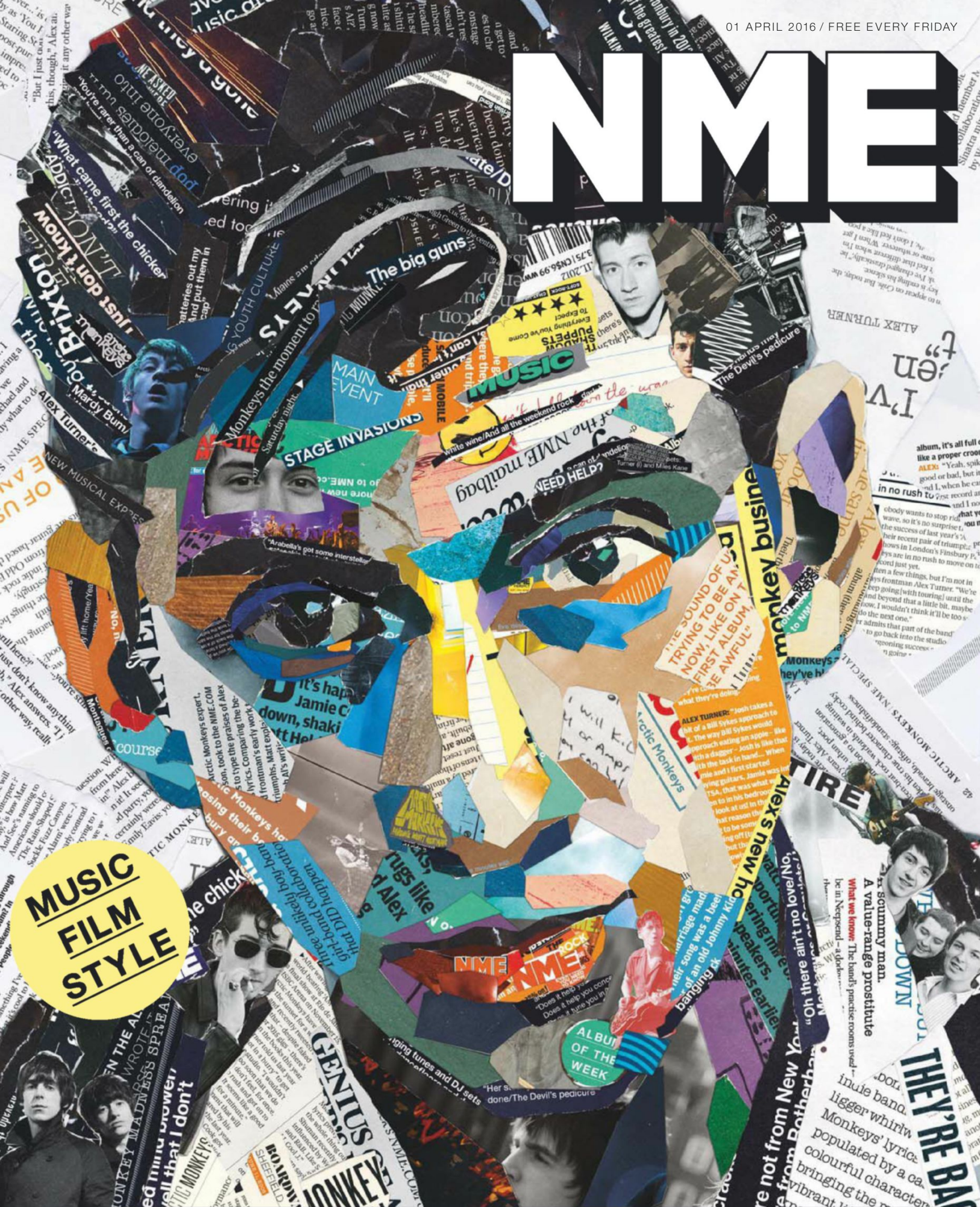




WHO IS ALEX TURNER? A PORTRAIT OF A MODERN MASTER



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Hello...



THIS WEEK'S cover is a special one. Illustrated by the excellent Andy Gellenberg, it's a portrait of Alex Turner using clippings from the Arctic Monkeys and Last Shadow Puppets frontman's career – as

told though the pages of NME.

Turner has always held a special place in our affections, being championed more than a few times as the greatest songwriter of his generation. We've put him on a pedestal next to people like Morrissey and Dylan, and on that count he's never let us down.

That's not to say that people haven't started questioning him. There's the odd new accent. The allegations of tax avoidance. And of course that "rock'n'roll" speech at the 2014 Brits, which was the final nail in the prick coffin as far as some people were concerned.

I said at the time and I stand by this today, Turner's idea of rock'n'roll isn't about an antiquated idea of "guitar music", or about genre elitism, but spirit and ethos, excitement and unpredictability; The traits that British music has always been renowned for. The guy is a riddle and an enigma, which is why Matt Wilkinson – who's interviewed Turner more than any other journalist – has been tasked with finding out what makes him tick. Enjoy.

MIKE WILLIAMS
Editor-in-Chief
@itsmikelike

Katy B p24

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Enigma or cliché? We make sense of the Arctic Monkeys mainman

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AGENDA

WHAT EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT THIS WEEK

Ian Brown outside north
London's Church Studios
(March 24)

The third coming

The Stone Roses exclusively reveal they're recording their first new material in over 21 years

STONE ROSES FRONTMAN IAN BROWN HAS TOLD *NME* THAT the band are definitely working on brand new music. Following rumours they'd started on the long-awaited follow-up to 1994's 'Second Coming', the singer spoke outside The Church Studios in north London, saying new material from the band would be coming "soon". He added that the sessions were going "like a dream" and that the new songs were sounding "glorious". Suspicions were raised when the band's gear was spotted outside the studio by fans, who shared photos on social media. One fan said Brown told her new music could be coming "before June", ahead of their gigs in Manchester and Perthshire this summer.

Witness the resurrection

June 15, 17, 18, 19
Manchester Etihad Stadium
July 8 T In The Park

WORDS: LEONIE COOPER; PHOTOS: PAUL BUGLER



The new Radiohead album: FAQs

The latest goss on gigs, artwork, release date – and what the hell it's gonna sound like

So when's it coming out?

It's been suggested Radiohead's eagerly awaited ninth album could debut before the end of April, for boring tax reasons. In October, news emerged that Radiohead had formed a new company called Dawn Chorus LLP. It's a tactic they've used for their previous two albums, launching Xurbia Xendless Ltd in July 2007 for 'In Rainbows', and Ticker Tape Ltd in December 2010 for 'The King of Limbs'.

What can we expect?

The unexpected, obviously. Or is the unexpected too obvious? Should we expect the expected, or is that what they want us to expect? All we know is:

photos leaked from their two years of sporadic studio sessions have seen the band working with elaborate synth set-ups as well as a full string orchestra, suggesting some plush electro.

What songs will be on it?

We may well have heard some of them. 'Dawn Chorus' is a track Thom Yorke claims to have been working on back in 2009. Even older than that is 'Lift', a song first performed back in 1996, which lead guitarist Jonny Greenwood says they reworked during their sessions. Two songs Thom played



at a solo show in Paris – 'Silent Spring' and 'Untitled' – could be on the album too. Thom paused during 'Silent Spring' to say, "Jonny's bit, which I can't play" – suggesting it's a full group track.

What do the band say about it?

"We've certainly changed our method again," Jonny said last year. "We're trying to use very old and very new technology together." Drummer Philip Selway has confessed to being baffled. "I have absolutely no idea [what it'll be like]," he told *NME*. "That's what keeps us there until the end."

Have we seen the artwork?

Possibly. The band have put out something as obtuse as we've come to expect, suggesting an organic feel. That said, when asked how the artwork was coming along, the band's long-term visual collaborator Stanley Donwood told *DIY* magazine, "There's still a lot I need to do."

Are there any gigs that aren't sold out?

Yeah, these ones...

Jun 1 Les Nuits Des Fourvière, Lyon **Jun 17** Secret Solstice festival, Reykjavik **Jul 2** OpenAir St. Gallen, St. Gallen **Jul 8** NOS Alive festival, Lisbon **Jul 29-31** Osheaga Music and Arts Festival, Montreal **20** Summer Sonic Festival, Osaka **Aug 21** Summer Sonic Festival, Tokyo **Sept 11** Lollapalooza, Berlin

Radiohead's Thom Yorke



Dave Grohl

After hearing a Cornish band were barred from rehearsing due to noise, he complained to the council.



Ricky Gervais

He's finished the David Brent movie and released a trailer for his comedy *Special Correspondents*.

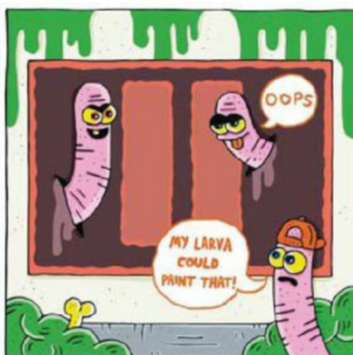
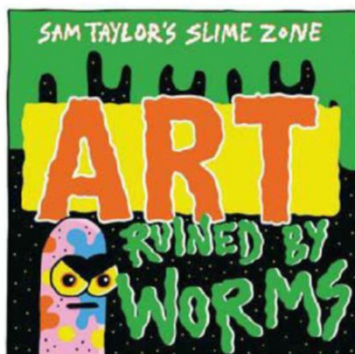


Noel Gallagher

Axed his first New Zealand show in 18 years after his equipment was delayed.



WORDS: MARK BEAUMONT. PHOTOS: REX





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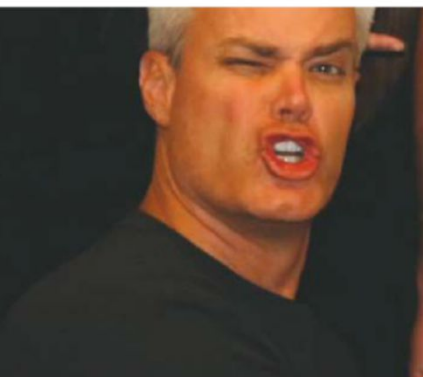
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AGENDA

This guy got a Donald Trump tattoo for gig tickets

What a plonker

SOMEONE ALERT *TATTOO Fixers* – a dude called Travis Gaarder, 38, has had US presidential candidate Donald Trump inked on his back in exchange for tickets to every country music gig in Phoenix, Arizona, for the next year. He was responding to a request from *The Ben & Matt Show* on radio station 102.5 KNIX. “The only reason I did it was for the concert tickets,” he told *Billboard*. “I just like music.”



Last W33K IN NUMBERS



32%

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£930m

The amount Madonna's various tours have earned. She's the highest-grossing solo musician ever, eclipsing Bruce Springsteen. Who's the boss now?

WORDS: TOM SMITH. PHOTOS: REX, IHEARTRADIO

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RISTOPHER NOLAN EMMA THOMAS WESLEY COLLER GEOFF JOHNS DAVID S. GOYER WRITTEN BY CHRIS TERRIO AND DAVID S. GOYER PRODUCED BY CHARLES ROVEN, p.g.a. DEBORAH SNYDER, p.g.a. DIRECTED BY ZACK SNYDER

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Katherine Ryan

OFF THE TV AND IN YOUR FACE

THIS WEEK

Feeling like a boss at a Little Mix gig

IN SOLIDARITY WITH people who choose to work on bank holidays, my daughter and I went to a Little Mix concert on Easter Sunday. We ate way too many chocolate eggs in the Uber and arrived at the O2 three hours early for the matinee performance. (Not because I'm insane, but because that's the time it said to get there on the ticket). We used the time to queue – a beloved pastime of British children like mine – for merchandise. We branded ourselves in T-shirts and wandered around observing the thousands of other mums and six-year-olds dressed exactly like us, many of whom were in full drag make-up.

There were also

clusters of glittery, miniskirted tweens and a lone licensed vendor standing among them shouting: "Ice cream! Ice cream!" like something out of *How To Catch A Predator*. As they'd been instructed to do outside school gates or in a parking lot, the girls avoided him. I was so proud. That's right, young ladies, he only wants one thing: £5.50.

The first support act were JAGMAC, a group of six siblings whose parents had a lot of unprotected sex in the 90s. Kids are savvy social media experts now. Between songs, the cutest one would say: "Hey there, beautiful people, follow us on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram! Please tweet us and we'll reply to EVERY MESSAGE, please!" I'm pretty sure they Snapchatted some of their own show. Look, I'm a very old woman. JAGMAC are working it and I've added them on MySpace.

Full of eggs and oestrogen, the whole place lost their sh*t when Little Mix came on. Perrie, Jesy, Leigh-Anne and Jade levitated

in harnesses and silk pyjamas, which were promptly snatched off by their all-male dance troupe. In varying cuts of barely-there matching costumes, they twerked and climbed all over the boys. I'm about as liberal as they come and even I had to take a moment to decide how I felt about an arena full of small children watching such a relentlessly sexual performance.

I watched as one of them mounted a dancer and thought: "Well, at least she's on top!" I laughed out loud when they donned small capes for modesty to sing a ballad, presumably because people are more emotive if they think you might be wearing underpants. In its entirety, the show is a feminist piece. I cried maternal tears throughout. I get it. I'd be lying if I said I didn't want to look and feel like a grown woman when I was young. That's one reason why it's important to hold adults who take advantage of that fully accountable. These are babies looking up to talented, beautiful, powerful older girls and fantasising about what it might be like to be them one day.

So even though it felt a bit like Ass Wednesday, Pussover, The Res-Erection, Palms-on-the-floor Sunday (too far), my kid walked away from that concert feeling like a boss. I love Little Mix and I always have. They've got some great messages. And no underpants.

"I love Little Mix. They've got great messages. And no underpants"

And another thing...

IT'S TOUGH TO STAND OUT as the most disgusting person on Twitter. Last week, when @MatthewDoyle31 recounted having confronted a Muslim woman and asked her to "explain Brussels", I knew I'd

found a special bellend. While I marvel at his ability to mind-read someone's religion (Worst. Superhero. Ever) and we can all agree the actions of a sick few don't represent the beliefs of many, how terrifying would it feel to be



walking alone and have a stranger demand you explain ANYTHING!? 'Explain Stonehenge! Explain Lana Del Rey!' I CAN'T, GO AWAY!

THINGS WE LIKE

THIS WEEK'S OBJECTS OF DESIRE



Pros and Cons

The classic Converse gets a new twist with these low-top leather kicks.

£90 converse.com



California dreaming

Rep old school punks Dead Kennedys with this neat pin badge.

£7 worldfamousoriginal.com



Rocky-wear

A\$AP Rocky's line for Guess is made up of '90s-tastic clothing like this crop top.

£25 guess.eu



Eye of the tiger

This slinky, shiny jacket gives off classy Ryan-Gosling-in-Drive vibes.

£55 asos.com



Perfume genius

Grimes fronts the campaign for Stella McCartney's Pop, which whiffs of tuberose.

£42 stellamccartney.com



Book of justice

Geek out on the art of *Batman V Superman: Dawn Of Justice* with this official book.

£29.99 titanbooks.com



Dead good

The latest *Walking Dead* comic – we're now at Volume 25 – is out next week.

£7.69 amazon.co.uk



Faux good

Save yourself a trip to the piercing parlour with a fake septum ring.

£9 claires.co.uk



Pigging out

This posh pork crackling comes in everything from sweet maple to chilli flavour.

£15.99 snafflingpig.co.uk



Hat trick

UK skatewear king Palace includes this brand-twisting beanie in its spring range.

£26 palaceskateboards.com



Wigging out

Cyclist Bradley Wiggins has teamed up with Fred Perry for a mod-inspired collection.

£95 fredperry.com



Electric dreams

This print maps out the history of electronica using the circuit board of a theremin.

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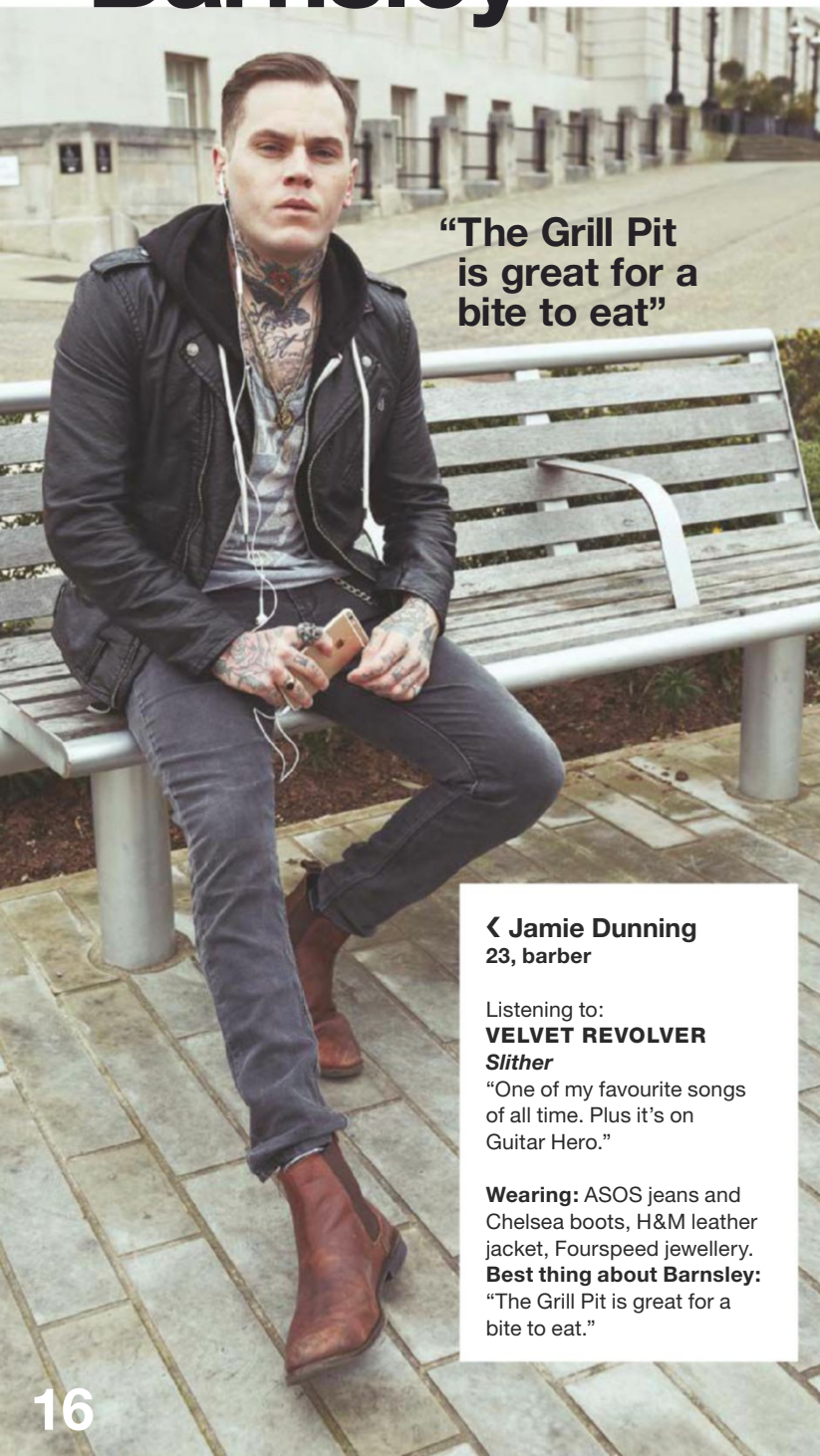
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What's ON your Headphones?

THIS WEEK

Barnsley



"The Grill Pit is great for a bite to eat"

◀ **Jamie Dunning**
23, barber

Listening to:
VELVET REVOLVER
Slither

"One of my favourite songs of all time. Plus it's on Guitar Hero."

Wearing: ASOS jeans and Chelsea boots, H&M leather jacket, Fourspeed jewellery.
Best thing about Barnsley: "The Grill Pit is great for a bite to eat."

Danielle Hunt >
20, fashion entrepreneur

Listening to:
THE STORY SO FAR
Nerve

"It's really catchy pop-punk. Not too wordy."

Wearing: Danielle Hunt Bespoke top, The Left Bank skirt, UNIF boots, ASOS coat.
Best thing about Barnsley: "Quasimodo's! It's the best for a night out."



◀ **April Ulliot**
24, tattoo artist

Listening to:
BOWLING FOR SOUP
1985

"I saw them live last month and it was totally amazing."

Wearing: Topshop jeans and T-shirt, Missguided cardigan.
Best thing about Barnsley: "There are some great old-school barbers."

Sam Arnold >
30, artist

Listening to:
SAM ARNOLD
In My Dreams

"It's quite personal. I think it'll touch a lot of people."

Wearing: Nike trainers, Topman jeans, vintage jacket.
Best thing about Barnsley: "I'm from the south originally and the people are a lot nicer here."



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Inside Alex Turner

Alex David Turner is a tricky character to decode. A songwriting genius? Yes. A rock'n'roll cliché? Maybe. In a milestone year for the Arctic Monkeys frontman – and in the week that the new *Last Shadow Puppets* album is released – Matt Wilkinson makes sense of a true musical enigma

D ECEMBER 2003. ALEX Turner, aged 17 and set free in London, thought his world had peaked for ever. Staying overnight in a £30 Golders Green B&B (no running water – but who really needs that?) and flanked by his best friends Matt Helders and Andy Nicholson, the part-time barman from Sheffield surveyed the capital's grandest music venue, Alexandra Palace. The Strokes, at the height of

their career, were playing onstage and a starstruck Alex had just met his idols, Libertines frontmen Pete Doherty and Carl Barat, who were also in the crowd.

Talking to *NME* in 2011, Turner was still fondly recalling the "little adventure" they'd all had that night. "As much as they probably hate hearing this," he gushed about The Strokes, "they were the band that encouraged me to rip the knees of my jeans and write on them in marker pen. I wrote on them in red ink: 'I've got soul

and I'm superbad!'"

Exactly two years after that gig – to the week, no less – and the tables had turned for all concerned. This time, it was The Strokes who were left open-mouthed after witnessing a hyped new band called Arctic Monkeys play 25 minutes of the most mesmerising, precision-perfect Buzzcocks-esque punk since two Johnnys (Ramone and Rotten) had invented it three decades earlier. Having already displaced Doherty as the UK's

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premier songwriter, Turner (with Nicholson, Helders and fellow like-minded soul Jamie Cook in tow) was about to go global.

And there he's remained. His art has been praised by millions, from bona fide legends (Bowie: "A delight"), to rap royalty (Diddy: "The Arctic Monkeys are so cool!"), to politicians (Gordon Brown, although the less said about that the better) to poets (Simon Armitage: "God bless him"). And, let's face it, probably by you too.

BUT JUST WHAT is it that makes Alex Turner tick? Over the past five years I've interviewed him countless times, watching him develop and evolve from a doe-eyed Yorkshire lad who appeared fully-formed, like the kid from Kes armed with Morrissey's lyrical lookbook and Noel Gallagher's knack for a chorus. In January this year he turned 30. A few weeks later marked the 10th anniversary of Arctic Monkeys' life-changing, multi-platinum debut album 'Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not'. This week, 'Everything You've Come To Expect', the second LP by him and his friend Miles Kane's side-project The Last Shadow Puppets, is released. Already, he's lived several lifetimes, zig-zagging all over the world and morphing into a true rock'n'roll kingpin: all hairdos, gold records, LA lifestyle and A-list hook-ups.

But not everything has run smoothly recently. First there was the furore surrounding the Monkeys when they were reported to have invested in the Liberty tax avoidance scheme in 2014. The Guardian ran a piece entitled 'Arctic Monkeys: from men of the people to tax-dodgers', prompting a statement on Arcticmonkeys.com the following month, which called the allegations "misleading", and added that the band had done nothing wrong legally and stood to gain nothing unjustly from any of their tax-related affairs. Despite it, vast numbers of fans and critics laid into them. Even now, two years later, those same accusatory comments still routinely appear on Twitter.

Then, last month, Kane's massively ill-judged and oversexed comments to a female journalist from *Spin* in a Last Shadow Puppets interview caused similar

ructions ("Do you want to go upstairs?" he asked the writer at the awkward chat's conclusion, a remark that later prompted a letter of apology – subsequently published online – from the singer). Both leave stains on an otherwise gleaming CV for Turner.

It's a far cry from the boy who, in his first cover interview in October 2005, told *NME*: "I like to think I walk the tightrope between Mike Skinner and Jarvis Cocker." A bold statement, but also one that, cleverly, he knew couldn't last. Just like

Cocker jumping ship ahead of Britpop's spectacular death in 1997, Turner was astute enough even as a 19-year-old to realise that if he was to survive the inevitable backlash against Arctic Monkeys' phenomenal rise, there was no way he could carry on writing the same old songs as before: brilliant, life-affirming, common people songs about watching shit bands play the Sheffield venue he bartended at ('Fake Tales Of San Francisco'); about weird encounters with scummy prostitutes outside Arctic Monkeys' Neepsend rehearsal space ('When The Sun Goes Down'); and about being skint and desperately in need of the latest Reeboks ('A Certain Romance').

Talking to him years after the initial

A great Turner phrase

Alex's best lyrics

A CERTAIN

ROMANCE 2006

"Over there there's broken bones / There's only music so that there's new ringtones"

FLUORESCENT

ADOLESCENT 2007

"You used to get it in your fishnets / Now you only get it in your nightdress"

CORNERSTONE 2009

"And I elongated my lift home / Yeah I let him go the long way round / I smelt your scent on the seatbelt and kept my shortcuts to myself"

SUCK IT AND SEE

2011

"You're rarer than a can of dandelion and burdock, and those other girls are just post-mix lemonade"

ARABELLA 2013

"Arabella's got some interstellar-gator skin boots and a helter skelter 'round her little finger, and I ride it endlessly"

"This is the first time I've had a haircut"

Beatlemania-style hype had died down, Turner told me he was "absolutely petrified" at all the bullsh*t levelled at him. But you'd never have known that at the time. Remarkably, within just six months of that first cover interview, he was already bullish enough to publicly denounce his former self by saying that Arctic Monkeys' 2006 stopgap single 'Leave Before The Lights Come On' – released just a year after their 'Five Minutes With...' debut – was, effectively, his way of saying goodbye to the Alex Turner the entire country had fallen hard for. "It's the last song I wrote about going out and that," he explained, closing the chapter on that part of his world for ever. "My life's not really like that guy any more."

Since then he's shed his skin numerous times. Every single song Turner has written post the band's second album 'Favourite Worst Nightmare' is more mature, technicolor and weird than the material he came up with as a fresh-faced teen, and with every new batch he releases he seems to travel further from his Sheffield starting point.

"How important is it to be looking over your shoulder?" he asked in the press release accompanying 'Everything You've Come To Expect'. "Is it not more exciting, rather than trying to hold on to something – or to someone's perception of something – to let that go and explore what's in front of you?"

This is the crux of Alex Turner in 2016. It's the reason why, while the entire British press was busy anointing him the new Noel Gallagher back in 2005, he dropped all pretence of being Britpop 2.0's golden boy and ran off into the Californian desert with Queens Of The Stone Age leader Josh Homme as soon as he could (the two bands first toured together in 2007, with Homme telling *NME*, "They're tight little springy f***ers, alright," stageside in Texas one night. Since then the American



(L-r): Recording the first Arctic Monkeys album in 2006. 'Humbug' era Turner, Chicago, 2009. 'Suck It And See' tour, Florida, 2011



ALEX TURNER

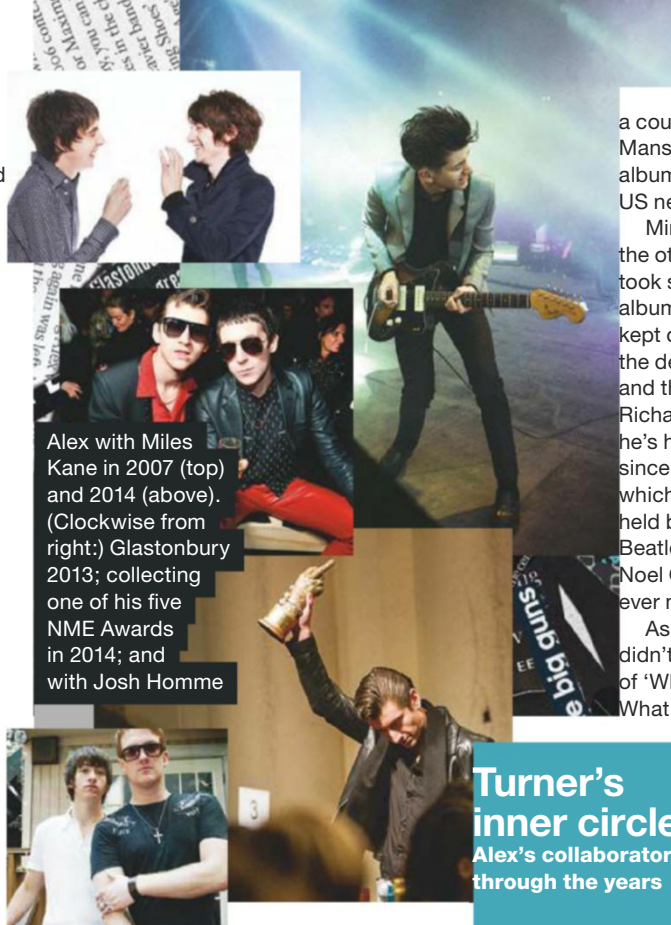
has become a Jedi knight figure for the band, and particularly Turner). It's also why, when the resulting Homme-produced deeply psychedelic album 'Humbug' (2009) freaked so many Monkeys fans out, Turner was able to act shrewdly, flip-reversing once again and handing over a beatific, New York-based collection of tightly-wound tracks on 'Suck It And See' (2011) that obsessed about his then-girlfriend – model and TV presenter Alexa Chung – before fully ensconcing himself in the all-out sleaze-fest that is after-hours Hollywood for Arctic Monkeys' mesmerising, world-beating 2013 record 'AM'.

ALEX TURNER IS always moving, and always working. It's this sense of never looking back that explains why the Monkeys barely play any material from their first two albums live these days, too. "Whatever it took to write and play them songs when we used to isn't there now," he told me frankly about the band's Sheffield output in 2011. "It sort of feels like we're doing covers of other songs [when attempting to play the early material]. But we can't do a cover of 'Fake Tales Of San Francisco'..."

He was sat on the Monkeys' tour bus midway through the band's 'Suck It And See' tour during that conversation, just as they were beginning to make serious headway in America. Turner, newly bequipped after he got his "shaggy Beatles bob" chopped on a whim in Austin, Texas, a few weeks before ("First time I've ever had a haircut. It's just fun, innit?! One of those things where you're like, 'You may as well...'"), looked every inch the rock star: beautiful leather jacket, regulation aviator shades, Strummer-esque Levi's turn-ups, bovver-boy boots, rings and chains galore. He fidgeted continuously, rolling a couple of dice around a small table for half an hour while slowly pondering – without ever really being able to find the answer – how it had all gone right for him.

This is the Turner way in interviews. Considered, delicate, quiet and ever careful. When paired with his bandmates, he'll almost always wait until they've said their piece before piping up with some wisecrack at the end. He winces if you quiz him on anything remotely deep – his lyrics, for example – in the presence of anybody else ("Don't do this to me, Matthew, not in front of me friends!"), but when you get him on his own, he opens up brilliantly, revealing a natural flow for conversation that's every bit as flowery and fast-paced as his way with words is on record.

"I told you I had a dart board, right?" he said once, as if he was letting you in on a huge secret while explaining about the songwriting process for 'AM'. And in a way, for Turner, even something as mundane as playing darts in his apartment ended up being a signifier, an inspiration for his most out-there collection of songs



Alex with Miles Kane in 2007 (top) and 2014 (above). (Clockwise from right:) Glastonbury 2013; collecting one of his five NME Awards in 2014; and with Josh Homme

"Whatever Arctic Monkeys do, you never lose faith"

yet. "I'd go out and throw darts, and there's definitely some symmetry between trying to nail the way a lyric wanders through and where the dart actually goes on the board. It was weird. Sometimes, when I was winning, when I was getting treble 20, I was getting further inside a song, getting there. You sort of have a little smirk to yourself..."

He's a dreamer and he has been forever – regardless of where he's based. This is perhaps what's instigated the biggest change in Turner's personality the older he's become. The more he's let it seep into his songs, changing the rapid-fire rollout of snotty early tracks like 'The View From The Afternoon' and 'Teddy Picker' into his more free-flowing, salacious output of late ('No 1 Party Anthem', 'Miracle Aligner'), the more he's grown into his role as a writer.

"You genuinely can't predict what might happen next with Arctic Monkeys," the band's manager Ian McAndrew told international and analysis platform Music Business Worldwide in 2015. "But whatever they do, you never lose faith, particularly in Alex as a writer. His skills, his lyricism especially, have been growing all the time. He's a special songwriter."

And a relentless one. Last year he spent his first serious time off since Arctic Monkeys formed writing and recording 'Everything You've Come To Expect',

a couple of songs for LA friends Mini Mansions and, reportedly, an entire secret album for the sultry, Lana Del Rey-esque US newcomer Alexandra Savior.

Mirror that with 2008 and 2010, when the other Arctic Monkeys members all took substantial downtime between albums. Turner, on the contrary, kept on going – first releasing and touring the debut *Last Shadow Puppets* album and then recording the soundtrack for Richard Ayoade's film *Submarine*. To date, he's had almost 150 songs published since 2005, including the two LSP albums, which is substantially closer to the number held by Lennon & McCartney in their Beatles prime (180 collectively) than Noel Gallagher (88) or Radiohead (96) ever managed in their first decade.

As 2016 dawned and Turner hit 30, he didn't gush about the 10-year anniversary of 'Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not'. Instead, his record

company Domino used the anniversary week to announce the release of 'Everything You've Come To Expect'.

Recorded at Rick Rubin's plush Shangri La studios in Malibu over the final months of 2015, this obscene level of scenic change from what Turner once was when he started out might horrify some bands, not to mention fans. They use Bob Dylan's old tour bus there as the mixing room, incense sticks burn constantly and you can smell the Pacific Ocean through the warm, serene garden breeze.

But the enduring and most important thing about Turner as he matures – and he's still the UK's most intriguing, inspirational mainstream songwriter by a country mile – is that this is exactly what he's always been about: never stopping, constantly looking and forever remaining utterly steadfast in his desire to not rest on his former glories.

"Writing songs for me is like waiting for deliveries," he once said when I asked him where it all came from. "There's always that thing... maybe it will just disappear? I could go and do gardening or something." He tailed off, before quietly returning to the conversation. "To tell you the truth, I don't have time to really worry about it."

NME

Turner's inner circle

Alex's collaborators through the years

MILES KANE

The other Last Shadow Puppet

"I tell [Alex] I love him all the time."

RICHARD AYOADE
Submarine and Arctic Monkeys At The Apollo director

"The dream collaboration: you do nothing and the other person is great. That's how I want every film to be from now on. Alex's music was the thing I worried about least."

JON MCCLURE
Reverend & The Makers frontman and occasional Turner co-writer

"I met Alex on a bus when we were young. I said: 'You look cool, do you wanna be in my band?' We've been mates ever since then."

JOSH HOMME
Queens Of The Stone Age singer and Arctic Monkeys producer

"Alex is one of the most talented songwriters and lyric writers that is out there. If I'd have grown up in Sheffield, I'd have hung out with Alex."

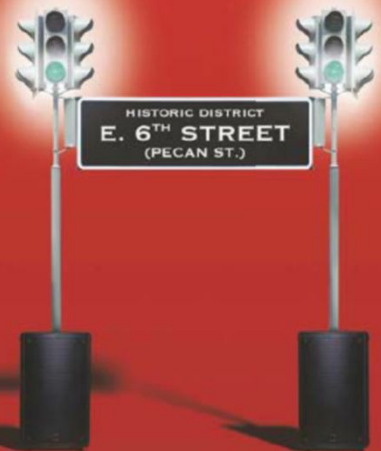
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D ★ N C I N G W I T H T H E S T ★ R S

Heartache and tragedy inspired London's club queen Katy B to make new album 'Honey', a record about "escaping through raving", she tells David Renshaw

KATY B IS SIPPING A GREEN tea and talking about her upcoming album 'Honey', a project that sees her collaborating with, alongside others, R&B's comeback king Craig David, US carnival-dancehall act Major Lazer, cerebral electronic artist Four Tet and fast-rising grime MC Novelist. If it sounds like a night out at the world's most eclectic club, that's sort of the point. "It's like being at Fabric on a Friday," she says. "Like wandering through a multi-genre rave."

Katy's career was born on the London club scene – home to superclub Fabric. She broke through alongside Magnetic Man on 2010's dubstep banger 'Perfect Stranger' and

since then has established herself as the voice of the dancefloor, lending a human narrative to house, soul, R&B and speaker-rattling bass.

She can still be spotted out with friends at London clubs such as Peckham's arty Bussey Building and Brixton's newer Phonox, but it's nights out further from home that excite Katy the most, as the looming threat of gentrification continues to play havoc with London's club

scene. "I'm always raving in Birmingham," she says, recommending local nights Rainbow and Void. "Everything's shutting down here [London]. It's getting really boring."

'Honey' started life as an EP, designed to give Katy the chance to work with others and create new material for live sets. But when you're as well liked as she is, the offers flood in. Alongside the aforementioned guests are producers Wilkinson, Jamie Jones, Mr Mitch, KDA and Geeneus. There are, however, only three female collaborators among the 21 present: Radio

1 resident Hannah Wants, producer Kate Simko and Disclosure collaborator Sasha Keable, who lends her voice to 'Chase Me'.

"When I finished I did think: 'Wow. It's a bit of a sausage party here,'" Katy jokes. "But

I'd never see other women as competition. I once had a massive support slot taken away from me because it was decided this artist couldn't tour with another female act. I'll definitely work with more female acts in the future."

Katy endured both heartbreak and tragedy while making the album. Her older brother Andrew passed away in September 2014 following a cardiac arrest, having suffered brain damage in an accident 18 months earlier. She released her second album 'Little Red' a few

months before his death and split her time between promoting the record and jetting back to be by her brother's bedside. That album provided an anchor for her, she says now. "I got to hold on to something while going through that crazy time."

'Honey' doesn't tackle this loss directly, instead acting as a portal to a happier place away from the stress and hardship brought on by losing her sibling. "I'm not ready to write about what happened with my brother – it's too painful," she says. "So this is an album that celebrates escapism through raving."

One thing that she does address head-on is the end of a three-year relationship on the "dark and sinister" track 'Water Rising' – a highlight of the album. "I thought we were going to be with each other for ever," says the 26-year-old. "That song is about that specific moment when you know you're going to break apart. It's me saying: 'You hurt me so much that I can't walk away from you crying. I'm not going to let you have that last dig at me. I need to be strong.'"

Having survived a torrid two years, Katy's looking to the future and speaks about plans to set up a home studio and start producing music herself. "I studied at college

so I can use Logic, but I was doing it to get a grade," she says, revealing she has ideas for her next 10 albums. "I'd love to do something with a unified sound. But I could never make an album of ballads. I need some flavour."

Make a B-line

Catch Katy B live at the following shows

April 29
Leamington Spa
The Assembly
May 14 London
O2 Academy
Brixton

NME

Hive minds

Katy B talks us through some of her collaborators



CRAIG DAVID

Who? Smooth crooner, now undergoing a big renaissance.

Appears on: 'Who Am I'.

Why him? 'Born To Do It' [his 2000 debut album] was all me and my friends listened to. I wanted a male perspective."



MAJOR LAZER

Who? Diplo's crew produced the Craig David-featuring song.

Appear on: 'Who Am I'.

Why them? "It began life as an instrumental for their last album ['Peace Is The Mission']. I was like: 'Can I have this please?'"



FOUR TET

Who? Recording name of producer Kieran Hebden.

Appears on: 'Calm Down'.

Why him? "He hit me up on Twitter, sent me the beat and I loved it. I sent back my version and that's what's on the album."



D DOUBLE E AND J HUS

Who? London grime MCs.

Appear on: 'Lose Your Head'.

Why them? "I grew up listening to grime on [TV station] Channel U. It's by young people, for young people. I wanted that represented on my album."

The real face

The migrant crisis has dominated the news agenda for the past year, but rarely have the voices of the refugees been heard. Here, six people who arrived in Britain under difficult circumstances tell Kevin EG Perry their story



Mohamed 24

"When the lorry stopped, we were in the centre of Sheffield"

"I didn't choose to come to the UK. I had been involved in political activities working for Kurdish rights in Syria. While I was at university in Aleppo, I organised medical groups for refugees who had been displaced within the country. We became a target for ISIS. My friends were kidnapped and killed. It was an awful situation, so my family wanted me to leave along with my younger brother. Some people my uncle knew said they could take us to a safe place. We didn't know where that would be. The first country we arrived in was Italy, but I was scared of the Italian authorities – they beat me and my brother – so we kept going until the last destination. They put me and my brother into a lorry. It was half empty and quite dangerous. It was a long journey. When we couldn't stand it any more, we started shouting. When the lorry stopped I realised we were in the UK, in the centre of Sheffield. Our clothes looked normal, so people didn't believe we'd just arrived in the UK illegally. When we spoke to someone from the Home Office, they asked us for ID, but we had no documents at all. We were transferred to London, then to Cardiff, then to Swindon, where I started to rebuild my life. I want to finish university. I believe I was born to do something with my life and not just live in the corners of humanity. Now we have full refugee status and I'm studying at Kent University. Whatever problems we've had here, we'll never forget that when we came here we were welcomed. I want to give back to this country and I believe I can do that through my education."



Mireille 34

"I had to leave home and leave everything behind, including my children"

"I came here from the Democratic Republic of the Congo four years ago. I didn't know anything about the UK, but I was forced to leave my country because of my political work there. It wasn't safe for me to live there. I had to leave home and leave everything behind, including my children. That's why I wrote my song 'Je Pleure' ['I Cry']. When I came to the Stone Flowers Project [a programme in the northwest working with survivors of torture] I didn't know anything about it. The first time I came I was a bit nervous, but everybody was friendly. I had lost my confidence so it helped to be in the group with other women. We started sharing our stories and laughing. I started to get my confidence back, so they said I should write a song. I was thinking about what I should do next for my children. I don't know what I can give them, but I had this opportunity to write a song for them. I haven't forgotten them, even though they are far from me. Now I live in Blackburn. I'm going to college to study maths, science and English. I spoke French but not English, so the language was a big barrier for me. I try to be positive."



Manny Loet 22

"Whatever situation you find yourself in, you can find a way"

"I came from Nigeria with my mum two years ago. She had been living with cancer and she passed away three months ago. Since then, I've been trying to continue to live life and not become negative. I want to get myself out there, doing the best that I can. I thought: 'I'm just gonna jump up there and be a boss.' I got involved with a refugee youth group called Brighter Futures and started doing campaigns. We went to the Houses of Parliament for a debate on immigration. It was interesting to be part of a circle trying to make a difference. At the same time, I found myself falling deeply in love with music. I thought to myself: 'How can I do the best I can with what I have?' I want to launch myself into the industry, but it was difficult to imagine going to a studio and paying £50 an hour on recording. I decided to build my own studio. With £600 I was able to build a studio in my bedroom that has attracted a lot of artists from different parts of Tottenham. Now I've been given a grant by O2 Think Big to run a workshop with young people in production. I have residency in the UK here now, so I can work. I love to tell people that it's possible. Whatever situation you find yourself in, you can find a way. You shouldn't have to limit yourself because of the passport you hold."

of UK migrants



Muhammad 30

“I’m not allowed to work. I have to rely on the £36.50 they give me each week”

“I first came to the UK from Sri Lanka as a student, but when I went back the problems started there [the Sri Lankan civil war escalated in the mid-2000s]. I returned here as a refugee. The charity Freedom From Torture helped me get involved with a musical project called Stone Flowers. Alongside other people with a Sri Lankan background, we’ve written songs that are based on the torture and other problems we had in Sri Lanka. Some people have lost families. They disappeared in their own country. If you were just approaching someone to tell them your problems, not many people would listen. That’s why we choose to tell our problems in song. People can listen and learn about our language and the real meaning behind our songs. When I applied for asylum, they put me in Liverpool and then moved me to Manchester. It’s difficult to be moved around. I’m not allowed to work. I have to rely on the £36.50 they give me each week on an Azure card [given to refused asylum seekers to keep them from ‘destitution’]. I had an ID card so I could get that money from the post office – but just one particular post office, and you can only spend it at the big stores like Tesco and Asda. I first claimed asylum in 2012. It was refused in a week. Then I went before a tribunal, but I didn’t have good representation. I have that now, with the help of Freedom From Torture. I’m hoping for the best decision this time. Things like Stone Flowers are really important because refugees are not allowed to work. We can’t spend money on any form of enjoyment, so music is a great stress relief.”



Babar 18

“My mother was afraid I’d be killed. She sold our house and used the money to pay an agent to smuggle me out of the country”

“I grew up in Afghanistan. I didn’t go to school but I went to a madrassa [religious school] and learnt the Koran and a few other subjects. My father was killed by his political enemies because he wouldn’t give them information they wanted. The people who killed him believed my mother knew this information but she didn’t. After a few months, they came to our house and when my mother still couldn’t tell them what they wanted to know, they beat me up very badly. After that I was very afraid, and my mother was very afraid I’d be killed too. She sold our house and used the money to pay an agent to smuggle me out of the country to find safety. I didn’t know where I was going. The journey was very long and hard and bad things happened on the way. I was just 13 when I arrived alone in the UK. I didn’t know anything about Britain before I started my journey. When I got here, it was a completely different world to Afghanistan. I was able to go to school here. Me and a few of my friends started playing with The Refugee Cricket Project, a charity that’s part of Refugee Council. I met so many people there from different backgrounds and they became like family to me. I was training hard and studying fielding positions. In 2012, when I was 15, I had a trial with Surrey. I did my best, but it wasn’t quite enough. I kept training and I was invited to play with the Free Foresters Cricket Club, and then Spencer Cricket Club when I was 16. When I was 17, I took 44 wickets in a season for Spencer – I was at the top of the list of bowlers. I’m at college studying as well.”

Meltem 21

“Eight men came into our house at six o’clock in the morning”

“I was born in a small village in Turkey, but we had to leave because we’re Kurds [Kurds have been persecuted for decades in Turkey. Meltem’s mother was deaf in one ear after a soldier hit her with his gun]. I was seven when we came to the UK. We lived in Doncaster and I went to school there for six years. My mum and dad separated and in 2007 my mum made an asylum claim for herself with me as her dependent. Because we entered the UK as my dad’s dependents, we were now at risk of deportation. August 27, 2007: that’s when the immigration officers came. Eight men came into our house at six o’clock in the morning. They banged on the door and rushed in. I was only 13. I was looking around and wondering what I’d done wrong the day before. Did I mistakenly take something from a shop? Did I cause all of this? They put us in a caged van and took us to the police station. From there, we had to wait. As an asylum seeker, you wait everywhere. Eventually we got in another van and they drove us to Bedford, to Yarl’s Wood – a B-class prison for innocent people. They strip-searched us. Our ID cards were taken. We were treated like criminals. We went through eight metal doors. He would open one, and then he would lock it behind us. My mum applied for bail and it got refused five times. The fifth time, the judge said to my mum that she couldn’t prove that I didn’t like being in there. How do I prove that I don’t like being in there? I cut my wrists. What else could I do? One day, the Children’s Commissioner Sir Albert Aynsley-Green came to visit me. The next day we were released. It was like nothing had happened. That’s when we started campaigning for them to stop detaining women and children.”

With thanks to The Harbour Project, The Refugee Council, Praxis and Stone Flowers, a project by Music Action International in partnership with Freedom From Torture

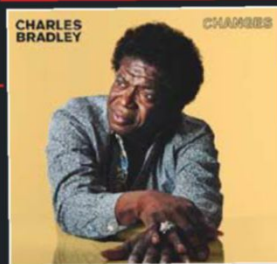
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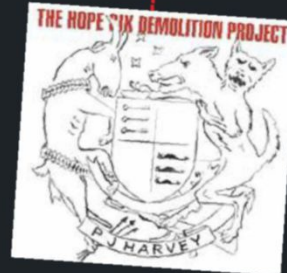


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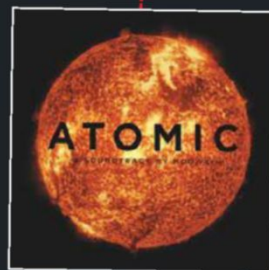
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out now



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out now



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RADAR

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

FLYING LOTUS

Best NEW tracks
And when to drop them

BEST FOR ZONING OUT

FLYING LOTUS

TDC Alt Experiment

A newly released outtake from the sessions for the LA producer's 2014 album 'You're Dead!', this string-laden version of 'Turkey Dog Coma' is a softer take on the original.

BEST FOR UNSETTLING YOURSELF

**MARK PRITCHARD
FEAT THOM YORKE**

Beautiful People

The Radiohead mainman lends his idiosyncratic vocals to electro artist Pritchard's creepingly ambient new tune.

BEST FOR RAGGED ROMANCE

THE BIG MOON

Cupid

From stripped back doo-wop to DIY punk and swooning Lush-like indie, London's Big Moon cover a variety of bases with the generous 'Cupid'.

BEST FOR PICNICS IN THE PARK

WHITNEY

Golden Days

The Chicago indie-country kings are at their summery best on this lilting, rolling slice of old school folk-funk.



BEST FOR WAKING UP

SBTRKT

Good Morning

With a guest spot from Atlanta rapper The-Dream, the British producer's first new track in almost two years is multi-textured electronica at its most vibrant.

BEST FOR DRIFTING OFF

TOOTHLESS

Terra

Bombay Bicycle Club's Ed Nash's first solo effort floats along in a dreamy haze, like a twinkly Pink Floyd meets a softcore take on The Horrors.

BEST FOR BREAKDOWNS

ISAAC GRACIE

Terrified

The hyped London singer-songwriter bares his soul on this heart-rending acoustic ballad, howling: "I wasn't cut out for this." We disagree, Isaac.

BEST FOR CONTACTING OTHER LIFE FORMS

VANT

Fly-By Alien

Giddy grunge at 100mph, the interplanetary 'Fly-By Alien' is a perfectly perky guitar pop anthem.

BEST FOR HITTING THE SKATE PARK

TWIN PEAKS

Butterfly

Because falling off your skateboard is loads more fun when it's done to the ragged sunshine riffs of garage rock ruffians Twin Peaks.



BEST FOR 2AM SEDUCTION

**PARTY NEXT DOOR
FEAT DRAKE**

Come And See Me

Signings to Drake's OVO label bring in the boss for a guest spot on this smoother-than-smooth slow jam.

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MUSIC

He's only gone and done it

The One Direction escapee lives up to his new image with a raunchy and credible pop-R&B album

ZAYN

Mind Of Mine



CREDIBLE SEXY FREEDOM

FROM GEORGE MICHAEL to Robbie Williams to Abz from 5ive, everyone loves a boyband escapee. The compelling narrative for Zayn Malik's debut solo album – 'pouting pop rebel defies tyrannical high-trousered ruler' – was written before he'd recorded a note. It's why lead single 'Pillowtalk' seemed fit to burst with previously repressed sexuality. The buzzcuts, the leather jackets and the selfies with supermodel girlfriend Gigi Hadid suggest the lad from Bradford is enjoying his new-found freedom. But is he merely following a well-worn path, or is he in it for the long haul?

The first notes of the album succeed in plonking him a million miles from his chirpy boyband past: "I'm on the edge, I can't find my way" he warbles plaintively

through a fog of effects. Frank Ocean is clearly the model for 'Mind Of Mine' and it's no coincidence that Zayn's primary creative foil here is James 'Malay'

Ho, who co-wrote and produced much of Ocean's 'Channel Orange'. The beginning of 'It's You' sounds like that album's 'Bad Religion', with its melancholy jazz

chords and confessional vocals – though it's debatable how much Zayn is ready to confess.

His frustration with the suffocating One Direction regime is restricted to a few coded lines in 'Befour' ("No strings for you to pull on... can't tune my chords into your song"), so it's not particularly revelatory. Zayn's forte appears to be bedroom politics. 'Pillowtalk' already gave us "it's our paradise and it's our warzone", while 'Lucozade' excavates the dark side of a tempestuous affair via deft lines such as "the elephant in this room/disguised as your perfume". Sure, Zayn isn't quite The Weeknd, although the gauzy 'Drunk' has a good stab at Abel Tesfaye's favourite metaphor of love as intoxication ("Late nights, red eyes/Amnesia on ice").

Zayn has clearly achieved his aim of making an album of sexy, credible pop-R&B. 'Mind Of Mine' is sumptuously produced and perfectly sung, with just enough intrigue. If it lacks personality, there are signs – especially on the dubby neo-soul of 'Truth' – that he's in the process of developing one. The dark days of scripted horseplay with Harry Styles seem a long way in the past.

Sam Richards



FRANK OCEAN

Channel Orange

Confessional R&B touchstone that shares a producer (James Ho) with 'Mind Of Mine'.



THE WEEKND

Beauty Behind The Madness

World-conquering collision of sleazy, art-rock R&B and shiny Swedish pop.

ALBUM
OF THE
WEEK



PHOTOS: NABIL, SEAN MURPHY

Weezer does it

The LA band come close to recapturing their '90s heyday on a beach-party album about girls and rollerblading

EVER SINCE THE BEATLES' dark, sprawling, career-defining, culture-changing 1968 behemoth, it's been a brave band indeed who'd produce a record their fans could refer to as 'The White

Album'. But to be fair, Weezer main man Rivers Cuomo has gone to Beatledelic lengths for his band's 10th album.

He hung out with mystical teachers – well, Hare Krishnas – on Los Angeles' Venice Beach. He experimented with compositional methods by meeting people in Santa Monica on Tinder to swap song ideas. And he delves into the depths of addiction: cranky chugger 'Do You Wanna Get High?' is about having seizures from snorting "blues" scored on a Mexican road trip, his own perky take on the Fab Four's 'I'm So Tired' (sort of). For the most part, though, 'Weezer' is Cuomo's

634th attempt to recapture the vivacity of his band's 1994 debut and the savage rom-pop glory of its acclaimed cult follow-up 'Pinkerton', and with more success than usual.

Discarding the electronics of 2010's 'Hurley' and the epic pretensions of 2014's 'Everything Will Be Alright In The End', this is a 34-minute free run of sunny surf pop, exuding the euphoria of boho beach unity ('California Kids', 'Summer Elaine And Drunk Dori'); summer lovin' (the Ben Folds-y 'Wind In Our Sail'; tambourine tapping '[Girl We Got A] Good Thing'); and unrequited love for bakery assistants ('Thank God For Girls').

It's a fan-pleasing record that's actually more Beach Boys than peak Beatles: 'King Of The World' and 'LA Girlz' are noble throwbacks to the quirky grunge of Weezer's debut and Cuomo maintains his collegiate appeal by peppering consistently ultra-accessible melodies with references to Charles Darwin,

Weezer's best moments

BUDDY HOLLY

The video for their 1994 breakout track referenced the 20-year-old *Happy Days*, which itself was set 20 years before that (the '50s, yeah).

HASH PIPE

The Cars' Ric Ocasek produced the 2001 'Weezer' album, which featured this genius heavy-metal pastiche.

BEVERLY HILLS

The 2005 vid was shot at the Playboy Mansion and has a cameo from Hugh Hefner.

the Torah, Lewis Carroll, Dante, the Creationist myth, *Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy* author Douglas Adams and spots of lady-celebrating Latin. Does this 'White Album' redefine rock? No. Does it define Weezer's career? Absolutely.
Mark Beaumont

WEEZER

Weezer



GEEK-ROCK TINDER BEACHES

STRANGE & TRUE

The album's producer Jake Sinclair is such a die-hard Weezer fan he was once in a tribute band called WannabeWeezer.

Weezer (l-r): Rivers Cuomo, Scott Shriner, Patrick Wilson, Brian Bell



Babymetal (l-r):
Moametal, Su-metal
& Yuimetal

Metal machine music

They've supported Lady Gaga and play Wembley Arena this week. But is the novelty of a manufactured teen trio mixing heavy riffs with J-pop wearing off?

BABYMETAL

Metal Resistance



METAL POP MADNESS

NO SECRET HAS ever been made of the story behind Babymetal, the Japanese novelty act who fuse the aggression of metal with the cutesiness of Japanese pop. Their brilliant stage outfits sum it up: half ballerina, half battle re-enactment. The group – consisting of schoolgirl teens Suzuka Nakamoto (Su-metal), Moa Kikuchi (Moametal) and Yui Mizuno (Yuimetal) – was created in 2010 by mysterious Japanese producer Kobametal. A backing band plays all the music for them and Yuimetal once admitted, “I’ve never been

in a moshpit. I think I’d get smashed to bits.”

But Babymetal are far from a niche joke: since forming, they’ve signed to Sony, released a self-titled debut that went gold in Japan in 2014, supported Lady Gaga and, at last year’s Reading Festival, inspired a moshpit Slipknot would have been proud of. Yet there’s obviously some irony at work here.

Admiration from metallers seems tongue-in-cheek, predicated on the ludicrousness of the band’s synchronised dance moves and the incongruity of their teenybopper image and bruising riffs. Could their shtick be as entertaining second time round?



FOR FANS OF



DRAGONFORCE

LADY GAGA

‘Metal Resistance’ is played straighter than its predecessor, leaning more heavily on rock than pop. First track ‘Road To Resistance’ opens with overblown ’80s hair metal bluster, combining chiming guitar leads with double-pedal drums. Gruff male chanting is then juxtaposed with Babymetal’s sugary vocals, setting the template for the entire album. This may hold your interest in some places – lead single ‘Karate’ is fast and furious until jangling, arpeggiated guitar alters the rhythm – but can be frustratingly repetitive, as on the lumbering ‘Meta Taro’.

Mostly sung in Japanese – English vocals only appear on closer ‘The One’ and briefly on ‘From Dusk Till Dawn’ – ‘Metal Resistance’ shines brightest during tracks such as the epic, melodic ‘Amore’, which draws more heavily on J-pop. For the most part, though, its adherence to the aforementioned formula can be quite boring, a word you might not readily associate with a band that claim to worship a ‘Fox God’. But maybe that’s the problem with being a novelty group – there’s not much left once it’s worn off.

Jordan Bassett

Also out this week



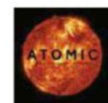
YEASAYER

Amen & Goodbye

★★★★★

Veering from

buoyant synthpop to glitchy soundscapes, the eclectic Brooklyn group’s fourth album is a vibrant, expansive return to form.



MOGWAI

Atomic

★★★★★

Mogwai’s latest

soundtrack album (written for BBC4 nuclear doc *Atomic: Living In Dread And Promise*) is grand and dark but could do with a bit more throttle.



PET SHOP BOYS

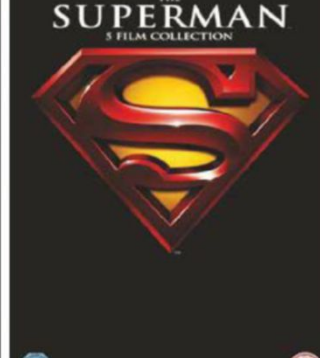
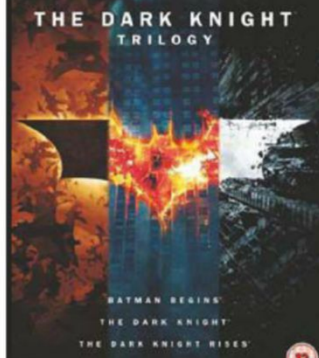
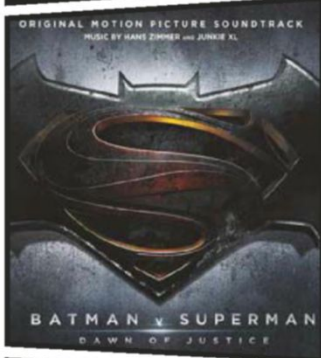
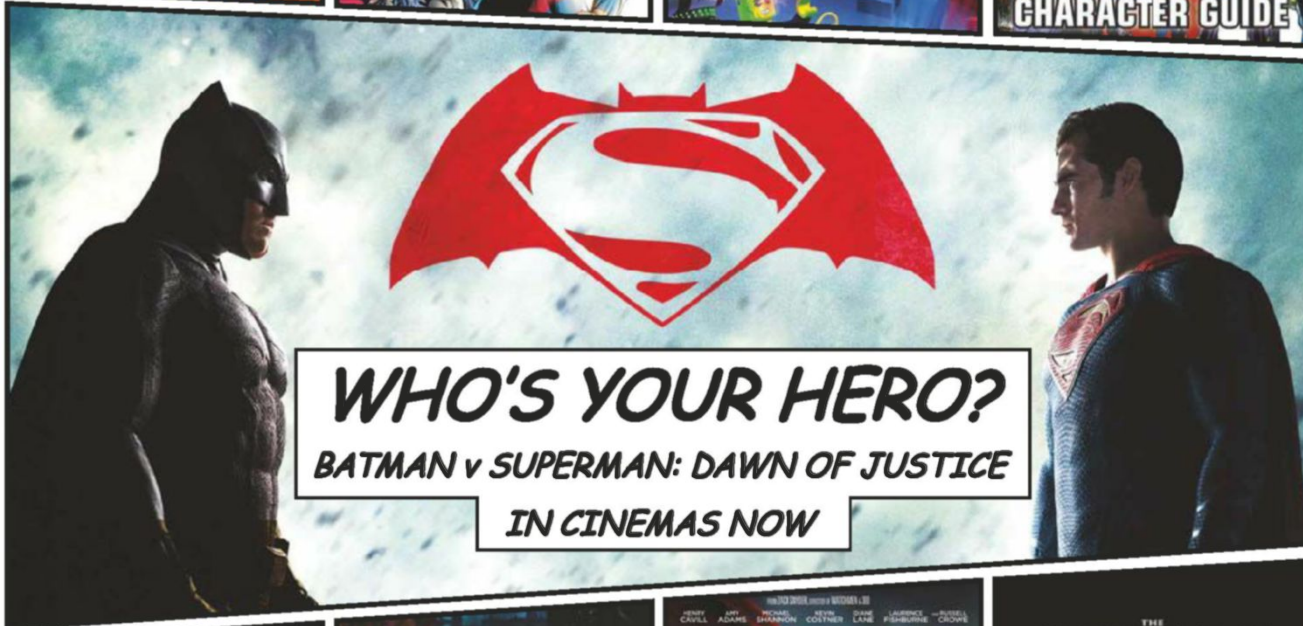
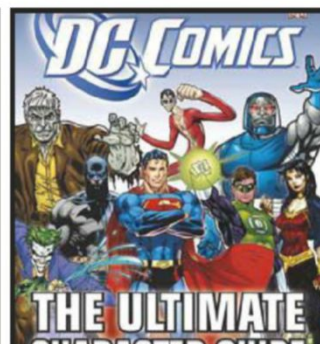
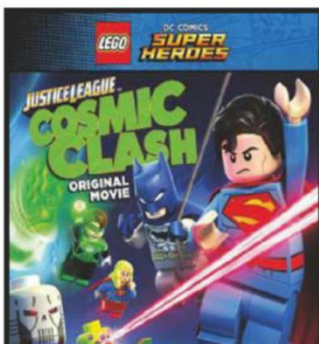
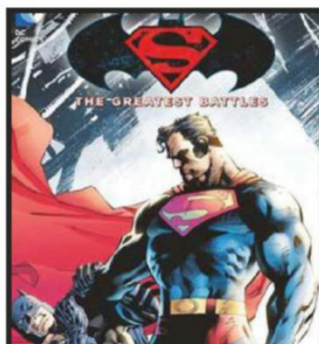
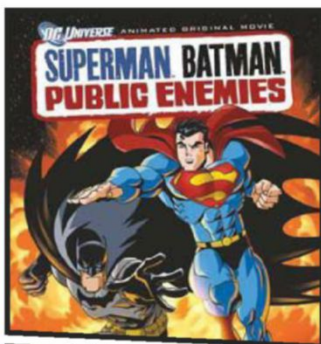
Super

★★★★★

Produced by ’80s

fanatic Stuart Price (Madonna, The Killers), Neil Tennant and Chris Lowe’s 13th album mixes pummeling synths and operatic flourishes, showing their love of pop endures.

Read more album reviews on NME.com



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While stocks last.

Snow joke

A hilarious look at the life of Eddie Edwards, Britain's wildly unsuccessful first ever ski jumper

EDDIE THE EAGLE

PG Taron Egerton,
Hugh Jackman



FALLING OVER DREAMS OLYMPICS

EDDIE 'THE EAGLE' EDWARDS was either one of British sport's biggest failures or one of its greatest heroes, depending on how important you consider actually winning things to be. At the 1988 Winter Olympics, Edwards – a short-sighted, podgy sometime builder – represented Britain in ski jumping, the first person ever to do so. He didn't get a sniff of a medal but was nevertheless celebrated as a national treasure, a career of reality TV and novelty singles laid out ahead of him. Many may consider him a joke, but this great big silly hug of a comedy from director Dexter Fletcher (who starred in *Lock, Stock And Two Smoking Barrels* and *Layer Cake*) treats Edwards as a victor on his own terms.

The film's greatest quality is that it refuses to take the easy route and use Edwards as a permanent punchline. It takes his ambitions seriously. It makes clear from the get-go that Edwards' goal is to make it to the Olympics, to prove to himself rather than the doubters around him that he can achieve that seemingly impossible dream. It's a sports film in which it truly is the taking part that matters. How delightfully British that is.

Directing from a jaunty script by Sean Macaulay and Simon Kelton that's largely made up – but not to any degree that should cause annoyance (we're hardly dealing with important history here) – Fletcher keeps everything light but heartfelt. Edwards' story is told as a series of silly adventures, but all with real importance to the man himself. You feel Eddie's achievements. They may not matter to the sporting world, but they matter to him. Taron Egerton (*Kingsman*) plays Edwards as daft but not simple, backing away from making him clownish. Hugh Jackman lends the little film some swarthy star wattage as Edwards' (completely fictional) coach.

Enthusiasm goes a long way in this sort of film and it would be very difficult not to get swept along in the avalanches of it you'll find here. It treats Edwards' mission as if it's akin to that of *Rocky*, which in a way it is – albeit with more falling over and fewer glistening muscles. He's only a little guy in the sporting world but Edwards' life makes for a huge joy of a movie.

Olly Richards



(L-r:) Taron Egerton as Eddie The Eagle, Hugh Jackman as his fictional coach

FOR FANS OF



COOL RUNNINGS



THE FULL MONTY

Henry Cavill as Superman
in *Batman V Superman:
Dawn Of Justice*



A disappointing caper

There's no storyline, the ending makes no sense and even Wonder Woman can't save it

BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE

12A Ben Affleck, Henry Cavill, Jesse Eisenberg



SUPERHEROES ACTION FAIL

ANTICIPATED FOR DECADES, the grand punch-up between Superman, last son of Krypton, and Batman, lost son of Gotham, arrives not with great fanfare but with a big, wet, fart raspberry. It's such a disappointing film. It fails not by trying to do too much – as may have been the worry with a film that also crams in Wonder Woman, Lex Luthor, Doomsday and a few other superhero cameos – but by trying to cover up how meagre its ambitions are.

The set-up is smart: the events of 2013's *Man Of Steel*, in which Superman and his adversary Zod carelessly obliterated most of

Metropolis, enraged Bruce Wayne, AKA Batman. His office building crumbled in the melee, taking most of his employees with it. A man who already carries the weight of loss heavily, Wayne determines that Superman is dangerous and only he, as Batman, can stop him.

After that it's a drably shot muddle in which nobody's motivations are clear. Trying to grab onto themes or some kind of storyline is like trying to catch salmon with oiled hands. Scenes are shunted together without flow or apparent connection; lengthy dream sequences play without clear relevance, logic thrown to the

wind as the film lumbers toward the big battle everyone paid to see. That battle is huge and expensive-looking, but doesn't justify the two-hour slog to get there.

Zack Snyder, who will either direct or produce the movies in the forthcoming DC franchise, doesn't appear to have a handle on who his characters are. His Batman (Affleck, giving welcome heft to a flimsy role) is a creature of violent vengeance, set not on stopping Superman but killing him. Superman is... lost. He's depressed by the world's cynicism, brooding and shut off. He's not a contrast to Batman, just an ever-so-slightly different shade. The villain, Lex Luthor – misconceived and miscast, with a twitchy, annoying Jesse Eisenberg – operates as an awkward plug for plot holes,

magically figuring out alien technology, Superman's back-story and genetic engineering as the lack of script demands.

A sense of panic runs through it. You get the feeling that its creators knew things weren't working so kept throwing in new elements in the hope that more and more characters would fill the story void at its centre. Yet characters need more than recognisable names. They need, well, character. Wonder Woman's big introduction is a non-event. The film concludes with a surprise computer-generated creature – already spoiled in the trailers – which is by this point a sure sign that nobody could figure out how to tie things up.

They're just trying to get the thing finished.

Yet this is not the finish. This is the beginning, the Big Bang that will become the DC cinematic universe, set to expand for years to come. Let's hope the characters to come can fill this airless void.

Olly Richards



Ben Affleck reportedly made numerous rewrites of the script while still dressed as Batman.



See this film immediately

Shot in one continuous take, this is a gripping story of a night out gone weird

VICTORIA

15 Laia Costa, Frederick Lau, Franz Rogowski



CLUBS CAMERAWORK SURPRISES

THE SUPER-LONG TRACKING shot has been very hot recently. That raid on the camp in *The Revenant*. The opening sequence of *Spectre*. All of *Birdman*. Increasingly, directors love a single, complex take, but quite often they're for the director, not the audience. It's 'look at me, mum!' filmmaking, an opportunity for the people behind the camera to remind you that they're there – which, it might be argued, is the opposite of what a director should be doing. Nominated in the Best Foreign Film category at this year's Oscars and then disqualified for having too much English dialogue, *Victoria* is all one shot, for over two

hours. It's an extremely impressive technical feat, yes, but much more than that, it's the most effective way to tell this story.

German director Sebastian Schipper's film opens with a bouncing figure silhouetted against the strobing lights of a Berlin nightclub. Victoria (the hotly-tipped Laia Costa) is a young Spanish woman out on her own. She gets chatting to Sonne (young German talent Frederick Lau). They meet again outside and Victoria walks with them. They will come back to the club, about an hour later, but by then all their lives will have changed completely.

Schipper's single-take style is a reminder of how much of a story is told in the editing. The rhythms of cutting tell us when danger is coming; close-ups help us read the characters. Without those visual cues here we just absorb everything like we're tagging along, unacknowledged.

STRANGE & TRUE

Although it has a running time of over two hours the script for the film consisted of just 12 pages.

It makes you keep re-evaluating who these people are, particularly Victoria. As the film develops from something akin to Richard Linklater's classic *Before Sunrise* without the pretentious poetry to, well, let's not spoil it, Victoria reveals herself to be much more than we may have lazily assumed when we first saw her pogoing around to German techno.

It's a story so surprising, absorbing and stunningly played by the cast that it's only when the film is over that you get a moment to breathe out and consider the logistical nightmare of making it. See it immediately. **Olly Richards**

Read the full reviews of these and many more films on NME.com



Also out this week

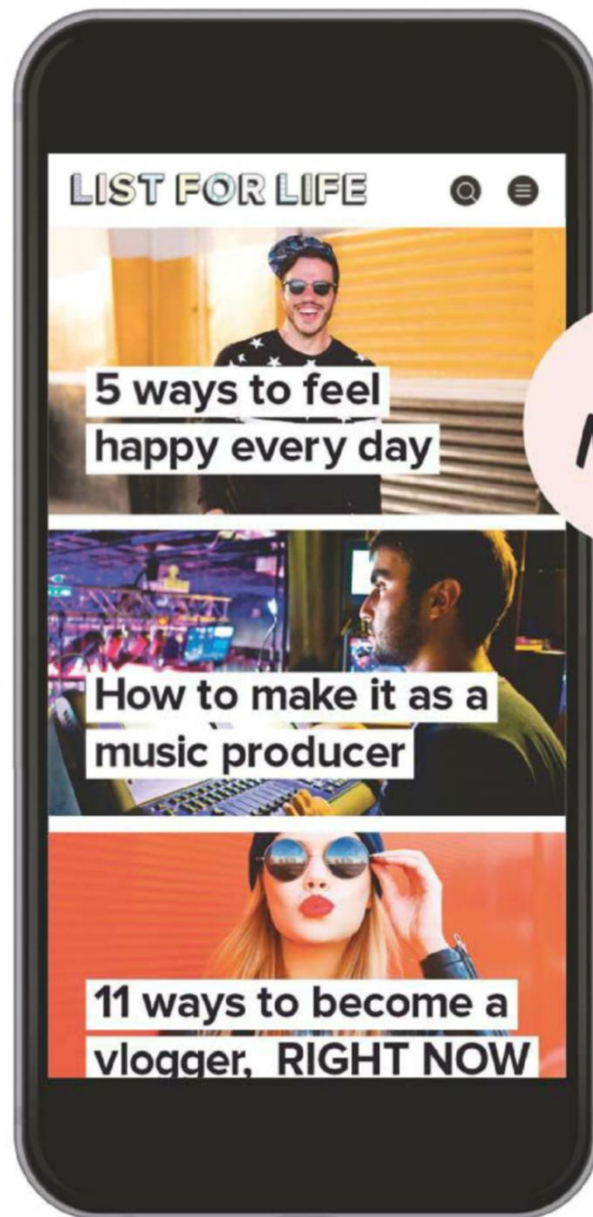
BLACK MOUNTAIN POETS

15 Alice Lowe, Dolly Wells, Tom Cullen



This Scottish comedy about two sisters on the run was among the winners at last year's Edinburgh Film Festival and in Alice Lowe (Garth Marengi's *Dark Place*) stars a comic talent to watch.

VISIT LIST FOR LIFE.NET



A new site for inspirational stories and
career advice to achieve your #goals

♥ WHAT YOU DO

What's on your mind?

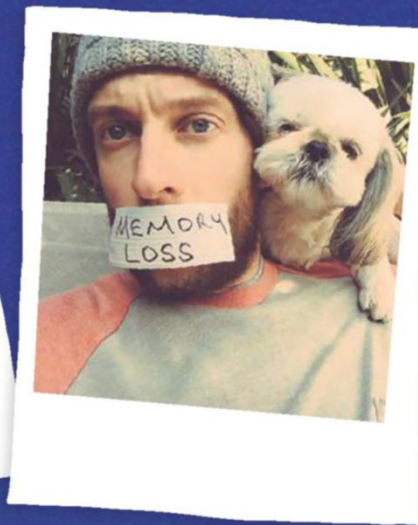
We all feel stressed out or anxious sometimes, but this doesn't mean you have to put on a brave face. Talking about your emotions should not be a sign of weakness.

Don't be silenced, **speak out with a selfie today!**



Step 1

Decide if you're ready to take the challenge and **#TakeOffTheTape**



Step 2

Select your tape - and if it's real tape, make sure it's not too sticky!



Step 3

Write what makes you anxious on the tape, then take a selfie with it over your mouth.

Step 4

Post it on social media. Remember to add the **#TakeOffTheTape**

Step 5

Your challenge is complete when you've donated £3 to Mind.

Just text
TAPE
to **70660**

#TakeOffTheTape

www.mind.org.uk/tape

 **mind**
for better mental health

Text costs £3 plus your standard network charge. Mind receives 100% of your donation. Obtain bill payers permission. Customer care 020 8215 2243.

YOU HEARD IT HERE FIRST

“We have an inherent politicalness”

(L-r:) Victoria Ruiz, Mary Regalado, Norlan Olivo, Joey DeFrancesco, Adrienne Berry



Downtown Boys

The Springsteen-esque political punks out to change the world

FOR DOWNTOWN Boys, everything is political. “There’s an inherent politicalness in being a band that has people of colour or a woman fronting it,” says drummer Norlan Olivo. So as you might expect, the Rhode Island band’s second album ‘Full Communism’ is full of brash and angry commentary on everything from racism (“She’s

brown!/She’s smart!” hollers Victoria Ruiz on ‘Monstro’) to feminism (‘Tall Boys’ is a demand that girls, not boys, should dominate the front of gigs).

At their shows, each song begins with Ruiz making an impassioned speech – recently, she pulverised US presidential candidate Donald Trump and has spoken out about everything from slavery to how hard it is to make a living as an artist. Not every conversation they have is a positive one, though. The band – completed by Joey DeFrancesco (guitar), Adrienne Berry (sax) and Mary Regalado

(bass) – say they regularly have to carry pepper spray back home “cos there are some big dudes” who don’t like what the band say. But if you think that’s going to stop them, think again.

One of the best tracks on ‘Full Communism’, ‘Desde Arriba’, includes the lyric: “We will make freedom” and a broad grin spreads over Ruiz’s face when she hears it cited back to her. “People get hand-slapped a lot and told what not to do,” says Olivo. “But that’s not the way to make change. Through the shows, there’s more energy and we’re able to have more conversations with people.”

Downtown Boys are angry, but there’s optimism and positivity in everything that they do. Write them off at your peril.
Rhian Daly

Best track

MONSTRO
A barrage of relentless punk riffing, sax and Ruiz’s racism-tackling lyrics.

FOR FANS OF



THE SPECIALS



BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

Details

BASED Providence, Rhode Island

SOCIAL @DowntownBoys

BUY Album ‘Full Communism’ is out now

LIVE
May 28 Green Door Store, Brighton
May 31 The Victoria, Dalston

FACT Joey and Victoria run thesparkmag.com, dedicated to supporting progressive and radical artists and musicians.

For more on Downtown Boys, head to NME.com

live

THE 10 MOST IMPORTANT
GIGS THIS WEEK



1

Muse

Sat 2 Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham

Sun 3 The O2, London

Wed 6 SSE Arena, Belfast

WHO: World-famous rock trio from Devon who put out seventh album 'Drones' last year. This is their hugely ambitious Drones World Tour.

WHY: It's got a stage that projects into the audience on both sides, balloon-shaped drones that swivel down from the ceiling, and a stage that rotates so everyone can see everything. It's massive.

WHO'S SUPPORTING: Southend rock five-piece Nothing But Thieves.

TICKETS: £51 in London from ents24.com; sold out in Birmingham and Belfast, but available on secondary ticketing sites from £75

2

Babymetal

Sat 2 SSE Arena Wembley, London

WHO: Japanese metal trio aged 16-18 and their band, who channel the spirit of a deity they call 'Fox God'. Casual.

WHY: If you need a reason, it's probably not for you.

WHO'S SUPPORTING:

No details yet.

TICKETS: £31 from seetickets.co.uk



4

Chvrches

Mon 4 SSE Hydro, Glasgow

WHO: Trio from Glasgow who deal in steely, heartfelt pop via a load of synths and samplers. Their second album 'Every Open Eye' came out in September.

WHY: Their confident live show has been perfected by six months on the road across the globe – this homecoming gig will be huge.

WHO'S SUPPORTING: Scottish indie trio The Twilight Sad and Manchester singer Shura.

TICKETS: £28.90 from ticketmaster.co.uk



6

Kiran Leonard

Fri 1 The Bullingdon, Oxford

Sat 2 The Nest, Bath

Mon 4 The Lexington, London

Tue 5 Ramsgate Music Hall

Wed 6 Portland Arms, Cambridge

Thu 7 Bodega, Nottingham

WHO: Enormously prolific 20-year-old prodigy from Manchester, who's just released his new album 'Grapefruit'.

WHY: One for lovers of the eclectic – he says he's influenced by everything from Deerhoof to Scriabin.

WHO'S SUPPORTING: No details yet.

TICKETS: £8.80 from ents24.com

For tour news and live reviews go to NME.com



3

Catfish And The Bottlemen

Mon 4 O2 Academy, Glasgow

WHO: Llandudno indie four-piece who are set to support Stereophonics soon and say that when their second album comes out "a little bomb will go off in the music industry".

WHY: Van McCann's a charismatic frontman and he delivers on all the band's hits, from 'Cocoon' to 'Kathleen'.

WHO'S SUPPORTING: No details yet.

TICKETS: Sold out, but available on secondary ticketing sites from £74



5

Jack Garratt

Fri 1 The ABC, Glasgow

Sat 2 Liquid Rooms, Edinburgh

Mon 4 University Student Union, Newcastle

Tue 5 University Union, Leeds

Thu 7 O2 Academy, Bristol

WHO: Buckinghamshire 24-year-old who won the BBC's Sound Of 2016 with his one-man-band approach and synthy blues. He released his debut album 'Phase' in February.

WHY: He's already announced a November tour in much bigger venues – catch him somewhere more intimate now.

WHO'S SUPPORTING: A 21-year-old singer-songwriter from Arizona called Kacy Hill. She's signed to Kanye West's GOOD Music.

TICKETS: Sold out, but available on secondary ticketing sites from £25



7

Weezer

Sun 3 Academy, Manchester
Tue 5 O2 Academy Brixton, London

WHO: Legendary LA four-piece who've been blazing an alt-rock trail for 24 years – and with their 10th album on the way, Rivers Cuomo and co are showing little signs of slowing down.

WHY: 'Buddy Holly', 'Keep Fishin', 'Island In The Sun' – all these hits and more.

WHO'S SUPPORTING: No details yet.

TICKETS: Sold out, but available on secondary ticketing sites from £50



9

The Last Shadow Puppets

Fri 1 Hackney Empire, London
Sat 2 Olympia, Liverpool
Sun 3 Memorial & City Hall, Sheffield

WHO: Ex-The Rascals man Miles Kane and Arctic Monkeys' Alex Turner have finally joined forces again, with their long-awaited second album 'Everything You've Come To Expect' out now.

WHY: The formidable double act are back on the road for the first time in four years.

WHO'S SUPPORTING: No details yet.

TICKETS: £38.50 from gigsandtours.com

8

Jess Glynne

Fri 1 Mandela Hall, Belfast

WHO: Big-voiced singing talent from London who hit fame guesting on Clean Bandit's ubiquitous 2014 hit 'Rather Be'.

WHY: This is her only Belfast date until she headlines Tennent's Vital in August.

WHO'S SUPPORTING: No details yet.

TICKETS: Sold out, but available on secondary ticketing sites from £100



10

Protomartyr

Fri 1 The Magnet, Liverpool
Sat 2 Broadcast, Glasgow
Sun 3 Picture House Social, Sheffield
Mon 4 100 Club, London

WHO: Beery Detroit punks whose third album 'The Agent Intellect' was released last October.

WHY: Puce-faced frontman Joe Casey is just about the best punk singer around at the moment and watching him burst blood vessels while growling over Protomartyr's rumbling riffs is electrifying.

WHO'S SUPPORTING: No details yet.

TICKETS: £9 from nme.com/tickets



Best of the rest

Adele

Fri 1 & Sat 2 Genting Arena, Birmingham
Mon 4 & Tue 5 The O2, London

The Big Moon

Fri 1 Think Tank, Newcastle
Sat 2 Stereo, Glasgow
Mon 4 Mandela Hall, Belfast
Thu 7 Brudenell Social Club, Leeds

Big Ups

Fri 1 The Louisiana, Bristol
Sat 2 Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

Black Peaks

Fri 1 The Deaf Institute, Manchester
Sat 2 Key Club, Leeds
Sun 3 King Tut's, Glasgow
Wed 6 The Borderline, London
Thu 7 The Forum, Tunbridge Wells

Brian Fallon

Tue 5 O2 Ritz, Manchester
Wed 6 The ABC, Glasgow
Thu 7 O2 Institute, Birmingham

Corinne Bailey Rae

Thu 7 The Tabernacle, London

Disciples

Sat 2 SWG3, Glasgow
Wed 6 Concorde 2, Brighton
Thu 7 XOYO, London

Ekkah

Thu 7 Oslo, London

Gregory Porter

Mon 4 Royal Albert Hall, London
Tue 5 Cliffs Pavilion, Southend-on-Sea
Wed 6 Colston Hall, Bristol

Holy Esque

Wed 6 Underground, Plymouth
Thu 7 Mono, Falmouth

James Bay

Sat 2 Eventim Apollo, London

Jennylee

Tue 5 Village Underground, London

JAMES BAY

READER'S PICK



Sarah, 31,
 Wolverhampton,
 @Saz_Harper

Weezer

Sun 3 Academy, Manchester
 "I'm almost nine months pregnant, but I'm still going to bust a move or two!"

John Cooper Clarke

Wed 6 Sub89 & The Bowery District, Reading

Kate Tempest

Thu 7 Barbican Centre, London

Krept & Konan

Fri 1 O2 Academy Brixton, London
Mon 4 O2 Ritz, Manchester
Wed 6 O2 Institute, Birmingham
Thurs 7 O2 Academy, Newcastle Upon Tyne

Leon Bridges

Thu 7 O2 Academy, Liverpool

Little Mix

Sat 2 Motorpoint Arena, Sheffield
Sun 3 Genting Arena, Birmingham
Tue 5 SSE Hydro, Glasgow
Thu 7 Arena, Manchester

Lucius

Wed 6 Gorilla, Manchester

Matt Corby

Sat 2 The Limelight, Belfast

Moderat

Sat 2 St John-at-Hackney Church
Sun 3 Motion, Bristol
Tue 5 O2 Academy, Glasgow
Thu 7 Dome, Brighton

Mura Masa

Tue 5 Deaf Institute, Manchester
Wed 6 Exchange, Bristol
Thu 7 Oval Space, London

Nai Harvest

Fri 1 Boston Music Room, London
Sat 2 The Cookie, Leicester

Newton Faulkner

Fri 1 O2 Academy, Newcastle
Sun 3 The ABC, Glasgow
Mon 4 The Beach Ballroom, Aberdeen
Tue 5 The Ironworks, Inverness

Nothing But Thieves

Fri 1 O2 Institute, Birmingham
Thu 7 The ABC, Glasgow

Oliver Heldens

Sat 2 Motion, Bristol

Primal Scream

Fri 1 Palladium, London
Sat 2 Albert Hall, Manchester

PVRIS

Fri 1 Concorde 2, Brighton
Sat 2 UEA, Norwich
Sun 3 Riverside, Newcastle
Mon 4 The ABC, Glasgow
Wed 6 Academy, Manchester
Thu 7 O2 Forum, London

Rick Ross

Sat 2 O2 Academy, Birmingham
Sun 3 SSE Arena Wembley, London

Sigma

Fri 1 Rock City, Nottingham
Sat 2 O2 Academy Brixton, London

Slow Club

Wed 6 Paper Dress Vintage Bar & Boutique, London

Teleman

Fri 1 The Buyers Club, Liverpool
Sat 2 The Wardrobe, Leeds
Sun 3 Think Tank?, Newcastle
Mon 4 King Tut's, Glasgow
Tue 5 Gorilla, Manchester
Thu 7 The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

Tellison

Fri 1 Sound Control, Manchester
Sat 2 Esquires, Bedford
Sun 3 Stag & Hounds, Bristol
Tue 5 The Boileroom, Guildford
Wed 6 The Wheatsheaf, Oxford
Thu 7 The Garage, London

This Is The Kit

Fri 1 Hootananny, Inverness
Sat 2 Woodlands Centre, Stornoway
Tue 5 An Tobar, Isle of Mull
Thu 7 McHugh's Bar, Belfast

US Girls

Tue 5 Oslo, London
Thu 7 Deaf Institute, Manchester

The View

Wed 6 The Ironworks, Inverness
Thu 7 The Garage, Aberdeen

Viola Beach – A Celebration

Sat 2 Pyramid & Parr Hall, Warrington

The Vryll Society

Tue 5 The Rocking Chair, Sheffield
Wed 6 Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
Thu 7 Think Tank?, Birmingham



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SAT 19 NOV MANCHESTER O ₂ RITZ	SAT 03 DEC LONDON O ₂ SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE
FRI 24 NOV LEICESTER O ₂ ACADEMY	SAT 10 DEC GLASGOW O ₂ ABC
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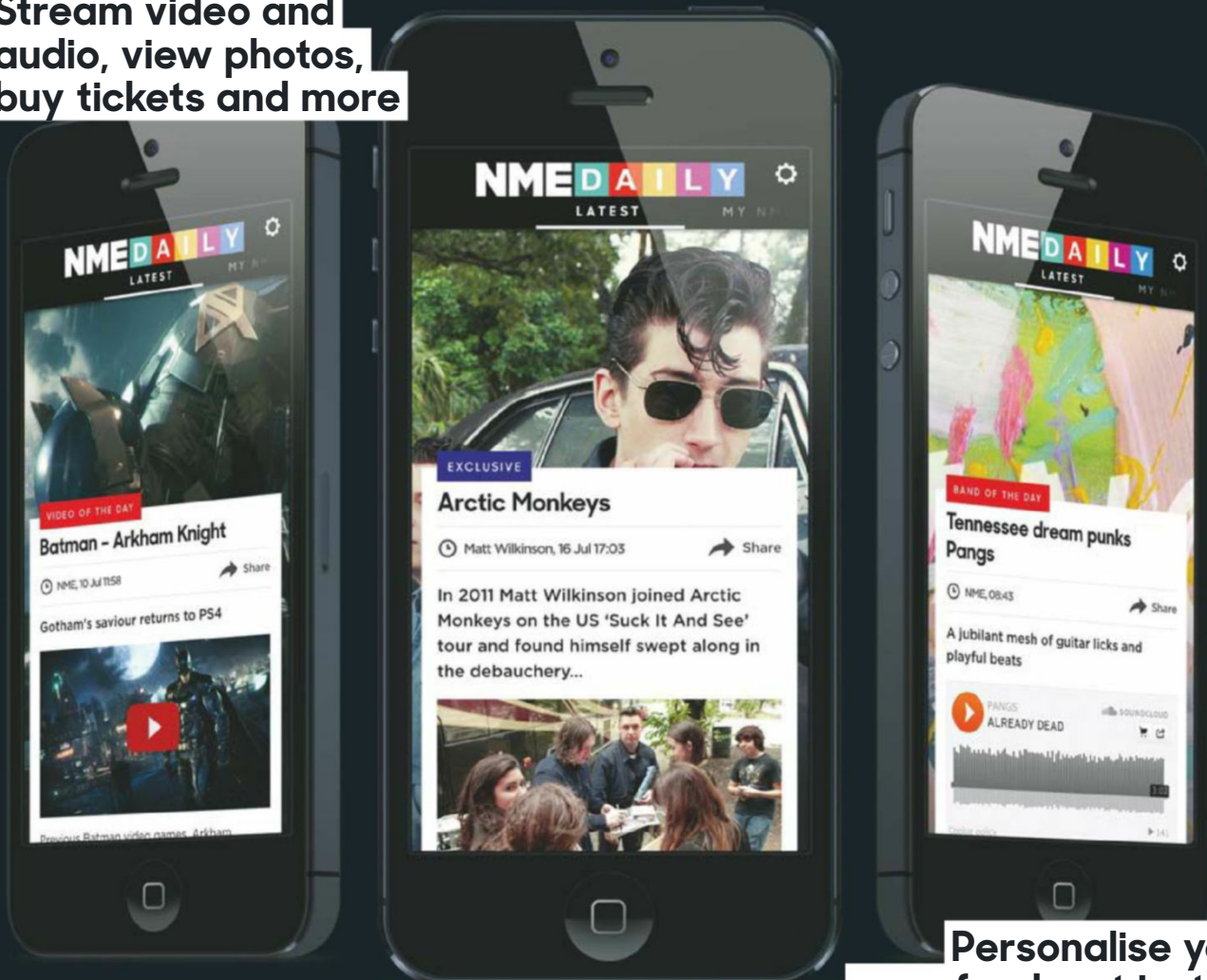
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SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE

Jamie Laing

Made In Chelsea star and confectionery entrepreneur

The first song I fell in love with

SPICE GIRLS

2 Become 1

"I really fancied Geri Halliwell... I fell in love with her boobies. Do you remember that Brit Awards dress? I liked 'Wannabe' as well – the video where Sporty Spice did a cartwheel across a table."



The song I can no longer listen to

KYLIE MINOGUE

Can't Get You Out Of My Head

"F**k that song, that's the worst. I remember being 12 or 13 when it came out, doing exams and going to a new school. You relate songs to a s**t period and I didn't like that time."



The song I can't get out of my head

JUSTIN BIEBER

Love Yourself

"I love Bieber. He's my boy. I feel like we'd be pals. He *smashes* it. His new album is actually quite good. I get revved up by mellow songs more. I sing it in the shower. Also, I have f***ing savage tinnitus, so to cut it out I have to listen to music. Can I hear it now? Yep, there it is."

The song that made me want to be a rock star

OASIS

Little By Little

"I went to T In The Park when I was 11, or maybe even 10, and someone gave me a marijuana lollipop – what a vibe. Oasis were playing. It was epic. I've seen Oasis live, that's f***ing cool, right? They did 'Little By Little' and 'Wonderwall' and everyone went nuts. I was tiny. It was epic."



First album I ever bought

SPICE GIRLS

Spice

"They were epic, enormous. I think every boy fancied them. I got it from WHSmith on tape. I played it in my bedroom or on the tape player in the kitchen. Tapes! I used to make mixtapes for people – it was so cool to do that – but they always had the s***tiest songs, like 'True Colors' by Cyndi Lauper, Blue and Savage Garden. What the hell was going on there?"

The song that makes me want to dance

R KELLY

Ignition (Remix)

"That's a good one. It's the 'toot toot' bit. The first time I listened to it I was coming back from a cricket match and I was like, 'What is this?!' I never really idolised R Kelly, although I liked his music. 'Trapped In The Closet' was a weird one – that was f***ing odd. He's a weird bloke."

The song I wish I'd written

OASIS

Wonderwall

"'Wonderwall', 100 per cent. It's as British and epic and cool as it gets. It's just a f***ing great song. They couldn't give a f*** – it was *Oasis*. I'm more Noel than Liam. They partied hard."

The song I want played at my funeral

HANSON

MMMBop

"Imagine that in church. You've got to rock it. I don't really remember them but I like the song loads."

The new series of *Made In Chelsea* starts on E4 on April 11



The wisdom of the NME archives

THIS WEEK

MICK JONES

The Clash guitarist
April 2 1977

"I don't believe in guitar heroes. If I walk out to the front of the stage it's because I wanna reach the audience. I want to *communicate* with them."



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