trying reinvent the looping melodicism of 'Urban Hymns'. "With all the studios closing down, record sales hit massively, the whole industry changing, I had to re-evaluate how I could still create these super records," he explains. "So [album track] 'Out Of My Body' is in the mould of 'A Song For The Lovers', 'Bittersweet Symphony', going right back. It's a proper old-school record made with modern technology and old stuff to create something you've never heard before."

"I FEEL LIKE *I'm number one again, like I'm born again,*" says a lyric in the title track. Is this a comeback album? "I don't feel like it's a grand return. That's that sense of knowing when you're through the storm. I've lost friends who weren't able to see it through those darkest points."



The Verve in 1997 (top); the 'Bittersweet Symphony' video (above); on stage at Shepherd's Bush Empire with The United Nations Of Sound, 2010 (left)

Were you disheartened by the critical mauling of 'United Nations Of Sound'?

"When you don't have the band backing you up, people will take shots at you because they see you as weak. It's very Darwinian. They see a solo artist, a guy who was in a band, as a fawn with a slight limp, when I'm actually stronger now. For a period around 'Urban Hymns', The Verve became a juggernaut and suddenly you're the Emperor's New Clothes. Once you leave that, people try to get in a few shots. I'm not vengeful, but a couple of people over the years have overstepped the line."

What happens then?

"It goes straight back to the playground. Like, 'If I ever see you, man, beware, because your name is etched there and I will find you one day.' Years ago in a live review, a guy was almost threatening to put a bottle to me if he saw me in a bar. Unfortunately for him, I found him. He understood when he met me that you don't

idly make threats to someone like me. You might be able to do it to Chris Martin but not to me. A lot of the hate and negativity has been a great fuel for me. Unfortunately for my critics, with every negative ounce of frustrated sweat they put into that piece, it's like wind in my f***ing sails."

Have you lost faith in the industry?

"Oh yeah, I've got no faith in it whatsoever. It's sold itself up the river, stabbed people in the back instead of trying to create a good, solid British music alternative. Turn left for Cowell, turn right for this. The mainstream consumed our culture."

But surely the monster success of 'Urban Hymns', alongside Oasis,

helped drive alternative into the mainstream?

"But we do it better. You can get as many songwriters in a room as you want for your new talent show contest winner, it's never gonna sound like a great Noel Gallagher song sung by Liam, it's never gonna reach 'Live Forever', it's never gonna be [Verve song] 'Lucky Man'. We know that."

Do you feel responsible for the current glut of singer-songwriters?

"I'd rather blame it on Neil Young. I'd hate it if I had anything to do with empty anthems. A lot of stadium rock now looks like the lighting guy wrote the song. But it's a great time now to be a young songwriter because the tech allows you to have your own little record company, do your artwork yourself. Let the talent do what it does and we'll always have great musicians in this country."

Noel Gallagher recently said he'd be interested in making an album with you. Would you do it?

"It's a great compliment for Noel to say something like that, and in the future who knows what might happen. I wish things like this would've happened years ago. Even the guys we had a bit of friction with, I look back and wish them luck. If I hear [Pulp frontman] Jarvis Cocker on the radio it gives me a good feeling. He's waving a flag for culture from that time. We're not stopping."

Bittersweet infamy

Defining moments in Richard's career

'MAD RICHARD' IS BORN 1992

"I believe you can fly and I believe in astral travel," Ashcroft told interviewers, without physically proving it. Oddball rep ensued.

'CAST NO SHADOW' 1995

"He tries to say the right things but they come out wrong," Noel Gallagher said as he dedicated Oasis song 'Cast No Shadow' to "the genius of Richard Ashcroft".

'BITTERSWEET SYMPHONY' 1997

Richard sauntered down the street with a wrecking-ball intent in the 'Bittersweet Symphony' video – and straight into rock'n'roll legend.

THE BRITS 1998

Having already refused to get up to collect The Verve's NME Awards, Richard snubbed that year's Brits, too, to play a homeless-charity gig in Brixton.

LIVE 8 2005

"Here's the best singer in the world," said Chris Martin at Live 8, introducing Richard – who then lived up to his billing.

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HISTORICALLY, WHEN

Richard Ashcroft would babble to the press about astral projection and feeling like Jesus, he was nicknamed 'Mad Richard'. The tag still lingers thanks to a reportedly distant attitude that derailed the 2007 reunion of The Verve, and the afternoon in 2006 when he was arrested for turning up at a Chippenham youth club in a 'dishevelled' state, offering the kids £10,000 and the chance to write songs with him. But Richard, like so many other crap-cutting rock'n'roll truth seekers, has been dismissed as another quasi-spiritual rock crackpot. Instead, thanks to the determination of this self-proclaimed "clear thinker" to read around every news story for alternative viewpoints and not be "spoon-fed" media narratives on pivotal world events, 'These People' sweeps around some very real, very dark modern issues. Tortured nights, barbaric riots, lost friends, media lies, oppressive governments, global intolerance; this is perhaps the only album about the ongoing collapse of civilisation that wouldn't ruin a Tinder hook-up.

"Over the period I wrote this record we've lived through incredible times," Richard explains. "Highly contentious wars were going into the pot; grassroots movements turning into semi-revolutions; Tahrir Square [centre of the Egyptian Revolution riots in 2011]. It was kicking off all over the globe, people being divided. Pepper spray everywhere, tear gas.

"Whether it's something to do with Syria or Ukraine, we, the people of this country, are being treated like fools. We no longer believe in the political process. We don't believe in Punch & Judy democracy. I don't believe in a left/right paradigm. I'm no activist – it's not a political record – but scratch the surface of some of the stories presented as facts over the last few years and you come to the conclusion that we're being played on a big level. That's why one of the opening lines on the record is 'Don't go looking for your Watergate'. There was a time when a whistleblower

The best of Ashcroft's new album 'These People'

OUT OF MY BODY
Ashcroft on whistleblowers and cover-ups over Fashion Week-friendly electro disco.

THIS IS HOW IT FEELS
Classic string-fondled Verve-isms akin to 'Bittersweet Symphony' and 'The Drugs Don't Work'. That good.

HOLD ON
Richard sings of Middle Eastern uprisings while sounding like he's cruising the Interstate to Santa Monica.

BLACK LINES
A heart-wrenching but ultimately hopeful ode to Richard's deceased guitar tech.

AIN'T THE FUTURE SO BRIGHT
Among the pain, a little T-Pain. Ashcroft embraces West Coast rap wobbles and Auto-Tune.



"If the world hasn't made you semi-mad, you ain't living in it"

I still believe. It's a long way back down. I'm not going f***ing anywhere."

Do you feel any kinship with Kanye West? "Yeah. If you really, truly believe in something, you're on fire and your tongue rolls at the same pace. A lot of his outrageous quotes, I believe, come from that. At The Verve's first ever gig I said that we were gonna blow this local band off the stage. It was only in the local Wigan paper and they rang me to ask why I was being so aggressive. I just went, 'Hey man, it's like boxing. I'm just trying to sell a ticket.' That side of my personality has always been there and that's why I've been labelled arrogant. It's not that – it's because I see this as combative. I'm in a fight. It's not all lovey-dovey, huggy fantastic. This is music, man. This is serious sh*t."

These are but edited highlights, cupfuls of a torrent. Music's mainstream "imposters" are providing "a Xerox of a Xerox of a Xerox". The NHS is "designed to fail". Our cities consist of isolated souls "moving kinetically around each other but in this silent dance of non-eye-contact". We're "on the last potential period of the human being as we've known it; this might be one of the last human records". Richard Ashcroft is a raging brainstorm with no interlude. He's back to share some of his wisdom. But is he back for good?

"I'm always in the wilderness. I'm always struggling to find something that stimulates me," he says. "When you've been to the top of the mountain, where do you go? We have no barriers. There are no genres now – forget genres, forget it all, forget what you think you should sound like, forget it. Just tap into that spirit and do what you feel is right."

And as suddenly as it arrived, the Radio Ashcroft signal is lost. This rare breed of enlightened rock motormouth is gone, mind whirling, still fighting, forever bereft of shadow. Off to hike back up the mountain.

would have a Hollywood movie made out of them. Now someone who tries to tell the world of political or corporate misbehaviour on a massive level finds himself on the run."

DISCUSSING THE sorry state of the world with Richard is like standing in the eye of a tornado of ideas; reach out and grab a random soundbite and it makes sense, but it all spins by in a dizzying maelstrom of stream-of-consciousness pontification. Syria, political smokescreens, the NHS, "fake news", Big Pharma and internet spytrolls... you can only tune in to Radio Ashcroft and try to decode the ciphers.

"There's a lot of pressure on people, young doctors," he says. "It's all coming to a head. The Ponzi scheme is about to burst. When you build stuff on things that aren't real then it comes falling down. People are dealing with stuff that would have been deemed fantasy – madness that was part of movies has become a reality. We're getting news of an earthquake three seconds after it happened on the other side of the world. I don't think we were wired to empathise with the world's grief – we were wired to empathise with our tribe."

So how do you feel about that 'Mad Richard' tag these days? He shrugs. "Great. If this world hasn't made you semi-mad then you ain't living in it. [When I got that nickname] it was my youthful exuberance being misread. I don't believe in a new-age movement; I'm not a hippy. Maybe at the time I believed I could fly.

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NME AWARDS 2016

WITH
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Last week, living legends, brand new artists and various stars of music, TV and radio gathered for the most raucous awards ceremony of the year. Here's what went down...



Kings of Kent Slaves won Best Music Video for 'Cheer Up London'. "If you were to sit on this NME Award with your sphincter, that's what our next album sounds like," revealed guitarist Laurie Vincent. Um, can't wait?



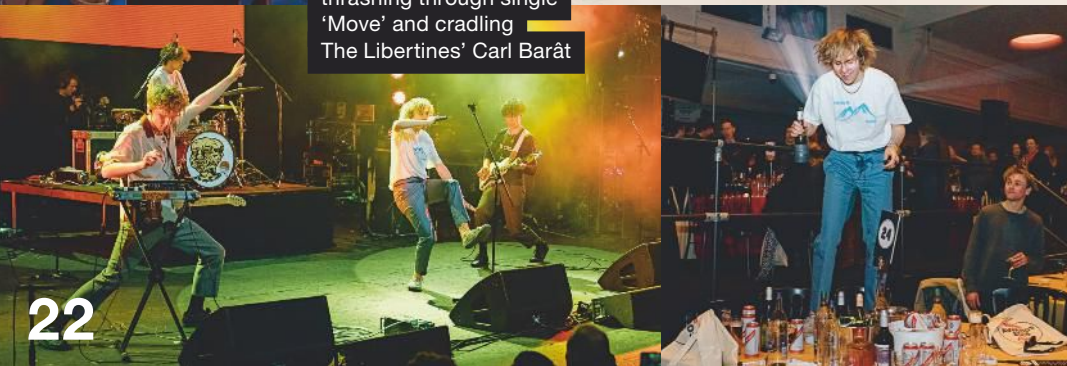
Rat Boy – aka Jordan Cardy – and pals caused all sorts of carnage after winning Best New Artist supported by Topman: leaping onto tables, thrashing through single 'Move' and cradling The Libertines' Carl Barât



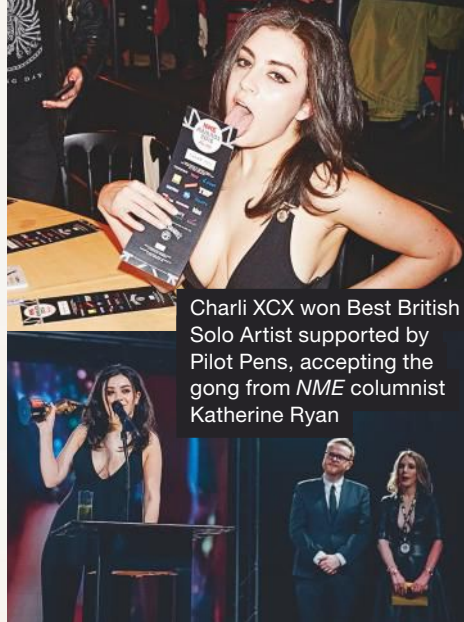
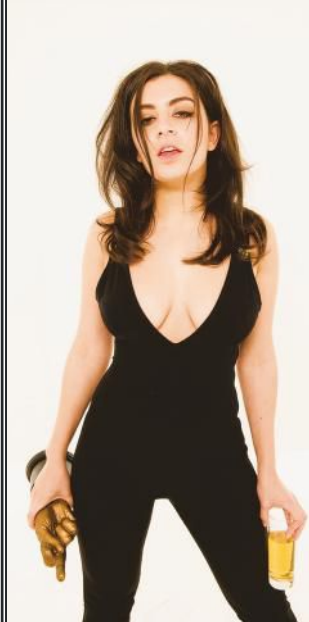
The cast of *This Is England '90* struck boyband poses with director Shane Meadows



Presenter Lilah Parsons



Run The Jewels received Best International Award supported by Austin, Texas, by video



Charli XCX won Best British Solo Artist supported by Pilot Pens, accepting the gong from *NME* columnist Katherine Ryan



Glastonbury's organisers with the Best Festival award. Nice shorts, Michael Eavis!



Game Of Thrones actors Dean-Charles Chapman and Isaac Hempstead-Wright



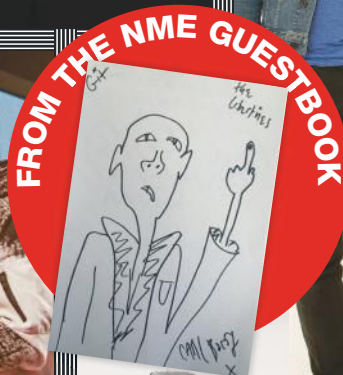
Experimental artist and musician Yoko Ono received *NME*'s Inspiration award from former Sonic Youth man Thurston Moore on the day before her 83rd birthday. Heads turned wherever she went



Pete Doherty might have been AWOL but Carl, Gary Powell and John Hassall gave us the goss on the next *Libs* album anyway. "We've got bags of new music," said Carl, adding that they've "had the best year of our lives. It's just like we're kids again"



Grime duo Krept & Konan presented The Libertines with the Music Moment Of The Year award for their surprise Glasto 2015 set



PHOTOS: DEAN CHALKLEY, MATT RICHARDSON, ED MILES, ANDY FORD, DEREK BRENNER, WUNMI ONIBUDO, LAURA PALMER, BEN BENTLEY, CAITLIN MOGRIDGE, ANDY HUGHES, JORDAN HUGHES

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Blur's Graham Coxon



Fiery five-piece Foals won Best Album supported by HMV for 'What Went Down'. They opened proceedings with a hot and heavy performance of the record's title track



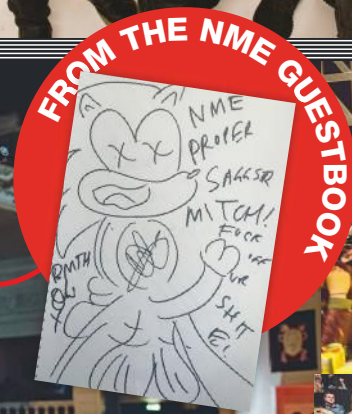
Taylor Swift picked up Best International Solo Artist supported by Nikon - from her LA home



Laura Whitmore and Katy B



Foals made friends with Bring Me The Horizon, musician/actor Raleigh Ritchie and TV cook Gizzi Erskine in the winners' room



The most explosive moment of the evening came when Bring Me The Horizon's Oli Sykes mounted Coldplay's table and trashed it during their performance. "Very rock'n'roll," commented Chris Martin, surveying the damage



NME AWARDS 2016



Best British Band The Maccabees dedicated their award to "everyone who's cared for us over the past 10 years". Aww



London grunge gang Wolf Alice won two awards. "You have no idea what this means," gushed Theo Ellis. "We grew up with NME. Thanks a lot"



Kylie gave old pals Coldplay their award



After receiving their Godlike Genius award, Coldplay tore through an epic five-song set, including 'Viva La Vida', 'Yellow' and 'Fix You', complete with confetti canons. The hoovering was murder



NME

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO: Topman • HMV • The Pilot Pen Company • Nikon • Red Stripe • Jack Daniel's • Teenage Cancer Trust • Huw Stephens • Arlene Moon and Phil Harvey • Murray Chalmers and all at MCPR • Coldplay • Foals • The Maccabees • Rat Boy • Bring Me The Horizon • All our special guest presenters • Simon Hilton at Imagine Peace • Yoko Ono • Thurston Moore • Stefan Demetriou • Ben Harris • Pauline Carroll (Foxy Events) • Alice Lindars and Paul Corrick (Reality) • Nigel Downs, Octavia Harwood, Louise Kovacs, Tina McFadden, Josh Rosen and all at O2 Academy Brixton • Mike Grove • Louise Stevens • Tim Holt & Acclaim • Arlene Dignam & Locomotion • PRG/XL Video • White Light • Jarman Creative • SSE Audio Group • Jared Pepai • Toby Bryant • ID&C • Blink TV • Streaming Tank • And a special big thank you to our good friends from Austin, Texas – the Live Music Capital of the World

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The album cover for Foals' 'What Went Down' features a dark, silhouetted figure of a person crouching on a reflective surface, set against a light blue, hazy background. The text 'FOALS' and 'WHAT WENT DOWN' is in the top left corner.

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RADAR

MUSIC, FILM, TV, GAMES AND MORE – THIS WEEK'S ESSENTIAL NEW RELEASES

Best NEW tracks And when to drop them



FKA Twigs

BEST FOR DIVING UNDER THE COVERS

FKA TWIGS

Good To Love

Twigs' surprise return has her sounding like Madonna circa Like A Prayer – sultry and altogether ethereal.

BEST FOR SOBBING

DMA'S

In The Moment

Aussie Britpop enthusiasts DMA's get all sentimental in this woozy, soaring and slightly weepy ballad.

BEST FOR ANGSTY AFTERNOONS

MISTY MILLER

Girlfriend

Imagine Fat White Family's younger, more carefree sister and you'd be halfway to getting Misty Miller's schtick: gutsy, riff-indebted scuzz rock.

BEST FOR GETTING READY TO GO OUT

AZEALIA BANKS

The Big Beat

Easily the best thing Banks has released since the epic '212', this feels like a classic Detroit house track that's been siphoned through a world of emojis and Twitter spats.



SKEPTA

BEST FOR SQUAD- FORMING

**SKEPTA FT. D DOUBLE
E & ASAP NAST**

Ladies Hit Squad

An ultra-smooth, smoky slow jam isn't what we expected from Skepta – especially its lush chorus from Harlem's ASAP Nast, which bows before the altar of Drake's 'Hotline Bling'.

BEST FOR 90s VIBING

JAMES BROOKS

This City Hates Us

Grimes' boyfriend Brooks has made music under various names for a while, but this is a beaut – A Tribe Called Quest meets Primal Scream with a little late '90s US hip-hop thrown in.

BEST FOR BRINGING OUT YOUR GLAM SIDE

THOMAS COHEN

Honeymoon

Former S.C.U.M. singer Cohen takes a leaf out of Mac DeMarco's book and sounds beatific, lovelorn and suitably kooky.

BEST FOR GETTING YOUR FUNK ON

ST VINCENT

Emotional Rescue

Annie Clark sexes up The Rolling Stones classic and turns it into a funk-laden beast.

BEST FOR GETTING YOUR OWN BACK

ALL SAINTS

One Strike

The London lasses are back with a sultry Lykke Li-like ballad that's aimed squarely at Liam Gallagher, who split with Nicole Appleton in 2013.

BEST FOR FEELING LIKE A PUNK KINGPIN

JULIAN

CASABLANCAS

Run Run Run

The Strokes singer's cover of the Velvet Underground classic is a gnarly, distorted gem.



JULIAN CASABLANCAS

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ALBUM
OF THE
WEEK

The long and winding road

Manchester indie boys threaten their chart-friendly image with a dark, druggy, bombastic and labyrinthine second album

THE 1975

I Like It When You Sleep, For You Are So Beautiful Yet So Unaware Of It



CURVEBALL POP DEPRESSION

WHEN A BAND conquers the charts with a fun but inoffensive debut album, you don't expect them to return with a 17-track follow-up that tempers pop tunes with swampy post-rock instrumentals and references mental health, religion, addiction, loneliness and fame. But The 1975, whose self-titled debut hit number one in 2013, aren't concerned with playing it safe.

Frontman Matt Healy told NME "The world needs this album," and for the most part, he's not wrong. Any record that burrows as deep into your psyche as 'I Like It...' should be considered essential. It's

hugely clever and wryly funny, too.

Lead single 'Love Me', a "post-ironic" (Healy's words) attack on selfie culture, nods to 'Fame'-era Bowie. 'The Ballad Of Me And My Brain', all caustic guitars and snapping drum pads, confronts the effect of fame on the singer's mental state with madcap black humour – the song sees him hunting for his brain in Sainsbury's. The elastic, R&B-flecked 'UGH!' is dedicated to the effects of cocaine (and Healy's addiction to it), while the crisp electro ballad 'Somebody Else' finds him refusing to let go of a dying relationship for fear of loneliness.

Elsewhere, there's genuine tenderness. 'Nana' is a gentle ode to Healy's deceased grandma, while album closer 'She Lays Down' is just the singer and his guitar telling the story of his

mother's postnatal depression:

"*She's appalled by not loving me at all*". These are serious moments from a band that don't take themselves too seriously and proof that The 1975 can do moving just as well as catchy.

Interspersed between all that are three largely instrumental tracks of glacial post-rock. The longest, the title track, lasts for six-and-a-half minutes. Healy says the band wanted to make this album a true representation of themselves and their generation's "non-linear consumption of music". But these songs feel less vital than the rest – bold intervals that add to the mood through melody and rhythm alone. Still, they do little to unbalance Healy's outlandish claim – and what's more exciting than a band who've got the bark *and* the bite? **Rhian Daly**

The 1975 (l-r):
Ross MacDonald,
Adam Hann, Matt Healy,
George Daniel

MATT SALACUSE

Seventh heaven

The dreamy New Yorkers' last ever album is a moving eulogy for the late Benjamin Curtis

SCHOOL OF SEVEN BELLS SVIIB



SYNTHPOP TRIBUTE EUPHORIA

THE FOURTH AND final album from these electro-gaze wanderers arrives with a heavy heart. Originally a trio comprising Benjamin Curtis (guitar) and twin sisters Alejandra and Claudia Deheza (guitar, keys), they became a duo in 2012 when Claudia departed for personal reasons. Then, in December 2013, Curtis – who previously dated

Alejandra for five years – died within a year of being diagnosed with lymphoma. 'SVIIB' collects the work the pair had started prior to his death.

Deheza has called the album “a love letter from start to finish” and while her grief is palpable, there's no hint of any wallowing. As with their three previous albums, the aim is sonic

ascension and Beck producer Justin Meldal-Johnsen revisits the mesmeric atmosphere of 2008's 'Alpinisms' and 2010's 'Disconnect From Desire' with renewed vigour.

Opening track 'Ablaze' establishes a sweetness that lingers throughout and 'SVIIB's bright synthpop is life-affirming stuff, whether in the glitchy beat patterns of 'Signals' or the clattering electro wormholes of 'Music Takes Me'.

'Elias' and 'Confusion' use elongated synth lines to build Deheza's soft phrases into billowing layers, her vocals

landing like warm breaths on icy glass. “I'll never understand why it turned out like this”, she sings on 'Elias', “Till then, I dream of you”. Closer 'This Is Our Time' continues the healing process: “Every time, every night, we fall in love again” she concludes, a reminder of the power we have to remember and remake. 'SVIIB' does both. Indeed, the only real drawback is that Deheza too often picks uniform shifts between verse and chorus over more expansive arrangements. Electro march 'On My Heart' never quite unleashes the tribal patterns hiding just beneath its verses, while 'A Thousand Times More' rather disappointingly lets power-pop melodies fall into predictable motion.

Completing this album after such great loss was never going to be easy, but Deheza uses euphoria to attack the incalculable spectrum of grief head on. Her resilience succeeds in transforming heartache into hope, and 'SVIIB' is a fitting eulogy for a musician and a band ever connected with both.

Kim Hillyard



FOR FANS OF



School Of Seven Bells'
Alejandra Deheza

MINI INTERVIEW



Matt Healy

The 1975's mouthpiece

There's so much variety on the album. Why?

“I wanted it to be like a personality. I wanted it to be as dynamic as a person – not in a contrived way, but I kept writing until it felt true.”

There's some pretty deep subject matter on there. Was that important, too?

“We just wanna talk about things that kids care about. On this record I'm just talking about the fundamentals of stuff, like love and fear and death.”

The single 'Love Me' is an absolute banger, but it only reached number 20 in the chart. Did that sting a bit?

“I didn't know it only went to number 20. But no, our aim is to be an albums band for the masses, not a singles band. I just want to make a proper body of work. I can't be defined in three minutes.”



Macklemore, left, with Ryan Lewis



Pretty fly for a white guy

When Macklemore concentrates on being a doofus, not a serious rapper, he's actually kinda loveable

MACKLEMORE & RYAN LEWIS

This Unruly Mess I've Made



GOOFY NAVEL-GAZING

BEING A WHITE rapper has traditionally brought with it a certain amount of baggage. Eminem fronted out his lack of melanin with ferocious technique and something akin to what politicians call "the dead cat strategy", tossing something appalling on the table to distract from the elephant in the room. Others, like G-Eazy or Asher Roth, got by through styling themselves as preppy or bro rather than gangsta or pimp. But Macklemore has tended to face the issue head

on. Blowing up in 2012 with 'Thrift Shop' – a goofy pop-rap anthem about the joys of shopping vintage – the Seattle rapper has come to grapple with the question of his whiteness and

exactly what that means when you've just become one of the biggest hip-hop stars on the planet.

That's the essential question of 'This Unruly Mess I've Made', Macklemore

and production partner Ryan Lewis's first LP since fame came a-knocking. It's equal parts witty and serious, poppy and knotty, cracking wise one minute, then demanding you sit quietly and listen carefully through some complicated soul-searching. 'Downtown'

is easy to love, a popping 'Uptown Funk'-a-like about owning a moped that enlists three oldest-of-the-old-school New York MCs – Melle Mel, Kool Moe Dee and Grandmaster Caz. Equally fun are the comic knockabout 'Brad Pitt's Cousin' ("Every white dude in America got the Macklemore haircut...") and dotty electro-shimmy 'Dance Off', featuring Dre collaborator Anderson .Paak and – brilliantly – Idris Elba. At the serious end of the scale is 'White Privilege II', a nine-minute suite that tackles police brutality, latent racism, cultural appropriation and the Black Lives Matter movement. A noble attempt to address pressing issues, but it's a

sprawling thing that shoots from too many perspectives and ends up gazing at its own navel.

In between, there's lots of grappling with white-guy problems: feeling awkward while winning a Grammy ('Light Tunnels'), growing pains ('St Ides'), getting emosh about being a dad while Ed Sheeran honks away in the background ('Growing Up'). This approach gleans one success in 'Kevin', a gospel-powered lament for a dead friend that skewers America's prescription drug problem, driven home by a hook from Leon Bridges. Ultimately, though, perhaps Macklemore is at his best when he's the loveable doofus on the moped, not trying to pen his own 'To Pimp A Butterfly', and the quicker he realises that, the better.

Louis Pattison



STRANGE & TRUE

Macklemore – real name Ben Haggerty – used to work at a Seattle zoo, where he reportedly stole money to fund his music career.

It's the guy from Razorlight!

He was a self-styled rock god set on world domination, but the former Razorlight frontman's latter-day weird period is certainly no fad

JOHNNY BORRELL & ZAZOU

The Atlantic Culture



JAZZY BLUESY 'TACHE

MICHAEL JACKSON dangled a baby over a balcony. Britney Spears shaved her head. East 17 singer Brian Harvey ate too many jacket potatoes and accidentally ran himself over. Johnny Borrell rode his motorbike to the island of Tiree in the Outer Hebrides and disappeared for four months.

The Razorlight frontman hasn't been the same since, adding to the canon of modern pop star meltdowns in January 2008. The songs he wrote off the Scottish coast led to Razorlight's 2008 album 'Slipway Fires', which all but banished the memory of 2004's era-defining debut 'Up All Night' and made 2006's 1.5 million-selling 'Razorlight' look like the shameless bid for stadiums it really was.

After that, Borrell seemed to disappear up his own backside, transforming himself from a ripped, white-jeaned motormouth into a moustachioed bluesman hell-bent on rejecting the fame he once craved. He recruited rag-tag roots band Zazou and made a brass-filled solo debut, 2013's 'Borrell 1', featuring songs with titles like 'Erotic Letter' and 'Pan-European Supermodel Song (Oh! Gina)'.

The blueprint is largely the same for 'Atlantic Culture' – 'We Cannot Overthrow' from 'Borrell 1' appears re-recorded and all four tracks from 2014 EP 'The Artificial Night' feature, while '60 Thompson', a song about ex-girlfriend Kirsten Dunst from 'Slipway Fires', is given a bluesy makeover. Crucially though, it's among the most striking moments here, hammering

home the contrast between Borrell old and new by morphing an arena-ballad about a Hollywood superstar into a tightly played passage of plinking jazz more credible than any of the 35-year-old's previous solo material.

The waltzing 'Swim Like A Star' (key line: "You say I'm just a normal guy/I'm only an average clown") and the slow-build skank of 'The Ego Song' (classic Borrell, that title) exude similar authenticity. 'Black God' and 'Swim Like A Star' are springier, featuring pinpoint-delivery choruses that stand a good chance of lodging in your head whatever your preconceptions.

The jarring rhythm of 'Zazou's Theme' and closing Bob Dylan cover 'Man Gave Names To All The Animals' are more lamentable, but it sounds like Zazou are having too much fun to notice. In fact, Borrell sounds more comfortable than he has in years – maybe it's time to cut him some slack. **Ben Homewood**

Johnny Borrell sans Zazou

RADAR

Also out this week



DMA'S Hills End

★★★★☆



This debut from the Aussie lads pays rowdy homage to the '90s. Fags, pints and parkas at the ready.

MOTHERS When You Walk A Long Distance You Are Tired

★★★★☆

Cut from the same cloth as their Atlanta, Georgia, neighbours Deerhunter, Mothers explore trippy indie-rock on a debut that'll leave you in a daze.

MEILYR JONES 2013

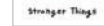
★★★★☆



The former frontman of Cardiff-based eccentrics Race Horses releases a tender, expansive solo debut that pushes his old band's sound to even weirder extremes.

YUCK Stranger Things

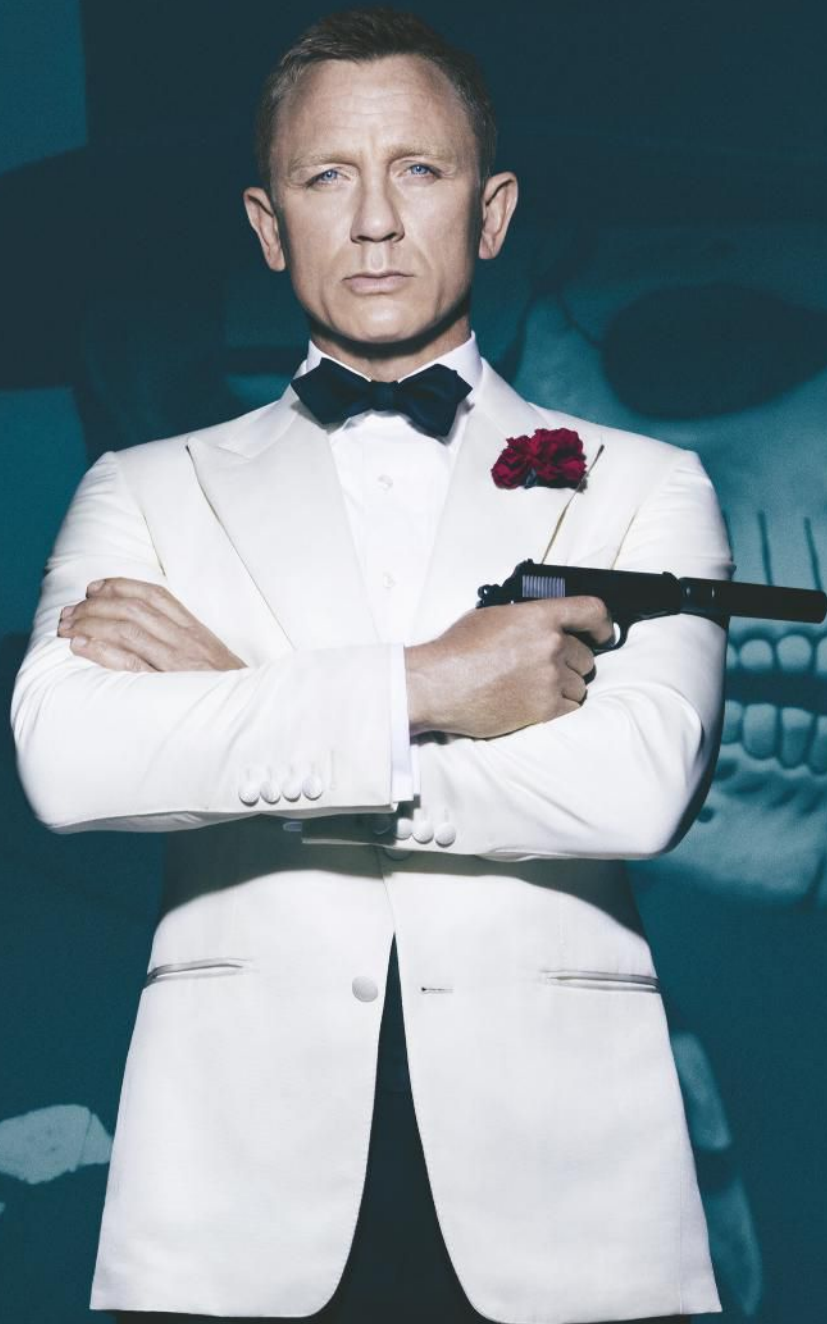
★★★★☆



Recorded on a shoestring in guitarist Max Bloom's family home, Yuck's third album offers more of their familiar melodic dirge.

Read more album reviews on NME.com

WORDS: BEN HOMEWOOD. PHOTOS: ICONICPIX.COM, JORDAN HUGHES/NME



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Branching out

Natalie Dormer plays *The Hunger Games*' Cressida and *Game Of Thrones*' Margaery. Now she's starring in *The Forest*, a horror film about a woman who ventures to a suicide destination in Japan to find her missing sibling.

Go on, sell *The Forest* to us.
"It's just a really good psychological horror. It gets inside your head."

You've been in two pop culture phenomenons: *The Hunger Games* and *Game Of Thrones*. Which has had a greater impact on your career?

"Six of one, half a dozen of the other. I couldn't pick two bigger zeitgeisty phenomenons. People ask me about ... *Thrones* more often. For a long time, the question was, 'Is Joffrey as horrible in real life?' The answer was, 'No, Jack Gleeson who plays him is absolutely gorgeous!'"

What's in store for Margaery in season six of *Game Of Thrones*?

"New challenges and new foes. She's desperately trying to get out of incarceration and she's wily. You don't know if she's being sincere or not. That's the thing I love about playing Margaery – I don't always know if she's being sincere. One take I'll mean it and the next I won't, and I'll leave it to the editor to cut it together."

The director of *The Hunger Games*, Francis Lawrence, has spoken tentatively about some kind of prequel or spin-off. Could that work?

"It could definitely work. The hunger is there for it – pun not intended. But it all starts with Suzanne [Collins, author of the novels]. The whole Panem universe comes from her, so if she doesn't write it, it will not be."

Jennifer Lawrence says she wants to get into directing. Will she be good?

"I haven't got a f**king clue! But she's a very talented storyteller and she's good at human emotion and truth. I have so much respect for directors. It's a hard, multifaceted job. I'm in awe of anyone who does it."

Natalie Dormer in *The Forest*

What was Madonna like as a director on 2011's *W.E.*?

"You need passion and instinct and Madonna has those. But I can't really talk to you about that because I signed a confidentiality agreement that was thicker than my contract. But one thing I'll say is she's a workhorse. She really throws herself in 100 per cent."

In the 11 years you've been working, have you noticed an improvement in the number of strong, well-rounded roles offered to women?

"Gradually, yes, and it comes from TV writing. Cinema is finally catching up with what TV has known for a while, which is that complex, identifiable women are something both male and female audiences respond to. Having a decent representation of half our population is overdue and it's not happening as quickly as everyone would like. What we're aiming for is gender irrelevance. It shouldn't be about whether a character is male or female; it should be about whether they're believable, whether the dialogue sounds real. Bad writing is bad writing and it all starts with the writing."

THE FOREST



15 Natalie Dormer, Taylor Kinney

SISTERS SUPERNATURAL RUBS

THIS SUPERNATURAL HORROR unfolds in Japan's Aokigahara Forest, a notorious suicide destination that's said to contain "yurei", or ghosts. When seemingly grounded Sara Price is told her flaky identical twin Jess is missing there and presumed dead, she's convinced local authorities are wrong and flies to Japan to find her. Despite warnings from locals who believe the forest's mystical properties will prey on her insecurities, Sara ventures in with a shifty Australian journalist (*Zero Dark Thirty*'s Taylor Kinney) and starts to experience terrifying ghostly visions that hark back to an unresolved childhood trauma. Playing both sisters, Natalie Dormer gives a compelling dual performance but she's saddled by the script's simplistic dialogue, which is often as wooden as the forest itself. You can't blame Dormer for wanting to branch out from *Game Of Thrones* and *The Hunger Games*, but she's barking up the wrong tree with this one.

Nick Levine

Also out this week



SECRET IN THEIR EYES

★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆

12A Chiwetel Ejiofor, Nicole Kidman, Julia Roberts

The original Argentinian film won an Oscar in 2010 for its story of an investigator haunted by an unsolved murder and an unresolved love. This remake flopped in the US last year.

Have these girls finally grown up?

GIRLS

Mondays, 10.45pm,

Sky Atlantic

Lena Dunham, Allison Williams, Zosia Mamet

NEW YORK FEMINIST ROMCOM

The ground-breaking comedy is on its penultimate series. After seeing the first few episodes, we ask if the NYC-dwelling gang are any closer to maturity

Shoshanna

Zosia Mamet

Shoshanna has been working in Japan for seven months. Back for Marnie's wedding, she's smitten with Japanese culture as well as her new work life – does this mean an end to her ditsy side?

KEY QUOTE:

"You know how people say you can't run away from your problems? Well, I moved away from mine – and it works."

Hannah

Lena Dunham

She's ditched her dreams of being a writer, but Hannah's now fully engrossed in her new job as an English teacher. So far, so mature. Yet while her relationship with her new boyfriend – fellow teacher Fran (*Carol*'s Jake Lacy) – seems firm at first, there are plenty of typically silly stumbling blocks awaiting the couple.

KEY QUOTE:

"Maybe all relationships have a finite end – like Whoopi Goldberg and Ted Danson."

Marnie

Allison Williams

The series kicks off with Marnie's wedding to epically annoying, folk-singing fiancé Desi. However, the nuptials are plagued with problems – including a make-up artist who misinterprets Marnie's request for a "Laurel Canyon vibe" and instead paints her like a fetish club Katy Perry.

KEY QUOTE:

"This is part of a very specific vision that I had for this wedding, a vision from an Edward Sharpe video. And it is mine."

Jessa

Jemima Kirke

Her burgeoning relationship with Hannah's ex Adam (Adam Driver) heats up at the wedding with an illicit kiss. Will they really betray Hannah and end up together?

KEY QUOTE:

"You know where this ends up? With you in a body bag and me headed to the border, pregnant."

And the boys...

Here's how the show's blokes are holding up



RAY

Alex Karpovsky

Ray's still obsessed with his ex Marnie. His coffee shop is also facing fierce competition from a new, über-hipster spot nearby. Tough times.



ADAM

Adam Driver

Adam is back on the scene, but this time he's after a different girl, Jessa, who he begins pursuing at the AA group they're attending.



ELIJAH

Andrew Rannells

Hannah's flatmate does MDMA at the wedding. As you do. There's also a new, high-profile love interest on the horizon.

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THE WHO

Won't Get Fooled Again

THE BEATLES

Back In The U.S.S.R.

ADELE *Hometown Glory*

QUEEN *I Want It All*

THE ROLLING STONES

(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction

KATE BUSH

Oh England My Lionheart

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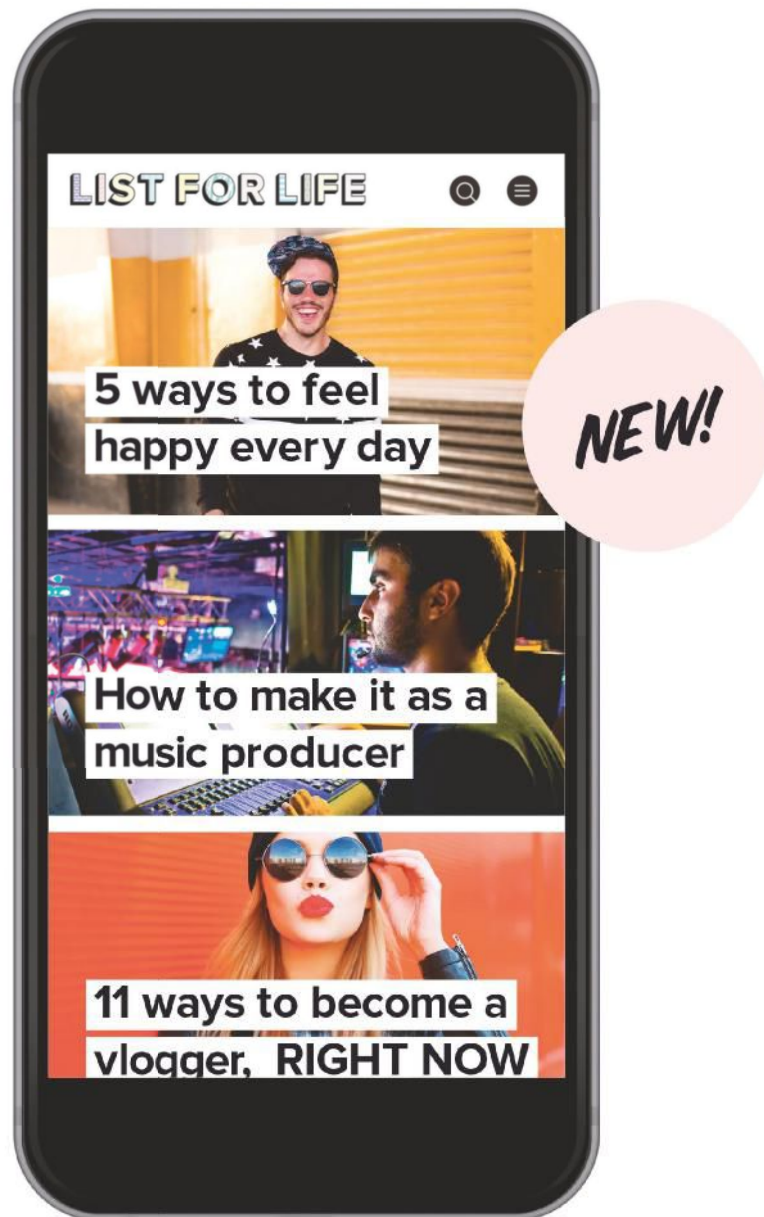
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YOU HEARD IT HERE FIRST

Anderson .Paak

**Dre's new protégé:
voice of an R&B superstar,
mentality of a rapper**

BEING DR DRE'S latest discovery can drive your ambition and Anderson .Paak is no exception. "I wanna do a song with Adele!" he says. "Nobody gets Adele as a feature, so maybe I can. I hope she knows who I am!"

The 30-year-old Californian singer only got his big break last month, signing to Dr Dre's label Aftermath Entertainment ("It's such a surreal thing") following the January release of his soul-infused belter of a second album 'Malibu'. It's earned acclaim for its rich mix of future-facing R&B and uplifting, narrative-driven hip-hop, marking .Paak out as a remarkable new songwriter who isn't afraid to write with the mentality of a rapper.

Taking time out from a video shoot – on his birthday, no less – to speak to NME, .Paak recounts the

tale of how he and NWA man Dre first hooked up. "I got invited to work on Dre's 'Compton' project," he says. "Dre was giving out ideas for what he wanted the vibe of [album track] 'All In A Day's Work' to be. I asked if I could get on the mic and started riffing off the top of my head. When I opened my eyes, everyone in the room was just like 'Woooooh, yeah!' And, after that, I was always over there."

.Paak's talents tend to elicit such a reaction: his recent performance on *The Late Show With Stephen Colbert* was electrifying and his whistle-stop visit of the UK this week with his band The Free Nationals is something you can't afford to miss – although the London date sold out well in advance. He's not feeling nervous ahead of it, he says, because "there's no pressure when they say it's sold out". And that's the kind of talk Dre himself would be proud of. **Sam Moore**

**"When they say
a gig's sold out,
there's no pressure"**

Details

LISTEN

Album 'Malibu' is out now on Steel Wool/OBE

LIVE

Feb 26 Ruby Lounge, Manchester
Feb 27 ABC2, Glasgow

FACT

The full-stop in his name is intentional – .Paak says he uses it as a reminder to pay attention to detail!

SOCIAL @AndersonPaak

For more on Anderson .Paak, head to NME.com

Best track

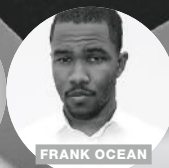
The Season/ Carry Me

The perfect five-minute capsule of .Paak's musical versatility and lyrical emotionality.

FOR FANS OF



KENDRICK LAMAR



FRANK OCEAN





THE 10 MOST IMPORTANT
GIGS THIS WEEK



1

Rudimental

Friday 26 O2 Academy, Glasgow

Saturday 27 Guild of Students, Liverpool

Monday 29 O2 Academy, Newcastle

Tuesday 1 O2 Academy, Leeds

Thursday 3 The O2, London

WHO: Hackney quartet who blend drum'n'bass rhythms with big-name singer-songwriter guests.

WHY: They recorded part of their last album 'We The Generation' with the late, great Bobby Womack and their collaborative tendencies mean Ella Eyre or John Newman might guest.

WHO'S SUPPORTING:

Regular Rudimental collaborator Anne Marie.

TICKETS: £23.10 from ents24.com

2

The Strypes

Tuesday 1 Clwb Ifor Bach, Cardiff

Thursday 3 O2 Institute, Birmingham

WHO: Irish quartet who can't legally drink in the USA but have already released two albums – 2013's 'Snapshot' and 2015's 'Little Victories'. Proper prodigious sorts.

WHY: They go against type, bringing blues and R&B into their rock. There are not one but two harmonicas.

WHO'S SUPPORTING: Zane Lowe-approved indie types from Reading The Amazons. Plus NME DJs.

TICKETS: £5 wristbands available from dice.fm as part of Topman 24, a jam-packed series of 24-hour city takeovers across the UK.





3

Eagulls

Wednesday 2 Oslo Hackney, London

Thursday 3 Fiddlers, Bristol

WHO: Twentysomething post-punk scowlers who lash out at other bands for "sucking each others' d*cks and rubbing the press's cl*t".

WHY: There are germs of bitter truths and uncomfortable flashes of real life beneath the snark. It's pretty refreshing.

WHO'S SUPPORTING: No details yet.

TICKETS: £9-11 from songkick.com

4

The Courteeners

Thursday 3 O2 Forum, London

WHO: Manchester guitar band fronted by Liam Fray, whose music is ambitious, triumphant and made for big venues.

WHY: Entering their 10th year and approaching a fifth album, they're as fresh as ever. They described last year's 25,000-capacity Heaton Park homecoming as "a Champions League final you've already won".

WHO'S SUPPORTING: No details yet.

TICKETS: £28.25 from ticketmaster.co.uk



6

DMA's

Sunday 28 Stereo, Glasgow

Monday 29 The Cluny, Newcastle

Wednesday 2 The Garage, London

WHO: Successors to the Oasis lad-rock title, but from Sydney, touring in support of their recent debut 'Hills End'.

WHY: You miss Britpop but listening to '(What's The Story) Morning Glory' isn't doing it for you any more.

WHO'S SUPPORTING: No details yet.

TICKETS: £8.25-11 from ents24.com

For tour news and live reviews go to NME.com



5

Joanna Newsom

Tuesday 1 Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool

Wednesday 2 Royal Concert Hall, Glasgow

WHO: Harp-playing art-folk legend from California whose recent album 'Divers' mined the themes of death and lifelong love.

WHY: She's treasured the world around for her idiosyncratic voice, dense lyricism and artistic clout. Newsom is completely unlike anyone else you'll see this year.

WHO'S SUPPORTING: No details yet.

TICKETS: £33 from ticketweb.co.uk



live



7

Roots Manuva

Monday 29 Concorde 2, Brighton
Wednesday 2 Gorilla, Manchester
Thursday 3 Junction, Cambridge

WHO: South London hip-hop veteran now on his ninth studio album 'Bleeds' – a deep, impressively lush effort involving Four Tet and Adrian Sherwood.

WHY: He's been working with Massive Attack recently, so as well as witnessing his on-point lyrics you might be in with a chance of spotting 3D.

WHO'S SUPPORTING: No details yet

TICKETS: £19 from seetickets.com



9

Jess Glynne

Friday 26 O2 Academy, Birmingham

WHO: 2014's breakthrough pop act, the 26-year-old sang on Clean Bandit's massive hit 'Rather Be' and then went stratospheric with 'Hold My Hand'. She released debut album 'I Cry When I Laugh' in summer 2015.

WHY: You love Radio 1 and pop music and laugh-crying and that's fine, OK?

WHO'S SUPPORTING: No details yet.

TICKETS: Sold out, but available from secondary ticketing sites from £82

8

Foxes

Friday 26 The Plug, Sheffield
Saturday 27 O2 Ritz, Manchester

Monday 29 Old Fire Station, Bournemouth

Tuesday 1 Trinity, Bristol

Thursday 3 O2 Institute, Birmingham

WHO: 26-year-old singer-songwriter AKA Louisa Rose Allen, who took on the moniker Foxes to avoid confusion with Lily, of 'The Fear' fame.

WHY: She's part of a British A-list bringing back cool pop. 'Body Talk' is a Cyndi Lauper-channelling standout.

WHO'S SUPPORTING:

RIVRS, Matt Wills.

TICKETS: £15.40-17.60 from gigsandtours.com



10

Field Music

Friday 26 The Cluny, Newcastle

Sunday 28 The Duchess, York

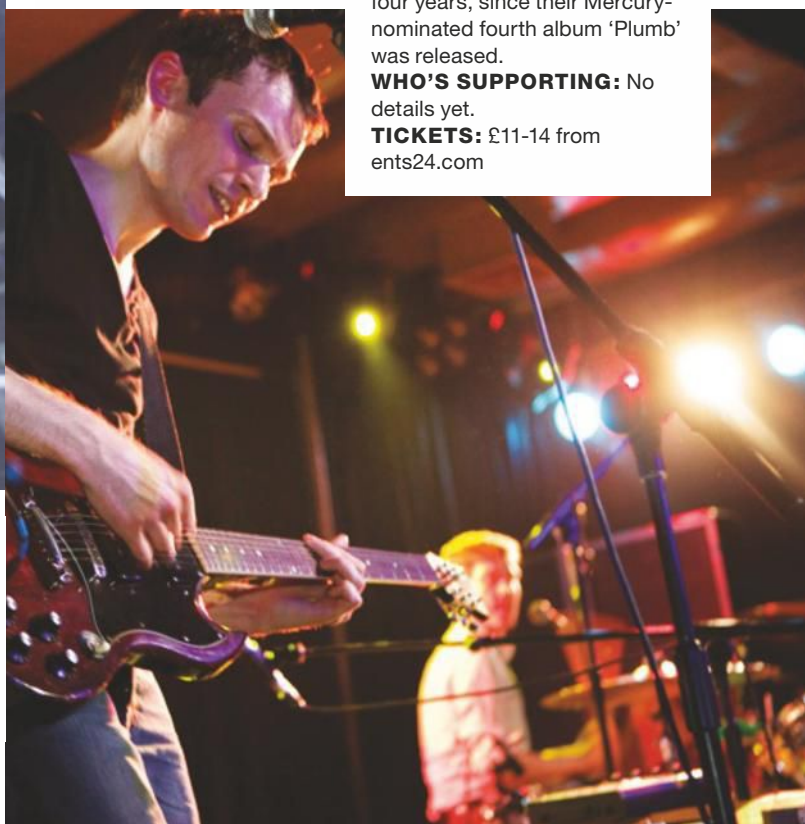
Thursday 3 The Globe, Cardiff

WHO: Sunderland Brothers Peter and David Brewis, who've recently released sixth album 'Commontime', their most accessible art-pop genre hopper yet.

WHY: They haven't toured in four years, since their Mercury-nominated fourth album 'Plumb' was released.

WHO'S SUPPORTING: No details yet.

TICKETS: £11-14 from ents24.com



Best of the rest

Anderson .Paak

Fri 26 The Ruby Lounge, Manchester
Sat 27 O2 ABC, Glasgow

Bill Ryder-Jones

Saturday 27 Adelphi, Hull
Tuesday 1 Belgrave Music Hall, Leeds
Wednesday 2 The Green Door Store, Brighton
Thursday 3 Scala, London

Black Honey

Tue 1 Fibbers, York
Wed 2 Sneaky Pete's, Edinburgh
Thu 3 Think Tank?, Newcastle

Blossoms

Fri 26 O2 Academy, Leicester
Sat 27 Albert Hall, Manchester
Wed 2 The Tunnels, Aberdeen
Thu 3 Liquid Rooms, Edinburgh

Boy & Bear

Fri 26 Trinity, Bristol
Sun 28 The Haunt, Brighton

British Sea Power

Sun 28 O2 Academy, Leicester

C Duncan

Tue 1 The Joiners, Southampton
Wed 2 Bodega, Nottingham
Thu 3 Leaf on Bold Street, Liverpool

Cattle & Cane

Fri 26 Diamond Live Lounge, Doncaster
Sat 27 Hemelvaart Bier Café, Aytton
Sun 28 Old Cinema Launderette, Durham

Coasts

Fri 26 The Roundhouse, London

The Crookes

Sat 27 Leadmill, Sheffield

Fat White Family

Fri 26 The Garage, Glasgow
Sat 27 Academy, Manchester
Sun 28 O2 Academy, Oxford
Mon 29 Bierkeller, Bristol

Fatherson

Fri 26 The Cluny, Newcastle

Flowers

Sat 27 Leaf On Bold Street, Liverpool
Sun 28 Broadcast, Glasgow

Fufanu

Fri 26 Headrow House, Leeds
Sun 28 Nice N Sleazy, Glasgow
Mon 29 Head of Steam, Newcastle
Tue 1 Sebright Arms, London

Gallant

Thu 3 The Edition Hotel, London

Gang Of Four

Sun 28 Islington Mill, Manchester

Giggs

Sat 27 O2 Academy, Glasgow

Glass Caves

Sat 27 The Deaf Institute, Manchester

Honne

Thu 3 Electric Brixton, London

The Hunna

Wed 2 & Thu 3 The Boston Music Room, London

Hyena

Fri 26 The Social, London
Sat 27 Oakford Social, Reading

Jamie Woon

Wed 2 The Plug, Sheffield
Thu 3 Gorilla, Manchester

Jamie xx

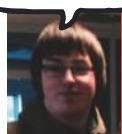
Fri 26 Alexandra Palace, London

KSI

Thu 3 O2 Academy Islington, London



READER'S PICK



Craig
 20, Ayr
 @Sycophant__

Sundara Karma

Mon 29 King Tut's, Glasgow
 "First time seeing them, buzzing to see what they're like!"

Hinds

Fri 26 Patterns, Brighton

Lusts

Tue 1 Barfly, London

Neon Waltz

Thu 3 The Tunnels, Aberdeen

Petite Noir

Thu 3 The Laundry, London

Reef

Fri 26 Mr Kyps, Poole
Thu 3 Electric Ballroom, London

Richard Hawley

Sun 28 University SU, Cardiff

The Rifles

Sat 27 The Roundhouse, London
Wed 2 O2 Institute, Birmingham
Thu 3 Oran Mor, Glasgow

Roo Panes

Tue 1 Band on the Wall, Manchester
Wed 2 Colston Hall, Bristol
Thu 3 Cadogan Hall, London

RY X

Tue 1 CCA, Glasgow
Thu 3 St Stephens Church, London

Ryley Walker

Fri 26 Brudenell Social Club, Leeds
Sat 27 The Band Room, Kirkbymoorside
Sun 28 Band on the Wall, Manchester
Mon 29 Bush Hall, London

Songhoy Blues

Fri 26 University Union, Sheffield

Seinabo Sey

Thu 3 XOYO, London

Sundara Karma

Sat 27 Patterns, Brighton
Sun 28 The Portland Arms, Cambridge
Mon 29 King Tut's, Glasgow
Tue 1 Sneaky Pete's, Edinburgh
Wed 2 Think Tank?, Newcastle

Telegram

Fri 26 Lennons, Southampton
Sat 27 Start The Bus, Bristol
Sun 28 Mono, Falmouth
Mon 29 The Portland Arms, Cambridge
Tue 1 Waterfront, Norwich

Turin Brakes

Fri 26 Cheese & Grain, Frome
Sat 27 Arts Centre, Pontardawe
Mon 29 Thekla, Bristol
Tue 1 The Stables, Milton Keynes
Wed 2 Concorde 2, Brighton

Vomit

Sat 27 The Underground, Stoke-on-Trent

Yonaka

Tue 1 The Lexington, London
Wed 2 Nation of Shopkeepers, Leeds
Thu 3 Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham



CLUB NME

Jacob Plant
Fri 26 KOKO, London

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SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE

Aaron Paul

Telly drug dealer, Hollywood nice guy



The first gig I went to

NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK

"It's kind of embarrassing but I went to this show with my older sister... I was 12 years old and the only reason I went was so I could hang out with one of her friends who I had a crush on. Paula was so hot! It was New Kids On The Block with MC Hammer and Vanilla Ice. Now that's a heavy trio! Just imagine... But sadly Vanilla Ice was arrested before the gig and couldn't perform. I believe he was detained for crimes against creativity."



The song I do at karaoke

JOURNEY

Don't Stop Believin'

"Anything by Journey is a go-to karaoke song for me. My wife loves doing 'Kiss From A Rose' by Seal. That song's been stuck in her head for four years. I'm not kidding. It's become part of her daily thing. She hums it around the house and she's even got me and all of her friends doing it!"



The first song I remember hearing

ELVIS PRESLEY
Love Me Tender

"The King was my mum's favourite musician, so I heard a lot of his stuff around the house when I was a kid."

The album that changed my life

RADIOHEAD
The Bends

"I was introduced to Radiohead when 'The Bends' came out. I was so floored by Thom Yorke and his talent. I really connected with his lyrics."

The song I can no longer listen to

SISQÓ

Thong Song

"People thought it was fun back in 1999 but if I go the rest of my life and not hear it again that's cool with me. At the time I couldn't believe it was a hit. That sh*t was everywhere, like a virus."

The song that reminds me of home

JACK GARRATT

Worry

"I'm a big fan. I met Jack in Los Angeles and we've become good friends. I've put on a few small concerts at my place and we've had Jack along, so anything I hear by him brings back good memories of home."



The first album I bought

NIRVANA

Nevermind

"That was the kind of stuff I listened to growing up before I moved on to bands like Radiohead."

The first song I fell in love with

THE SHIVERS

Beauty

"My wife and I sang this together at our wedding. I'd never 'had' a song before, but now it's ours."

The song I want played at my funeral

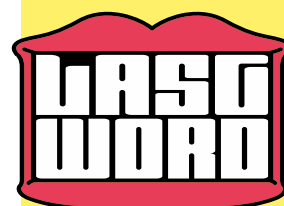
JOHN LENNON

Imagine

"I love The Beatles, but I'm obsessed with John Lennon. His view on life was such an inspiration to so many people. I was in New York last year when Yoko Ono set up this thing in Central Park to create the biggest peace sign in the world with humans. They shot it from above in a helicopter. I got a day off filming just so I could be a part of it. It was on what would have been John Lennon's 75th birthday and they played 'Imagine' through loudspeakers. It was an incredible moment, so it would have to be that track."

Aaron Paul stars in Triple 9, in cinemas now

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THIS WEEK

BONO

U2 frontman

February 26 1983

"The power of love is always more striking when set against realism than when set against escapism."

