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BEING DAVE GROHL

A WEEK IN
THE LIFE OF A
FAST-LIVING
FOO FIGHTER



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NME

Hello...

I MADE A MIXTAPE FOR the first time in years the other day. I mean technically it was a Spotify playlist, but let's not let nuance get in the way. If you've read this column before, you'll know I'm an old-school album-lover. Immersing yourself in an artist's world for an hour while they take you on a trip deep into their souls is a very powerful experience. But I'm a singles guy too – the immediacy of a three-minute banger is pretty hard to argue with. I'm not really sure when it was exactly that I forgot that mixtapes were the bridge between the two, but rediscovering that was a righteous experience.

Needless to say, I spent way too long overanalysing every song I chose and longer still agonising over the order, but when it was complete and I could sit back and admire my masterpiece, I finally understood how da Vinci must have felt as he put the finishing touches to the Mona Lisa. OK, a bit over the f**king top, but man, what a buzz.

My only point is this: we all make playlists, and yes we all share tunes, but give it a purpose and call it a mixtape and believe me, it's a life-changer.

MIKE WILLIAMS
Editor-in-Chief
@itsmikelike

Krept & Konan p26



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Foo Fighters

"I can't remember a time it wasn't fun being a Foo Fighter. Even when I broke my leg it was f**king fun."

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Krept & Konan

"At school you don't learn how things are in real life. We're reaching out to the kids who have trouble."

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AGENDA

WHAT EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT THIS WEEK

Lock down your aerial

Mike Skinner's legendary garage crew, The Streets, are back after a six-year hiatus

SINCE THEY CAME TO AN end in 2011, after 10 years, main man Mike Skinner has said he wouldn't be capable of another Streets album. "I honestly don't think I could do it," he said last year. "I wouldn't know how to – it's been that long. It'd just sound weird."

But in a live capacity, at least, they're back. On Monday, Skinner made a typically casual post to Instagram that read, "Spoken to my band! Told them we need to sing the old songs!" So begins the UK's quest to bag tickets for the band's brief The Darker The Shadow The Brighter The Light tour in April next year.

Of the news, Skinner says, "I've missed tour buses very much. Which is the least of the reasons why I have decided to tour The Streets again. The other thing I've missed is trying to think up what I'm going to say in the gap between the songs... But seriously, it's been long enough. With my Tonga parties, the new rap and grime MCs I have been producing and the DJing, I have been living with music since making The Streets for nearly as long as I made The Streets. I'm not the guy smoking in the car anymore though, I have become the guy in the club, so I hope I will be excused for putting on after-parties in nightclubs after every show".

The shows will draw on five albums' worth of quality geezer garage, including classics like 'Dry Your Eyes' and the ageless 'Fit But You Know It'. Don't forget your chips and drinks.

Three of the greatest Streets tunes

HAS IT COME TO THIS? (2001)

Breakthrough track that announced Mike Skinner to the world – part rowdy lad, part street poet.

Best bit: The pirate radio station call to arms that is "lock down your aerial".

BLINDED BY THE LIGHTS (2004)

In which Mike gets off his mash in a club while his girlfriend cheats on him in the very same club. It's epic.

Best bit: The massive wobbly synth line.

DRY YOUR EYES (2004)

Mike tells the fellas it's OK to be sad as he ponders a big break-up.

Best bit: Those violins. Such emotion.

The dates

APRIL 2018

Thu 19 O2 Academy, Birmingham. **Fri 20** O2 Academy, Glasgow. **Sat 21** O2 Apollo, Manchester. **Mon 23** O2 Academy, Leeds. **Wed 25 & Thu 26** O2 Academy, Brixton.

Tickets are on sale now



L-r: DJ Beats, MC Grindah, Chabuddy G, Steves, Decoy, Fantasy

Kurupting the mainstream

Kurupt FM are the fictional group in the BBC mockumentary *People Just Do Nothing*, who have somehow signed a record deal and are going on tour. Band member Chabuddy G breaks it down

You've signed to XL Recordings, home to Radiohead, Adele and The xx. How did you celebrate?

"I literally just sleep on a bed of fivers. All over my bed is just fivers and love letters, that's how I sleep. It's sometimes a bit painful actually because those new fivers are made of plastic so I've gone to the doctor and I'm just bleeding. But do you know what? The blood is symbolic of success, so I bleed success. Do you know what I mean? Do you hear me now? I'm immortal."

Would you like to collaborate with Adele?

"Oh yeah, I'd love that, do you know what I mean? Like, I proper fancy Adele as well so I'm gonna try and chirpse her, I wanna be with her. Do you know what I mean? I know that I'm a dirty geezer, and I like a curvaceous woman. Obviously she can hit them high notes, mate – she's got a beautiful singing voice and I've actually got quite a pleasant falsetto. A lot of people don't know that."

So I wanna sing to her, I wanna serenade her, do you know what I mean? A Kurupt FM and Adele track... Do you know what we'd probably do – we'd probably get her to sing and then Beats will probably sample her, chop her up like old-school garage style because she's a bit soppy for Kurupt FM, do you know what I mean? Singing about love and all that crap. The boys are a little bit more hardcore, talking about bars and weed – that's our main subjects."

Who would your dream collaboration be with?

"Ah, mate, I mean, listen. Obviously you could say Michael Jackson, you could say Prince but for me it would 100 per cent be Apache Indian, mate. I wanna bring back Apache Indian, so Chabuddy G x Apache Indian x Kurupt FM remix. Do you what I mean, like I think it just works, like we've got the reggaeton, we've got the bhangra, we've got the garage – let's bring it all together, mate. Michael Jackson would be cool. Marvin Gaye would be alright,

but Apache Indian? You're talking proper icon. You're talking legend. Do you know what I mean? You're talking a place in history; nostalgia. Yeah mate, and I'm Pakistani so we could be called Apaki Indian."

What's your album gonna sound like?

"It's going to be epic, an instant classic. It's going to define culture, that's what we do. We have a look at culture and go, 'Oh look, that culture's alright, let me define it!' We look at the ground and think, 'This ground is alright', and then we break it: groundbreaking... That's good word play. So you know, mate, just keep your eyes and ears peeled. Keep everything peeled. All of your bodily functions and holes, keep them peeled."

See the lads live

Tickets on sale now

NOVEMBER

Fri 17 O2 Academy, Oxford

Sat 18 Motion, Bristol

Fri 24 La Belle Angele, Edinburgh

Sat 25 SWG3, Glasgow



DOLLY PARTON

The country queen is next in line to record a CBeebies Bedtime Story. Brilliant.



DAME VERA LYNN

The UK's top-selling female artist of 2017. Not bad for a 100-year-old.



**DICK LOYLE
CARNER FANS**

The London MC kicked a sexist fan out of his gig in Norwich. Good riddance.



EARS

The Teletubbies are releasing their first album in 20 years. Run for cover.





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KJ Apa as
Archie Andrews

SPOILER ALERT!

Three questions season two of *Riverdale* needs to answer

Season one of the teen *Twin Peaks* ended darkly and dramatically, with many loose ends

1 WHO SHOT FRED ANDREWS?

The final thing we saw in season one was teenage football-star-cum-musician Archie Andrews tending to his dad, Fred, after a masked man shot him in a diner. **Here's the thing:** Don't know if he's dead. Don't know who did it. Goddammit, we don't know if it was deliberate.

2 HAS JUGHEAD JOINED THE SOUTHSIDE SERPENTS?

Last we saw of Archie's ex-bestie and series narrator Jughead Jones was him being welcomed by the Southside Serpents gang, and presented with one of their serpent jackets. **Here's the thing:** Does he follow in his criminal dad's footsteps, or keep it straight? Decision time.

3 WILL THEY ADDRESS THE BLOSSOM-COOPER FAMILY TREE?

Turns out, starstruck young lovers Jason Blossom and Polly Cooper's great-grandfathers were brothers, making them third cousins. The two families cut all ties years ago, but Polly is preggo with (the now dead) Jason's twins. **Here's the thing:** It's a clusterf**k.

Episode one of *Riverdale* season two is on Netflix now

"George Michael was a fantastic chap"

The new George Michael doc, *Freedom*, is a welcome reminder of the pop icon's remarkable career, featuring glowing tributes from Elton John, Kate Moss and Stevie Wonder. But it's Liam Gallagher, of course, who steals the show



Michael with Christy Turlington and Linda Evangelista, who appeared in the 'Freedom '90' video

Were you friends with George?

"I wouldn't say I was friends with him, but I met him a few times and he was a fantastic chap. There was one song of his he found out I loved ['Praying For Time'], and asked if I'd come and chat about it for this documentary. I went and had a chat and a cup of tea. He was top."

On the Oasis ...*There And Then* DVD, Noel talks about George Michael being at your Maine Road shows in 1996, so he clearly liked you guys too.

"He came to see us in Bournemouth once, and was down the front of the gig, apparently, and he took a pill and wanted to come to the after-show party. We were like, 'Not having one,' 'cos we had a gig the next day. He was off his box on these pills with no party to go to. So he got on a bus and ended up in Coventry or something."

What was the last conversation you had with him?

"I think it was at a party after the Olympics. His mate turns around and goes, 'Oh, George said he met you before in Bournemouth, we were in a hotel room with three bananas,' and I was going, 'This f**king story sounds a bit f**king dodgy, f**king George Michael and three bananas?' and he went 'Bananarama!' He was knocking about with them at the time."

You lived near him. Was the community sad when he died?

"We were away when it happened, and I'm sure it was f**king rammed with all the f**king d**kheads, with paps and that, but there's like a shrine now. I see it when I go for a run. It's nice, but s**t, if you know what I mean."

Freedom is on Channel 4 on Monday, October 16

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APRIL 1



MULAN
SzeChuan
teriyaki dipping
sauce

APRIL 19

JULY 30

The remainder of *Rick And Morty* season 3 begins on Adult Swim. To mark the occasion, McDonald's produces three 64oz bottles of Szechuan sauce, gifting one to *Rick And Morty* co-creator Justin Roiland and the others to fans who retweet McDonald's on the night. Ignoring *Rick And Morty*'s no-time-travel rule, chef Mike Haracz makes an eye-rolling statement about how limited the sauce is: "We wish we could have brought more sauce through, but we couldn't risk keeping a portal like that open... If we left the portal open, we'd have puka shells, bucket hats, and boy bands as far as the eye could see."

APRIL 3

McDonald's corporate chef Mike Haracz tweets "I'll see what I can do" to fans asking him to recreate the recipe.

AUGUST 6

OCTOBER 2

McDonald's announces plans to resurrect the sauce for one day (Saturday, October 7) in the US. A statement reads, "After nearly 20 years (and perhaps a bit of time travel) we're doing the impossible – we're giving away a one-time only, limited-edition run of Szechuan Sauce in select restaurants." Again: there is absolutely no time travel in *Rick and Morty*.

OCTOBER 7

OCTOBER 7
Mass demand leads to such anger that police are called to McDonald's outlets. Fans chant "We want sauce!" and protest with #GiveUsTheSauce signs. McDonald's tweets apologies to disappointed fans.



OCTOBER 8

OCTOBER 8

Rick And Morty co-creator Justin Roiland distances himself from the promo, writing, "We had nothing to do with this McDonald's stuff. Not happy with how this was handled. Please be cool to the employees, it's not their fault."

OCTOBER 9

OCTOBER 9



McDonald's announces plans to bring back the sauce on wide release, continuing to use what they might call "the lingo": "We've worked to open any portal necessary, and it worked. Szechuan Sauce is coming back again this winter. And instead of being one-day-only we're bringing more – a lot more – so that any fan who's willing to do whatever it takes for Szechuan Sauce will only have to ask for it at a nearby McDonald's. You're some of the best fans in this – or any – dimension"

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90,000

Florida Gators fans who embarked on a mass Tom Petty tribute singalong at a game. Sob.



1

Number of furry puppets with whom Swedish singer Tove Lo gets it on in the NSFW 'Disco Tits' video.



11

Seasons of *X-Files* Gillian Anderson will have starred in when she leaves the show after the next series.



£47,000

Money raised so Sweden's women-only Statement music festival can happen next summer.

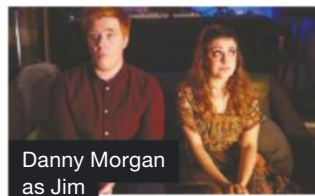
PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES, REX FEATURES



Kelly Wenham
as Kitty

How to make a Brit horror film (with a killer soundtrack)

Top tips from *Double Date* director Danny Morgan, and star of its cameo, Big Narstie



Danny Morgan
as Jim

DOUBLE DATE IS A schlocky horror comedy that you're going to want to see if your movie library features a lot of films with the word 'Dead' in the title (*The Evil...*, *Shaun Of The...* etc). It's the debut film written by star Danny Morgan and features, among other things: attempted sacrifice of a 29-year-old virgin, *This Is England*'s Michael Socha giving pick-up advice and a very funny scene that will be painfully familiar to anyone who's ever gurned their t**s off in front of their parents. It also features a violently good soundtrack that includes live appearances from Swedish psych oddballs Goat and south London's own Big Narstie, who also cameos as

himself. So how did Morgan pull it off? We went to east London to watch them film Big Narstie's rave scene and ask for tips.

1 GET INSPIRED BY THE CLASSICS

Danny Morgan: "I've always loved low-budget indie films that take place over a night, and films about male friendship are really interesting to me as well. Things like *Swingers*, and *Withnail And I*, but I'm also a big horror fan so I tried to combine those things."

2 WRITE WHAT YOU KNOW

Danny Morgan: "The idea came from a basic fear of talking to girls in my twenties. I thought it would be a nice idea to have a guy who's terrified of talking to girls, and then the one time he gets over it they're serial killers and they are actually trying to kill him."



Big Narstie

3 DON'T ASK, DON'T GET

Big Narstie: "I met Danny at a party a year ago. He said to me that if they ever got to do a film they'd like me to be in it. Look at that, a year's gone

past and now they're doing their film. They were like, 'Yo man, we'd still love you to be in it. I'm thankful for the opportunity, man.'"

4 BE YOURSELF

Big Narstie: "I was made for this! I'm in a rave scene just to regulate some yoot not riding his buzz appropriately. I just give him a little checkdown. Then after that I'm going to do a performance and just flex it."



Goat

5 DON'T BE PUT OFF BY A SCARY MAN AT THE URINAL

Danny Morgan: "We were really happy to get Goat in the film, because they have that '70s *Wicker Man* pagan thing going on. The thing is, though, they're f**king terrifying. The guy in black walked past me at catering and I almost s**t myself. I dropped my croissant. The bongo player went into the toilets and was just standing next to people at the urinals. They're fun and scary, which is what we want the film to be."

Kevin EG Perry

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ON THE RECORD

BIG OPINIONS. NO FILTER.



THIS WEEK

Going to gigs alone is the greatest

SO YOU REALLY WANT TO buy tickets to see King Gizzard & The Lizard Wizard play live but have no pals who share your passion for wonky Australian psych jams? Well, why not just buy a ticket anyway and go alone? It's what over half of young people have done, according to a new survey by ticketing app Dice, who've found that 65 per cent of 18 to 24-year-olds have gone to a gig on their own, and 98 per cent wouldn't mind doing it again. Even more interestingly, a big old 84 per cent said the music sounded better when they didn't have to deal with chatty mates or substandard dates, and I wholeheartedly agree. There's something wonderful about going to a gig alone (see also: the cinema). You can turn up when you want to turn up

and you can stand where you want to stand; in fact, it's even easier to subtly manoeuvre your way to the front of the crowd when you're flying solo. Just a few simple pleases and thank yous and suddenly you're mere metres away from Liam Gallagher's trousers. Most importantly, if you're not enjoying the oppressively banging Goan trance gig you decided to take a gamble on, you can just bugger off and go home. Bliss.

A while ago I went to see The War On Drugs play at the Roundhouse on my own. I took myself out for a not-bad-for-Camden dinner first and timed it



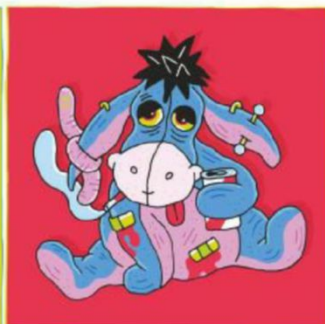
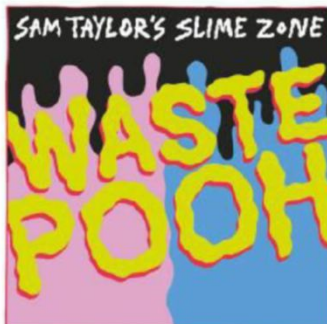
Best. Time. Ever.

perfectly so that I arrived at the venue just before the band went onstage. Nestling down in my seat with nothing but a melty bar of Fruit & Nut in my pocket for company, I proceeded to have a transcendental couple of hours. There was nobody asking me silly questions throughout my favourite song, nobody to make me feel bad for dragging them out to see a band they were definitely not

into and nobody to insist that we leave before the encore to miss the rush for the Tube. Even if I'd gone with somebody who'd have enjoyed every second of the gig, there's something special about taking in a sublime show alone and – forgive the slight hint of hippy bulls**t – totally becoming one with the music. It's the closest you can get to meditating with a pint in your hand. You can close your eyes, rock back and forth – hell, maybe even dribble a bit – and not have to answer to anyone. Here's to going it alone at gigs – one of life's truest pleasures. @leoniemaycooper

"It's the closest you can get to meditating with a pint"

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES



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& World Champion,
Adam Gemili.

Adam Gemili
World Champion
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London 2017

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THIS WEEK'S OBJECTS OF DESIRE



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£5.99 amazon.co.uk



Chain reaction
This epic, elaborate choker is goth goals, and no mistake.
£48 regalrose.co.uk



Good god
Injustice: Gods Among Us casts the DC universe in a new light.
£12.99 in-store at hmv



Do it yourself
Mipic lets you create your own homewares and clothes with personal pics.
£20 mipic.co



Red, red wine
Dark Horse's merlot is perfect for drinking while listening to The National.
£8.50 tesco.com



Nom nom nom
Get your stomach all excited with the Brindisa: The True Food Of Spain cookbook.
£20 brindisa.com



Slick Rick
Get your official Rick And Morty garms over in the NME Merch store.
£15.95 nmemerch.com



Good together
Aries and Vans have clubbed together to make these sweet limited edition slip-ons.
£100 ariesarise.com



Monster mash
Featuring the Suicide Squad, Harley Quinn's Greatest Hits is comic gold.
£8.99 in-store at hmv



Notoriously good
Stance's Biggie Smalls socks are a cosy, comfy rapper's delight.
£14.99 selfridges.com



Beret good
Jamie Hewlett of Gorillaz has designed the band's new G Foot clothing line.
£30 eu.gfoot.store



Smell sweet
Rentless mixes up patchouli and grapefruit. The result? A zingy perfume party.
£25 lush.com



Sleep tight
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What's ON your Headphones?

THIS WEEK

Shoreditch



< NICOLAI STENUM JENSEN
24, student

Listening to:
DRAKE
Started From The Bottom
"It's a song about life and that's why I like it."

Wearing: Adidas jumper, Urban Outfitters jeans, Ray-Ban glasses, Nike bag.
Best thing about Shoreditch: "I love the culture here. There's such diversity."
If you could take an instax of any musician, who would it be?
Ella Mai

"I love the culture here"



< MIA BARTHOLOMAEUS
21, student

Listening to:
CHINAH
Even Love
"She's an underground artist from Denmark – very mellow and I think she could be big over here."

Wearing: Boohoo top, vintage jeans, H&M earrings.
Best thing about Shoreditch: "The people. There's both old and young people here – it's just great!"
If you could take an instax of any musician, who would it be?
Charli XCX

SOFIA CLAUSSE >
27, graphic designer

Listening to:
VARIOUS ARTISTS
Circle Of Life
(*The Lion King* soundtrack)
"It made me wake up and do something that I really wanted to do!"

Wearing: Brandy Melville T-shirt, Pull&Bear jeans, Nike trainers, Topshop earrings.
Best thing about Shoreditch: "The vegan food at CookDaily."
If you could take an instax of any musician, who would it be?
John Cage



JAMES CUMMINGS >
33, plumber

Listening to:
MALL GRAB
Can't
"It's got a chilled vibe but is also quite fun."

Wearing: T-shirt and trousers from eBay, Carhartt hat, vintage braces.
Best thing about Shoreditch: "I'd recommend going to the Brick Lane Vintage Market, especially on a Sunday."
If you could take an instax of any musician, who would it be?
Jamiroquai



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PHOTOS: RACHEL BILLINGS



Foo Fighters' new album is, according to Dave Grohl, "The Beatles meets Motörhead". In a week that included a sold-out O2 show, a *Jools Holland* appearance, a pub opening and a booze-up in an oyster bar, Charlotte Gunn pinned down the world's busiest band for a spot of afternoon tea

PHOTOS BY DANNY NORTH



“**P**AT, WHAT ARE THESE little sparkly things in our dessert?” Dave Grohl is poking at the contents of a miniature Eton mess with childlike glee, in the dining room at London’s Savoy Hotel.

“I’ve noticed they use a lot of real gold in the desserts here,” Foo guitarist and hardcore punk legend Pat Smear muses, eating a teaspoon of his pudding. “You all usually under-sweeten the whipped cream, but this? This is nice”.

It’s lunchtime and we’re having afternoon tea with one-third of Foo Fighters. It’s a terribly civilised way to interview one of the world’s biggest rock bands, but actually, it’s all for our benefit. Famed nice-guy frontman Dave was astounded that poor little *NME* had never experienced the pinnacle of Britishness that is a Savoy tower of sangers, so insisted we “eat some scones and get f**king fancy”.

For Foo Fighters, it’s the end of a gruelling summer of festivals – including one much-hyped Glastonbury headline set – and promo for their ninth album, ‘Concrete And Gold’. For this record, they headed to

Hollywood with uber-successful pop producer Greg Kurstin – the guy who built upon Adele and Sia’s successes – and the result is something quite spectacular. Rock riffs fuse with Beatles-like melodies to create a sound Dave quite fittingly describes as “Motörhead doing ‘Sgt. Pepper’s...’”. Macca even makes a drumming cameo.

But today, with only a couple more obligations left until they get a well-earned break, Foos are feeling silly. Dave, ever the prankster, tells the waiter it’s *NME*’s birthday (it isn’t). Midway through our interview, which is already more about scones than anything else, the dining room goes silent and a very classy rendition of ‘Happy Birthday’ starts to tinkle on the ivories. A cake arrives. Dave and Pat are beside themselves.

The ridiculousness continues as Dave tries to shoehorn in the pianist’s choice of song into every answer he gives. “At the end of the day, I’m just glad I did it ‘My Way’,” comes the response to a question about the choice to work with Kurstin. Momentary confusion ensues, before the



“I’m trying to grow up but I don’t know if it’s working” Dave Grohl

Foo Fighters (l-r):
Nate Mendel, Chris Shiflett,
Dave Grohl, Pat Smear,
Taylor Hawkins, Rami Jaffee

pair erupt into giggles again.

For a band that have been going for 22 years, having a laugh still seems high on the agenda. “I can’t remember a time when it wasn’t fun to be a Foo Fighter,” Dave reckons. “Even when I broke my leg, it was f**king fun. We had a party that night.”

Fans will remember Dave’s onstage leg break in 2015 – now the stuff of rock legend – which saw him finish the gig with a paramedic holding his bones in place, but later pull out of their Glastonbury headline slot. Ever honourable, Foos were back this year to deliver one of the most memorable sets in Worthy Farm history.

Two days before our tea-drinking sesh, Foo Fighters played a sold-out show at London’s O2 arena, rattling through almost three hours of hits from their epic back catalogue. “We were told there was a hard curfew at 11 and we’d get fined if we didn’t meet it, so I asked how much it would be if we went over time, and I thought, ‘We can afford that’, so we just carried on playing,” says Dave.

Being a Foos fan in 2017 has become something of an endurance test. “We played for nearly four hours in Sydney once,” Dave brags. But do they ever worry about the fans getting Foos fatigue? “I’m usually the last guy at the party and that’s not something you want to happen at a rock concert. I don’t want to be the last one there. I’d appreciate it if everyone stayed. But they usually do!”

The band knows it helps to keep some tricks up your sleeve for that point in the set when the fans are thinking, as Dave puts it, “Just f**king play ‘Everlong’ and let us go home”. At this week’s show, that secret sauce was a special appearance by one “badass motherf**ker” going by the

name of, er, Rick Astley.

“Rick is *the man*. The seventh Foo Fighter. He’s such a sweetheart,” Dave gushes about his new pal.

After a chance meeting in Japan, the band adopted Astley – ‘80s pop titan and subject of the Rickrolling internet meme – as something of a mascot, bringing him out whenever they can to perform his decades-old megahit ‘Never Gonna Give You Up’. “I love that he gets nervous before playing. He’s Rick Astley! It’s like he’s Muhammad Ali! You just wouldn’t be nervous, but he’s such a good guy.”

After the O2 show, an awkward-looking Astley is loitering alone backstage. He seems bemused by this newfound friendship, but when Nice Guy Dave turns on the charm, you very quickly find yourself along for the ride.

Somewhere across the other side of London, the band have commandeered an east London boozer and rebranded it the Foo Fighters Arms for album release week. Fans have been queuing for hours for a pint of a specially brewed beer – Concrete And Gold – and to get a glimpse of the Foos-themed décor which consists of some old tour posters and paintings of the lads done up like some sort of 17th century musical tableau. Oh, and there’s some pretty pricey limited-edition merch on sale too, word on the street being that the shop took £28,000 in its first day.

Sadly, all hope of seeing Dave behind the bar in a Peggy Mitchell wig yelling “Get out of my pub” vanishes when he reveals that, firstly, he’s never seen

EastEnders and, secondly, he’s not even been to the Foo Fighters Arms. “I do like British pubs but I just like to smoke and drink and chat. I’d throw a dart, but mostly I don’t like to compete with anybody unless it’s to see who can drink the f**king most”.

The answer to that question, we’d wager, might well be Mr Grohl himself. Metallica’s Lars Ulrich recently teased him about their differing pre-show rituals – Metallica’s being massage and meditation and Foos’ being cans and top bants. “I’m trying to grow up but I don’t know if it’s working,” Dave jokes. “I honestly feel like, for me, the best way to walk on stage is while everyone’s f**king laughing. Like at The O2 until 20 mins before we walked on stage...” Pat chimes in, “We had a lot of people in the dressing room, it was a lot of fun and then it’s like, ‘Oh great, we get to play a show now. Let’s go!’”

That ‘lot of people’ weren’t your usual motley crew of friends and family, either. Kylie Minogue, Simon Pegg and boxer Joe Calzaghe chatted while rowdy British punk band Idles played their support set. Stella McCartney was seen pulling Dave away to do sneaky Patrón shots from her secret supply while Foos bassist Nate Mendel was baffled as to who the 6ft 5in Czech dude, with whom everyone wanted selfies, was. “Are you some kind of sports guy?” he asked Arsenal goalie Petr Cech.

“Most people that know us know that we’re friends with everybody,” Dave says. “Do we seem like some super-elitist rock snobs? We have an open-door policy with this band.”

It’s that open-door policy that has seen a number of surprising guests feature on ‘Concrete And Gold’, from Justin Timberlake (“The guy’s an incredible singer”) to Shawn Stockman from Boyz II Men and basically anybody who happened to be passing through LA’s star-studded EastWest studios at the time they were making the record.

“When you’re in a studio like that and Rufus Wainwright is down the hall and the guy from Deep Purple is in the other room and Lady Gaga is wandering around and Wolf Alice were there for a week... I was just doing all this crazy barbecuing and talking to everyone. Gaga would come in and listen to the record. Wolf Alice were scared of us though, I think.”

Exclusive! Foos stadium gigs

Foo Fighters are playing three giant shows next summer

JUNE 2018

Tue 19
Emirates LCCC,
Manchester

Thu 21 & Fri 22
Olympic Stadium,
London

**Tickets on sale
October 20**

On display at the Foo
Fighters Arms



Later on at the *NME* photoshoot, drummer Taylor Hawkins further confirms – over a brew – that this band really are “friends with everyone”. He’s spent a lazy day in bed, mostly watching Liam Gallagher interviews on YouTube (“That cup of tea thing was so hilarious. Did you see that? I texted him about that, it was so funny”). The night before, he and Nate had been for a late-night chicken tikka masala with Queen’s Roger Taylor and Brian May. “It’s a bit of a tradition, whenever we come here, to go for a curry. I still totally still get all fanboy around them sometimes,” he admits, “even though I’ve met them so many times.”

“Iiiii just wanna tell you how I’m feeling...” The conversation is interrupted by Dave bounding into the room singing Rick Astley and clicking his fingers. “Damn, once that song gets in your head, you just can’t f**king get it out”.

The band are whisked off to the Royal Albert Hall for a special 25th anniversary episode of Jools Holland’s *Later* show where they perform a mix of new and classic material. They’re required to be on stage throughout the two-and-a-half-hour recording. Taylor gets fidgety, drumming along to everyone else’s songs on his bright

pink kit that’s decorated with his parents’ faces. Dave “goes bananas” during ‘Times Like These’, thrashing about in front of some unassuming Jools fans who look like they’ve come straight from work.

Kylie and Stella McCartney are dancing in the box to our right and it’s McCartney’s local, a tiny Notting Hill oyster and Guinness bar, that is the destination for the after party. She and Kylie are the first to arrive, shortly followed by Reese Witherspoon, Jools Holland, KT Tunstall and, of course, the band – who work the room, chatting to everyone, despite Dave admitting he’s shattered. “You wake up every morning on tour and you open your eyes and think, ‘Does my back hurt? Does my throat hurt? Do I have another show in me?’” he says. “We were doing three countries a day in Asia. I’m f**king exhausted. I have found a cure for insomnia though: the BBC Parliament channel.”

But with a bit more of McCartney’s magic Patrón, Dave’s on his feet, passing around cigarettes – the smoking ban doesn’t apply if you’re a Foo Fighter – and joining Kylie on the dancefloor to bellow out the words to Toto’s ‘Africa’.

The jukebox is manned by the

band’s tour manager. Dave shimmies over. “This was my first punk rock record in 1979,” he yells as the spooky synths of The B-52’s ‘Planet Claire’ start to play.

After many more tunes – at one point Kylie is assigning instrumental parts to everyone in her vicinity (“I’m the triangle”) – we leave Dave in the pub in the early hours. Things are winding down.

“Sometimes I wonder if f**king ‘Everlong’ is too old for us to play now,” Dave mused over tea, earlier in the day. “You see kids in the audience singing along to ‘Run’ but if we bust out ‘This Is A Call’ they’re like ‘What’s this f**king new Foo Fighters song’. It’s weird. We’ve been in a band 22 years. It really is a long time.”

So what is next for the band who’ve done it all? “We’ll see, I guess. Things just fall into our laps.”

We bump into Taylor who wants to talk about The Gallaghers again. In doing so, he tells us he reckons that it’s never the same if you break up a band and try and get it back together. “Doing this is a blessing – why would I ever want to stop being in Foo Fighters? It’s the greatest thing on earth.”

As we head off, Dave is looking like he’s settling in for the night. True to form, he’s the last guy at the party. But what a f**king party it is.

NME

Foo Fighters: their most epic gigs

No wonder Dave needs a lie-down...

THE CHAOTIC ONE Reading Festival AUGUST 1995

Dave Grohl: “We’d only played one other show in the UK, to maybe 400 people. When it was time to go on, there were maybe 30k people trying to get in. The promoter said, “Will you go on the main stage?” and I was like, “No f**king way, this is like our first real show, I’m not gonna

headline Reading”. So we started playing in that tent and it was so hot and f**king packed, there were people climbing the rafters and the security guards were passing out. The promoter said, “You gotta stop,” so I said to the audience, ‘I’m sorry, we’ve gotta stop,’ and they went, ‘Boo!’ and he went, ‘Keep playing, keep playing.’”

THE EMOTIONAL ONE

Wembley Stadium,
London

JUNE 2008

Dave Grohl: “The first Wembley show was huge for me because we never imagined we would get to the point we could do something like that. While I was onstage, I was thinking about how this whole thing started, with just this demo tape and

without the intention of becoming a band and then looking around and I could see my old friends and I could see my daughter and my mother, it was really overwhelming and I f**king cried. And then the [Led] Zeppelin guys came out. That to me was a big one. I felt really proud, y’know. I still feel that way but that was the first time I felt it.”

THE PAINFUL ONE

Ullevi Stadium,
Gothenburg,
Sweden

JUNE 2015

Pat Smear: “That’s tough, there’s a lot of memories there, but I’m sorry Dave, but I’m going to have to pick the broken leg show. That one will stay with me forever.”



THE TWO SIDES OF

Next week, Krept & Konan are putting out two new mixtapes – a ‘daytime’ rap album and ‘nighttime’ R&B album. Jordan Bassett explores their split personalities

SOUTH LONDON rapper Casyo ‘Krept’ Johnson and Karl ‘Konan’ Wilson met at a bus stop, while Konan was being pursued by members of a rival gang. “It didn’t look positive for him”, Krept deadpans. Krept distracted the assailants so his new pal could sail to safety on a double-decker and, as a result, they formed a friendship and an acclaimed duo. They’ve now recorded two new mixtapes, ‘7 Days’ and ‘7 Nights’, and are releasing them both on October 20. One is a daytime-themed rap record featuring Skepta and Stormzy; the other draws on their soft R&B side and is best played after dark. They’re complex characters alright, who find themselves in scrapes despite having hearts of gold. Let’s explore their two sides – the naughty and the nice.

THEIR BRAVE, TRUTHFUL LYRICS

In 2011, Konan’s stepfather, Carlton, was shot and killed in his own home by an assailant who was attempting to kill Konan. The duo address the murder in an incredibly candid and emotional way on the 2013 track ‘My Story’, which includes the heartbreaking line, “*This is my story / All the pain, all the things, falling on me*”. Konan explains his motivation for recording the track: “I wanted to open people’s eyes to the fact that we’re all going through things behind the scenes. A lot of people are showing you their fun side, but you don’t know what they could be going through.”

NICE

KREPT &

KONAN

THEIR FEMINIST FREESTYLE

Krept delivers a feminist freestyle on the ‘7 Days’ track ‘Cold Summer’: “*Gotta give praise to a woman / Every one of us came from a woman / I was raised by a woman*”. This is a reference to a similar line in the 2Pac track ‘Keep Ya Head Up’ and, indeed, he also shouts out the originator of the lines. Krept tells us that he “wanted to pay homage to the woman in my life” and, when we point out that Skepta brought his mum onstage at the Mercury and Stormzy cast his mum in the video for ‘Know Me From’, he beams, “Mums are having a moment!”

KONAN’S DUET WITH HIS MUM. N’AWW!

Talk about mums having a moment. The 2015 track ‘Fell Apart/Lucky Ones’ sees Konan actually duet with his! Well, sort of. She found an old tape of them singing together when Konan was young and happened to send him a recording as he was working on the track. “It actually fit the beat,” he says. Konan was always singing around the house as a kid – his father, Delroy Wilson, was a famous Jamaican reggae singer. As Konan says, “I’m kind of a big deal when I go to Jamaica.”

THEIR RIGHT-ON CHARITY

This duo’s Positive Direction Foundation seeks to teach disadvantaged kids the workings of the music industry. They’ve enlisted the help of producers, engineers and visual artists they’ve worked with and will invite kids to record, mix and design the artwork for their own records. Says Krept, “We’re reaching out to the kids who have trouble.” He has a degree in accountancy from Portsmouth University but argues, “At school you don’t really learn how things are in real life. It’s important for people to learn how to do the things that they’re actually studying for real.”



KREPT & KONAN

NAUGHTY

KREPT

&

KONAN

BEEFING WITH WILEY

There are probably vegans out there who've had beef with Wiley. The Godfather of Grime enjoys a Twitter spat and, in 2015, it was Krept & Konan's turn to get sprayed with 140 characters of pure shade. "Wiley just likes to say stuff," Konan says now of Wiley's criticism of the duo's album 'The Long Way Home'. "You've gotta banter it off or let it get to you." Readers, he let it get to him. Konan responded with a veiled diss on the track 'Last Night In LA': *"Calling my name, that's a real risk / I thought about it and I'm still pissed / 'Cos I don't care if you're new or a legend"*.

UNWOKE LYRICS

The track 'Do It For The Gang', taken from 'The Long Way Home', sees Krept deliver the decidedly dodgy line, *"White whip, red interiors / That's a white chick on her period / Said she into girls, I'mma turn her straight"*. He cringes at the lyric when NME reads it back to him. "Sometimes you don't realise how bad lyrics are when you're writing them," he says. "I just thought of the punchline rather than the statement." He now skips the line when he and Konan perform the song live. "Obviously you grow. Every time we perform it, it's like, 'Oh, s**t, that line's coming up again.'"



KONAN'S PRISON SENTENCE

He was jailed for robbery in 2008, of which he says, "When I came out, it was like, 'I've gotta get my head screwed on.'" Konan made a list of achievements he wanted under his belt: two mixtapes, an album, festival performances, radio play and, of course, at least one good crowdsurf. He recalls being amazed at "ticking it all off". The duo received a Guinness World Record when 'Young Kingz' became the highest charting album by an unsigned act. "That was a little bonus," he grins.

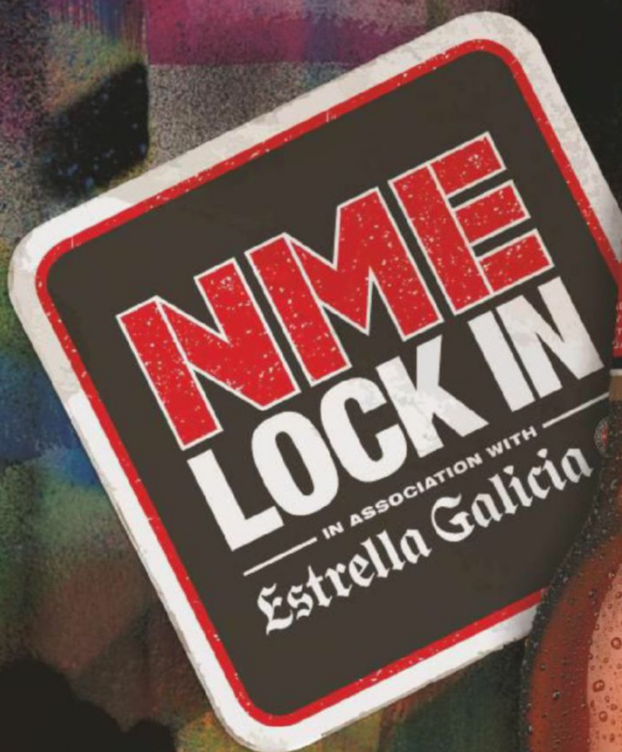
PISSING OFF JAY-Z

JAY-Z and Kanye are probably low on the list of people you want to vex. Yet Krept & Konan did so when, in 2011, they freestyled over the 'Watch The Throne' track 'Otis'. The video reached 5 million views in five days, but was swiftly removed when it transpired that someone had erroneously ticked a box that claimed Krept & Konan owned the rights to the track. "This is when we were at our lowest so were like, 'Yeah! We're gonna get paid today by YouTube,'" says Krept. In the end, the royalties went in Jay and 'Ye's silky pockets. Bummer.

KREPT

NME

Estrella Galicia



SERVED IN THE
NME
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Estrella Galicia  recommends responsible drinking



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RADAR

THIS WEEK'S ESSENTIAL NEW RELEASES

Best NEW tracks And when to drop them

BEST FOR A NICE TIME

BELLE & SEBASTIAN

I'll Be Your Pilot

Bring on the sweet, sweet jangle, as Scots heroes B&S do their gentle, hushed thing to perfection.

BEST FOR BANNING THE BOMB

US GIRLS

Mad As Hell

An anti-war anthem for modern times Meg Remy – AKA US Girls – does pacifist alt-pop with super sass, coming on like a no-nukes Blondie.

BEST FOR CHANNELLING YOUR RAGE

SLOWCOACHES

Complex

Railing against toxic masculinity in the music industry, DIY punks Slowcoaches are deeply political.

BEST FOR WOOZY DAYDREAMS

LO MOON

Thorns

A little bit Radiohead, a little bit The War On Drugs, 'Thorns' is a super-slinky slice of synthy dream-pop.

BEST FOR AIR GUITAR

THE BREEDERS

Wait In The Car

Two minutes of gritty, garage-rock fire from the returning 1990s alt-icons.

BEST FOR GETTING EMOTIONAL

SAM SMITH

Pray

The soulful track features Timbaland on production duties, and comes complete with powerful choral backing.



BEST FOR SHOWING OFF YOUR DIAMONDS

RICH THE KID FEAT.

KENDRICK LAMAR

New Freezer

Interscope's newest signing gets fresh on this trap-inflected ode to bling, with a guest spot from a rap great.

BEST FOR BENDING YOUR BRAIN

DJANGO DJANGO

Tic Tac Toe

The first track from Django Django's new album – due out next year – is a fizzing, furious new wave and disco mash-up.

BEST FOR THE LAST DANCE

HAMILTON

LEITHAUSER FEAT.

ANGEL OLSEN

Heartstruck

(Wild Hunk)

Indie dreams come true on this sweeping, soaring 1950s-feeling prom-worthy doo-wop ballad.

BEST FOR GETTING READY

PARTYNEXTDOOR

FEAT. HALSEY

Damage

The Canadian rapper brings in the husky vocals of Halsey on this pre-gaming party soundtrack.

FOR MORE NEW MUSIC,
GO TO NME.COM

MUSIC

And for her next trick...

Annie Clark gets personal on a clutch of tales about power and lust

ST VINCENT

Masseduction



ART ROCK FAME



THREE YEARS AGO, ANNIE Clark sent out an "autumn hello" to her newsletter subscribers. "Last night," she recounted, "I attended a party meant to celebrate 'fashion' where I felt woefully out of place. I, however, am not one to look a gift horse full of champagne in the mouth. So I grabbed a couple and began chatting up the most interesting-looking person in the room."

That night, fame's gift horse presented her with a retired police officer's stories about

9/11. Shortly after, St Vincent passed from champagne receptions into the inner sanctum of high celebrity, thanks in part to her relationship with Cara Delevingne, and had a strange few years. 'Masseduction' is the result, another gift from fame's fickle filly, a clutch of tales about power, lust and spectacle.

This time, though, the subject is St Vincent herself, from the softly spoken, synth-fogged desperation of opener 'Hang On Me' ("I cannot stop the aeroplane from crashing") to an out-of-control paramour ODing in a bathtub on 'Young Lover', to 'Pills', a witty, madcap sketch of self-medication. "I heard the tales: fortune and blame," she confides. "Tigers and wolves, defanged by fame". An eruption of fat, fuzzy squiggling guitar

confirms her intention to disrupt the cautionary-tale narrative. Yet amid thrusting, shunting funk and slideshow of surreal desires, the title track heartily acknowledges complicity in the great sex sale: "I can't turn off what turns me on," she wails.

It might all be a bit Introductory Media Studies if 'Masseduction' wasn't, firstly, so much fun and, secondly, so personal. Perhaps the closest to home of all is 'Happy Birthday, Johnny': pedal steel, delicate piano and heart's blood, and the memory of "you've changed" recriminations from loved ones.

'Smoking Section' ends on a dark night of the soul, but the final refrain is "it's not the end". The horror stories are dodged, and St Vincent goes on. She's due, next year, to direct a film adaptation of *The Picture Of Dorian Gray*; in 'Masseduction' we already have both Dorian and his portrait: the fox on the album's cover, all rampant neons, stockinged legs, and taut flesh, and the inner ravaging – material just too good to keep in the attic. **Emily Mackay**

PHOTO: NEDDA AFSARI



LORDE

Melodrama



Lorde's glorious second coming shares a magnetic pop energy and a co-producer, Jack Antonoff, with 'Masseduction'.



ANNA MEREDITH

Varmints

If you enjoy having your boundaries pushed by Clark's omnivorous approach to genre, why not go a little further with this avant-raving composer?



LADY GAGA

Joanne

Strange bedfellows, but St Vincent's most pop moments edge into Mother Monster's home turf, and they both get personal on these albums.


 ALBUM
OF THE
WEEK

Beck to the future

The musical chameleon lets loose on this pop triumph

BECK
Colors


POP VIBRANT FUN



BECK IS NOT ONE FOR repeating himself. Each record of his 12-album, 25-year career brings something a little bit different to the table – while remaining distinctly Beck. 1996's 'Odelay' was the beer-chugging party starter, 2002's 'Sea Change' saw him get dead serious and orchestral, and on 2008's 'Modern Guilt', the multi-instrumentalist dabbled with filthy garage-rock. But on his new popstastic album 'Colors', it's abundantly clear that we've *really* never seen Beck like this before.

It is, without a shadow of a doubt, Beck's most mainstream-palatable record thus far. Whereas his previous pop guises had a little sprinkle of outsider magic – like 1999's freak-funk odyssey 'Midnite Vultures' and 2006's glitch-hop tinged 'The Information' – 'Colors' is unashamedly honest about its ambitions as a massive chart-topping pop record.

But we should have seen this coming. Speaking to *NME* in 2016, the Californian made it known we'd be seeing a new, untapped side.

"Recovering from my spine injury makes it a lot easier," he said about the new album's process. "It's made a huge difference, so this record has felt like a lot of freedom." From the off, that liberating atmosphere is intoxicating. Take the self-titled opener, which is built around a Men At Work-esque panpipe riff, and 'I'm So Free', a vibrant, riff-heavy monster where he openly celebrates his new mindset.

Much of the chart-ready feel lies with the album's

shimmering production, led by hitmaker Greg Kurstin (Adele, Sia). 2016's low-key dancefloor-ready curveball 'Wow' is jampacked with kooky tidbits and 2015 single 'Dreams' gets a fancy, shiny makeover. That mainstream ambition has its drawbacks in the lyrical department, mind. 'Up All Night', for example, is tainted by its irritatingly vague chorus: "Just wanna stay up all night with you / There's nothing that I wouldn't rather do".

As a collection of songs, however, 'Colors' is by far Beck's most upbeat and enjoyable record from front to back since the '90s. Repeated listens will no doubt be rewarded. Where the 47-year-old goes from here is a mystery once again – but 'Colors' proves that the element of surprise works to his advantage.

Thomas Smith


PARAMORE
'After Laughter'

The former emo clan embrace their '80s

sensibilities on the paint-splattered comeback.

MUSIC

Living like a king

Archy Marshall's second album as King Krule proves he's the troubled voice of a generation

KING KRULE

The Ooz



JAZZ BRASS BASS

WELCOME BACK inside Archy Marshall's mind.

Four years ago, on 'Cementality', he sang, "*Brain, leave me be / Can't you see these eyes are*

shut". That song featured on '6 Feet Beneath The Moon', his debut album as King Krule. Now 23, the south London singer with the ghostly pallor and a throat like a cement mixer sounds as insular and conflicted as ever. Conceived after a weed-addled period of writer's block, 'The Ooz' – his swampy, 19-track new record

– is a blackened document of paranoia, relationship breakdown and more sleepless nights. His vocals – guttural, electric and still the star of the show – seep from the cracks of songs sketched from jazz, punk, hip-hop, bossa nova and the ambient drift favoured by Dean Blunt and Frank Ocean. Incidentally, Ocean sought out Marshall to work on 2016's 'Blonde', only for the sessions to break down.

But Marshall has always been better off alone, defiant

yet vulnerable at the centre of songs like 2013 breakout 'Out Getting Ribs'. And so it goes on 'The Ooz', which he named after the human body's natural secretions,

or "gunk". A record strewn with familiar depressive lyrical motifs and freaky little touches opens with the jazzy groove of 'Biscuit Town', which rhymes "*bipolar*", "*Motorola*" and "*Gianfranco Zola*", and breaks down into a stutter of irregular percussion. Creaking bass and alarm bells introduce

'The Locomotive', which mutates from a sparse waltz into a dirge that knocks the wind from your chest. "*I wish I was people... I plead just take me home*," Marshall wails, blood boiling in his veins.

Brassy pub-rock boogie 'Dum Surfer' plumbs sludgier depths, as do 'Vidual', 'Emergency Blimp' – a story of Marshall's insomnia ("*My head hit bed, but my mind's still alive*") – and 'Half Man Half Shark', one of two tracks to feature vocals from Marshall's father.

The other is 'Bermondsey Bosom (Right)', the second of two spoken-word pieces relating to a failed Spanish romance. Positioned midway through each half of the record, they serve as bridges to its dreamier moments ('Slush Puppy', 'Lonely Blue', 'Czech One'). Taken whole, it's a looping, dense, all-encompassing experience where anger and tenderness bang heads throughout. Marshall's world is grimmer than ever. **Ben Homewood**

STRANGE & TRUE

At 17, Archy Marshall ditched his music course at The BRIT School, choosing to focus on art instead. Their loss.



L-r: Dustin Hoffman as Harold and Ben Stiller as his son, Matthew



We are family

An all-star cast provides some enjoyable LOLs playing a family of oddballs

THE MEYEROWITZ STORIES

Dustin Hoffman, Adam Sandler, Ben Stiller



COMEDY FAMILY HOFFMAN

IF THERE'S ONE ABSOLUTE truth to be drawn from *The Meyerowitz Stories* it's that any film would be improved with a couple of scenes of Dustin Hoffman running. It's not the confident charge he had in *Marathon Man*. He's 80 now. It's just a shuffle with slightly raised knees – a walk with ambitions. Like a gerbil that hasn't noticed someone's stolen his wheel. It

happens two or three times here and it's hard to explain why it's always funny, but that's true of many moments in Noah Baumbach's latest, and in fact all his movies. There aren't really jokes or even necessarily situations that sound amusing in isolation, but there's a rhythm to his scenes and his characters' very carefully chosen words that comes off as funny. His people are very slightly detached from the world and unaware of their own oddness. He has innate wit.

This is a wandering account of the Meyerowitz family. Hoffman's Harold is the head, married to a bohemian drunk (Emma Thompson). His children are Danny (Adam Sandler), an

overly clingy single father who isn't doing much with his life; Matthew (Ben Stiller), a Hollywood accountant who has loads of money and no fun; and Jean (Elizabeth Marvel), who gets on with things undramatically and has made her peace with being largely ignored.

There's not an enormous amount more to it than simply

that. Baumbach gets plenty of mileage out of simply letting these people awkwardly interact, trying, not very successfully, to keep unkind honesty tamped down while they watch each other make horrible life decisions. It's the kind of comedy where a lot could be solved by people sitting down and calmly clearing the air, but the laughs come from doing the opposite. Years of resentments keep popping to the surface in a series of snippy gatherings.

It's better in the first half, before it's about anything. The second half brings some plot into the mix and it strangely loses some energy by burdening itself with having to resolve conflicts. It's still very funny, but less so than just hanging out with these people. They're great to be around, even if they're not enjoying it. **Olly Richards**

FOR FANS OF



A rocky horror picture

Some alarms, not many surprises

THE RITUAL

15 Rafe Spall, Robert James-Collier, Arsher Ali



TWISTS TURNS TREES

THIS BRITISH HORROR film, based on an acclaimed novel by Adam Nevill, begins in a very British setting: the pub. Some male friends in their 30s are debating where to go on a lads' holiday: hiking in Sweden, or partying hard in Ibiza? Frustrated that his pals are slipping into paunchy middle age, Luke (*Black Mirror*'s Rafe Spall) tries to goad them into buying more booze after

last orders, but only Robert (Paul Reid) follows him into the off-licence. The two men stumble on a hold-up, and Robert is bludgeoned to death while Luke evades the robbers by crouching down, cowering, at the end of the aisle.

The Ritual then cuts to northern Sweden, where the friendship group's four remaining members are taking that hiking trip in Robert's honour. The landscape is bleakly beautiful and the atmosphere is suitably muted as they create a makeshift shrine at the top of a mountain. But then Dom (*Robin Hood*'s Sam Troughton) twists his knee and their planned route back to the hiking lodge becomes impossible. The group's de facto leader, gruff Hutch (*Downton Abbey*'s Robert

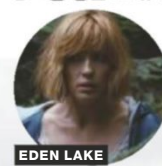
James-Collier), suggests that instead of circumnavigating a dark and dense-looking forest, they take a shortcut through it.

What happens next won't shock even casual horror fans. The guys are grossed out when they spot a disembowelled bear strung up in the trees, and confused by some unusual letters carved into the bark. As rain begins lashing down, they take shelter in a creepy abandoned cabin which particularly spooks the group's most likeable member, Phil (*Four Lions*' Arsher Ali). Yet despite the setting's familiarity, director David Bruckner (who previously co-directed 2015 horror anthology film *Southbound*) manages to build tension steadily and effectively. He's helped by a

compelling performance from Spall, who brilliantly hints at the guilt eating away at his character since Robert's gruesome death.

Sadly, *The Ritual*'s big reveal is both predictable and a bit silly, which drains the ending of some of its tension. The result is a workmanlike but watchable horror flick which provokes a few gasps without ever really raising your heart rate. **Nick Levine**

FOR FANS OF



EDEN LAKE



THE CABIN IN THE WOODS

PHOTOS: ALAMY



L-r: Dom (Sam Troughton), Luke (Rafe Spall), Phil (Arsher Ali) and Hutch (Robert James-Collier)

Under THE RADAR

YOU HEARD IT HERE FIRST

STRANGE & TRUE

O'Connor just featured on the *FIFA 18* soundtrack, but admits he "totally sucks" at the football video game.

Best track

'SUNFLOWER'

Cheerful lyrics and O'Connor's knack for a killer melody combine in a bombastic, trumpet-filled finale.

DETAILS

From: Haslemere, Surrey

Social: @RexOrangeCounty

Buy: 'Loving Is Easy' is out now

Live: Koko, London (Feb 20), Exchange, Bristol (Feb 22), Deaf Institute, Manchester (Feb 24)

FOR FANS OF



FRANK OCEAN



LOYCE CARNER

Rex Orange County

Youth-filled love songs from Tyler, The Creator's pal

REX ORANGE COUNTY'S recent album 'Apricot Princess' is the sound of falling in love. Over 10 sickly-sweet songs, Surrey-born musician Alex O'Connor encapsulates those butterflies-in-your-tummy feelings with lashings of jazzy piano and tales of tripping head-over-heels for someone. It is utterly joyous.

His next single – the '70s-soul-infused 'Loving Is Easy' – continues that theme, blending lush strings with subtle nods to some of the 19-year-old's musical influences, such as LA jazz king Thundercat. "I feel like a really positive person

now, for sure," O'Connor says. "And I think I will be for a while."

He's got good reason to be chipper. It was only once his stint at The BRIT School started in 2014 that he considered a career as a solo musician, having been stuck behind a drumkit for most of his life. "It felt like the exact right time to be myself and not just the guy at the back of the stage. I like being at the front – it's where I'm meant to be," he explains.

And it's served him well. 'Apricot Princess', his gorgeous second collection of songs, saw him land a gig in Frank Ocean's touring band this past summer,

and in September he performed guitar with Skepta at the Mercury Awards. Not bad company, really.

It was his guest spot on Tyler, The Creator's 2017 album 'Flower Boy' that cemented O'Connor as one of Britain's most in-demand songwriters. "He just picked me up on email, but I was pretty convinced it wasn't him at first," O'Connor

"I like being at the front, where I'm meant to be"

says. Soon after, though, he was flown out to LA to sing on the woozy 'Boredom' and album opener 'Foreword'. It's already having an effect on how he works. "I feel like collaborating is something I need to try more of," he says. "Like how Frank Ocean and Damon Albarn are able to do – it'd just be super-impressive to hear other people's cool s**t on my project."

With US shows on the horizon, O'Connor is only just beginning to grasp exactly what this next phase of his career looks like. But given that he's settling into living in London with his partner, and he's "very much in love" right now, you can consider your next Valentine's Day mixtape well and truly sorted.

Thomas Smith

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| SOLD OUT CAMBRIDGE, JUNCTION 2 [°] | 26/10 LONDON, O ₂ |
| SOLD OUT LEEDS, WARDROBE [°] | FORUM KENTISH TOWN [*] |
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Karate kid

Chart-topper Anne-Marie is taking her banging live show across the UK

WHEN ANNE-MARIE WAS a kid, she starred opposite Jessie J in a West End production of *Whistle Down The Wind* and later became karate world champion. Since turning her attentions to the pop world she's made a name for herself as a touring

member of Rudimental, topped the charts alongside Clean Bandit with 'Rockabye', and been nominated for the Critics' Choice Award at the BRITs. The Essex pop star isn't really someone who does things by halves. While we wait for her debut album to drop, she's announced a spree of shows across the UK for March, by which time she'll probably have topped the album chart too.

ANNE-MARIE

Pop pal of Rudimental and Clean Bandit

MARCH 2018

Mon 19 O2 Institute, Birmingham. **Tue 20** O2 Ritz, Manchester. **Thu 22** Roundhouse, London. **Tue 27** O2 Academy, Glasgow.

TICKETS: £18.10-£22.50

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JORJA SMITH

Drake's British protégée

FEBRUARY 2018

Tue 6 Liquid Room, Edinburgh. **Wed 7** Leadmill, Sheffield. **Thu 8** Invisible Wind Factory, Liverpool. **Sat 10** Central Library, Coventry. **Sun 11** O2 Academy, Oxford. **Mon 12** Junction, Cambridge. **Wed 14 & Thu 15** O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire, London.

TELL ME MORE: The 20-year-old from Walsall featured on Drake's latest project 'More Life'.
TICKETS: £14.85-£20.35

ON SALE NOW



WILD BEASTS

Lusty four-piece

FEBRUARY 2018

Fri 16 O2 Apollo, Manchester. **Sat 17** Eventim Apollo, London.

TELL ME MORE: After 15 years together, the Kendal art-rock quartet are toasting their split with these farewell shows.
TICKETS: £20-£26.50

ON SALE NOW

FRIENDLY FIRES

Snake-hipped St Albans trio

APRIL 2018

Thu 5 O2 Academy Brixton, London.

TELL ME MORE: The dance-punks are jumping back in the pool with this comeback gig, ending a years-long hiatus.
TICKETS: £27.50

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THE WEEK'S BEST GIGS

AJ TRACEY

Wed 18 O2 Academy, Leicester. **Thu 19** Tramshed, Cardiff.

BETH DITTO

Mon 16 KOKO, London. **Tue 17** Albert Hall, Manchester.

THE BIG MOON

Sat 14 The Cookie, Leicester. **Sun 15** Moles, Bath. **Wed 18** The Bullingdon, Oxford.

BIG NARSTIE

Sat 14 The Plug, Sheffield.

BLEACHERS

Wed 18 KOKO, London.

DIET CIG

Fri 13 Rough Trade, Nottingham. **Sat 14** Music Library, Lancaster. **Mon 16** Soup Kitchen, Manchester. **Tue 17** Sneaky Pete's, Edinburgh. **Wed 18** Broadcast, Glasgow. **Thu 19** Headrow House, Leeds.

DIZZEE RASCAL

Fri 13 Corn Exchange, Cambridge. **Sat 14** Academy, Manchester. **Mon 16** O2 Academy, Bristol. **Tue 17** Rock City, Nottingham. **Thu 19** Cliffs Pavilion, Southend-on-Sea.

DODIE

Wed 18 Queen's University Student Union, Belfast.

DREAM WIFE

Fri 13 King Tut's, Glasgow. **Sun 15** The Cookie, Leicester. **Mon 16** The Bullingdon, Oxford. **Wed 18** The Wardrobe, Leeds. **Thu 19** Band on the Wall, Manchester.

FAKE LAUGH

Sun 15 The Library, Leeds. **Mon 16** The Hug & Pint, Glasgow. **Tue 17** The Peer Hat, Manchester.

FESTIFEEL

Sat 14 House of Vans, London.

FICKLE FRIENDS

Sat 14 Junction, Cambridge. **Tue 17** The Wardrobe, Leeds.

Wed 18 Riverside, Newcastle.

FIFI RONG

Thu 19 Archspace Haggerston, London.

FRANCOBOLLO

Wed 18 The Talking Heads, Southampton. **Thu 19** The Hope & Ruin, Brighton.

GIGGS

Fri 13 The Warehouse Project, Manchester.

HIPPO CAMPUS

Fri 13 Gorilla, Manchester. **Sun 15** The Garage, Glasgow.

HMLTD

Fri 13 Broadcast, Glasgow. **Sat 14** Hare & Hounds, Birmingham.

THE HORRORS

Thu 19 QMU, Glasgow.

IBEYI

Wed 18 Thekla, Bristol. **Thu 19** Shoreditch Town Hall, London.

INHEAVEN

Fri 13 Bodega, Nottingham. **Sat 14** Clwb Ifor Bach, Cardiff. **Sun 15** The Bullingdon, Oxford. **Tue 17** Scala, London. **Wed 18** The Haunt, Brighton. **Thu 19** The Joiners, Southampton.

J COLE

Sat 14 Arena, Birmingham. **Sun 15 & Mon 16** The O2, London.

JOE FOX

Fri 13 Brudenell Social Club, Leeds. **Sat 14** Record Junkee, Sheffield.

KELE

Mon 16 The Deaf Institute, Manchester. **Tue 17** The Cluny, Newcastle. **Wed 18** Saint Luke's, Glasgow.

LIV DAWSON

Thu 19 Church, Leeds.

NICK MULVEY

Sat 14 University SU, Cardiff. **Sun 15** O2 Academy, Bournemouth. **Mon 16** Junction, Cambridge. **Tue 17** O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire, London. **Thu 19** De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea.

NILÜFER YANYA

Tue 17 The Louisiana, Bristol.

PALE WAVES

Mon 16 Hare & Hounds, Birmingham. **Tue 17** Bodega, Nottingham. **Wed 18** Sound Control, Manchester.

PHOEBE BRIDGERS

Wed 18 Soup Kitchen, Manchester. **Thu 19** Broadcast, Glasgow.

SÄLEN

Tue 17 Gullivers, Manchester. **Wed 18** Exchange, Bristol. **Thu 19** Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham.

(SANDY) ALEX G

Wed 18 CCA, Glasgow. **Thu 19** The Deaf Institute, Manchester.

SHAME

Fri 13 The Buyers Club, Liverpool. **Wed 18** Scala, London.

SLØTFACE

Fri 13 Ku Bar, Stockton-on-Tees. **Mon 16** Bodega, Nottingham. **Tue 17** The Cookie, Leicester. **Wed 18** The Joiners, Southampton. **Thu 19** Underground, Plymouth.

SLOWDIVE

Fri 13 The Roundhouse, London.

SOCCER 96

Sat 14 The Hope & Ruin, Brighton.

ST VINCENT

Tue 17 O2 Academy Brixton, London. **Wed 18** O2 Apollo, Manchester.

SUPERFOOD

Fri 13 Dryden Street Social, Leicester.

SUPERORGANISM

Sat 14 Band on the Wall, Manchester.

TOM MISCH

Thu 19 Ronnie Scott's, London.

VANT

Thu 19 The Junction, Plymouth.

WILL JOSEPH COOK

Fri 13 Guildhall, Preston. **Tue 17** The Haunt, Brighton. **Wed 18** Moles, Bath.

YAK

Fri 13 Clwb Ifor Bach, Cardiff. **Sat 14** Night & Day Café, Manchester. **Mon 16** Village Underground, London. **Wed 18** The Forum, Tunbridge Wells.

SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE

Brian Molko

It's him from Placebo

THE FIRST GIG I WENT TO TÉLÉPHONE

"It was in a field in Belgium. I was 11 years old and living in Luxembourg. My brother was 21 at the time, and he took me along. During the gig I was so small that I made myself to the front and scaled over the barriers. I spent the gig hanging out with security. It was my first experience of rock'n'roll. They were basically the biggest French rock band in the '80s. I was pretty blown away."

THE SONG THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

SONIC YOUTH
Dirty Boots

"Me and my buddy Nick were 16, he came over to mine, we smoked a joint, turned the lights out and put 'Goo' on. I'd been playing guitar for about three years, but my entire perception of what was possible for what could be done with electric guitar changed that day. It opened up an entire new universe of possibilities. Sonic Youth remain possibly my biggest influence to this day. They're the greatest rock'n'roll band of all time."

THE FIRST SONG I REMEMBER HEARING

CLAUDE FRANÇOIS
Alexandrie Alexandra

"He's a French artist who died mysteriously, changing a light bulb while he was taking a bath. He was quite a pioneer. It's a disco tune, but this came out in the early '80s, possibly late '70s. He had a special dance that used to go along with this song. Part of it involved putting your hand on your ass and jiggling it around. In a way it was a form of primitive twerking. I'd do the dance for my parents and my brother."



CLAUDE FRANÇOIS

THE SONG THAT MADE ME WANT TO PERFORM

PJ HARVEY
Sheela-Na-Gig

"It came when I was leaving university. It felt kind of raw and visceral. The record itself sounds so unproduced and so real. I fell completely in love with Polly Harvey and became obsessed with her music."

THE SONG I WANT PLAYED AT MY FUNERAL

NINA SIMONE
Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood

"It's the one song in the world that I identify with the most. If you listen to the lyrics, that's me."

THE SONG THAT I CAN NO LONGER LISTEN TO

THE NATIONAL
I Need My Girl

"There have been many over the last 20 years. Recently though, I decided 'f**k this' and set myself a challenge to psychologically and emotionally steal back these songs from exes. It works. The most recent one is 'I Need My Girl' by The National."

THE FIRST ALBUM I BOUGHT

MICHAEL JACKSON
Thriller

"I bought it at John Menzies in Dundee in '82 with my mum. I would have been 10 years old. I was really obsessed with 'Beat It', more than the title track. 'Thriller' was the golden age of Michael."

THE FIRST SONG I FELL IN LOVE WITH

LEONARD COHEN
Hey, That's No Way To Say Goodbye

"I was brokenhearted, I'd been dumped. Back at school that was a really big deal – the end of the world. I'd just bought Cohen's greatest hits on cassette. This came on and something really magical happened. It was a transcendental experience. I was the song. I remember falling to the ground, bursting into tears and crying for about 20 minutes."

Placebo are currently on tour in the UK, celebrating 20 years together



The wisdom of the **NME** archives

THIS WEEK
JOE STRUMMER
The Clash
October 13, 1979

"If all we've achieved is someone wanting my autograph then we've gone wrong."



INTERVIEW: ANDREW TRENDLELL. PHOTOS: REX FEATURES

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