

13 JANUARY 2017 / FREE EVERY FRIDAY

NME



WILEY

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THE KING

MUSIC
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STYLE





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NME

Hello...



WELCOME TO THE FIRST *NME* of 2017. While last year may have been dominated by death and intolerance, there's no doubt it was an ace 12 months for music. Brilliant albums, amazing festival headliners, righteous moments and a brilliant influx of new artists, all of which will be celebrated and honoured at *NME*'s annual awards do on Feb 15. This year already looks great, with new albums from Run The Jewels, The xx (both reviewed in this issue) and Dua Lipa in the first few months alone. Add to that rumoured new records from Gorillaz, Arcade Fire, HAIM and Rage Against The Machine legend Zack de la Rocha and there are plenty of reasons to be optimistic that, if we are all going to burn at the hands of a megalomaniac despot, the soundtrack will be scorching.

The first massive statement of the year goes to the godfather of grime, Wiley. When Skepta says that you're the main reason he's doing what he does, you're not just important – you're vital. When Stormzy talks about being star-struck in your presence, you're kind of a big deal. And when you tell *NME* that this is probably the last album you're going to record, it's time to celebrate you in the way you always should have been. Long live the king...

MIKE WILLIAMS
Editor-in-Chief
@itsmikelike

Ray BLK: "Why does everyone think I'm a monster?" **p28**

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The man who invented grime says he's getting out of the game. Say it ain't so

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AGENDA

WHAT EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT THIS WEEK

The return of Ed

Ed Sheeran's back – laying claim to the rest of 2017 by having one hell of a week. Here's what went down...

WORDS: ANDREW TRENDLELL. PHOTO: GREG WILLIAMS



THE SURPRISE COMEBACK

At 5am on Friday, January 6, Sheeran dropped 'Castle On The Hill' and 'Shape Of You'. The former is a soulful acoustic ditty, the other a surprisingly sleek and sexy R&B affair. Prepare to see both sides of Ed on new album '÷'.

THE WORLD RESPONDS

Fans were pretty chuffed, while One Direction's Niall Horan said "'Castle On The Hill' is my kind of song." Sheeran's old mate Taylor Swift exclaimed: "OH MY GOD OKAY IT'S HAPPENING EVERYBODY STAY CALM."

HE 'DOESN'T NEED' BIEBER TRACKS

Speaking of Justin Bieber's hit 'Love Yourself', Sheeran said: "That was a song I had written for '÷'. It just wouldn't have made it. Justin took it and did his thing on it. It just shows that you shouldn't always write stuff off."

HE SMASHES STREAMING RECORDS

Cementing his status as comeback king, Sheeran set a new record for one-day Spotify streams. Jumping the bar set by One Direction's 'Drag Me Down', 'Shape Of You' scored 6,868,642 listens in 24 hours, while 'Castle On The Hill' pulled in 6,168,395 streams. Not too shabby.

IS GLASTONBURY NEXT?

Last year saw bookies close betting on Sheeran headlining Glastonbury 2017. With the hype around the release of '÷', could his cameo in Bridget Jones become a reality?



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Choose music

The *T2 Trainspotting* soundtrack is here, and it looks mighty fine

THE SOUNDTRACK FOR THE long-awaited *Trainspotting* sequel, *T2*, has arrived. The original's accompanying album was as seminal and era-defining as the film, capturing the decadent rush, boisterous energy and boundless optimism of the mid-'90s. The big question this time around is: how will the follow-up capture the sound of now, and bring the *Trainspotting* spirit into 2017? The classic 'Lust For Life' by Iggy Pop has been

given a violent reboot courtesy of The Prodigy, and that respect for the old-school continues with the likes of Frankie Goes To Hollywood, Blondie, Queen, Run-DMC, Underworld and The Clash. Wolf Alice and Fat White Family bring a kick of modern indie to proceedings – and Glaswegian hip-hop trio Young Fathers have written new track 'Only God Knows' especially for it.



Young Fathers

The tracklist

- 1 'Lust For Life' Iggy Pop
(The Prodigy Remix)
- 2 'Shotgun Mouthwash'
High Contrast
- 3 'Silk' Wolf Alice
- 4 'Get Up' Young Fathers
- 5 'Relax' Frankie Goes
To Hollywood
- 6 'Eventually But
(Spud's Letter To Gail)'
Underworld,
Ewen Bremner
- 7 'Only God Knows'
Young Fathers
- 8 'Dad's Best Friend'
The Rubberbandits
- 9 'Dreaming' Blondie
- 10 'Radio Ga Ga' Queen
- 11 'It's Like That'
Run-DMC vs Jason Nevins
- 12 '(White Man) In
Hammersmith Palais'
The Clash
- 13 'Rain Or Shine'
Young Fathers
- 14 'Whitest Boy On The
Beach' Fat White Family
- 15 'Slow Slippy'
Underworld

AGENDA



DAVID BOWIE

A year since his death, Bowie's spirit lives on: new video, new EP, still the ultimate hero.



BARACK OBAMA

Held his final party – attended by Stevie Wonder, Paul McCartney, Chance The Rapper and more. Cool.



RITA ORA

Invested in a failed invention to help women pee at festivals. Her response: "Just wee on the floor"



DONALD TRUMP

Attacked in numerous Golden Globes speeches. Meryl Streep said he had "an instinct to humiliate".



L-r: Jonny Lee Miller as Sick Boy and Ewan McGregor as Renton



The nominations are in

Who you gonna vote for?

BEST BRITISH BAND

Supported by **Zig-Zag**

Wolf Alice
The 1975
Bastille
Years & Years
The Last Shadow Puppets
Biffy Clyro

BEST BRITISH FEMALE ARTIST

Dua Lipa
Adele
Charli XCX
M.I.A.
Kate Tempest
PJ Harvey

BEST BRITISH MALE ARTIST

Supported by **PILOT**

Skepta
Zayn Malik
Kano
Jamie T
Michael Kiwanuka
Richard Ashcroft

BEST INTERNATIONAL BAND

Supported by **Austin**

Tame Impala
Kings Of Leon
Green Day
Metallica
A Tribe Called Quest
Tegan And Sara

BEST INTERNATIONAL FEMALE ARTIST

Supported by **V05**

Sia
Lady Gaga
Beyoncé
Solange
Christine & The Queens
Tove Lo

BEST INTERNATIONAL MALE ARTIST

Supported by **V05**

Kanye West
Drake
The Weeknd
Frank Ocean
Kendrick Lamar
Chance The Rapper

BEST NEW ARTIST

Supported by **TOPMAN**

Blossoms
Zara Larsson
Sunflower Bean
Christine & The Queens
Dua Lipa
Anderson .Paak

BEST LIVE BAND

Supported by **Nikon**

Bastille
Slaves
The 1975
Bring Me
The Horizon
Christine & The Queens
Wolf Alice

BEST ALBUM

'The Life Of Pablo'
Kanye West
'Konnichiwa' Skepta
'I Like It When You Sleep, For You Are So Beautiful Yet So Unaware Of It'
The 1975
'A Moon Shaped Pool'
Radiohead
'Wild World' Bastille
'Lemonade' Beyoncé

BEST TRACK

'Cool Girl' Tove Lo
'After The Afterparty' Charli XCX feat. Lil Yachty
'Man' Skepta
'Good Grief' Bastille
'Somebody Else' The 1975
'Tilted' Christine & The Queens

BEST VIDEO

'Famous' Kanye West
'Formation' Beyoncé
'Burn The Witch' Radiohead
'Consume Or Be Consumed' Slaves
'Get Over It' Rat Boy
'Lisbon' Wolf Alice

BEST FESTIVAL

Glastonbury
Reading & Leeds
Download
Isle Of Wight
Primavera
V Festival

BEST MUSIC FILM

Oasis: Supersonic
Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds: One More Time With Feeling
Sing Street
Gimme Danger
The Beatles: Eight Days A Week – The Touring Years
The Rolling Stones: Havana Moon

BEST TV SERIES

Stranger Things
Fleabag
Game Of Thrones
Black Mirror
Humans
People Just Do Nothing

BEST FILM

Deadpool
My Scientology Movie
Captain America: Civil War
Suicide Squad
Everybody Wants Some!!
Hunt For The Wilderpeople

MUSIC MOMENT OF THE YEAR

Bring Me The Horizon invade Coldplay's table at the 2016 NME Awards
Coldplay's Viola Beach tribute at Glastonbury
Beyoncé drops 'Lemonade'
Skepta wins Mercury Prize
Pete Doherty plays The Bataclan
The Stone Roses' first new music in 20 years

BEST FESTIVAL HEADLINER

Coldplay
Radiohead
Biffy Clyro
Adele
Foals
The Stone Roses

BEST SMALL FESTIVAL

Y Not
Green Man
End Of The Road
Festival No 6
Kendal Calling
Slam Dunk

VILLAIN OF THE YEAR

Donald Trump
David Cameron
Boris Johnson
Nigel Farage
Martin Shkreli
Katie Hopkins

HERO OF THE YEAR

David Bowie
Adele
Millie Bobby Brown
Gary Lineker
Beyoncé
Liam Gallagher

WORST BAND

The Chainsmokers
Clean Bandit
Honey G
Nickelback
5 Seconds Of Summer
Twenty One Pilots

BEST REISSUE

REM 'Out Of Time'
Pink Floyd 'Meddle'
Oasis 'Be Here Now'
Michael Jackson 'Off The Wall'
DJ Shadow 'Endtroducing'
Blur 'Leisure'

BEST BOOK

Alan Partridge Nomad
Johnny Marr Set The Boy Free
Bruce Springsteen Born To Run
The Killers Somewhere Outside That Finish Line
Zayn Malik Zayn: The Official Autobiography
Sylvia Patterson I'm Not With The Band

VOTE HERE:
AWARDS.NME.COM



Wolf Alice



Blossoms

The tour is go

It's an absolute scorcher

THIS YEAR'S CHOSEN three are following in the footsteps of NME Awards Tour alumni such as Arctic Monkeys and Royal Blood. And our 2017 Tour trio are all from the creative hotbed of Greater Manchester. There's 17-year-old indie-pop prodigy Rory Wynne, there's Cabbage, who say their gigs are "like a purge, driving round with a circus cult trying to anarchise people", and headliners Blossoms, creators of synth-kissed masterpieces like 'Charlemagne'. Making 2017 amazing starts now.

THE LINE-UP

Blossoms
Cabbage
Rory Wynne

THE DATES

MARCH

Thu 16 ~~SOLD OUT~~ Ballroom, Keele

Fri 17 ~~SOLD OUT~~ Liverpool

Sat 18 Dome, Brighton

Mon 20 ~~SOLD OUT~~ Shed, Lincoln

Tue 21 Lemon Grove, Exeter

Thu 23 Roundhouse, London

Fri 24 ~~SOLD OUT~~ my, Bristol

Sat 25 ~~SOLD OUT~~ Cardiff

Mon 27 The Nick Rayns LCR
UEA, Norwich

Wed 29 O2 Academy,
Birmingham

Thu 30 ~~SOLD OUT~~ my, Leeds

Fri 31 ~~SOLD OUT~~ my, Newcastle

APRIL

Sat 1 O2 Academy, Glasgow

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ON THE RECORD



THIS WEEK

The vinyl revolution is a sham

FANS OF LARGE, UNWIELDY discs of black plastic rejoice, because last year vinyl sales reached a 25-year high in the UK, with over 3.2 million albums shifted on the pleasingly analogue format. I count myself as one of those very fans – see above as I casually enrage the purists and rub my grubby fingers all over a treasured Dolly Parton offering that I picked up for 50p and makes up part of my largely battered but very much beloved collection of second-hand records.

At first the recent boost in sales of brand new vinyl seems to be a glorious thing, with people embracing an old-school format as a stand against the constant digitisation of our consumption of music. But when you look at the 2016 data in detail, a weird pattern starts to emerge. David Bowie's 'Blackstar' and Radiohead's

'A Moon Shaped Pool' aside, the albums that populate the Top 10 are old, from The Stone Roses' 1989 debut to Nirvana's 1991 breakthrough 'Nevermind', Fleetwood Mac's 1977 smash 'Rumours', Amy Winehouse's 2006 'Back To Black' and Bob Marley's posthumous 1984 best-of, 'Legend'. They're all records that were – and remain – bestsellers; none of them have shifted fewer than four million copies, with most selling a hell of a lot more. Which brings us to the question: why are people buying albums that they most likely already have, be it on CD or through a download?

Is vinyl simply just the latest poser accessory, after beards,

"Is vinyl the latest poser accessory, after beards and fixie bikes?"

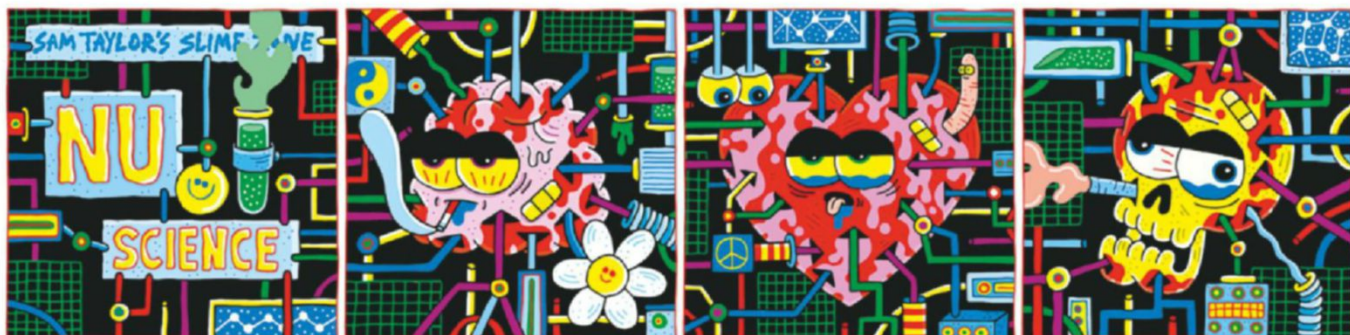
fixed wheel bicycles and literally anything with the word 'craft' in it? It's not an entirely out-there assumption, especially considering the current popularity of vinyl frames, made for the express purpose of locking up your records and placing them on the wall, which makes them pretty difficult – even impossible – to then play. The stats seem to back the theory up; last year the BBC published a survey that stated half the people who purchase vinyl have no intention of ever playing it, while seven per cent of vinyl buyers don't even own a record player. It's a bit like

buying a bunch of flash new workout gear when you know full well that you're going to spend the next few months on the sofa eating Deliveroo and watching back-to-back episodes of *The OA*. The fact that all vinyl now comes with a 'download code' seems to suggest that even record labels know that their releases are unlikely to get much love on the turntable. Add to this a new wave of unreliable record players that don't cost much more than the actual vinyl, on which records sound, well, a bit s***t, and you've hardly got the makings of a real vinyl revolution. Here's to things changing in 2017 though – and to people actually playing the records that they buy. @leoniemaycooper

BIG OPINIONS. NO FILTER.



PHOTO: ALAMY



THINGS WE LIKE

THIS WEEK'S OBJECTS OF DESIRE



Training day
K-Swiss and Aape By A Bathing Ape's camo trainer is worth lusting after.
£120 kswiss.com



Looking rosy
Check out the sweet floral motif on this neat Drop Dead khaki jacket.
£100 dropdead.co



Record setting
Beck has written the foreword to the epic *75 Years Of Capitol Records* book.
£99.99 taschen.com



Rocks off
Celebrate the greatest heavy metal band ever with this Black Sabbath necklace.
£48 souvenirjewelry.com



Sweat it
Pepe's *Star Wars* sweatshirt lets you wear your dedication to the Force on your sleeve.
£80 pepejeans.com



Shoe-in
Dr Martens' latest collab is with Concepts and it's terribly classy.
£115 drmartens.com



Sneaker boys
Ad-Rock of the Beastie Boys has designed this shoe to benefit Planned Parenthood in the US.
£79.13 keepcompany.com



Grunge goods
Ed Meadham's Blue Roses line is inspired by 1990s grunge iconography.
£58 doverstreetmarket.com



Sleep sound
Blink-182's arty pal D*Face has made a mattress for homelessness charity Crisis.
£599 simbasleep.com



Mane man
Gucci Mane is into socks. Who knew? His Stance line is fittingly fabulous.
£16.82 stance.com



Hoff the rack
Pay tribute to the ironic hero of your choice with *Homage Tees'* amazing selection.
£29.50 homagetees.com



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£20 libertylondon.com



Pale and interesting
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£2.89 kwoff.co.uk



Party food
Sausage Party is rude and hilarious. Get it on DVD and Blu-ray now.
£9.99 amazon.co.uk

YOUR TOWN. YOUR MUSIC. YOUR STYLE

What's ON your Headphones?

THIS WEEK

Eastleigh

GLENN SWANNELL >
24, chef

Listening to:
FLEETWOOD MAC
Landslide
"It's an old classic from my all-time favourite album."

Wearing: Vintage shirt, Burton jeans and Dr Martens boots.
Best thing about Eastleigh: "There's a river nearby and lots of nice country walks."

JAMES HIBBERD >
23, intern

Listening to:
CHANCE THE RAPPER
Summer Friends
"It's the best song on 'Coloring Book'."

Wearing: River Island shirt and jeans, Adidas trainers.
Best thing about Eastleigh: "The Point theatre is well-renowned around the country."

< SIMON MCNEILL
23, artist

Listening to:
AESOP ROCK
Mystery Fish
"It's my favourite track off his latest album."

Wearing: Urban Outfitters jacket, vintage shirt, Gap jeans, Converse trainers.
Best thing about Eastleigh: "It's got a really great cinema."

KIRSTIE DYKE >
24, online marketing co-ordinator

Listening to:
BEYONCÉ
Formation
"I saw her at Wembley last year. Amazing."

Wearing: Marks & Spencer top.
Best thing about Eastleigh: "There's a weird statue of a lady outside the train station that scares everyone because it looks like a real person."

PHOTOS: SAM DEARDEN

WILEY



Father Grime

Since he invented it in the early '00s, Wiley has devoted his life to grime. He is the king of the genre. Now that it's become a global phenomenon, he tells **Alexi Duggins** why he's making new album 'Godfather' his last

SIX MONTHS AGO, Wiley's career nearly ended on a family shopping trip in Greece. As the creator of the most hard-edged British musical genre in a generation led his smiling children through warm Athenian streets, he felt good. "I was having the best time of my life," sighs Wiley. "We were just chilling, hanging around in Athens – it was a beautiful day."

Then, out of the blue, a friend phoned, telling Wiley that he wasn't sure he had what it took to make it in grime any more. Now that it had become the internationally renowned playground of megastars like Drake, perhaps Wiley should save his blushes by not releasing any more music. "It properly messed me up," sighs the east London MC. "It made me think, 'S**t, if one of my mates is saying this to my face, everyone else is probably thinking it behind my back'." Thus, Wiley took to his phone, fired up Twitter and made an announcement about his upcoming 'Godfather' album: "I'm not dropping an album anymore. Pointless I reckon." The internet responded with articles entitled: "Wiley cancels 'pointless' album Godfather" and that was that: album over.

And yet, today we're in a photo studio on an industrial estate in Bow, east London, chatting to Wiley about the now-definitely-not-cancelled 'Godfather'. "I just decided that I'm not gonna let what other people

think stop me from doing anything," he chuckles, tucking into a huge pile of Nando's. He pauses while unwrapping a chicken pitta. "I know it's a new day now. But this is grime. There will never be a time when I don't know how to do it."

Fair enough. After all, he did invent it. Born Richard Kylea Cowie, he'd initially thought his destiny was to be a child star. He'd spend his evenings trying to write new jack swing and reggae hits, watching *Top Of The Pops*, hoping for a break ("A few people came out, like Ultimate Kaos, Shola Ama – she was, like, 14. I wanted to be like that," he smiles). When Simon Cowell failed to call offering a role in a boyband, he moved into DJing, took the name of DJ Wildchild, eventually changing it to Wiley Kat due to his love of '80s cartoon *ThunderCats*. He picked up the mic, joined garage crew Pay As U Go Cartel and ended up appearing on *Top Of The Pops* in 2000 when their hit 'Champagne Dance' went Top 20 ("Top Of The Pops was sick," he reminisces, "though the way they chopped up the performance like a radio edit was a bit dodgy").

Then, when Pay As U Go Cartel disbanded, he struck off on a tangent, making darker, crystalline beats. He formed his own crew, Roll Deep, to put vocals over the top that focused – unlike most UK MCs of the time – not on sounding American, but on observational lyricism about





WILEY

THE GODFATHER SHOW

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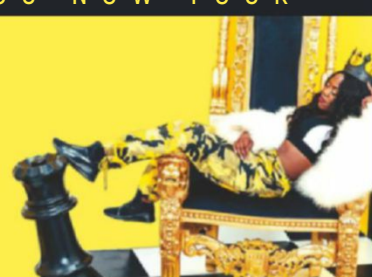
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“Bro, I’m so happy grime’s come back round”

Wot do u call him?

What grime stars have said about Wiley



STORMZY

“I’ve been a fan so long and now I’m on the other end. I’m meeting people that I’m actually a fan of and they want to talk to me. When I did the ‘On A Level’ video, I’m trying to act normally and professionally but I’m like, ‘Arghhhh that’s Wiley’. In a blink of an eye you go from being a fan and admiring someone, to working with them.”



SKEPTA

“I ain’t got no hate for him because he was the one initially that gave me the spark. I would probably never have done it if it weren’t for him... I looked to my dad as a youth for direction. Then I found this other legend that was like me. I gravitated towards Wiley.”



KREPT

(Krept & Konan)

“When you’ve had a Twitter beef with Wiley, that’s when you know you’ve made it.”

London life, delivered in an English accent. When his track, ‘Eskimo’, became a huge hit on London’s urban underground, he found that he’d created a new genre and artists from all across the city flocked to the sound. This was in no small part due to Wiley showcasing it via his show on then pirate radio station Rinse FM: a high profile gig, if not always the most glam.

“We were broadcasting from all over the place – squats, people’s kitchens,” chuckles Wiley as he dismisses a range of clothes he’s been sent and decides to do the photoshoot in his own tracksuit. “Once, we had it at mine while my dad was away and I got arrested for weed. When the police came round, they were like, ‘What’s this massive aerial?’ We told them it was just how we listened to radio.”

Music aside, he started pouring himself into grime, not just as a form of music, but as a community. So that grime artists had somewhere they could perform live, Wiley created a night called Eskimo Dance. He began dedicating himself to helping younger MCs break through. He formed a prolific partnership with a young Dizzee Rascal, introducing him to



DIZZEE RASCAL

“Wiley’s the godfather of grime... he’s a legend! We’ve had our ups and downs, but Wiley is someone who I looked up to in the game. He was my favourite MC as a kid. Him, D Double E, someone called Riddles... he’s a legend.”



(Clockwise from top:) With Roll Deep; getting his hair cut on the *NME* shoot; the video for ‘Wearing My Rolex’

the manager who would land him the album deal for ‘Boy In Da Corner’ and eventually bag grime a Mercury Award. In later years, he even turned up to a Westwood 1Xtra session with the then unknown Chipmunk and another 14-year-old MC called Ice Kid, insisting that they also be given mic time (“Yeah, it weren’t exactly a good career move for me,” he laughs. “Was for them, though!”).

It’s during these years that Wiley became known as the Godfather of Grime. He wasn’t just an artist in his own right, signing to XL at the same time as Dizzee and releasing a genre-defining, if less feted, album, ‘Treddin’ On Thin Ice’. He didn’t just create a genre whose furious energy and DIY aesthetic was like punk for an urban inner city youth (“Punk rock is the root of everything we do: I honestly believe that without punk there’d be no grime”). He also imbued it with such an ethos of community spirit that a decade later its stars are able to top charts, bag awards and win international acclaim without the support of record labels: all down to its grassroots support. Reason to be proud, no?

Not as proud as you might think. As he settles down into a barber’s chair and thanks the hairdresser in advance for his pre-photoshoot trim (“I need this! I’ve had to do the last three videos with my baseball cap on!”), he’s strangely reticent to accepting plaudits for his cultural impact. “Nah, nah, nah. I didn’t change the country: people in the ’80s, like Smiley Culture, they changed the country,” he protests. But Smiley Culture didn’t inspire kids across the UK to spend their lunchtimes freestyling in playgrounds. That’s got to be down to grime? “Nah, kids always had bars. That’s thanks to rap.” But he must at least be proud of his music? “I like some of my tracks, but I don’t like none of my albums and I really don’t like ‘Treddin’ On Thin Ice’”, he grimaces. What? But it’s a classic! “Nah, I wasn’t ready to do it. Back then, I might have had my own sound, but I didn’t really have my own identity on the mic. I’ve got that now, though. One hundred percent.”

Listening to new album

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At the heart of the image



'Godfather', the latter half of this claim is hard to dispute. His 11th proper studio album is his most impressive in years: a pop-free rampage through 'Eskimo'-era beats (Jme collaboration, 'Speakerbox'), monstrous, gnarled bass ('Pattern Up Properly') and even the odd spot of smooth, loverman Rhythm N Grime ('U Were Always'). At points there's an astonishing energy to his flows: from the breathless bar trading of 'Holy Grime' to the frenetic lyricism of 'Bait Face', via the bassy menace of the Ice Kid and Chipmunk reunion that is 'On This'. It's also so packed with lyrical references to his grime heritage that you can't help but wonder: is it called 'Godfather' because it's Wiley's attempt to let grime's newer fans know that he's the one who created it? "No – I'm not trying to force any kids to listen to me. They have their own heroes. I'm just making music," he counters.

And then he drops a massive bombshell. "In fact, the real reason this is called 'Godfather', is because it's probably the last Wiley album." Sorry: WHAT? "I'm nearly 40. I can't be jumping about like a 20-year-old anymore." But plenty of artists continue making music after they're 40. Look at The Rolling Stones! "The Rolling Stones are different. They sing; melody is the key in what they do. What we do is like punk rock – we're shouting. You can't shout for 20 years. You'll go mad in the head."

It's not hard to see his point. The audiences for grime are getting younger. Skepta's recent Alexandra Palace gig was 14+, as was Wiley's Koko launch gig for 'Godfather' ("40-year-olds are just not meant to hang around with 14-year-olds", he chuckles). It's becoming routine for them to be packed with frenzied moshing and gigantic tween-filled circle pits. Grime gigs are beginning to feel like heavy metal concerts. "Exactly," nods Wiley. "And I just want to start making music in a less aggressive vein."

Funny, really. Because if there's anyone who should be reaping the rewards of grime's recent resurgence, it's Wiley. From 2007 to 2013, grime entered a fallow period when the music industry was only interested in MCs if they could make them goof about over a pop-dance backing track. But at the same time as Wiley was scoring a No.2 hit with 'Wearing My Rolex' ("I had to do it for my daughter: I needed the money to buy her stuff"), he was ferociously recording underground grime hits, self-releasing seven mixtapes and three albums for free (not to mention the 203-track zip files he leaked for free in protest at his then record company's attempt to influence his musical direction). The two major label studio albums he released after the 'Rolex'-featuring 'See Clear Now' were both

Keyboard warrior

Nuggets of Wiley gold on Twitter...

ON HIS NAME

"Wishing my name was bob at the moment cos 'wiley' is getting on my nerves."

AFTER BEING PELTED WITH FOOD AT CUMBRIAN FESTIVAL COCKROCK

"you inbreds get off my @s and get a f**king life... f**king reptillions... get the f**k out of here you county of witches children..."

ON HAUTE CUISINE

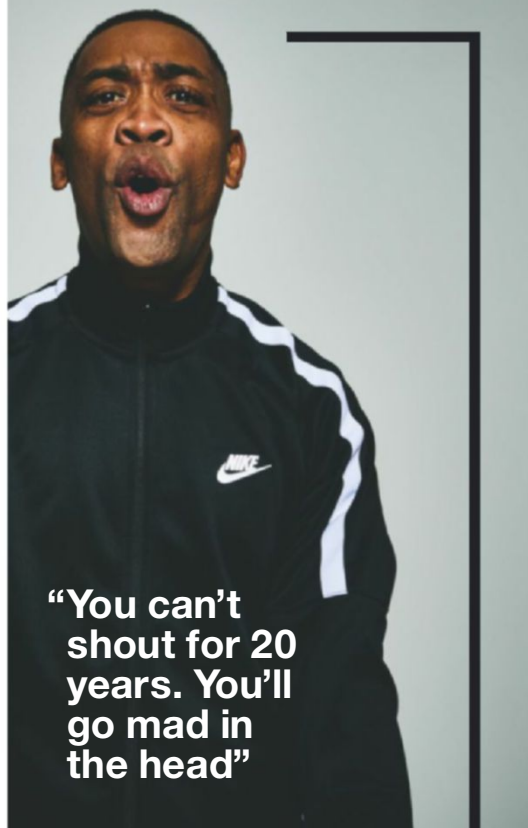
"I got a breakfast in scotland and they had square sausage ...Trust me famsquare."

ON LEGENDS

"i just blocked stevie wonder lol."

ON GLASTONBURY

"I'm gonna tell all the promoters how much Glastonbury get away with paying people and the other festivals will think wtf... f**k them and their farm."



"You can't shout for 20 years. You'll go mad in the head"

entirely pop-free. And when he eventually released another chart-courting album, 'The Ascent', he followed it with 'Steps 1-20', 20 rugged, free-to-download freestyles, despite even his closest industry advisers' lack of interest ("I played them to my manager, he just didn't care"). For years after he'd seen chart success, he insisted on living in the same community he'd grown up as a mark of his loyalty to his scene ("I just didn't want to leave. I was in the hood with half a million pounds in my bank account and people trying to rip the chain off my neck. I didn't have a brain,"

he laughs). While the likes of Dizzee Rascal gave up on making credible music to tit about on mobility scooters with Robbie Williams, Wiley showed that you could make a living by refusing to stray from your roots. It is his living, breathing example that showed the newer generation that grime was worth dedicating yourself to.

"Bro, I'm so happy grime's come back round," grins Wiley of the commercial and critical success that artists like Stormzy and Skepta have started to enjoy in the last couple of years. "Those guys are doing things we never did. Stormzy is having meetings with the people from The Brits. None of us ever did anything like that back in the day." Is it even sweeter that they've managed to do it without a record label? That they've shown that grime doesn't need the music industry to succeed? "Hah, music industry: what industry? The internet means no one pays for nothing no more. The whole thing is extinct," he laughs. "That's part of why I'm getting out. I've gotta get out before the day Adele drops an album and it only sells one copy."

Then Wiley starts to pose for our photographer. Soon, he's having the time of his life. Between shots, he leaps over equipment to look at the results being displayed on the snapper's laptop, high fiving the photographer excitedly, yelling: "Yes, bro!" He's having such a good time, it's not easy to believe that this is a man on the verge of retirement. Particularly given that he notoriously claimed he was retiring 10 years ago, only to find music impossible to step away from. He even has a whole freestyle called 'I Thought U Retired'.

"It will be hard for me to stop making music. But it won't be hard for me to sit at home and watch [Streatham MC] Santan Dave and all these sick kids take grime to where I couldn't take it," he grins, between poses. Is this down to the phone call that nearly killed 'Godfather'? "Nah, I got over that. Think of it this way: I did my first rave when I was 14. I'm 37 now; I don't want to overstay my welcome." So what's he going to do? "A clothing label, maybe. I've got a project I'll do with Jme too. I'll still release stuff, just under a different name." The end of Wiley? Is he absolutely sure? "Yeah," he insists. And with that, the photoshoot is over and everyone packs up. As we go to exit, we pause, waiting for him to head out of the door first. "Oh no, I'm not leaving. I'm going to shoot a video here. I've just decided." Really? For which track on the album? "It's not on the album. This is for a separate track I'm doing." He's not even put the album out and he's already releasing new tracks? For the moment at least, stopping making grime isn't on the agenda. Thank goodness.

NME

RUTHLESS AMBITION

Back with bold new album 'Night People', reformed emo-poppers **You Me At Six** are focused on becoming Britain's biggest rock band. Frontman **Josh Franceschi** tells **Thea De Gallier** their 10-point plan for world domination

1 KNOW WHAT YOU'RE CAPABLE OF

The last thing you might imagine a band cracking out when they record an album is a whiteboard listing their goals and achievements, but that's exactly what You Me At Six did. "We've had a Number One album and played arenas, and the question was if we want to take it up, how are we going to do that?" singer Josh explains.

2 GET OFF SOCIAL MEDIA

"We didn't want to worry about what our peers were doing," says Josh. "When you're making a record, you look at all the bands that are touring and think, 'I wanna be doing that as well.' Then when you're on tour, you want to be in the studio making a record. There's no point comparing yourself to a band on-cycle when you're off-cycle."

3 BE MORE AMERICAN

"The American dream is to be from a small town and make it in Hollywood. In England it's like, 'What, you're not satisfied playing this s**tty pub every Friday night?'" says Josh. "Being in the music industry, people don't often open doors for you. You have to knock them the f**k down."

4 GET OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE

'Night People' was a record of firsts for YMAS. It was the first time they worked with Grammy-winning producer Jacquire King – whose résumé includes Tom Waits and Kings Of Leon – and the first time they recorded live as opposed to single-tracking each song. "Not many bands could record an album that way – there might be a weak link in the group," Josh says. "We learned that we're a far more accomplished set of musicians than we thought we were."

5 DON'T HOLD GRUDGES

There's an old cliché about being nice to people on the way up in case you need them on the way down. Or, in YMAS's case, being nice to people who weren't so nice to you on the way up. "I think *NME* gave our first record three out of 10," laughs Josh. "But the guy who gave us [that] is actually one of our best friends now. Moments like that, we just think, 'Fine, it's not all meant to happen at once.'"

6 CULTIVATE IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIPS

You Me At Six made their 2016 live comeback with a secret set at Reading & Leeds Festivals. "If you look at the history of those secret sets, they're there because [the organisers] have the intention of you and them working towards being a headliner," says Josh. Canny.

Can't hold them down

How You Me At Six went from underground rockers to scene-stealing stars

(L-r:) Max Helyer, Dan Flint, Josh Franceschi, Matt Barnes, Chris Miller



WARPED TOUR 2009, 2010, 2012

Not one, but three appearances on the US's biggest travelling punk-rock tour put YMAS firmly on the radar of America's millions of lovers of dust-caked lager.

SUPPORTING 30 SECONDS TO MARS November 2013

Whether their rep for filling arenas impressed Jared Leto or they reminded him of *My So-Called Life*, he chose to take them on his UK tour, gathering them vast swathes of followers from Leto's devoted suicide squad.



7 DON'T PLAY DOWN YOUR AMBITIONS

"I remember standing watching Paramore side-of-stage at Wembley when we supported them and saying to our promoters, 'Do you think we can do this one day?' and them being like, 'You've got no f**king chance!'" laughs Josh. Well, we know who had the last laugh there.

8 BOND WITH YOUR TEAM

Working in Nashville with a new team meant the band had relationships to build. So the idea of Thirsty Thursdays, where the band boozed with producers and studio staff, came about. "It's really important to build trust between people [who are] going to make your record," Josh explains. "Sometimes loosening people up is one of those things. Thirsty Thursdays allowed [the production team] to get loose, rather than us being high all the time."

9 KNOW YOUR LIMITS

"We all smoke weed a lot, but it's a lesser evil than going out and drinking a bottle of vodka," says Josh. "[Getting wrecked] is not something we're massively interested in. People's advice has always been, 'If you're really serious about not being a flash in the pan, you can't be off your nut every night on stage.' If people come to a show and I'm hungover and my performance is weak, we're doing a disservice to them."

"We're far better musicians than we thought"

10 STAND UP FOR WHAT YOU BELIEVE IN

"If you're a musician, you've got to realise you make money in a way that not a lot of people are fortunate enough to do. You don't need to take the p**s on top of that." So alongside launching his band's album, Josh has been declaring war on ticket touts. "In 20 years' time when musicians of the future say, 'Why the f**k didn't you do anything about this?' we can say we at least tried," he says. "There's been some hairy moments over it already [Josh personally sold tickets to a small show, and has spoken on the *Daily Politics* show] but I'm not scared of anybody. You've got to be some sort of d**khead to think it's OK."

NME

The album *'Night People'* is out now

PHOTOS: REX FEATURES, GETTY IMAGES, SANDRA SORENSON



CO-HEADLINE TOUR WITH ALL TIME LOW February 2015

As well as their own Wembley headliner in 2012, YMAS delighted fans of pop-punk by teaming up with All Time Low for this co-headliner.

THE GHOST INSIDE BENEFIT SHOW December 2015

When their friends in The Ghost Inside were involved in a horrific bus crash, YMAS rallied the rock scene to put on a show at Camden's Underworld. Your Demise even reformed for the occasion.



SELLING STRAIGHT TO FANS October 2016

Whereas some major bands see fans as walking wallets, YMAS have taken a stand against ticket touts. Having launched a campaign to stop ticket sites ripping fans off, Josh personally sold tickets for the band's Dingwalls show.

S LNDERMAN: a digital menace who crawled onto computer screens almost a decade ago and spilled violently into the real world in 2014, when two American tweens stabbed another 19 times in his name. This is the gruesome story that's brought into focus in *Beware The Slenderman*, a new HBO documentary out this week, which seeks to unpick the chain of events leading to that crime. Faceless and grotesque, viral in his spread, Slenderman is the creeping ghost of our own imaginations. And like fake news, chatbots and 419 scams, this modern-day bogeyman is also totally, unashamedly unreal.

The film's director, Irene Taylor Brodsky, has her own theory on how meme turned to violence. "Even though [children] have a sense of what is right and wrong from an early age... the visceral dynamic nature of the internet can be all-consuming," she told film website *Screen Daily*. "It can sweep you up, kind of like falling in love. I think that is what Slenderman is for these girls, and for all we know, that is what he is for a lot of kids."

S lenderman first flexed his creepily elongated limbs on June 8, 2009, when the comedy website *Something Awful* hosted a competition to make "paranormal pictures" on Photoshop. Feeling game, user Eric Knudsen posted a doctored image of teenagers fleeing a tall, faceless, suited man. A caption read: "'We didn't want to go, we didn't want to kill them, but its persistent silence and outstretched arms horrified and comforted us at the same time...' - 1983, photographer unknown, presumed dead."

Knudsen also posted a second image, the caption of which coined the name 'Slenderman'. The meme became myth as *Something Awful* users ran with Knudsen's creation, posting their own self-created images of the freakish character.

The hijinks could have ended there were it not for the stories that started to appear on horror fiction website creepypasta.com. At the centre of this exceedingly modern phenomenon is an old-fashioned sort of creative endeavour: it's the internet

THE MEME THAT COULD MURDER

Memes are usually funny or cat-based. Slenderman is neither. Jordan Bassett looks at the digital bogeyman that became flesh



"The internet can be dark and wicked"

equivalent of passing a torch around a campfire to tell scary stories. But Slenderman's innocence came to an end near Waukesha, Wisconsin on May 31, 2014 when 12-year-olds Morgan Geyser and Anissa Weier lured Payton Leutner, also 12, to a quiet woodland area. They stabbed her in the stomach, liver and pancreas, missing a vital artery by just a millimetre. A cyclist noticed a bloodstained Leutner crawling out of the woods and called an ambulance, saving her life.

The Slenderman myth holds that the character can use mind control to force his victims to commit violent acts. It emerged that Weier and Geyser had planned the attack for months, believing themselves to be "proxies" of the Slenderman, destined to "prove [themselves] worthy to the Slender" by acting out his most violent desires. Waukesha Police released a statement that claimed: "This should be a wake-up call for all parents. The internet has changed the way we live. It is full of information and wonderful sites that teach and entertain. The internet can also be full of dark and wicked things."

T here were more Slenderman-related crimes in 2014. A 13-year-old girl in Ohio attempted to stab her mother after writing stories about Slenderman. A 14-year-old girl in Florida set her home alight while her family were inside; the sheriff's office said that "she had visited the website that contains a lot of the Slenderman information and stories" and that "it would be safe to say there is a connection to that".

When the news broke of Leutner's stabbing, US journalist Lindsay Beyerstein wrote a *Guardian* piece in which she dismissed the moral panic as a smokescreen for wider societal ills: "It's almost comforting to think that violence stems from a new online or youth-culture fad, in which we adults may have little stake. But sometimes the threat is more banal, more numbingly familiar, and therefore more difficult to face. It's a lot easier to censor a fictional character than to confront the real violence in our society."

Eric Knudsen, meanwhile, has distanced himself from Slenderman. In 2011 he told fan blog *slenderman235*: "I don't spent [sic] a lot of active time on the Internet since I usually have a lot of real-life stuff going on." In the aftermath of the attack on Payton Leutner, he said: "I am deeply saddened by the tragedy in Wisconsin and my heart goes out to the families of those affected by this terrible act."

Before two children committed violence on his behalf, Slenderman had become an internet joke, inspiring daft YouTube videos such as the 2013 upload in which the titular character performs a parody of Psy's track 'Gentleman'. In the wake of the attempted murders he retreated in disgrace to the backwaters of the web, but with the HBO documentary and a fictionalised account, *Slenderman: The Movie*, due in 2018, the myth is about to get another shot in the arm.

Now both 14, Weier and Geyser will – controversially – be tried as adults, facing 65-year sentences. By the time the trial has concluded, *Beware The Slenderman* will have attempted to humanise them, claiming mental instabilities. Such rational thought could be Slenderman's silver bullet, stripping his power for good.

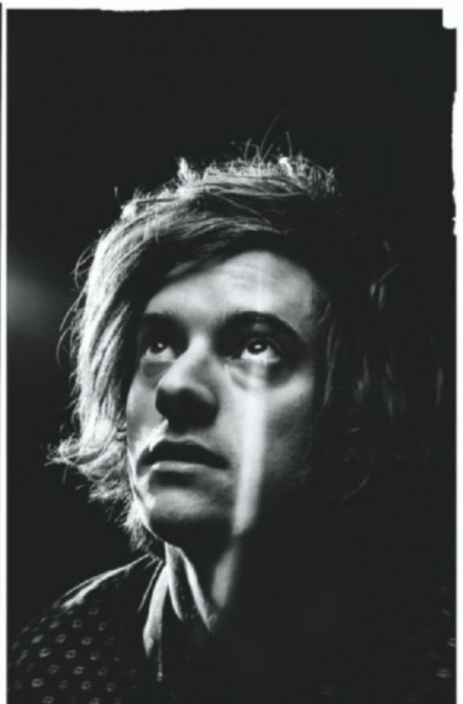
NME

PHOTO: HBO

RADAR

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

London Grammar (l-r): Daniel Rothman, Hannah Reid and Dominic Major



BEST FOR FEELING EMOSH

LONDON GRAMMAR

Rooting For You

Hannah Reid's dazzling vocal carries this partially a cappella track, which bursts into vibrant life with the backing of an entire orchestra. What a stunner.

BEST FOR MAKING AN EPIC RETURN

ED SHEERAN

Castle On The Hill/Shape Of You

He's back! The Suffolk songsman has just dropped a double serving of heavy hitting tunes – the Springsteen-inspired 'Castle On The Hill' and tropical pop smash 'Shape Of You'.

Best NEW tracks

And when to drop them

BEST FOR SHOCK VALUE

PROFESSOR GREEN

Active

There's sex, drugs and rock'n'roll antics aplenty in this 18-rated Brit-hop tune that's definitely not one you want your nan to be listening to. Unless she's a real rowdy type.



PROFESSOR GREEN

BEST FOR FEELING FOLKSY

JOHNNY FLYNN

Raising The Dead

UK folk firebrand and sometime actor Johnny Flynn returns to the recording studio for this rustic tune, which recalls Fairport Convention at their finest.

BEST FOR FEELING LOVELORN

SNAKEHIPS AND MØ

Don't Leave

The British producers and Swedish vocalist join forces for a heart-rending take on their typical trademark bangers.

BEST FOR GETTING ARTY

DIRTY PROJECTORS

Little Bubble

Experimental lushness courtesy of David Longstreth – who helped produce Solange's 2016 album – 'Little Bubble' is a soulful but beautifully off-kilter offering.

BEST FOR BEING SPOOKY

TYGA AND KANYE WEST

Feel Me

West buddies up with Tyga over some haunted house organ, as they name-drop everyone from Kim Kardashian to Usher.

BEST FOR OUT OF BODY EXPERIENCES

SLOWDIVE

Star Roving

Iconic 1990s shoegaze band Slowdive are back with a swirly, feedback-flooded plunge into the far reaches of indie.

BEST FOR BEING BADASS

KEHLANI

Undercover

The ace California R&B singer's debut solo album comes out on January 27 and this is the perfect sweet but sour warm-up.

BEST FOR DRIFTING AWAY

CHERRY GLAZERR

Nuclear Bomb

The LA guitar gang start the year with a particularly drowsy take on classic grunge. Like falling asleep on the sofa in the best possible way.

FOR MORE NEW MUSIC,
GO TO NME.COM

RTJ (l-r): El-P and Killer Mike

ALBUM
OF THE
WEEK

Big 'n' bad

Another bar-raising collaboration from the most buzzed-over act in rap

RUN THE JEWELS

RTJ3



HIP-HOP POLITICS RAGE



HIP-HOP IS A GENRE THAT thrives on freshness and the shock of the new. Hot rappers rarely get more than three years in the spotlight and late-career renaissances are unheard-of – which makes the ongoing, mainstream-nudging success of Run The Jewels all the more extraordinary. A pair of 41-year-olds with four accumulative decades in the game are the most buzzed-over act in rap right now and they've just rounded off an ecstatically received triptych of albums with their most bar-raising, industry-quaking collaboration yet. Up is down, black is white and all bets are off.

A quick synopsis: rapper/producer El-P first emerged in 1997 as leader of New York futurists Company Flow, whose extraordinary debut album 'Funcrusher Plus' helped set the template for the 'backpack rap' wave that revolutionised late-'90s hip-hop. He went on to forge a solo career in the noughties, honing his razor-sharp, super-smart take on

rhyming and beat-making to unflinching critical acclaim. Killer Mike, meanwhile, made his name on the swaggering post-Outkast Atlanta rap scene, unleashing four solo albums of heavy-yet-graceful hip-hop before calling on El-P to produce his fifth – the bombastic, old-skool-referencing 'R.A.P. Music'. The pair forged an instant bond over a shared love of hip-hop that balances aggression, humour, innovation and defiant political awareness.

It's the latter that's 'RTJ3's defining quality. Amid all the braggadocio and rapper-wounding one-liners, 'RTJ1' and 'RTJ2' always maintained a rage against the machine, but the slow-motion horror show of the last 12 months has focused Mike and El-P's political ire like never before. Trump, police brutality, poverty and America's descent into darkness are all grist to the mill – hip-hop has seldom sounded this righteous since Public Enemy. 'RTJ3' is purpose-built

to inspire and soundtrack insurrection over the coming months and years – as El-P scowls on 'Thieves! (Screamed The Ghost)', "*Fear's been the law for so long rage feels like therapy*". Not that you're ever at risk of enduring a worthy, hectoring lecture. There's tons of fun to be had from absorbing the duo's fury and El-P's sci-fi beats are as thrillingly big 'n' bad as ever. But if 2017's nightmarish status quo has you feeling powerless, anxious or alone, 'RTJ3' is the therapeutic rallying cry you need right now. **Joe Madden**

Best track

TALK TO ME

Run The Jewels at their most explosive: Killer Mike rhyming with the weight of a charging rhino; El-P's labyrinthine lyrics dripping with pure disdain; and a beat that sounds like the apocalypse elbow-dropping the Big Bang.

Relaxed, warm, joyful

The trio of shrinking violets are gone, replaced by a fresh full-colour version of themselves

THE XX

I See You



POP RAVE EUPHORIC

BACK WHEN THEY FORMED as teenagers in the mid-00s, The xx's early interviews and gigs were defined by their anxiousness. They admitted that they never dreamt of, nor searched for, fame. On stage, dressed in black as if to blend in with the shadows, they struggled to make eye contact with the crowd. To them, the oncoming limelight looked terrifyingly bright.

Their self-titled debut was the embodiment of their meekness. Sparse, alluring and refreshingly new, it also turned out to be massive. By the time 2012 follow-up 'Coexist' arrived there were flickers of confidence, like the trio were finally inching themselves into their stardom

as if it was a steaming hot bath.

Five years away and their self-belief has transformed – as people, but also in their songwriting. Romy Madley Croft challenged herself by taking part in pop songwriting camps in LA. Along with his production work for Drake and Alicia Keys, Jamie xx's solo debut 'In Colour' earned him a Mercury Prize nomination and a series of huge sold-out shows.

On 'I See You' we meet a new tactile version of The xx. They're relaxed, warm, joyful even. They admit it themselves: "I really enjoyed not feeling so clenched," says Romy about the process. And you can feel it from the first euphoric note on 'Dangerous'. A blast of synthetic horns gives way to a Burial-esque beat and Oli Sim and Romy harmonising on a shuffling chorus straight from a '90s garage rave, "You are

dangerous but I don't care / I'm going to pretend that I'm not scared". The vibrancy continues. 'Say Something' is lush and glowing. 'A Violet Noise' is Oli singing over a Euro-house backbone and the Hall & Oates-sampling lead single 'On Hold' will sound huge in the festival fields come summer.

They find a balance with the old xx though. Fragility and self-doubt are still themes. Indeed, the highlight is Romy's pensive, vulnerable ballad 'Performance'. "I'll put on a performance / I'll put on a brave face," she confesses, accompanied by a single guitar and scurrying violins.

'I See You' is not simply an album then, but a moment of realisation. The moment where The xx stop glancing shyly at their reflection and confront themselves in the mirror. What they discover is infectious. **Greg Cochrane**

Best track

'PERFORMANCE'

First played by the band during a series of tiny gigs in New York in 2014, it's the most poignant, simple and raw moment on the album.

The xx (l-r): Jamie xx, Romy Madley Croft and Oli Sim

The American dream

The US singer-songwriter's second album offers a beautiful, otherworldly take on classic folk and Americana

JULIE BYRNE

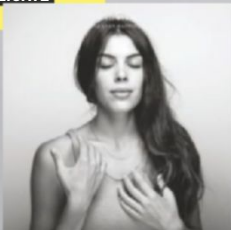
Not Even Happiness



FOLK AMERICANA DELICATE

WHEN IT'S ONLY January but you're already convinced you're listening to one of the finest albums of the year, then it's highly possible you've heard something very special indeed. Step forward US folk singer Julie Byrne, whose second album is a delicate masterpiece, one that takes traditional Americana and imbues it with a soft sensuality, using lush melodies and evocative lyricism to conjure up a roving, lvelorn narrative that it's impossible not to be spellbound by.

Like Vashti Bunyan before her – an otherworldly singer-songwriter who travelled around in a horse-drawn gypsy caravan – Byrne's backstory paints her as something of a nomad. The album was recorded in her childhood home in New York state, but she's lived in numerous far-flung locations



across the States over the past few years, from Buffalo and Pittsburgh to Massachusetts, Chicago, Seattle and New Orleans. Currently residing in New York City, where she works part-time as a park ranger, her own mythology plugs in perfectly to the roaming, unctuous sound of 'Not Even Happiness'.

A timeless creation, the record's nine carefully crafted tracks draw gracefully on the past 50 years of folk music. You can hear shades of 1960s Joni Mitchell here and a warm blast of 1970s Sandy Denny there, as well as whispers of 1980s Kate Bush, a not unpleasant smattering of 1990s Enya and a fair whack of 2000s Laura

Marling, especially in Byrne's mellow but unflappable vocal.

Opener 'Follow My Voice' sets the elegant tone, with gently picked guitar laid over Byrne's evocative visions of double rainbows and passing clouds, delivered in hushed reverence. The lilting 'Natural Blue' mixes the poetry of the open road ("Sun split ember / Fields that span both ways forever") with Byrne's own romantic experience ("When I first saw you / The sky it was such a natural blue") to create the most touching kind of love song. 'All The Land Glimmered' offers a more buoyant spin on her pastoral sound, but it's still unquestionably lovely.

With 'self-care' one of 2017's biggest buzzwords, we can think of few better ways to treat your mind and soul than with 'Not Even Happiness'.

Leonie Cooper

FOR FANS OF



LAURA MARLING



JONI MITCHELL



FILM

Emma Stone as Mia and
Ryan Gosling as Sebastian



Put your faith in love and music

As giddy and joyous as cinema gets

LA LA LAND

Emma Stone, Ryan Gosling, John Legend



MUSICAL HOLLYWOOD LOVE

FROM ITS FIRST MOMENT to its last, *La La Land* is so adorable that if it had physical form it would be hard to hold back from squeezing it. If its creative cuteness could be bottled, you'd fill a bath with it and slosh around in it until pruned beyond measure. The slightest prick of cynicism could burst its fantasy, but watched with kind eyes and full heart it's as giddy and joyous as cinema gets.

In 2014, director Damien Chazelle made *Whiplash*, a small drama about a jazz band that he somehow turned into a thriller. This is a modest love story of everyday emotions that he's made a heart-rending musical. It's a tale of two people coming to LA to make their dreams come true. Mia (Emma Stone) wants to be an actress; Sebastian (Ryan Gosling) has his heart set on

opening a jazz club. Hollywood doesn't care what they want. In trying to find their dreams they find each other, but as their careers take different paths it's not certain they'll be able to keep a hold of one another.

The story is simple because the execution is lavish. This is a musical – maybe you hate musicals, but give it a shot – with one toe in Hollywood's Golden Age and one in the present. Characters burst into song or a waltz through the stars, but Chazelle has sanded off a touch of the gloss. They sing in voices that sound untrained (until one showstopper of a solo) and their dance steps are enthusiastic but simple. It's not a pastiche of old musicals but an attempt to capture the same spirit and giant

emotions, which it does with eager hands.

As the lovers, Stone and Gosling are a dream. Such is their chemistry that it begins to feel almost intrusive watching them tap-dance their way through burgeoning love and over its rockier patches. Even when it's sad, the whole thing is so cheering it should be prescribed on the NHS for the good of the national mood.

Olly Richards

FOR FANS OF



MOULIN ROUGE



AMÉLIE

Ray BLK

South London's soulful queen of hip-hop,
and winner of the BBC Music Sound Of 2017

FROM THE MOMENT SHE formed New Found Content with her schoolfriend MNEK aged 13, Rita Ekwere knew music was the life for her. Now, aged 22, Rita's known as Ray BLK and has been declared The Sound Of 2017 by the BBC. Her talent and brutal honesty have been noted by collaborators including Stormzy, SG Lewis and Wretch 32. Now it's time for the rest of the world to find out.

What are your earliest memories of being exposed to music?

"Being in church and school choirs and the gospel music that my mum would play. Then I found the music that I loved and got really into hip-hop and R&B. My musical taste just keeps on growing as I get older. At about the age of 10, I had my first studio session and decided 'Yes, this is what I'm going to do – I don't know how, but this is going to happen'."

How did you come to work with Stormzy on 'My Hood'?

"I met him three years ago at a local talent show. He gave me some advice about the music industry; to take my time and focus on my music. I said that at the right time we'd work together one day – then the right time came."

Is there anyone else you would love to collaborate with?

"Kendrick Lamar. He's in a league of his own and is such a force to be reckoned with. His music speaks to a lot of people."

Your lyrics are very open and honest. Do you ever feel vulnerable by being so exposed?

"I think it's more cathartic. When I first started, I did feel a bit exposed about people knowing so much about my life, but then I started hearing about how it resonated with so many people, gave them strength and made them feel like they weren't alone. I thought, 'Why should I stop telling my story?'"

What do you think the greatest misconception about you might be?

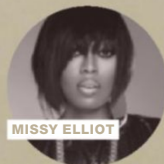
"Probably that I'm angry, aggressive and mean. I think that comes because my lyrics and music videos are quite tough and hard-hitting, but then people meet me and they're like, 'Oh, you're a lot nicer and warmer than I expected!' Why does everyone think I'm a monster?"

Andrew Trendell

Best track FOR FANS OF STRANGE & TRUE

MY HOOD

This soulful 2016 Stormzy collab makes the fried chicken shops and greasy spoons of south London sound epic.



MISSY ELLIOT



LAURYN HILL

The BLK in her name stands for 'Building, Living, Knowing' – the motto she lives her life by.



“People think I’m
angry and mean,
because of my lyrics.
Then they meet me”

VOS NME AWARDS TOUR 2017



BLOSSOMS

PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS

CABBAGE

RORY WYNNE

THU 16 MAR KEELE UNIVE **SOLD OUT** BALLROOM SAT 25 MAR CARDIFF **SOLD OUT** WILSHED
FRI 17 MAR LIV **SOLD OUT** OLYMPIA MON 27 MAR NORWICH THE NICK RAYNS LCR UEA
SAT 18 MAR BRIGHTON DOME WED 29 MAR BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY
MON 20 MAR LINC **SOLD OUT** ENGINE SHED THU 30 MAR LEEDS **SOLD OUT** ACADEMY
TUE 21 MAR EXETER LEMON GROVE FRI 31 MAR NEWCAS **SOLD OUT** ACADEMY
THU 23 MAR LONDON ROUNDHOUSE SAT 01 APR GLASGOW O2 ACADEMY
FRI 24 MAR BRIS **SOLD OUT** ACADEMY

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TOPMAN



ZIG-ZAG



PILOT

live

THE MOST IMPORTANT GIGS THIS WEEK

Take the night off

It's Laura Marling's first UK tour in two years!

CONTINUING TO MAKE her peers feel criminally unproductive, Laura Marling releases her sixth album just a month after she turns 27, having also recently completed a podcast series featuring Dolly Parton and HAIM, which scrutinised the lack of women in recording studios and its effect on the music industry.

Gender is also a crucial aspect of new album 'Semper Femina' – Latin for 'always a woman' – which Marling says she started out writing "as if a man was writing about a woman".

"Then," she says, "I thought, it's not a man, it's me – I don't need to pretend it's a man to justify the intimacy of the way I'm looking and feeling about women. It's me looking specifically at women and feeling great empathy towards them and, by proxy, towards myself."

Expect Marling to bring the same level of thought to her spellbinding, no-frills sets this time round – you'll find her crowds eerily but justifiably attentive.

LAURA MARLING

The BRIT-winning songwriter returns to tour sixth album 'Semper Femina'

ON SALE NOW

MARCH 2017

Wed 8 O2 Academy & Underground, Leeds **Thu 9** Colston Hall, Bristol **Fri 10** O2 ABC, Glasgow **Sun 12** Albert Hall, Manchester **Mon 13** O2 Academy, Oxford **Tue 14** O2 Institute 1, Birmingham **Thu 16** Dome, Brighton **Fri 17** Roundhouse, London **Sat 18** City Hall, Salisbury **Tue 21** Roundhouse, London

TICKETS: £22.55-£29.15

A full-page photograph of Justin Bieber in a rainstorm. He is wearing a grey hoodie with 'DON BEIBER'S COLLECTION' printed on the back, a black baseball cap, and a black face mask. He is holding a black smartphone in his right hand and looking down at it. The background is a dark, rainy street at night with blurred lights.

**ON SALE
NOW**

JUSTIN BIEBER

**Massive pop star, says
sorry a lot**

JUNE Fri 30 Principality
Stadium, Cardiff

JULY Sun 2 BST Hyde
Park, London

TELL ME MORE: Bieber will
headline London's British
Summer Time, supported by
EDM DJ Martin Garrix and
Sweden's Tove Lo.

TICKETS: £73.25-£75



KEHLANI

Rising R&B star

MARCH

Wed 1 O2 ABC, Glasgow
Fri 3 O2 Ritz, Manchester
Sat 4 O2 Institute, Birmingham
Sun 5 & Mon 6 KOKO, London

TELL ME MORE: Formerly in a teen pop group on *America's Got Talent*, Kehlani is now solo and credible; her debut is out later this month.
TICKETS: £17-22



SLEIGH BELLS

Loud noises from New York

FEBRUARY

Tue 21 Gorilla, Manchester
Wed 22 Electric Ballroom, London

TELL ME MORE: The noise-pop duo are back to burst your eardrums with new album 'Jessica Rabbit'.
TICKETS: £15.40-£18.15



THE LEMON TWIGS

Glam-looking musical purists

MARCH

Thu 23 Thekla, Bristol
Fri 24 Bodega, Nottingham
Tue 28 Gorilla, Manchester
Wed 29 KOKO, London

TELL ME MORE: The D'Addario brothers' 2016 album 'Do Hollywood' drew on the best of Bowie, the Beach Boys and The Beatles – live, it's a glorious thing.
TICKETS: £12.10-£13.75



JUSTICE

Disco-friendly French dance duo

SEPTEMBER

Thu 28 & Fri 29 O2 Academy Brixton, London

TELL ME MORE: As well as the smooth electro of third album 'Woman', expect classics like 'D.A.N.C.E.'. **TICKETS:** £37.12



PWR BTTM

Gender-fluid punk duo

APRIL Tue 11 The Deaf Institute, Manchester **Wed 12** The Harley, Sheffield **Thu 13** Hare & Hounds, Birmingham **Sat 15** CCA, Glasgow **Sun 16** Exchange, Bristol **Mon 17** The Haunt, Brighton **Tue 18** The Garage, London

TELL ME MORE: These pioneering New York punks emphasise inclusivity at their riotous shows.
TICKETS: £11-£14.56

FOR MORE LIVE MUSIC,
GO TO NME.COM



THE WEEK'S BEST GIGS

ALICE PHOEBE LOU

Sat 14 The Forge, London

AMBER ARCADES

Wed 18 Oslo, London
Thu 19 The Harley, Sheffield

CAGE THE ELEPHANT

Tue 17 O2 ABC, Glasgow
Thu 19 Albert Hall,
Manchester

CHARLOTTE CHURCH'S LATE NIGHT POP DUNGEON

Fri 13 The Lexington, London

DIVIDES

Wed 18 King Tut's, Glasgow

DREAM WIFE

Wed 18 The Green Door
Store, Brighton
Thu 19 The Crofters
Rights, Bristol

EASY KILL

Sat 14 The Lexington, London

GANG

Thu 19 Paper Dress Vintage
Bar & Boutique, London

GNARWOLVES

Sun 15 The Haunt, Brighton

HAAI

Sat 14 Phonox, London

HALFNOISE

Sat 14 Headrow House, Leeds
Mon 16 O2 Academy,
Birmingham
Tue 17 King Tut's, Glasgow
Thu 19 Camden Assembly,
London

THE HUNNA

Sat 14 Leadmill, Sheffield
Sun 15 O2 Ritz, Manchester
Mon 16 Riverside, Newcastle
Tue 17 Liquid Room, Edinburgh
Wed 18 Stylus, Leeds

JOJO

Tue 17 KOKO, London

KING CREOSOTE

Fri 13 Birnam Arts
Centre, Dunkeld
Sat 14 Woodend Barn, Banchory
Mon 16 RNCM, Manchester
Tue 17 OPEN, Norwich

LEONIE EVANS

Sat 14 The Slaughtered
Lamb, London

MARGO PRICE

Thu 19 Islington Assembly Hall,
London

MARTHA WAINWRIGHT

Thu 19 The Redeemer
Church, Belfast

PLAID

Fri 13 Arts Centre, Norwich

R.SEILIOG

Wed 18 The Waiting
Room, London

RAE SREMMURD

Tue 17 & Wed 18 O2
Shepherd's Bush Empire,
London
Thu 19 O2 ABC, Glasgow

TIM BURGESS

Fri 13 The Met, Bury

THE VRYLL SOCIETY

Thu 19 The Deaf Institute,
Manchester

YXNG BANE

Thu 19 Sumo, Leicester

ZOLA BLOOD

Thu 19 The Pickle
Factory, London

DREAM WIFE



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LOYLE GARNER

WITH REBEL KLEFF

YESTERDAY'S GONE TOUR

FEBRUARY 2017

SOLD OUT

FRI	03	DUBLIN WORKMANS CLUB
FRI	03	GLASGOW GARAGE
SAT	04	EDINBURGH LIQUID ROOM
SUN	05	NEWCASTLE RIVERSIDE
TUE	07	OXFORD O2 ACADEMY
SOLD OUT		LEEDS BELGRAVE MUSIC HALL
THU	09	MANCHESTER ACADEMY 2
SAT	11	NORWICH WATERFRONT
SUN	12	BRISTOL MOTION
MON	13	PLYMOUTH THE HUB
WED	15	SOUTHAMPTON ENGINE ROOMS
THU	16	BIRMINGHAM O2 INSTITUTE 2

EXTRA TICKETS JUST ADDED

FRI	17	LONDON O2
		SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE
SAT	18	LONDON O2
		SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE

GIGSANDTOURS.COM | TICKETMASTER.CO.UK

LOYLEGARNER.COM

An S.J.M. Concerts & Friends presentation by arrangement with Primary Talent International

RETTIE SNOW

2017

19 APR	GLASGOW	O2 ABC
21 APR	BIRMINGHAM	O2 INSTITUTE
22 APR	MANCHESTER	MANCHESTER ACADEMY
23 APR	BRISTOL	MARBLE FACTORY
24 APR	NOTTINGHAM	RESCUE ROOMS
25 APR	LEEDS	BELGRAVE
27 APR	BRIGHTON	CONCORDE 2
28 APR	LONDON	O2 FORUM KENTISH TOWN

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AN S.J.M. CONCERTS PRESENTATION BY ARRANGEMENT WITH PRIMARY TALENT INTERNATIONAL

AN S.J.M. CONCERTS PRESENTATION BY ARRANGEMENT WITH ECHO LOCATION TALENT



APRIL 2017

VENUE UPGRADED DUE TO PHENOMENAL DEMAND
FRIDAY 07 APRIL – MANCHESTER ACADEMY 3

SATURDAY 08 APRIL – BIRMINGHAM O2 | **SOLD OUT**

WEDNESDAY 08 APRIL – LONDON KOKO

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/FOREVERYUNGS
 /YUNGENPLAYDIRTY
 /YUNGENPLAYDIRTY

FOREVER



CIRCA WAVES

MARCH 2017

SAT 18 SHEFFIELD O2 ACADEMY
 MON 20 GLASGOW BARROWLAND
 TUE 21 NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY
 THU 23 MANCHESTER ACADEMY
 FRI 24 LIVERPOOL MOUNTFORD HALL
 SAT 25 OXFORD O2 ACADEMY

PLUS THE MAGIC GANG
& IN HEAVEN

MON 27 BRISTOL O2 ACADEMY
 TUE 28 NOTTINGHAM ROCK CITY
 THU 30 BIRMINGHAM O2 INSTITUTE
 FRI 31 LONDON O2 FORUM
 APRIL 2017
 MON 03 NORWICH UEA
 TUE 04 CAMBRIDGE JUNCTION

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THE MAC CABEES

LIVE FOR THE LAST TIME:
 THE FAREWELL SHOWS

june 27th manchester o2 apollo **sold out**
 june 28th manchester o2 apollo **sold out**

june 29th london alexandra palace
 tickets on sale now

june 30th london alexandra palace **sold out**
 july 1st london alexandra palace **sold out**

gigsandtours.com ticketmaster.co.uk themaccabees.co.uk

An S.J.M. Concerts presentation by arrangement with 13 Artists

YOU ME AT SIX NIGHT PEOPLE

2017 UK TOUR

EXTRA DATE ADDED

02 APRIL - MANCHESTER ACADEMY

03 APRIL - NEWCASTLE O2 ACADEMY

05 APRIL - PLYMOUTH PAVILIONS

06 APRIL - BLACKBURN KING GEORGE'S HALL

07 APRIL - DONCASTER THE DOME

EXTRA DATE ADDED

08 APRIL - NORWICH UEA

10 APRIL - BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY

11 APRIL - BOURNEMOUTH SOLENT HALL

13 APRIL - GLASGOW SECC

14 APRIL - CARDIFF MOTORPOINT ARENA

15 APRIL - LONDON ALEXANDRA PALACE

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 YOUMEATSIX.CO.UK | @YOUMEATSIX

AN S.J.M. CONCERTS, DF AND KILMANJARO PRESENTATION BY ARRANGEMENT WITH CAA

Band of Horses

why are you ok
 2017 tour



WITH SPECIAL GUEST
 ISRAEL NASH

FEBRUARY

THU 16 GLASGOW O2 ACADEMY
 FRI 17 NEWCASTLE O2 ACADEMY
 SUN 19 LEEDS O2 ACADEMY
 MON 20 BIRMINGHAM O2 INSTITUTE
 TUE 21 BRISTOL O2 ACADEMY
 THU 23 LONDON TROXY

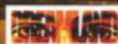
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BANDOFHORSES.COM

NEW ALBUM 'WHY ARE YOU OK' OUT NOW

An S.J.M. Concerts, Metropolis Music and DF
 Concerts presentation by arrangement with CAA

MIC RIGHTEOUS



WED 01 FEB 2017
 THE CA **SOLO OUT**
 LONDON

NEW DATES ADDED DUE
 TO PHENOMENAL DEMAND

FRI 24 FEB
 MANCHESTER
 GORILLA

SAT 25 FEB
 BIRMINGHAM
 O2 ACADEMY 2

SUN 26 FEB
 LONDON O2
 ISLINGTON ACADEMY

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An S.J.M. Concerts presentation by arrangement
 with Primary Talent International

SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE

Mel B

Scary Spice, even scarier *Lip Sync Battle UK* judge



TONI BASIL

THE FIRST SONG I REMEMBER HEARING

TONI BASIL
Hey Mickey

"I must have heard this on *Top Of The Pops*. I thought it was super-catchy and I wanted to know where I could buy it. My dad bought it for me in the end, on 7" vinyl. It's one of those songs that once you get in your head, you can't get out again. I want to do the handclaps right now!"

THE SONG THAT INSPIRED ME

NENEH CHERRY
Buffalo Stance

"She was mixed race like me, so finally I had somebody I could identify with. She wasn't ignoring her black side, she wasn't ignoring her white side, she was just standing strong as a brown-skinned person. I was like, 'Yeah!'"



NENEH CHERRY

THE FIRST GIG I WENT TO

DIANA ROSS
Wembley Arena

"I grew up not having that much money so I couldn't even save up to go to a concert. I didn't go to a concert until we signed our record deal, and we got given tickets to go and see Diana Ross. I remember she did 'Reach Out And Touch Somebody's Hand' and she walked through the audience, touching everybody's hand. I remember being scared for her and thinking, 'Oh God, she's going to get mobbed.'"



DIANA ROSS

THE SONG I CAN NO LONGER LISTEN TO

MR BLOBBY
Mr Blobby

"Oh my God. I could never understand why that was so popular. It was Christmas Number One, and for ages after. I just don't get it. I get The Wiggles for kids. I get Peppa Pig, but Mr Blobby I never ever understood."

GO TO NME.COM FOR MORE SOUNDTRACKS

THE SONG I DO AT KARAOKE

GLORIA GAYNOR
I Will Survive

"This is just a typical sing-along song. It was also the song I used to sing whenever I'd go to an audition."



CRAIG DAVID

THE SONG THAT GETS ME UP IN THE MORNING

CRAIG DAVID
Re-Rewind

"I was listening to some old-school British garage the other day, and this song is hard to beat. It has such a good drop-to-the-floor beat."

THE SONG I WISH I'D WRITTEN

THE FUGEES
Killing Me Softly

"This is just such a good song. The lyrics, the pace of it, Lauryn Hill's voice, just the whole arrangement is great."



THE FUGEES

THE ALBUM THAT MADE ME PROUD TO BE ME

TRACY CHAPMAN
Tracy Chapman

"I loved the way she sung about race and about people not being accepting and not being able to fit in. She made it OK to admit there's hatred, there's racism, there's jealousy and there's evil out there."

THE SONG I WANT PLAYED AT MY FUNERAL

KEYSHIA COLE
Heaven Sent

"God. Morbid. I've never thought of an answer like this. I wouldn't have a Spice Girls song. I don't think it would be appropriate because we wrote them all together. I'll go for this instead."

Lip Sync Battle UK is on Channel 5, Fridays at 10pm



The wisdom of the NME archives

THIS WEEK

JAY-Z

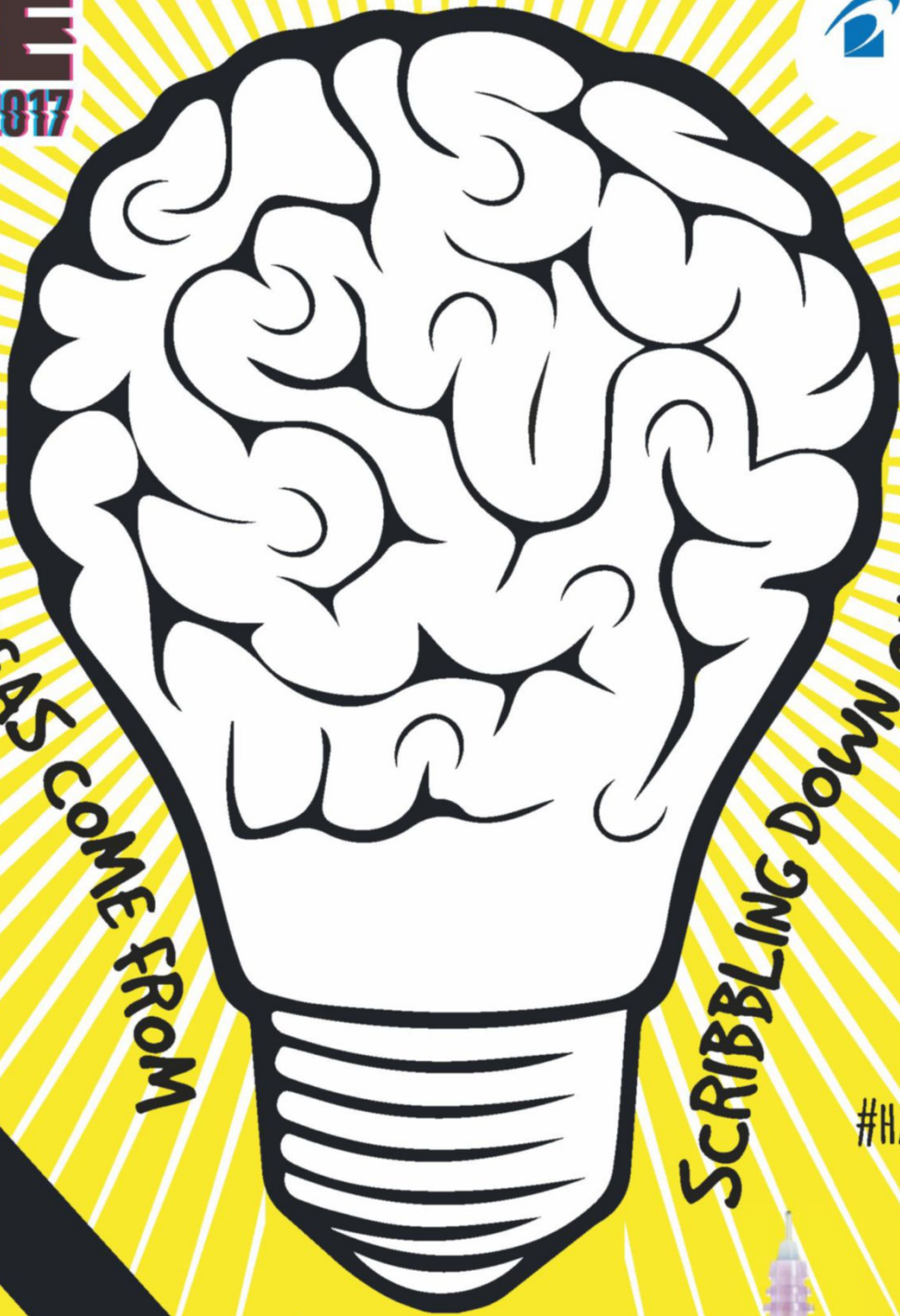
Rap icon

January 12, 2002

"I grew up only owning three pairs of pants. I'm from [Brooklyn Projects] Marcy. Of course I want a Bentley!"



THE BEST IDEAS
COME FROM



SCRIBBLING DOWN
ONTO PAPER

#HAPPYWRITING

V5

Hi-tecpoint

G-2

Rollerball



BEN
AFFLECK

ELLE
FANNING

BRENDAN
GLEESON

CHRIS
MESSINA

SIENNA
MILLER

ZOE
SALDANA

CHRIS
AND COOPER

"A THRILLING GANGSTER EPIC"

ANDY LEE, DAILY STAR

LIVE BY NIGHT

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF ARGO AND THE TOWN



WARNER BROS. PICTURES PRESENTS

AN APPIAN WAY/PEARL STREET PRODUCTION "LIVE BY NIGHT" BEN AFFLECK ELLE FANNING BRENDAN GLEESON CHRIS MESSINA
SIENNA MILLER ZOE SALDANA AND CHRIS COOPER MUSIC BY HARRY GREGSON-WILLIAMS COSTUMES DESIGNED BY JACQUELINE WEST EDITED BY WILLIAM GOLDENBERG, ACE
PRODUCTION DESIGNER JESS GONCHOR DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ROBERT RICHARDSON, ASC BASED ON THE NOVEL BY DENNIS LEHANE EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS CHRIS BRIGHAM DENNIS LEHANE CHAY CARTER
PRODUCED BY LEONARDO DICAPRIO, p.g.a. JENNIFER DAVISSON, p.g.a. BEN AFFLECK, p.g.a. JENNIFER TODD, p.g.a. SCREENPLAY BY BEN AFFLECK DIRECTED BY BEN AFFLECK

Soundtrack
Album on
WATERTOWER
MUSIC

15
VERY STRONG LANGUAGE,
STRONG VIOLENCE, SEX,
RACIST LANGUAGE

IN CINEMAS NOW

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