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A Sony Ericsson Aino phone and a Sony Ericsson Media Home device are shown on a wooden desk. The Media Home device's screen displays a video of a person performing a stunt on a red ball. The Aino phone's screen also displays a video of a person performing a stunt. In the background, a person is performing a stunt in a room filled with toys and furniture. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day. The overall theme is entertainment and staying connected.

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WHAT'S
INSIDE

30 Seconds To Mars 5
50 Cent 48
Amorphous
Androgynous 50
Atlas Sound 67
Buraka Som Sistema 5
Beth Jeans
Houghton 44
Biffy Clyro 42
The Big Pink 5
Bloc Party 54
Boys Climbing
Ropes 25
Carsick Cars 25
The Cheek 55
Cinerge 51
Citadels 67
Codeine Velvet Club 53
Comaneci 50
Cosmo Jarvis 51
The Cribs 74
The Dead Weather 55
Edwyn Collins 53
The Fall 67
Findlay Brown 5
Frank Turner 57
Frankie & The
Heartstrings 67
Gentle Friendly 51
Glasvegas 55
Gliss 55
The Golden Filter 5
Grizzly Bear 57
Gyratory System 50
Hot Chip 7
Jon Whistle 64
Juliette Lewis 5
Kap Bambino 57
King Charles 57
La Roux 67
Luke Haines 50
Martha Wainwright 51
Memory Tapes 51
Muse 37
P K 14 25
The Pains Of Being
Pure At Heart 4
Paolo Nutini 5
Paul Haig 51
Planet Earth 4
Queen Sea Big
Shark 25
Radiohead 12
Roisin Murphy 5
Royal Bangs 51
Samuel And The
Dragon 5
School Of Seven
Bells 9
Shy Child 4
Snoop Dogg 56
St Vincent 57
Stereophonics 53
Surfer Blood 22
Teitur 34
Them Crooked
Vultures 26
Top Floor Circus 25
Two Door Cinema
Club 5
Wavves 67
Wetdog 4
Wild Beasts 17
Wild Palms 4

SNAPSHOT

ALEXANDRA PALACE, LONDON,
4/11/09

Jay-Z surveys his British Palace

After making the UK his second home in 2009 – from sharing a couch with Andrew Marr to selling out gigs in less than 30 seconds – Jay-Z said goodbye to Blighty with a sold-out show at Alexandra Palace last week.

During the second of his two UK headline shows this year, Hova took the chance to immortalise the show by shooting set-closer 'Young Forever' for a new video. With the show going off in a 'palace', the King Of New York's gig developed an inadvertent regal theme. Princess Eugenie was among the famous faces packing the VIP area, while Jigga pointed out onstage how he had toppled the 'other' King. "I want to thank anyone who bought my 'Blueprint 3'. My 11th Number One album – surpassing Elvis Presley. I can officially say Elvis has left the building," he said. "I'm just joking!" Can't wait to have you back, Jay.



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WHAT'S ON THE NME STEREO



1 THE PAINS OF BEING PURE AT HEART Higher Than The Stars

It's been great over the last year to watch these New York indie-rock dreamers become a proper word-of-mouth success, and this last single off their new LP of the same name proves there's always more to come. And to prove, reminding us it has the heart of the Cure's classic 'Just Like Heaven' with some gushing drum glissandos. **On NME Radio now**

2 WET DOG Lower Leg

In December 2012, The Wet Dog's debut album is released. It's fitting that these veterans of their own punk adventures have been suffering our wounds. Working hard, wet down our thoughts, and back to the two totally different songs stitched together into a perfect blend of genius. **On NME Radio now**

3 WILD PALMS Over Time

Remember those days a few years back when if you weren't angular, you weren't worth shit? Wild Palms do, and this, their taut and glamorously dark debut single, worships at the church of Pil. before taking a careless swig of brandy and heading out to pull some girls in eyeliner. **On NME Radio now**



4 TWO DOOR CINEMA CLUB I Can Talk

It's herky, it's jerky, it's mile-a-minute, it's everything we love about guitars and boys. Bloc Party might not want to stay on hiatus too long with them around. **On NME Radio now**



MUSE

5 SAMUEL AND THE DRAGON

Diamonds On A Boat



If you thrilled to The xx's rich dubstep torch songs or Memory Tapes' romantic cut-and-paste electronic dreampop this year, you'll be all over this dreamy, slo-core synth number. *On MySpace now*



6 PLANET EARTH Bristol And Back

Just what we like from the ace Young And Lost Club label – proper schmindie with a heartbroken mumble and a romantic strum. Want a badge with that?

Free download from YoungAndLostClub.com



7 SHY CHILD

Criss Cross

These disco-funk new ravers were once the light of our lives, and it's good to see them back with this low-key, pulsing, keytar-fuelled track. Glowstick?

On NME.COM/mp3blog now



10 BURAKA SOM SISTEMA

More of a straight-up rock band than anything that preceded it, *Black Sabbath* (1970) was off to a heady, heavy, and somewhat over-the-top rock and roll band with a kind of space-rock funkiness. **On MySpace now**



9 ROISIN MURPHY
Orally Fixated

Er... crapes. Roisin's been the mistress of formidable dancefloor pop ever since her Moloko days, and she just keeps getting better. Opening with Alice In Wonderland cries of 'eat me' and 'drink me', the scarily deep techno-house and cavernous drums of this track suggest a world of out-of-control passion to get lost in before morphing into Basement Jaxx-ish hip-hop-house-pop.

On MySpace now



... AND WHAT ISN'T

JULIETTE LEWIS
Romeo

Yes, yes, you're very rock'n'roll. Go launch a perfume or something.

30 SECONDS TO MARS

Kings And Queens

**Same goes for you,
except with aftershave.**

THE B!G PINK
Domino's (Switch Remix)
 Turning one of the

year's best tunes into a faceless banger = yawn.

FINDLAY BROWN
Nobody Cared

With male-Duffy thrills like this, we can't imagine why not, Fin.

PAOLO NUTINI

Pencil Full Of Lead

When he says 'pencil', he means 'penis'. When he says 'lead' he means 'chirpy blues-pop toss'.



8 THE GOLDEN FILTER

House is designed to go beyond the ordinary reach. How does the house work? In fact, with each new house added, this new page refers to the mythology of the house, bringing a new, not with the old, new and more.

On NME Radio now

CONTENTS

UNDISCLOSED DESIRES

THE NEW SINGLE

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**FEATURING REMIXES BY THE BIG PINK
& THIN WHITE DUKE**

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“We’re doing
really crazy things
in a normal way”
ALEXIS TAYLOR

Ready for the fourth

Hot Chip reveal all about their new album, and their ‘three’ new ‘Over And Over’s...

They started out as the self-styled ‘bedroom Neptunes’, and even on 2008’s ‘Made In The Dark’ were still recording large parts of their records at home. For their fourth album, though, Hot Chip have revealed that they decamped full-time to a ‘proper’ studio. Due in February, the record – entitled ‘One Life Stand’ – was created in east London’s Lanark Studio, which is run by two of their number, Al Doyle and Felix Martin.

“It’s a big space, and I think the record has a bigger sound as a result of that,” suggested frontman Alexis Taylor. “It’s got a bit less of an electronic feel – it’s not an acoustic record *per se*, but it does feature more live drumming. I want to use the word ‘simple’, but that has boring connotations. I think everything on this record is melodically simpler and stronger.”

To achieve the necessary rhythms, the band called up drummer Leo Taylor from Mercury Prize nominees

The Invisible and veteran sticksman Charles Hayward of 1970s prog-rockers This Heat. These aren’t Hot Chip’s only guests though, as they have also enlisted the pipes of a mystery singer. However, following the Kylie Minogue rumour-mill that geared up last year, Taylor is a little coy about revealing their special guest’s identity this time.

“There’s a guest vocalist I won’t mention because I’ve just received the files of his vocal – I’m trying to open them on my computer as we speak,” he explained. “If that comes off it’s something I’m incredibly excited about. I’d say you will have heard of this person...”

Taylor declared the band were not weighed down by the expectation of coming up with more dance-pop smashes in the mould of ‘Ready For The Floor’ and ‘Over And Over’, believing they have at least three songs which will have the same effect.

“The title track – that’s the first one we got really

excited about. It’s got a mechanical electro sort of groove... you don’t expect it to have a joyous soul chorus, but then it does,” he said. “There’s another called ‘I Feel Better’ that may change to ‘The Longest Night’. That’s the most anthemic-sounding one – a big, massive Euro club sounding track, and there’s also ‘Hand Me Down Your Love’ – [the first single will be] one of those three.”

Of course, Hot Chip should know when they’ve got a dancefloor smash on their hands. Despite being quiet on the band front this year, the name ‘Hot Chip DJs’ has appeared at clubs, aftershows, celeb parties and even the vintaged Lake Of Stars festival in Malawi.

“Are there times we can’t record because someone’s off DJing? Sometimes that does happen,” admitted Taylor of Hot Chip’s lucrative sideline. “It is a pretty strange way of doing things. But we’ve never really done things in a normal way.”

Hot Chip (clockwise from bottom left): Joe, Al, Owen, Alexis. Felix was making a cup of tea

7 DAYS IN MUSIC



xx lose a member

LONDON

It seems now that there was more to The xx's Baria Qureshi's recent gig drop-out than simple "exhaustion".

The guitarist-keyboard player was missing when the band played London's Village Underground on October 28, but having suggested it was just a minor blip, the group - who resumed their European tour having cancelled a handful of dates - have admitted that their bandmate has gone for good.

"I guess 'personal differences' would be the standard way to say it," explained singer/guitarist Romy Madley Croft. "I guess it's just the intensity of being on tour, things are so much heightened. But I haven't really sat down and thought about how to put it in words yet, to issue a statement to the world of exactly what's happened."

The singer confirmed though, that "Baria has left the band. But we're back. I really didn't want to cancel those shows, but if we were going to go out and play as a three-piece I wanted to do it right. I didn't want it to be a rush."

With Qureshi's parts missing, the band spent the last week restructuring to plug the holes in their live show left by her exit.

"Jamie [Smith, multi-instrumentalist] needs another few arms so he can work everything," Croft admitted. "Everything's going to be completely live. It's going to mean a bit of brushing up on lead pedal manuals."

Despite these concerns Croft was keen to look ahead. "I'm really excited about how it's going to work as a three-piece," she said. "Playing together more instinctually is hopefully going to work well."

KELE GETS BUSY

LONDON

With Bloc Party set for an indefinite hiatus, it appears frontman Kele Okereke will not be taking it easy during the break. Having already told us he's writing fiction and trying his hand as a bit of a pop svengali, it's rumoured he is also recording a solo LP. Producer Hudson Mohawke let the cat out of the bag by suggesting he's doing stuff on the record. In the meantime, check out our review of what could be one of Bloc Party's last gigs, on page 54.



RUN, NIKOLAI, RUN!

NEW YORK ■ Despite starting his training late due to "weird band schedules", The Strokes' Nikolai Fraiture finished last week's (Nov 1) New York Marathon. The bassist rounded the course in a credible four hours, 23 minutes and 36 seconds, raising \$5,000 for US charity Team For Kids.

JACK WHITE GETS SCIENTIFIC

NASHVILLE ■ Jack White is releasing physicist Stephen Hawking's words on seven-inch vinyl. The author features on 'Cosmos: A Personal Voyage', a tribute to late astronomer Carl Sagan - an arrangement of which is being released by White's label Third Man Recordings this week (Nov 9) as 'A Glorious Dawn'.



QUEENS PARK RECORDS



LOFTUS ROAD ■ It seems football matches are always eventful for New York duo Shy Child. At their first ever game last year the pair signed their record deal, while last week (Nov 3) they marked their second match - the QPR vs Crystal Palace clash in west London - by helping label boss Mark Jones celebrate Wall Of Sound's 15th birthday with a party in a swish executive box and a walk on the pitch (pictured). "Being so close to this kind of athleticism made us feel like unhealthy worthless human beings. But in the best of ways," they told us. "And the fact that it was Wall Of Sound's 15th Birthday made the match especially titillating." See NME.COM/artists/shy-child for full details of a free song from the band.

FIERY FIGHT

BROOKLYN ■ The Fiery Furnaces have ignited a feud with Radiohead. Matthew Friedberger accused them of "arbitrarily associating yourself with things that you know people consider cool" by releasing 'Harry Patch (In Memory Of)'. It had been thought Friedberger had mistaken war veteran Patch for composer Harry Partch, but he then said he hadn't misheard and did hate Radiohead. So we're clear.

LONDON: CRAP

MANCHESTER ■ Noel Gallagher is going home. Having being advised to become a tax exile, the former Oasis man has instead decided to head back to Manc. He said: "I'm leaving London, it's lost its spark."

NO STATES

ILLINOIS ■ Sufjan Stevens has finally admitted he's unlikely to record an album about every single US state. The singer said he was planning an album or EP for each one, but has recently changed his mind. "The whole premise was such a joke," he confirmed.



"He said 'I'll play drums, I'll play guitar, but I don't wanna sing'"

SLASH REVEALS HE WAS NEAR, YET SO FAR FROM DUETING WITH JACK WHITE

XXX GIRLS

SAN FRANCISCO

Girls were responsible for the most searchable video on the internet last week. If you looked for 'XXX' and 'Girls' you'd have found a leaked "hardcore" version of the video for the band's new single 'Lust For Life'. Boasting full-frontal nudity, cross-dressing and an



erect penis used as a microphone, the band's label forced them to make a clean promo, but the filth seeped out online.



ALBUM NEWS

Bells tolling for new record

BROOKLYN

With recording on School Of Seven Bells' new album now almost complete, singer-guitarist **Alejandra Deheza** says the thing she's most looking forward to about it is leaving the band's past behind. Although 2008 debut 'Alpinisms' fared well for the Brooklyn three-piece, Deheza admitted that the monotony of playing it night after night has become almost too much to bear. "I feel like I'm at the point where there just has to be some new material," she said. "I'm not nervous at all [about the new album] – I just really want to move ahead with all these new songs. It's like, 'Alright, we're finally done with this [Alpinisms]'. Don't get me wrong – I love those songs,

but if the band doesn't keep moving I think I'm just going to lose my mind."

Deheza added that School Of Seven Bells' upcoming gig at London's ICA (December 4) should see them play "at least six new songs" from the album, which will be called 'Disconnect From Desire' and be "more personal, less abstract" than the debut.

However they're not totally abandoning their debut album, as that record was recently expanded in a new edition boasting a host of alternate versions of the album's songs.

"They're not remixes or anything – they're just 'stages' of the songs before we actually released the record," said Deheza of the new edition. "It would have been a shame not to release them, I think."

KINGS OF FASHION

COPENHAGEN ■ Sorry, Liam, but Pretty Green has got competition. Not content with taking over the kind of venues Oasis used to play, Kings Of Leon have followed their singer's lead by bringing out their own clothing line. The band have teamed up with French designers Surface To Air for a range based on their own look. It's only onsale from the Paris Texas shop in the Danish capital.



"The game results in an unauthorised performance by the Gwen Stefani avatar in a male voice choir boasting about having sex with prostitutes"

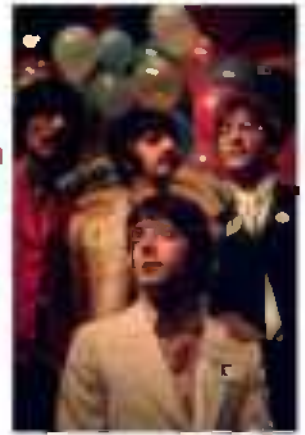
NO DOUBT ARE NOT HAPPY WITH BAND HERO'S CHARACTER MANIPULATION FUNCTION

HAR MAR GETS DAFT

LOS ANGELES ■ LCD Soundsystem wrote the song, but Har Mar Superstar has lived it by having Daft Punk playing in his house. Almost: the French duo turned up at his LA "pub quiz". "They even left their helmets in the car to take part in the quiz," explained the singer, who turned the evening into 'Game Night', a track on his new album 'Dark Touches', out now.

BEATLES ONLINE

ABBEY ROAD ■ The Beatles songs made their debut as paid-for downloads last week – and quickly ended up in court. The songs appeared for sale on BlueBeat.com, but the band's label EMI started legal proceedings, citing copyright violation. They won an injunction, preventing it from selling or streaming the Fabs' music.



A FIRE INSIDE

ST ALBANS ■ Friendly Fires hope to have a new album out by May next year. The band say they've written four songs while on the road and hope to have the rest written soon. Then it's time for some fast recording sessions in January. "We're really pleased with the way it's panning out," Ed Macfarlane told BBC 6Music. "We hope to have the album ready for May time, and do some festivals around then."

BRMC GO LIVE

BERLIN, DUBLIN, GLASGOW ■

Black Rebel Motorcycle Club are to release a live album. 'Live' was recorded in 2007, and is out on CD and DVD on November 16. The band are recording their fifth album, the first with new drummer Leah Shapiro.

LIE TO ME

LOS ANGELES ■ Liars' fifth album 'Sisterworld' will be out in early 2009. "We're interested in the alternate spaces people create in order to maintain identity in a city like LA," they say of the album. "Environments where outcasts and loners celebrate a skewed relationship to society."

BABYSHAMBLES FEELING BNP BLUE

CAMDEN

After a year of solo work, Pete Doherty geared up Babyshambles again last Thursday (November 5, pictured). The band made their live comeback at the Proud Gallery in north London with a secret show, playing six new songs. It seems that Pete may have been watching a bit of *Newsnight* recently – one new track was titled 'The BNP Blues', and along with other newbies 'Fireman', 'Stranger In My Own Skin' and 'Farmer's Son', showcased a Pistols-y punky style. So who needs a Libs reunion now, eh? Eh?



SHOCKWAVES
**NME
AWARDS
TOUR**
2010



The Drums



Bombay Bicycle Club



The Big Pink



Headliners The Maccabees

Awards tour line-up revealed

And it's The Maccabees, Bombay Bicycle Club, The Big Pink and The Drums

The Shockwaves NME Awards Tour 2010 has been announced – with The Maccabees, Bombay Bicycle Club, The Big Pink and The Drums set to span the length and breadth of the UK in February next year.

The bands will follow in the footsteps of the likes of last year's tour openers Florence & The Machine, Arctic Monkeys, Franz Ferdinand, The Coral and Interpol – a legacy not lost on Maccabees guitarist Felix White.

"Since we were 18 or whatever we've been going to those NME shows – if I missed one I'd think, 'Shit, I'll never get to see that again,'" he explained.

"I remember me and Hugo [White, guitar] went to see Bloc Party, The Futureheads and Kaiser Chiefs on one. We were like, 'That's how it's done.' That was a time when the possibility of what you could do with your mates and guitars became real. It was there in front of us."

White added that he fully expected this year's bill to live up to the standards of tours past. "I bought The Drums' record the other day and Orlando [Weeks, Maccabees frontman] in particular loves The Big Pink," he outlined. "And for the gigs themselves – there'll be a few different things from us. I'm not going to say too much, but we're already thinking about it..."

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NOTTINGHAM O2 ACADEMY (10)

BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY (11)

GLASGOW UNIVERSITY (13)

BRISTOL O2 ACADEMY (14)

BRIGHTON O2 ACADEMY (15)

BOURNEMOUTH O2 ACADEMY (16)

PORTSMOUTH O2 ACADEMY (18)

CAMBRIDGE CORN EXCHANGE (19)

LONDON BRISTOL O2 ACADEMY (20)

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This is hardcore... gym class

DISCO TWO THOUSAND AND... WHEN?

Jarvis Cocker is gearing up his aerobic experiment – but Pulp are still on his mind...

Jarvis Cocker is this week (November 9-11) set to be in the midst of a three-day residency at Shoreditch's Village Underground, which – if all goes to plan – will see him play live alongside pole dancers, yoga classes, graffiti artists and even a circus troupe.

Although he is turning his attention to aerobic activities, speculation recently grew about the possibility of a Pulp reunion for next year, with maybe even a Glastonbury slot in line for the Sheffield indie legends. While Cocker denied there is a Pulp plan as yet, he has now admitted the speculation has made him reassess the possibility.

"I think it was when I was going into that *Fantastic Mr Fox* premiere [Cocker voices a character in the film and has contributed to the score], and I got asked about Glastonbury and someone said, 'Would I like to play there again?' I said 'Yes,'" he explained, "but I think people interpreted that as, 'I would like Pulp to play Glastonbury again.'"

He reiterated that a Glastonbury reunion is "not something that I'm really planning", but did admit the furore surrounding the story had made him consider the prospect of gearing up Pulp again one day.

"I suppose it made me think a little bit. The fact that people did seem interested, that made me think about it a little bit more," he said.

First, though, Jarvis is concentrating on the show, which echoes his May residency at the Galerie Chappe in Paris, and is also set to see him inviting fans to bring instruments with them so they can join him and jam along. According to the singer, it's an "exhibition... installation... experimentation... happening... call it anything you like!"



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WE WANT ANSWERS!

This week: **ED O'BRIEN**
Radiohead

NME: Last week Nicky Wire claimed you didn't care about illegal downloading when you sold millions. Fair point?

Ed O'Brien: "That's a load of old bollocks. If it was just about self-interest I'd be going: 'Fuck the file-sharers, because we want to sell more copies of 'In Rainbows'. This [leading artists' rights group Featured Artists Coalition] is not about self-interest at all. For me, this all started about four years ago. I heard an interview with Quincy Jones, he was asked about the 'phenomenon' of file-sharing. Quincy said, 'The genie is out of the bottle' – there's a whole generation out there who don't pay for music. Whatever you think about it, whatever your judgement is, is not the issue. It's there, it's a fact, deal with it. It's all about forward thinking. Is the pint half-full or half-empty? In my mind the pint is half-full. That's where I come from, and Nicky Wire has got it completely wrong. That's just not the issue."

What do you make of Lord Mandelson's plan to potentially cut off file-sharers' internet connections?

"It's just pathetic, and we all know it's

completely unrealistic. And it's not enforceable. I know that there's a Swiss ISP that you can pay £3 a month to, and it makes all your traffic undetectable. And this is what will happen."

The government is currently planning to cut off connections if illegal downloading doesn't drop by 70 per cent by April 2011. Any chance Mandelson will get that drop?

"No – how can he? You know that, I know that, the person on the street knows that. Anyone who knows anything about the internet knows that it's not going to happen. It [the legislation] basically appeases the record industry. It's all politics, it's all fucking politics."

You want the same 'three strikes' rule and to reduce the internet speed of file-sharers. Pretty similar to Mandy's plan...

"You're right, it's not a million miles away. We all have different views, but it's a compromise that we [the FAC] felt comfortable with. I mean, the key difference is the suspension of the account [rather than reducing speed], and we felt very strongly that that's not realistic. I think Mandelson has good intentions. Part of it has to be applauded. It's like everything in life – it's not black and white. There's good stuff in it. He's

"Radiohead are about to start rehearsals for the album. It's early days"



it being the record company's responsibility to license more tracks."

With other FAC musicians you've started holding seminar-type events across the country for young bands. What's this, 'An Audience With Ed'?

"We've been particularly bad in this country, we're sort of... a little bit bitchy, a little bit one-eye-over-the-shoulder. When Radiohead were a band in Oxford when we started, we were doing our own thing and it was great but we were thinking, 'How do we get there? How do we make a record? How do we do all of that? Should we move to London?' We were lucky because Ride blew the doors wide open to everyone and suddenly people came to Oxford. It was still pretty difficult, although we had a lot of luck. I think the reason I'm doing this now is

talking about

because I'm a little bit older and feel like I want to pass some of this stuff on."

Any time for Radiohead in between fighting the system?

"Don't get me wrong, the band is always number one. Thom was in LA doing his solo stuff, that gave me a bit of time to do my own thing, do more stuff for the FAC and this file-sharing thing. But it's a very separate thing from Radiohead – cross-collateral invasion of these things can be dodgy."

So it's full steam ahead with new material, then?

"Ohhhh yeah! We start rehearsals tomorrow. It's early, early days – all will be revealed when we're further down the line and we've got our chops up. I'm not going to say anything more than that."

ELLIE GULDING
UNDER THE SHEETS
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RCA

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Four Night Stand
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Nov 25th, Dec 3rd, Dec 10th, Dec 17th

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NEW TO THE PLAYLIST...

Who will be fighting it out in future charts?

NME TRACK OF THE WEEK...



THE DRUMS - 'I FELT STUPID'

"This is the song that best encapsulates why everyone's getting so excited about The Drums. Featuring beautifully entwining, Cure-esque guitar lines, aerodynamic rhythms, miserabilist lyrics and enough hooks to moor a cruise ship with, it is effortlessly amazing, sounding almost freakishly, instantly familiar but totally fresh at the same time. This isn't the first time we've said this, and it doubtless will not be the last, but... this lot are going to own 2010."

Hamish MacBain,
Acting Deputy Editor



GRIZZLY BEAR - 'TWO WEEKS'

"Recorded amid the splendour of rural Cape Cod, 'Two Weeks' makes even November feel summery."

Ash Dosanjh,
Acting Reviews Assistant



GIRLS - 'LAURA'

"Lurking somewhere at the bottom of the stash tin is this parched ode to all West Coast American ne'r-do-well drossing pursuits."

Jaimie Hodgson,
New Music Editor



DARWIN DEEZ - 'CONSTELLATIONS'

"Sounding like a cross between The Strokes and Phoenix, Darwin Deez strikes the right chord every time with this star-gazing song."

Firaz, NME Radio Presenter



THEM CROOKED VULTURES - 'NEW FANG'

"A cheeky and playful but still disarmingly heavy introduction to the world of the Vultures."

Ben Patashnik,
Sub-editor

THE NME CHART

THIS WEEK'S TOP 20

- 1 3 CALVIN HARRIS
'FLASHBACK'
Columbia
- 2 1 BIFFY CLYRO
'THE CAPTAIN'
14th Floor
- 3 2 THE TEMPER TRAP
'SWEET DISPOSITION'
Infectious
- 4 5 FLORENCE AND THE MACHINE
'YOU'VE GOT THE LOVE'
Island
- 5 4 THE BIG PINK
'DOMINOS'
4AD
- 6 7 DIZZEE RASCAL
'HOLY DAI'
Diztee Stank
- 7 6 KASABIAN
'UNDERDOG'
Columbia
- 8 8 MUSE
'UPRISING'
HE!lvin 3/Warner Bros
- 9 10 MUMFORD & SONS
'LITTLE LION MAN'
Island
- 10 9 EDITORS
'PAPILLON'
Kitchenware
- 11 18 MUSE
'UNDISCLOSED DESIRES'
HE!lvin 3/Warner Bros
- 12 11 MIKE SNOW
'BLACK & BLUE'
Columbia
- 13 12 LA ROUX
'I'M NOT YOUR TOY'
Polydor
- 14 14 BIFFY CLYRO
'THAT GOLDEN RULE'
14th Floor
- 15 NEW DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE
'MEET ME ON THE EQUINOX'
Atlantic
- 16 NEW JULIAN CASABLANCAS
'11TH DIMENSION'
Rough Trade
- 17 16 BLOC PARTY
'ONE MORE CHANCE'
Wichita
- 18 15 FLORENCE AND THE MACHINE
'DRUMMING SONG'
Island
- 19 20 GREEN DAY
'EAST JESUS NOWHERE'
Reprise
- 20 13 MIKE SNOW
'ANIMAL'
Columbia



FLORENCE AND THE MACHINE

Florence continues to frolic in the upper echelons with the best take on this perennial classic. Not bad considering it was initially just a B-side to 'Dog Days...'



DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE

The *Twilight* effect strikes again as Death Cab's offering lifted from the soundtrack to new teen vampire movie *New Moon* ushers them right into the Top 20.



JULIAN CASABLANCAS

From NME Radio's B-list to the Top 20 with this new entry at 16, Julian's first solo outing is doing well, but how will his forthcoming Christmas single fare?

The NME Chart is compiled on a weekly basis from the sales of physical and digital singles through traditional high street retailers, internet retailers and digital music service providers. Singles are eligible for the NME Chart if they have featured on the playlists of NME Radio or TV or in NME Magazine.

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To make me dance...

'THIS IS NOW'
THE KNIFE



"It's a bonus track on the UK edition of 'Deep Cuts'. It's got this revolving sequencer line to it which is very, very simple, but then most of the best dance songs are. You can lose yourself in it, like hypnosis. It's a triumph of body over mind, you turn off completely and feel the pulse. This song is euphoric but understated and subtle; there's no big-fish-little-fish going on, that's for sure."

My guilty pleasure...

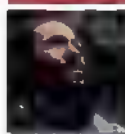
'HALO'
BEYONCÉ



"It's written by the same guy who did [Leona Lewis'] 'Bleeding Love', which is another guilty pleasure. First off, I think the vocal is absolutely incredible. And I love these pop moments that really engage you, rather than just brush over you – it's designed to be this huge, awe-inspiring pop song, which is quite a big task when you think about it. That they pull it off is extraordinary."

A record by a hero...

'WHAT'S GOING ON'
MARVIN GAYE



"He's a hero to me because he's such an antihero. He was a smooth lothario in a pop band – almost like a modern-day Robbie Williams – who then went on to make an album about Vietnam and oppression. To follow through on that sort of transformation so convincingly is just amazing. Motown notoriously refused to put his album out, said it was too heavy and that he needed to go back to making pop. But he faced them down, won, and history has vindicated him."

Everyone should hear...

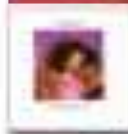
JUNIOR BOYS



"They make electronic music, but their songs really have substance – it's pop music that has a deep intelligence to it. One of the writers lives in Berlin and the other in Canada and they put songs together over email. You can hear that meeting of urban landscape versus sparse wilderness in the music. We often have their songs on rotation before we play shows. I sound like I'm verging on being a creepy superfan. I guess I am one."

I've played to death...

'HOUNDS OF LOVE'
KATE BUSH



"It's a real time-and-a-place album. It's so intimate, so uninhibited it's almost grotesque. She puts so much into it that you feel like you're perverting over her. There's this strange dilemma going on in that some of the songs are frankly quite horrible. But she seems to need those bits to vault up to the high points. She makes herself fall so she can pick herself up again and propel herself forward."

I wish I'd made...

'SATURDAYS = YOUTH'
M83



"It's a concept album about being a young adult. It's got this drunken euphoria about it, but at the same time a sort of fear, a lingering confusion about what's next. The uncertainty of that time is captured so strongly. When I listen to it, I think, 'Oh god, why didn't I think of that?' I grew up listening to a lot of early-'90s dance music on the radio, 'You Got The Love', the last days of the Hacienda, the end of hedonism, and its synth bliss sort of regurgitates that for me."

My first record...

'DIFFERENT CLASS'
PULP



"I was definitely a Britpop kid – the time I was getting into music collided with the height of that era. I was too young to grasp the wit and the irony behind it, but as I grew older, I grew into it. I think a lesson from 'Different Class' that stuck with me was that you have to have the hearts before you can win the minds – you need the pop hooks and then you can feed people the meanings behind that."



I've just discovered...

'THE UNTHANKS'

"I'm always late to the party with new bands, but something that really impressed me recently was The Unthanks, who we played with on *Jools Holland*. They're a beautiful orchestral folk band with these incredibly vivid storytelling lyrics, led by Rachel Unthank, who used to be a solo performer. They're from Northumberland, close to where we're from, so there's this sort of taken-for-granted sensibility to us in where they're singing about."

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LETTERS

YOU WRITE IT, WE PRINT IT, EVERYONE ARGUES *Edited by Matt Wilkinson*

LETTER OF THE WEEK WINS A SAMSUNG Q2 MP3/MP4 PLAYER TO LISTEN OR WATCH THE LATEST MUSIC VIDEOS ON

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Letter of the week

Rulers of the Empire

With regards to your Kasabian cover feature (*NME*, October 31), I think it shows that there is one band around these days who are absolutely mega. Kasabian are a band who aren't afraid to play around with different, unconventional ideas and integrate them into their music – and make them bloody successful. What other bands these days would even begin to think about making a song about ancient Egyptians and secret letters? The refreshing thing about them is that while normal guitar bands are putting out average songs about girls and stuff, Kasabian are singing about an outlook on life, and doing it well. That's why they are now the biggest band in Britain.

Sean Atkinson, via email

If there's one thing The People lurve, it's a couple of likely lads at the top of their game, and that's exactly where Tom and Serge are at present. Now that they've got the tunes and credibility (of sorts) to match the swagger, let's hope it lasts, eh? – MW

AND NOW THE HATERS...

Thank you for the front cover of this week's *NME*, it made me laugh out loud. Kasabian – biggest band in Britain?! How deluded are these people and why on earth did you print this? Please give me any reason to substantiate this claim (er, because Serge said it in the interview? – MW). They are a third-rate band with nothing new about them. I do not get the excitement when it is announced they are releasing anything new. They even have one of the weakest frontmen in the business. He just stands onstage saying "thank you" all the time. Where is the attitude?

Paul Longhurst, via email

Can I just say, where the fuck do Kasabian get off declaring themselves the "biggest band in Britain right now"? I'm sorry mate, but er, no, you're not. In the past however-many-years they've fucked around being 'macho' dimwits and staring shifty-eyed into cameras, they've had one, maybe two good songs.

And FYI: 'Fire' is a load of shit. They are not, and will never be in the near future, the "biggest band in Britain right now". And I'm betting there are quite possibly loads of people who agree with me, including my Kasabian-crazy friend. And no, you're not the "family favourite", my family probably don't even know you exist. Tossers.

Becky, Essex

Of course a band like Kasabian is going to polarise opinion. For every 'Fire'-eating, pill-popping oaf, there are at least two Morrissey stalkers who probably get offended by the fact Tom Meighan looks a bit like a walrus when he sings. It's natural (the division, I mean). But with the Monkeys currently shedding fans by the truckload and Doherty in eternal meltdown, Serge and co have rightfully grasped the mantle of Britrock with both hands – and who can blame them? Somebody had to do it. Oh and Paul, whaddya mean, 'Where's the attitude'?! They make their roadies dress up as asylum patients, for Christ's sake! – MW

MANIC STATE PREACHER

As an American Manic Street Preachers fan, I was interested to see what you'd write about their recent US tour (*NME*, October 24). I had the pleasure of going to three shows and loved every second of them. I scraped together some money to see them in London on their 2005 tour, but I have always dreamed (and yes, I mean that literally) of seeing the Manics play in Boston at The Paradise, where they cancelled scheduled shows in both 1996 and 1999. While waiting in line for the New York show (that's me in



Manic Street Preachers: US loves us

STALKERS

It can't be illegal if it's love... right?



HATTIE, MANCHESTER

"Here's me and Peter Hook at the Xfm Rock School final last year. The T-shirt was a coincidence, promise!"



KRIS, MANCHESTER

"Me and my girlfriend Emily met Pop Chapman of The Chapman Family after their gig. He was cool!"



DEBORAH, VIA EMAIL

"It's me and my idol, Matt Bellamy, after Muse's gig in Liévin in France. He was so nice!"

the years (and we're not just talking 'This Is My Truth...'), so it's only fitting that they're also among the most steely and devoted sorts out there. How apt it is that the band should finally find their American groove in such glorious fashion. Also, congratulations to Sean Moore, who I've just discovered set the 22nd fastest lap time around the Nurburgring. Wow! Thanks Wiki – MW

NO FILLER/ALL FILLER?

NME, I'm disappointed. First of all, the review of the *New Moon* soundtrack was just rubbish (NME, October 17). 'A White Demon Love Song' is the best song on the album, which makes sense seeing as it was The Killers who wrote it, and they haven't had a bad track yet (Snip... I think you've said quite enough already – MW). Martha, via email

Just a little lesson in the art of arguing. Whatever it is you're intending to convince your opponent of, using a line "The Killers... haven't written a bad track yet", will ultimately undermine whatever you're pledging. Even if your argument is: 'cuddles are a nice thing', it immediately adds an air of suspicion and scepticism to even the most obvious and plausible claims. I'm certain even *Mama Flowers* is fully aware of her son's past two albums being utter gash. When your B-sides collection receives more critical acclaim than your third long-player, it's never the best sign – MW

BE GONE NOW

So now Liam Gallagher has decided he will start a new band (NME, October 17)! What a joke. I can't wait until he puts pen to paper and realises he isn't actually developed enough to read and write. God help him when the album has been ripped to shreds moments after its release. Noel was always the talent in Oasis, and Liam was always the cocky younger brother. And now Noel's finally had enough and walked out on the band and will no doubt soar as a solo artist. But as for Liam, his gob won't save him now, and neither will his awful clothing range. James Backway, South Croydon

An album by a member of Oasis getting ripped to shreds? Never! Look, surely the thing that's most interesting about the split is... what Gem'll do next? Boom-tish! Of the Gallagher's, Liam's future is easily the most uncertain, and therefore exciting. It's precisely because he's done so little songwriting and band-leading for the past two decades that his current position is so salivating. Will he go jazz? Rip off a few Django Reinhardt numbers perhaps? Or just try and

re-write 'How Do You Sleep?' again and again and again? We live in such uncertain times – MW

FOR PARIS' SAKE

Not too long ago I claimed that Paris Hilton was one of the most rock'n'roll people around, and the abuse I received was unbelievable. So I think it is great that Jack White has championed artists like La Roux. As far as purists and music snobs go, I would have expected him to be quite far up the list that opposes any form of music that so much as looks at a synthesizer or computer. Too many people put down genres they know nothing about simply to appear as an authority on another subject. Arthur Elletson, London

Totally agreed, Arthur. On almost everything. Erm, what you think calling Paris Hilton rock'n'roll, surely she's more grindcore? – MW

EVERYONE STOP...

I'm a Paramore fan and I have been since their debut album back in 2005 and I'm not a *Twilight* fan. I haven't read the books, I haven't seen the films and despite Paramore having two tracks on the first film's soundtrack, I didn't buy it. Liv Akhurst, via email

Thanks for clearing that up, Liv – MW

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AND ANOTHER THING...

In case you've still not made your point

VOICE OF TREASON

Why don't you just focus on music you like as a general rule and stop slagging off Twisted Wheel and The Twang etc?

BEN, VIA EMAIL

Because it's FUN to slag off The Twang, Ben! Even with the death threats/voodoo rituals that get directed our way. Heck, we should be rewarded – MW

D:RUMBLER

The Drums are so amazing. I'm not surprised that everyone in your office is in love with them. What's not to like?

SEAN, VIA EMAIL

How about the fact that half the band don't play live and the rumour that one of them does actually surf? – MW



SPITTING IMAGE

Is it me or does the guy from The Armstrong & Miller Show remind you of anyone? Pigeon Detectives? Matt Bowman perhaps?

RICH, 'BORINGSTOKE'

The drummer is the dead spit of a young Rodney Trotter too – MW

DADDY'S PONG

I wonder how many people tried to scratch off that coffee stain on page 28 of the October 31 issue?

BENJAMIN, VIA EMAIL

It's not just about the scratch element, Benjamin. Sniff the page and you'll get a toasty whiff of Ian McCulloch and James Allan's aroma that fateful day: stale, wheezy piss – MW

BIG PINK STINK

To Robbie and Milo of The Big Pink: if the crowd want you to play 'Stop The World' after paying £10, sitting through two awful support bands and waiting ages for you to appear, I would next time. Also, I'm annoyed that I'll have to buy the *New Moon* soundtrack just so I can get Thom Yorke's new track. DAVID, LIVERPOOL

the green jacket in your photo on page 32), I met a man who, like me, had been at the Manics' second Bowery Ballroom concert in 1999, which was ultimately cancelled right when the band should've taken to the stage. That was a crushing feeling 10 years ago and, until the Manics appeared this time, we both were nervous that it might happen again. Thank god it didn't, because the gig was amazing! I really hope the band enjoyed the tour, despite playing to smaller crowds than usual. I got to meet them in Philadelphia and was struck by how gracious and accommodating they were. I truly hope they realise just how much the tour meant to their American fans and that they don't wait another 10 years to come back. Becca Reuss, via email

Couldn't agree more, Becca. Manics fans seem to have suffered way more than their fair share of misery over



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NEED TO KNOW...

What: Off-kilter anti-surf pop

For fans of: Girls, The Drums

Download: 'Swim (To Reach The End)' from the Radar blog, NME.COM/blogs



NME LOVES

Don't go into the water, it's...

SURFER BLOOD

Blood brother
(l-r): Tyler,
Thomas, Brian,
John Paul, Marcos

When did it stop being cool to say you're influenced by The Beach Boys, and become cooler to say you're influenced by The Rip Chords?

Don't know. Neither do Surfer Blood.

One week they're playing self-financed tours to less than 30 people, the next they're the toast of the CMJ industry fest buzz-vultures and key aficionados of late 2009's latest *de rigueur* sub-genre: anti-surf. Of course, they'll say their influences are bedded in Pixies' appropriation of surfstyle rather than the original, pre-British Invasion, version. And, even in spite of an album cover starring an extruded shark, the thought of waxing a board rightly makes them come over all icky.

"Our name isn't really related to anything," groans John Paul Pitts, singer, songwriter, guy with the milky, clean-cut, self-corrective, formal wear air of some Dick Clark-era Brylcreem boy. "It was just something that [drummer] Tyler was running around saying one evening over and over – 'surfer blood!'" But this rhetoric is patently a paper-thin tissue of lies

to cover up the fact they are the latest dystopian twist on surf-pop's template.

More than anything, what's threatening to vault Surfer Blood to the top of the pile in the 2009 surf-pop stakes is 'Swim (To Reach The End)'. A deepwater cold gutbust of joy-glam, it's a song no less direct than a harpoon fired into your midriff. "That was the song that made me want to join the band more than anything," Thomas Fekete, guitar, tan, cheekbones, vaguely vulpine air, affirms. "When JP first gave it to me, I had to play it back about three times, just to make sure it was real, that I'd heard what I thought I'd heard."

But despite the puppy-fat and big frat anthems, there's dark waters beneath their surf. More than the positivism of The Drums (whose guitarist Jacob released SB's early cuts through his Floridian web imprint), they fit into the malevolent wavemaking of Girls, the latest Stateside hyper-buzz band. They seem to delight in the façades cracking; like their San Fran counterparts, they're using the most Pravda-perfect of genres to juxtapose their unease. You can hear the

faded plastic pink flamingos that line the depressing blocks of '70s retirement condos around their stomping ground; it's the sun-bleached American Dream gone fishing, never to return. Their album – 'Astro Coast' – only arrives in the back half of January, but JP assures us that the flipside is going to take the gnarly down and crank the general-unease. "It gets very dark. There are two songs in particular, where it gets very brooding. I think people who have only heard the hits so far are in for a bit of a shock."

"When I first heard those songs, I was like, 'What are they about?'" Thomas confirms. "I really wanted to know what the stories behind them were, because they're so cinematic, so disquieting."

These boys are, after all, from Florida's Palm Beach, a sort of *Stepford Wives* county, the global Botox capital, groaning under the weight of its collective rhinoplasty bills, where the discrepancy between appearance and reality is a religion, and the tang of scandal lingers just beneath the surface. A beautiful day. A glassy sea. A fin in the water. Surfer Blood... **Gavin Haynes**

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RADAR

OTHER STUFF YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT



DIY HEROES

Because sometimes support acts aren't crap

CHAPTER24

I only know who Chapter 24 are because, two months ago, the band I used to be in were doing a gig in Camden and they were on first. In fact, I didn't even know there was another band booked to play until the girl in the audience wearing the Monster Munch T-shirt took her shoes and socks off, unearthed a giant plastic teapot from behind a curtain and started rolling her eyes to the back of her head and shouting odd phonetic sounds, all while her band came on like The Slits playing psychedelic rock. They were an absolute revelation. Here are five things I now know about them: 1) Claire is the singer, Mel the bassist, Mark the drummer and Joe the guitarist. 2) Their name comes from a Syd

Barrett song on Pink Floyd's 'The Piper At The Gates Of Dawn'. 3) They don't write setlists – they write all the songs they know on the backs of teabags and pull them out of the plastic teapot at random on the night. 4) Their favourite bands include Van Halen and The Fiery Furnaces. 5) With any justice, they'll be absolutely massive and will never again have to piss all over any Lemonheads-riff-off band an *NME* journalist happens to be in. **James McMahon**

NEED TO KNOW...

What: Pointy grrrl rock with pastoral psychedelic overtones
Download: 'Hepcats'

MAJOR INVESTMENT

Valley gurl brat-pop with Celebsville heritage

SKY FERREIRA

Since MJ croaked he's gone from circus freakshow to tabloid deity and back, but to Sky Ferreira, "He was never 'Michael Jackson,' just Michael." Massive words. "I used to have my birthday parties at Neverland. Once he asked me to sing for him and he started crying."

From her name-dropping valley-girl slur and showbiz cliques (including Pharrell, Taylor Swift, Will.i.am et al) you could mistake her for yet another identikit tweenstar, but Ferreira inhabits a different world from the Mickey Mouse mafia. Her first single (called 'Lolita' after the slur shouted at Sky when she was partying in LA clubs with guys twice her age) sounds like Edith Piaf warbling the lesser/latter hits of Shampoo in Wigan Casino circa 1974.

Now she's working with oh-my-God: they-wrote-Britney's-'Toxic' producers Bloodshy and Avant (aka the Swedish dudes from Miiike Snow). And they're just top of a list of artists from Friendly Fires to The Virgins eyeing up Sky.

Why? Well she is just 17, if you know what we mean. But she's more than a pretty face: her 'wtvr' teen attitudez and mogul-esque tenacity have been garnering her all the right allies through the A to Z lists. But whether her pudding is filled with proof or poo very much remains to be seen. **Sam Wolfson**

NEED TO KNOW...

What: Squeaky-unclean LA hipster power-pop
Download: 'Lolita'



BLOG BUZZ

Glow-fi smartens up and finds God

FUTURE TRENDS

'Glow-fi'. Sounds nice, doesn't it? Kind of humid and intimate. Better, anyway, than 'chill-wave' or 'wave-gaze' or anything else dreamt up thus far to describe what Washed Out, Memory Tapes and Toro Y Moi are doing with their lives. If you're the biggest glow-fi fanatic on your street you'll love this latest addition to the web-canon, Ohio's Future Trends. The music Andrew G Clark makes is less snuggly and bleary-eyed but somehow more cosmic and snappily presented than his comrades' work, though.

"I think of that movie *Sunshine* by Danny Boyle," says Clark, 20, when asked where his head goes. "Or I imagine flying through space to save the world." Standard. 'Dangerous', once

its tempo slows, bathes naked in lagoons of blue ruby gloom, while 'Moonraker' is on Donnie Darko's 'going out' iTunes playlist.

"I researched how nebulas form on Wikipedia," Clark continues. "One of the terms used was 'future trends'. So I used it too."

Clark is also devoted to God, and is in electro-pop duo JAILB8 – now, is that 'glow-fi'? Maybe it's what's beyond, bona fide future trends glimpsed by Clark from the porthole of Donnie's time machine. **Kev Kharas**

NEED TO KNOW...

What: Slick, wide-eyed bedroom club-pop from God-fearing 20-year-old
Download: 'Dangerous'



JAIMIE'S ROUNDUP

NEW MUSIC'S TRANSCERVER

It has been a lo-fidelity year. In fact when our hoverboard-customising offspring look back on the sounds of 2009, you could forgive them for wondering if over these last 12 months terrorists got bored and started targeting the West's supplies of microphones, leads and mixing desks. Witness the underground rock'n'roll of last week's stars Dum Dum Girls, previous Radar faces such as Wavves and Blank Dogs, the abused electronics of Kindness, Nite Jewel or Salem and numerous made-up genres like Washed Out's glow-fi and the no-fi of Graffiti Island. With a bit of luck this should yield some stars, and my money's on Dum Dum Girls (who we've been promised will be touring with Blank Dogs over this way early 2010) and Kindness - whose every new demo makes us completely rethink every conception we held about the project and foam at the mouth in

anticipation of the album. But for anyone whose eardrums have been left feeling like slashed tracing paper from the past year's siege of distortion, a lo-fi antidote is upon us. Right now, the US

Billboard Hot 100 is topped by one of iTunes' fastest-ever selling singles, having shipped over 900,000 in a matter of weeks, and it's by a band you'll probably not have heard of. Owl City is one very smiley, wholesome Christian chap from Minnesota called Adam and his single 'Fireflies' represents the very latest Stateside monster chart mutation: lektrö-tweemo. It's bedroom twee-tinkling with emo's impassioned hooks and a backdrop of sheezy blips and glitches. An unstoppable force we'd be foolish to try fight against à la Paramore? Or just a terrible mouldy Stilton Postal Service rip-off? We haven't yet decided. Maybe both. Anyway, prepare yourself for impact, as with release and tour imminent, this one is gonna hit hard. By the way, thanks to everyone who made the launch of our new monthly club Radar Live @ Upstairs at The Garage a fairytale maiden voyage.

Jaimie Hodgeson
New Music Editor

EMAIL JAIMIE: RADAR@NME.COM
OR CHECK OUT HIS BLOG
NME.COM/NEWMUSIC/RADAR

Carsick Cars: throw a cigarette at them, they love it, honestly!

SCENE REPORT

Red Rock Revolution

Alex Hoban salutes the Chinese indie missionaries kicking off in Beijing

This month marks the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Communist People's Republic of China, and the state will be putting on a typically ostentatious display of unity in Tiananmen Square to celebrate. Yet the truth is this ain't the same country Chairman Mao and his cronies commandeered with the communist revolution all those many moons ago. Over the course of one generation it has opened up, liberalised, and is now the new economic centre of the world. In this relatively brief period of catch up it has adopted many of the cultural trends the West has taken for granted for decades; and rock music is no exception.

So even though as recently as 25 years ago, when Wham! became the first Western act to perform in Beijing and

show attendees dressed in identical communist smocks were beaten by police if they got out of their seats and danced, today the youth of Shanghai and Beijing are greedily sucking up the history of music at a speed that's creating chaos in the numerous live houses that the scene is sprouting.

In Shanghai's Zhijiang Dream Factory, crowds gather at weekends to check out the latest bands. With a capacity of 500, it transcends any expectations of an indie affair taking place at a pub-gig level, and instead offers shows that let young Chinese music fans with guitars in their eyes let rip.

And they bloody well do. While culturally reserved audiences in neighbours Japan and Korea may nod politely and, if feeling feisty, will hazard applause, here people mosh until the sweat is collecting in puddles in their shoes. The city itself has spawned its own roster of bands, whose main purpose is simply to soundtrack people's choreographed stagediving, but a few, like *1012*, *Blank Dogs* and *Boys Climbing Ropes*, are merging sounds and styles to create a form of local indie. Meanwhile up in the capital, a different atmosphere prevails. With the government close by and watching over,



Boys Climbing Ropes (not literally)



The wonderfully named new wavers Queen Sea Big Shark

live houses such as Mao's and D22 are smaller and more inclusive. Most bands know each other and play together, and take pride in the community atmosphere. The best of them have huge followings. Ask any teenager who knows what a guitar is what they think of China's Sonic Youth sound-a-likes *Carsick Cars* and they'll probably throw a cigarette at you, in honour of their huge hit 'Zhong Nan Hai', which takes its name from a local tobacco brand.

Along with *P K 14*, who sound like The Fall fed up on fried rice, and new wave partisans *Queen Sea Big Shark*, these are the bands that represent Chinese youth culture finding a voice of its own. It all marks a Red Revolution that's worthy of real celebration



P K 14: like 'The Fall fed on fried rice' apparently...



THEM CROOKED VULTURES

(l-r) Some dude,
some other dude,
some other dude



HOW TO MAKE A SUPERGROUP

The worry was that Dave Grohl, John Paul Jones and Josh Homme might damage their legacies with **Them Crooked Vultures**. The result, says **Martin Robinson**, is a band worth of being mentioned in the same breath as their past glories...

The first anyone knew of it was a page on the Lollapalooza website in August this year, which just stated 'Metro - 8/9 - Midnight' below three symbols: that of Queens Of The Stone Age, Foo Fighters and John Paul Jones' own cipher from 'Led Zeppelin IV'. That was enough for the show to sell out in three minutes. When Josh Homme, Dave Grohl and Jones came onstage, announced themselves as Them Crooked Vultures and blew faces apart with their never-before-heard, Sledgehammer Of The Gods rock, two questions arose: 1) How the hell had they managed to keep this a secret? and 2) How amazing is this?

The three members are speaking exclusively to *NME* about Them Crooked Vultures for the first time, although scheduling conflicts, most notably Grohl's overseeing of the Foo's 'Greatest Hits', mean they have to do it individually. Such an air of a flame that could flicker out at any time is only adding to the excitement surrounding this, something which the band are hardly quelling. Fittingly, given the way they announced their arrival, they even have their own coat of arms now.

"I consider the album to be the most exciting thing I've done in my whole

entire life," says Dave Grohl from Nirvana and Foo Fighters.

John Paul Jones can barely contain himself, "Oh YEAH I'm excited! It's a dream... it's like the old Zeppelin days."

Josh Homme simply smirks, "Well, no pressure then."

■ Meet in an unusual place

Them Crooked Vultures began, as these things often do, in drink. Dave Grohl was speaking to his pal John Paul Jones after presenting Led Zep with an award in London in September last year, and since he was "absolutely pissed," rattled me over for his birthday party at Medieval Times.

"IT'S NICE THAT NOBODY'S BEEN SHOUTING FOR 'STAIRWAY...'"

JOHN PAUL JONES

fuckin' mate Josh Homme, and asked Jones to come play in LA. Grohl and Homme both wanted a break from Foo's and Queens respectively, had been looking for an excuse to work together again for ages, and now Grohl had an amazing one. "For 20 years people have asked me what my dream band line-up is. And now I can say, I'm in it!" he says.

However, at the time Jones had a Led Zeppelin around his neck. "I wasn't quite sure what was happening with another band we were trying to start!" he laughs. "Once we heard that Robert didn't want to do anything, Page and I weren't going to reform Zeppelin, but just a new band. But nothing came of that, so I called Dave up and he invited me over for his birthday party at Medieval Times."

The US restaurant chain where you eat while watching knights duel on horses was a very Grohl-ish place to set up Homme and a member of that most Arthurian of bands on their "blind date".

Homme recalls, "Dave never mentioned John to me until December, and I didn't even believe him until January [at his birthday party]. What was good about Medieval Times was that there was no risk of pretension. It broke the ice. With a lance." Jones says they quickly arranged to play amid the clash of swords. "It was weird, the blind date, but I was aware of

Josh's music, obviously, and I thought he was really interesting as a singer, a guitarist and songwriter. I couldn't imagine it not working."

■ When it comes to rehearsals, man up

Two days later, these three legendary musicians converged on Homme's Baby Duck Studios like the greatest gunfighters in the West ready to prove who was the fastest of them all. Grohl and Homme, arguably the greatest drummer and guitarist of their generation, eyeballed each other as they set up, but when Jones strolled through the doors like an old sheriff - the greatest bass player of all time, who was playing 'Kashmir' while they were still shitting in nappies - they trembled. This was not for the faint-hearted, this was muso-a-muso, Goliath Vs two only slightly smaller Goliaths, and the sheer weight of musical history hung between them in the air. Josh Homme is still having palpitations about what happened next. "It was white knuckles - oh right, HERE, and then HERE. It was like cramming for a test. To be honest, I was fucking nervous. It was just a blur. But the second jam it was like, this is on. It had a real forward motion to it, and I think we all understood we had to grab hold of it."



Grohl chuckles at the memory of the Titans Of Rock awkwardly seeing if they should get serious. "After three days John had to go back to England, and we put down our instruments, sat down and looked at each other and went, 'OK, should we be a band?' and everyone nodded. It was funny, none of us has started a new band for years!"

■ Don't be afraid of legends

When Jones returned they reconvened at Baby Duck with the understanding that they keep their activities completely secret (Homme: "Just to do a number on everyone and hope they dig it") and challenged themselves by writing and recording in the studio. While Jones was thrilled by this ("We had to discover each other musically during the actual recording process. It was different for me, but brilliant") and

Grohl was oozing confidence ("I knew it was going to be the best thing I'd ever done"), the uncharacteristically humble Josh Homme that *NME* speaks to confesses he was worried. "I've spent my whole career avoiding situations like that. I've always had 15 pieces of songs, or actual songs waiting for a record, so you're freed from the pressure of writing. But in this situation I had one and a half tunes, and I hadn't played guitar in six months."

Grohl was surprised by how stressed Homme was. "Josh is usually the strong bravado leader type, but he was nervous. That made him make the best record he's ever done. But there were times where I could tell Josh was questioning himself. I don't think he often questions himself, y'know? (laughs) At one point I said to him, 'Man, let's just blast through this like a Desert Session. And he said, 'This is NOT a Desert Session record. I'm dead serious with this.' Josh had the realisation that the three of us together had to deliver something classic."



"FOR 20 YEARS PEOPLE HAVE ASKED ME WHAT MY DREAM BAND LINE-UP IS. AND NOW I CAN SAY I'M IN IT"

DAVE GROHL

Homme reasons, "Once Dave asked for this to go down, it had to work – it'd be damning if we didn't deliver."

But the promise of their reputations wasn't the only worry; since sessions revolved initially around jamming, their musical mettle was effectively tested, as Grohl so colourfully illustrates.

NME: Was it also, Dave, that Josh felt pressure because he was playing with John Paul Jones and...

Grohl: "Fuck yeah, who didn't?! NO SHIT! Jones is a musical giant and when you're in a room with someone like that... John

Paul Jones is not forcing you to do the best you've ever done, he's not holding his name above your head to remind you he is A FUCKING GENIUS AND WAS IN THE GREATEST ROCK'N'ROLL BAND OF ALL TIME! You just have it implanted in your mind."

NME: How did you cope with that?

Grohl: "Cos I entered into this

knowing, OK, he's already played with the greatest rock drummer of all time. There's no way on earth that John will ever say, (sundering) Dave, you're the best drummer I've ever played with.' There's just no way that could ever happen. So that takes a lot of the pressure off for me. That's my warped sense of justification."

Homme says the two young 'uns covered up such concerns by being cheeky. "Dave's the type of guy to be like, 'Whatever, John Paul Jones of Led Zeppelin.' So it was among the most ego-less albums I've ever been on."

Jones himself says any awkwardness was soon dispelled. "We all laughed a lot. Josh soon put his rustiness behind him. When he saw we were blasting away he thought, 'I'm gonna be part of this', and he was. The two of them are up there with the best I've ever played with."

■ Take it seriously

Once everyone had gotten comfortable with each other, they got down to it with serious focus. They understood they weren't going to just bash it out Dead Weather-style, there was serious intent to write something great. Working from noon until 3am every day, they got better and tighter, and took more risks.

"We all worked very hard and the atmosphere in the studio was electric because the music was obviously very exciting," says Jones. "We would impress each other as well, because you're showing what you can do. It's not

really competitive, but everybody's trying to show their best side. And it comes out in the record. Nobody's sitting back and coasting, everybody's taking chances. It really makes for some fiery music."

As Grohl might say, 'NO SHIT!' Really, it's resulted in the most exciting rock album in a long, long time. On opening track 'No One Loves Me And Neither Do I', the buzz in the studio is palpable, as the three of them strut bluesy patterns around each other before uniting for a crunching, relentless, rhythmic climax. *Hell* yes it sounds like 'Songs For The Deaf' meets 'Physical Graffiti', and the sheer amount of ideas crammed into every song – tempo changes, riff changes, instrument changes, clothes changes, sex changes – shows the band works spectacularly well, and they can barely believe it themselves. Jones says, "I got to stretch out, and I'm playing better than I have done in years," while Grohl states, "I did things on this album that I've never done before, that I'm really proud of. I've just played disco AC/DC beats for my whole career, but this album I'm pulling some shit where my drummer friends are like, 'Wow! How the fuck did you do that?'"

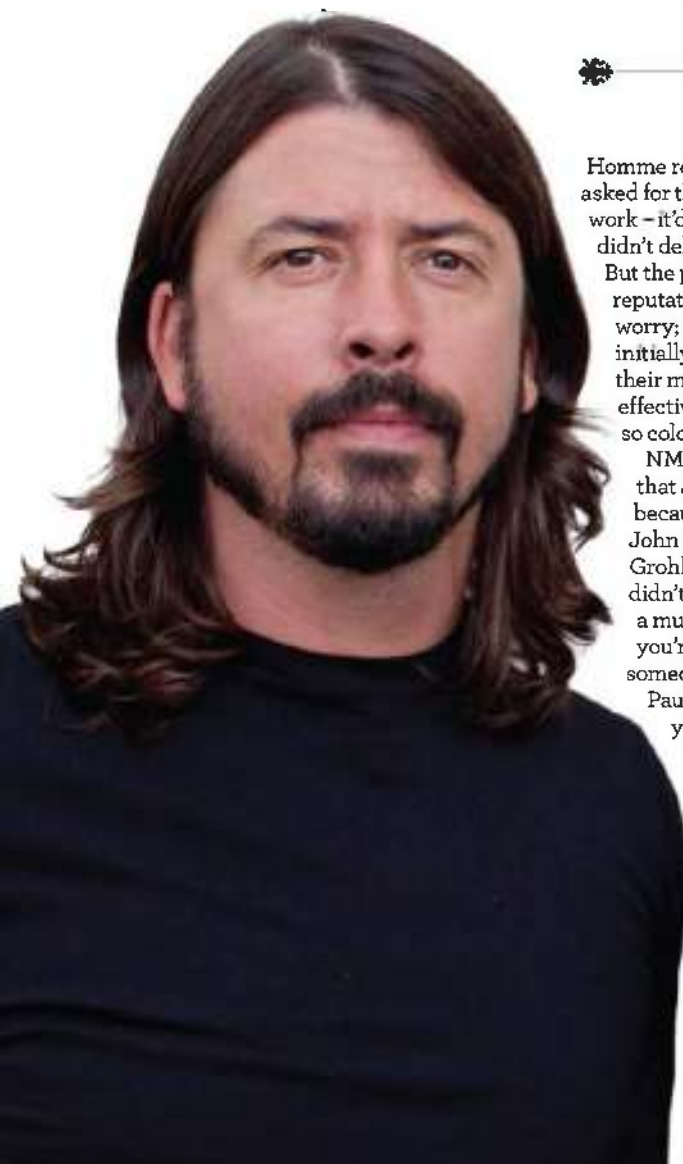
Yet, despite his concerns, it's Homme's playing that first grabs your attention. For while the album touches esoteric places on say, the Tom Waits-goes-drone of 'Interludes With Ludes', spectacular gee-tar action is never far away, because while it's hard to fully appreciate the polyrhythmic genius at work, we all know a muthachuffa of a riff when we hear one. When the experimentation and heavy rocking truly lock together as on 'Elephants' and 'Spinning In Daffodils', it's unlike anything you've ever smashed your face to before.

Homme says putting it all together was "like three people solving a giant Rubik's Cube". He's proud it's quite difficult in places and embraces Jones' arsenal of oddball instruments: "Jones is the Swiss army knife of rock'n'roll. Music has got really safe. That's not for me. Risk nothing, get nothing. So it's important for Jones to whip out his tools."

He winces at the word 'supergroup', notes how pedigree didn't count, and insists their methodology wasn't self-indulgent. "It was the most difficult record I've ever made, knowing I wanted it to be as good as possible – it was the time to push it. But early on it was decided we should make songs. And I'm a sucker for hooks."

■ Trust Josh

He's a walking contradiction is Josh Homme, and while all insist there was no leader, you feel he's the key to where this is coming from. Grohl says of 'Reptiles', "I only



started understanding that song three weeks ago. I'm not kidding. Josh put together this beat and I was like, 'I don't even know what that is. It sounds completely random.' And he was like, 'Yeah, it's supposed to.' Things written to sound arbitrary and random – that's Josh's forte."

And of Homme himself, Grohl says, "I have no problem calling one of my best friends a total fucking genius. But he'll come to the studio with something that you think is the most ridiculous piece of shit you've ever heard in your life."

Homme laughs about deliberately doing that as a way to push Jones. "I was trying to think how I can take him to a new level, and then I finally realised I have to play the dumbest stuff ever. My granpappy always used to say, 'If you can't out smart 'em, out dumb 'em.' That's where 'Caligulove' came from. The riff in that song is amongst the stupidest I've ever done."

Jones hoots at the memory. "I wasn't going to be out-dumbed either. I can play a dumb riff as good as anybody! But we played it, and went, 'Well actually...' And I started doing an organ riff, using a sound I always hated in the '60s. And it worked out. It was something I'd never have done otherwise."

■ When you play the first shows, kick some ass

With an album ready by August, the band played their secret Lollapalooza show, followed by surprise sets at Reading and Leeds, and delighted in



The Vultures in full flight

blind-siding everyone. "The audience hadn't heard anything at that point," says Jones. "They went wild between each song and then they shut up, and had to concentrate. It was really funny."

Homme talks about surprise being important ("It's one of the great elements of music, being able to go BOOM, and it's gone in the last few years") and it continues to be a motivator. "Before the shows, I've felt like a puppy with rabies, frothing and jumping at the guys, because I don't know exactly what's going to happen." Jones similarly loves

do. I go completely berserk. People make fun of me for it, but I can't help it."

As for the future, Homme and Grohl say they're having the time of their lives, but aren't sure there'll be more music. But, John Paul Jones, who the two youngsters were so worried about impressing, says, "Another album? Oh yeah. Yeah! Absolutely. I mean eventually their bands will want them back, but they're going to have to fight me first!" He then explains why he's enjoying it so much. "There's many parallels to Led Zeppelin with this. It's like Zeppelin plus the internet in the

"I'VE FELT LIKE A PUPPY WITH RABIES, FROTHING AND JUMPING, BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN"

JOSH HOMME

the onstage "stretching out", especially when he plays keytar and "jaws drop", but even better for him, "These are the first shows in years when nobody has shouted out for 'Stairway To Heaven'."

The audiences expect to hear Them Crooked Vultures music. It really is nice."

With a full tour coming up in December, Grohl's primary concern is survival. "I just want to make it through the set without having a stroke. It's not easy at 40 to play like you're 21."

Unfortunately that's what my enthusiasm for this forces me to

way it's spread through word of mouth. And it's like Zeppelin in the way it's bringing together some of the best players around, and not having to follow rules."

So there you go: according to John Paul Jones, this is your generation's very own Led Zeppelin. And you should listen to him, because he wrote shitting 'Black Dog'.



Turn the page for NME's verdict on the just-released album





THE ALBUM VERDICT

THEM CROOKED VULTURES THEM CROOKED VULTURES (COLUMBIA)

8

There are two ways to approach this record. The first is to squint back into history, light a candle and recite this list thrice by moonlight: Led Zeppelin's first four albums, 'Presence', 'Physical Graffiti', 'Houses Of The Holy', 'In Utero', 'Nevermind', 'The Colour And The Shape', 'Rated R', 'Songs For The Deaf'. Each of those albums is a stone-cold classic, an unimpeachable document of greatness that echoes long after it stops spinning. For a trio of behemoth legends who've had a hand in their creation to cloister themselves in a studio and make music, whatever their motives, demands our attention and respect. It's not exactly inscribed on two stone tablets and hand-delivered to a lost society fattened from mischief and decadence, but to a certain sector of music fans it's not a million miles away.

The second way is to say all old music is shit, and the greatest bands in history always made a point of deliberately fucking up what came before them. Kill your idols, flay those tired prophets, stick your neck out and create some art.

Them Crooked Vultures are paying lip-service to an era that crumbled decades ago, and this album could have been made by any bunch of hoary chancers over the last 40 years.

The truth of TCV, and this record is, of course, much more interesting. John Paul Jones, Dave Grohl and Josh Homme have come up with something that sounds, well, a lot like Zep, the Fooz and the Queens jamming together: some of it is staggeringly good and thrillingly muscular in a way so little is at the moment, some should have been swiftly nixed (having said that, it'd take some serious sac to nudge the guy who held 'Dazed And Confused' together and say, "Sorry JPJ, but slap-bass sucks") and some is intentionally funny, to pre-emptively prick the bubble of pomposity they knew would be foisted upon them. Take rock too seriously and you end up with the joyless Wolfmother, too lightly and The Darkness' fake tits are pushed in your face. In the middle, however, are AC/DC, Iron Maiden and now TCV. What have we learnt?



The charging 'Elephants' is an instant, almost unbearably exciting highlight, a thudding pure rock anthem that feels like it's been played in a small, close practice room with all three Vultures sparring by playing as hard and fast as they can until one of them blinks. Switching between ankle-deep puddles of sludge and an asteroid shower of 10-fingered riffery, it's a head-spinning feast of polyrhythms with Jones' heartbeat bass at its core and Homme's lounge drawl kept to a minimum. And so

much happens in the first minute of 'Mind Eraser, No Chaser' – an intro consisting of three different songs being played at once but still sounding awesome, a chorus that rises and blooms like a sunflower, Homme growling about head-altering pills – that reaching the end of the song is quite the struggle, but certainly a rewarding one.

Changing pace, 'Caligulove' is as sleazy as the name suggests, strutting cocksure through a fog of hot fuzz, stabbing guitars and an organ part so authentically '60s it sounds perversely fresh; 'New Fang' is a playful but disarmingly meaty exercise in putting together a verse-chorus-verse song that'll get steering wheels tapped during drivetime across the world. Like much of the album it's complexity masquerading as simplicity with the end result as fine a rock song as has been released in years. And for those who say all good guitar music is about getting laid, it would appear Homme agrees. "I told her I was trash/She winked and laughed and said, 'I already know, I got a beautiful place to put your face'/And she was right" goes opener 'No One Loves Me & Neither Do I', and if that's a touch too sophisticated then try this: "If sex is a weapon then smash boom pow/How ya like me now?"

Disappointingly, or perhaps inevitably, there are a couple of moments of howling shitiness. 'Scumbag Blues' starts off inoffensive enough but detours into a painful world of slap-bass – sorry, JPJ, but slap-bass sucks – and a predictably shuddering beat. 'Warsaw Or The First Breath You Take After You Give Up' also slips slightly too far into solipsistic meandering and sounds like what every band with a competent rhythm section might soundcheck with. And the worst that can be said of 'Dead End Friends' is that it's just a bit dull. 'Bandoliers', on the

her hand, feels sparse compared to the richness of the rest of the record, and suffers for it. The southern-fried guitars add colour to a fairly standard structure, but compared to the reptilian 'Reptiles' (because it's menacing, changes direction at speed and bites hard) it's just filler.

But TCV are taking the piss, because they can. Hell, there's one called 'Interludes With Ludes', and the parping outro of 'Mind Eraser...' and the jig that closes 'Spinning In Daffodils' are intentionally weird, as if to say, 'Stop analysing this! We're mucking about!'. It shows, and not in a bad way. As a light-hearted jam by three mates it's far superior to most rock careerists' entire oeuvre. It won't change the world, but it doesn't need to – because we've got Zep's first four albumzzzz... **Ben Patashnik**

DOWNLOAD: 1) 'Elephants' 2) 'New Fang' 3) 'Caligulove'

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Give your opinion on Them Crooked Vultures' debut at NME.COM/blogs

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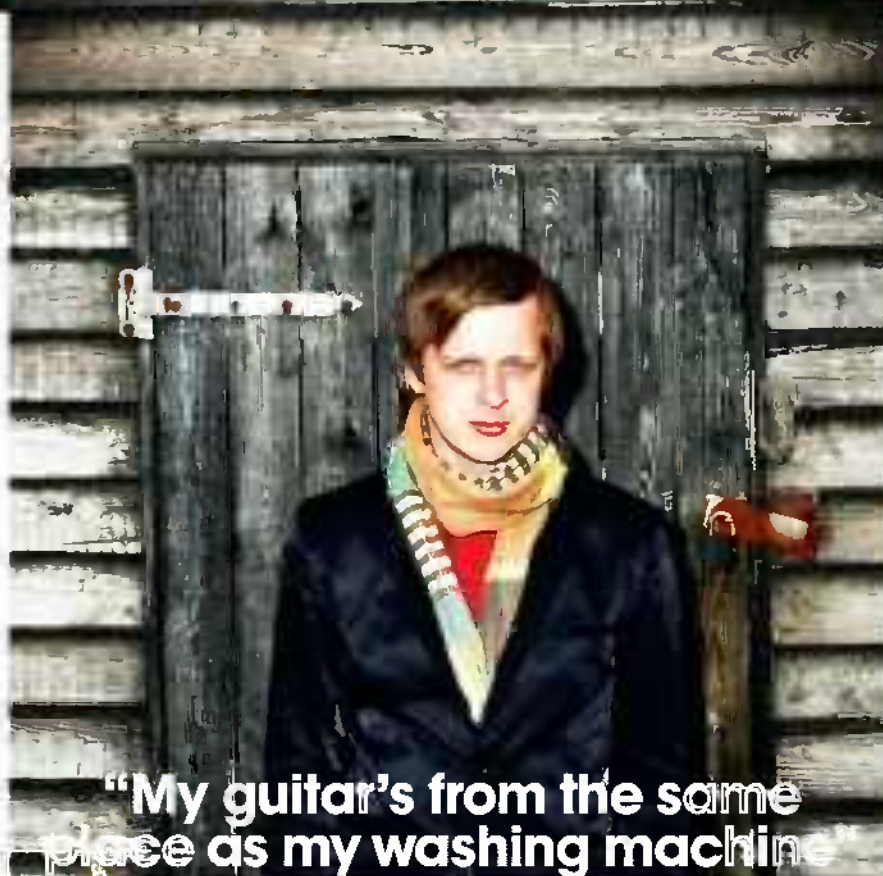
He's a hero on the tiny island he calls home, but will Teitur's provincial background ever allow him to be taken seriously elsewhere, asks **James McMahon**

If you ever find yourself in the Faroe Islands, and you go buy a jumper – because there's not really much to buy in this small country other than knitwear and postcards depicting houses with grass on their roofs – the shopkeeper will smile and whistle a song called 'Catherine The Waitress' at you. And if you conquer your moral dilemma and decide to eat a puffin in one of the island's few restaurants, the waitress will most likely blush and ask what "he" is like while serving you the plucked seabird.

The preconception is this: if you're foreign, and in the Faroes, you've probably come to interview Teitur.

"That said, I think most Faroese people have no idea what I really do," laughs the multi-instrumentalist, singer-songwriter and 32-year-old man-child. "The idea of being an artist in the Faroe Islands is almost an abstract idea – there's not really much precedent for someone who writes songs and plays them to people for a living. There's not really anything like a music shop here. I bought my guitar from the same place I got my washing machine." Yet his countrymen do love him – in fact, the Faroese love Teitur so much, he can leave the keys to his recording studio in the islands' capital Tórshavn underneath a brick by the door and not get robbed.

After running whales onto beaches and stabbing the fuck out of them (an activity that has been practised in the country since 1584 – around 950 Long-finned Pilot Whales are killed annually) Teitur Lassen is undoubtedly the Faroe Islands' most high-profile export. They are, after all, tiny – a 2008 census estimated that this autonomous Danish province, located roughly equidistant between Scotland and Iceland in the middle of the North Atlantic Ocean, registered a population of only 48,856 (that's about the same as the UK town of Weymouth). The fact that someone who was once nominated for America's equivalent of the Mercury's – the Shortlist Awards – and appeared on the soundtrack to a couple of bad US romcoms is living



"My guitar's from the same place as my washing machine"

among the more regular populace of fishermen and farmers registers high on the gossip factor. Not that there's much else to gossip about. There's never even been a recorded murder (Teitur: "Except for some drunk guy who shot someone from Greenland, and that doesn't really count").

Yet all of this poses a problem. Teitur deserves to be talked about – 'All My Mistakes', his fourth English record (2007's 'Káta Hjørnið' was sung in his native tongue) is a deep, rewarding collection of songs that veer between acid-folk, bleary eyed AOR balladry and C86-style twee pop. His performance at the island's principal music festival G!, backed by a four-piece brass section made up of children from the host village of Norðragøta waving to their mums throughout, provides an opportunity for many in the country to see their hero in the flesh for the first time. His

performance is punctuated by the entire crowd turning towards the sea en masse to watch 12 naked men hold a running race across the shore, and is characterised by people dressed as trolls throwing sausages in the air throughout. But how, when you come from a nation as esoteric as this, whose only possible reference point is Narnia, do you distinguish yourself enough to be known for your music and not your nationality?

"I get asked about the place whether I'm in America or Europe, wherever... But I appreciate that the Faroes are mysterious for people. The problem is, is that there is so much that is unique about here, that people don't ask one question, they ask lots. By the time I've finished telling them, 'Yes, we have our own language', we run out of time to talk about my music."

Yet while Teitur understandably finds this frustrating, perhaps the role he

has to play in Faroese culture is bigger than the prospects of his own career. The Faroes are a beautiful place, for sure, but one not without problems; the islands' principal religion is part of the Lutheran evangelical movement and, consequently, the nation's outlook is often very conservative, making it difficult for young people on the island ("Very few people stay after the age of 18," says Teitur. "You just run out of stuff to do"). Add to that mix much conflict between those who want to remain under Danish rule and those who want independence and you've got a country with many questions to ask of itself in the next decade.

"I think a problem for young people here is provinciality and the province police," says Teitur. "You know the way small towns are ran? Imagine a whole country run like that, by schoolteachers and jolly men with dubious ambitions. When you're a teenager, it's what it is. But when you grow older and have travelled, it becomes harder to deal with. Young people feel very much outside of society here in some ways, because many values are totally ignored in comparison to other countries. And it's so hard here sometimes – you're in the middle of nature. If you want a good pizza or just justice, you have to make it yourself."

Above and beyond his music, perhaps this is why the people in the wool shops, the restaurants, and at G! love him so; Teitur represents something to them other than what the schoolteacher, their church and the police do. After all, he's shown you can be Faroese and not be a farmer. That you can travel the world and see something other than snowy mountaintops. That you can make your way in life from having a guitar and something to say. Whatever impact he may make outside his native isle, perhaps his role to play in all this is as Godhead of a new Faroese inspiration. Whether the rest of the world falls for him like his own kind have or not, perhaps Teitur Lassen's glorious, lasting legacy will be to see sales of guitars in the islands' washing machine shop rise exponentially.

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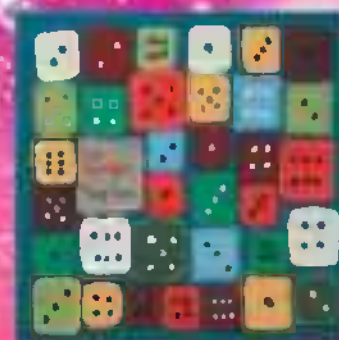
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MUSE

UK TOUR 2009

Transported by no less than 80 crew members, Muse's most ambitious stage set to date centred around what Matt Bellamy describes as "a group of utilitarian-style buildings, like prisons, that the three of us will be locked in". One of the highlights of the set came three songs in during 'New Born', when hundreds of green lasers darted around the arena.



MUSE

UK TOUR 2009

The setlist on this tour featured almost every song from 'The Resistance', including Matt Bellamy's classical piece 'Exogenesis: Symphony Part 1 (Overture)'. And despite the fact the three members spent much of the shows perched atop skyscrapers, there were points in the set – here during 'Guiding Light', for example – where Muse adopted a more conventional three-piece stage set up.





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THEY HAVE “NO IDEA” WHETHER MUSE ARE GAY. THEY THINK LILY ALLEN SHOULD KEEP HER NOSE OUT OF DOWNLOADING. AND ONE’S A MASSIVE SHANIA TWAIN FAN. WE PUT YOUR QUESTIONS TO **BIFFY CLYRO**. THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED...

INTERVIEW: JUDE ROGERS PICS: ANDY WILLISHER

If you ever thought that rock was the refuge of an harsh and unforgiving mistress, be reassured that it appears it's ruled by a god after all. In 2009, the hairiest, sweatiest, nicest band making it – a three-piece from Ayrshire who came together as teenagers, spent 15 years honing their heavy, heart-shattering songs and building their following without industry backing – are finally bona fide chart stars. With two Top 10 singles tucked under their (moist, presumably) belts, and a career-best album out this week, Biffy Clyro sit before *NME*, beaming like stadium lights, ready to take their newbie

'Only Revolutions', their fifth album, out on a nationwide tour.

But Biffy are still a band of the people. They've not forgotten the fans who lifted their careers to the lofty station that they now occupy – a dashing cream sofa in a Carnaby Street office, where they're trying to get cappuccino froth out of their beards, since you ask. To prove they're not living the Life Of Zane Lowe and Fearnie Cotton-assisted Riley, they wanted you to ask them whatever you wanted, and as always, dear readers, you obliged dutifully. So now it's time to find out Biffy's most embarrassing stories, whether or not

they think Muse are gay, and why they reckon Lily Allen "should keep her nose out of things"...

Where did you get the name Biffy Clyro? And be truthful this time! *From @kwik_silva*

Simon: "OK, I'll tell the truth then! Basically, what happened is that when I was 12, I came out of the shower, I was drying myself in my room, and I stood all over a newspaper, and I got the ink all over my feet. When I went to wipe the ink off the letters on the bottom of my feet spelt out Biffy Clyro (room explodes into laughter)."

NME: You spend hours at home thinking these up don't you?

Simon: "Yeah, it's great fun!"

What's the most embarrassing thing you've ever done? *From @HannahBubba*

James: "Supporting The Rolling Stones and both my shoes falling off. Both of them. Imagine trying to keep your cool in front of 40,000 bloody Stones fans who couldn't care less about what you're doing."

Simon: "And then there was the time when we said, 'Thanks Milton Keynes!' when we were in Wolverhampton, or that early show at the Barfly in London when everyone in the front row was staring at me really intently, and I thought, yes, they're loving it... and then one girl pointed at my trousers and my fly was undone..."

Ben: "Or the time with Hell Is for Heroes, when I got drunk one night and told them, 'Hey, I can drum on your songs.' And they asked me the next night, when I was sober, and I was awful."

What embarrassing records do you own?

From Daniel, via email

Simon: "Embarrassing is relative, isn't it? We're huge Crowded House fans, and we like Dire Straits, but we're not embarrassed by our records."

James: "I've got a few Ne-Yo records."

Simon: "That's quite bad."

James: "I hate R&B, the whole vocoder thing, but he's really talented. He can move! I can't dance at all (*ruffles ginger hair*). I've not got enough black in me."

Ben: "I've got a Shania Twain single, 'I'm Gonna Getcha Good!'. It's a cracking song! That middle-eight is really good."

Simon: "Mine would have to be 'Chinese Democracy' (*everyone laughs*). I was so desperate to get the record, and I was so let down. Ah well, they'll be back, I'm sure of that."

What did you think of the BBC's decision to let Nick Griffin on Question Time? *From Silverberg, via email*

Simon: "It's a shame they're getting so much publicity, the BNP. And then they complain when people are booing them, when they're putting their opinions out there that the rest of the nation don't share."

James: "And they've only got 80,000 members, you know, people think they've got a lot more than that."

Simon: "They can just fuck off."

What did you think of Lily Allen's campaign to stop people file-sharing? Did you agree that file-sharing is having a bad impact on the music industry?

From @Terriblesoup

Simon: "Taking records when they're not finished - I don't think that's cool. But I find it's ironic that Lily Allen is voicing her opinions about it, then a week later she's saying she doesn't want to make music any more. Keep your nose out of things, then! She's lucky that she can fare well not doing music, and she's got her millions in the bank with which she can do whatever the fuck she wants to."

James: "Yeah, it kind of kind of defeated her argument somehow."

Ben: "Yeah, 'Stop your illegal downloads - I'm off!'"

Simon: "It's not cool. I don't think downloading's a problem, but there is a line you have to draw. With the new Atlas Sound record, for instance, someone got into his files and nicked the record before he'd done it - that's not on. Saying that, we're dying for people to hear our record, but if it snuck out, we'd be disappointed. It's complicated."

Simon - do you always catch colds because you've always got your top off? *From Lucy, via email*

Simon: "I get colds a lot, aye, but I've always got my top off because I'm a sweating enthusiast! I love sweating!"

NME: A friend of mine asked if I could get one of your sweaty T-shirts to take back for him.

Simon: "Oh God! You wouldn't want to pollute your bag with that!"

What's your favourite old song to perform - and what new songs do you love? *From @DonnaKurylak*

Simon: "A song that we played the other night for the first time in five years, called 'Kill The Old, Torture Their Young'. We wanted to open our first record with it, but we didn't, and I wish we had. It's funny when you play an old song - you get right back to the headspace you were in when you were writing it. And a new one, not one we've played yet, called 'Know Your Quarry'. I hope we'll pull that off without the strings on it!"

Ben: "'Eradicate The Doubt' off our second album. It's frantic, and goes off on all these angular tangents. A new one, I'd say 'Bubbles'. Because in true Biffy fashion, by the end of the song you don't know how it started!"

James: "Old songs, I'd say 'Hope For An Angel', which didn't make our first album, a bit of a regret of ours. It was the song we'd start our sets with in the early days - it's really quiet and beautiful, then it'd kick in and take people by surprise. You'd get people by the bar dropping drinks! We'd make it so quiet, almost silent, and then people would be, argh! And new, I'd say 'Born On A Horse'. It's quite different to anything we've done before, and I'd say a bit... (*looks at others nervously*) groovy?"

Ben: "Yeah, we're normally anti-groove..."

This is the second time you've supported Muse.

What do you think of them? *From @UchuBonkers*

Simon: "It's impossible to not love Muse if you're a rock band - they're so flamboyant and ridiculously over the top. They kind of do everything you dream of doing in a rock band when you're 15 years old and starting to dream about it. They're the same age as us, and just done their fifth record, too, and it's beautiful to see a band like that really evolving, not trying to recreate the same thing. To be a band of their scope and their size and their nature to push what they're doing, it's incredible."

James: "And to book two nights at the legendary Wembley Stadium, being the first band to play there when it reopened, with everyone going (*raises eyebrows*), and then for them to sell out the two of them really quickly and become among the greatest rock shows ever... we were lucky enough to be there, to get a chance to walk around that stage."

Are Muse really gay? *From @Megglan* (*Everyone laughs*)

Simon: "We don't know them that intimately, but we know they enjoy their lives, and enjoy the avenues they pursue! We're touring with them soon, so we'll certainly let you know."

Have your pals the Future Kings Of Spain split up? If so, can you get them back together? *From @Tickets_uk*

James: "They haven't! We just thought they had. We heard two different stories... but they're back on. They're a great band, great songwriters, and I'm sure they'll do great on their next record. Job done!"

What do you think about labels saying they'll drop people, like Amy Winehouse, who take recreational drugs? *From Jeanette, via email*

Simon: "Amy Winehouse and drugs! That's not exactly recreational, is it?"

Ben: "There's recreation, and then there's ruining your career through drugs. If you take drugs recreationally, that's up to the person, isn't it? Then the record labels might want to look at their employees..."

Simon: "And then take every record you own and fucking burn it! The record label people are probably doing the drugs with her."

When me and a friend first heard of you we misheard your name as Beefy Claypole. Do you agree this is better?

From @Themella

James: "Beefy Claypole? But those are real words! The idea that Biffy Clyro aren't real words was the point of it, so no. Sorry!"

What underground music has been an influential, and essential part of your creative process? By the way, loving Simon's shoes.

From @MontheBiffy

Simon: "Thank you! We're really influenced by weird stuff. Like Lightning Bolt. When you watch their DVD, *The Power Of Salad & Milkshakes*, them driving round, playing in kitchens and gym halls...

you see a band as ferocious as that, it's their whole (*hacks*) *raison d'être* - God, I hate that phrase! But I love that - a band wanting to be awkward and as insanely loud as possible and almost drive people out of the place. And Sunn O))) too - I've actually got a Sunn O))) tattoo after hearing their new record."

James: "And Karate, Burning Airlines, Braid."

What's your favourite tattoo, Simon and when and why did you get it? *From James, via email*

Simon: "This circle on my back is my favourite. My wife and I got the same tattoo, at the same time, when we were first together. We're married now."

James/Ben in unison: "Awwwww."

What's your favourite current record?

From @Bubbles_123

Simon: "The xx album - it's a perfect record."

James: "The new Wilco or Pearl Jam."

Ben: "Any Pulled Apart By Horses stuff."

Did you ever think you'd make it big when you started out? *From Richard, via email*

Simon: "To us, being successful is getting to make music for a living. Saying that, we've definitely done more than we thought we would, but we make music in the same way that we used to."

James: "We haven't changed anything. Although obviously I've got a stylist (*pats T-shirt, everyone laughs*). We write songs the same way, practise, just work hard. It's the Biffy way!"



"I've always got my top off because I'm a sweating enthusiast, I love sweating!"

SIMON NEIL

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THE CURIOUS CASE OF BETH JEANS HOUGHTON

She sees words as colours, wants to sell soup for a living and has vile table manners. **Rebecca Robinson** meets the indie folkster who will restore your faith in the great British eccentric



“I did an interview once where they asked me if I thought me and Laura Marling had anything in common,” splutters the girl with the shocking blonde afro. “I said, ‘No, unless you want to hear about my vagina.’”

If music in 2009 has had one coherent theme, it's been the re-emergence of the female singer-songwriter as a dominant force in pop. Lob a brick through the window of a Barfy and you'll hit a girl playing an acoustic guitar on a stool. Beth Jeans Houghton, the aforementioned bubble-blondie girl, speaks the truth when she says the only thing this year's proliferation of women in pop have in common is genitalia. Yet you can't deny the obvious – from La Roux to Ladyhawke to Florence to Speech Debelle, the charts are full of esoteric, talented women. Yet such is the modern artist's marketing spend, and given the hot air emanating from major label boardrooms, there's a suspicion that often these artists' visions aren't exclusively their own.

Thank heaven, then, for Beth Jeans Houghton; underage indie folk star in ascension and an artist whose music, vision, personality, message – the whole package – is a creation all of her own.

Consider this: more money has been spent on making sure Little Boots' hair is totally now in the last five minutes than has been spent on Beth in the last five months. That just serves to highlight that what's important in this age of homogenisation – both of opinion and of music – is imagination. Beth Jeans Houghton has done it her way because no-one would do it for her. When we commission a shoot of someone for the features section of *NME*, we consider hiring a stylist. Yet Beth's vision is so unspoilt – check out her host of 'looks' on MySpace – we knew that there was no need to for her. It's worth noting she turned up more or less looking like she does over on the left of these words. If everyone spent less time on elaborate viral marketing ploys and more time on tunes, ideas and such innovative presentation, perhaps pop might be a more colourful, vibrant place.

“I'm really happy that everything's coming together and I'm working with people who won't force me to do anything I don't want to,” says Beth. “I'm not even signing a proper record deal until I've finished my album because I don't want anyone else to have any influence over it. I want to do it my way, I don't want anyone coming in and telling me the trumpet should be louder or I should make a song longer or even tell me what to wear. I think that would suggest to anyone listening that I didn't have a very good sense of myself or a strong belief in what I was doing. If I didn't I wouldn't be a happy person.”

In an interview peppered with shrieks of hysterical laughter, wild tangents and the science of synesthesia she proves that passion and creativity are integral to her very being – as well as a choice anecdote about spitting in a child's face (more on this later). The fact that just

a few years ago she was an ordinary schoolgirl living in a terraced house in a sleepy Newcastle suburb, busking in the city centre on Saturdays and knitting ties for boys she liked is remarkable, because to look at her now she might as well be from space. She left school to study fashion at college. However, during a class project where students were told to make a collage of their fashion influences, among a sea of Kates and Naomis, she was a lone voice championing the aesthetics of Spider-Man. The class laughed at her. She decided to leave.

“The first song I ever wrote I played to my brother when he was in the bath through the bathroom door. He told me it sounded too much like Red Hot Chili Peppers and I was gutted because I had spent ages on it and didn't

“I’VE BEEN THINKING I’D LIKE TO GET A HEAD ENLARGEMENT. I HAVE A VERY SMALL HEAD”

write another one for a long time,” she says, pouting at the recollection. “I tried to write a musical when I was 12, it was called *Funny Honey* and I wanted to put it on at my school, but I didn't really know what it was going to be about, except I just had this idea that everyone would have afros and leggings and big bows.”

It's her ideas that set her head and shoulders above the competition, with a deceptively obtuse back catalogue propelling her forward in album-like leaps from song to song; everything from ethereal folk princess to glam-psycho Bowie-esque pop mastermind.

“I've got a plan,” she chirrups when asked about what the future holds. “I had planned to get married and have a child before I was 18 and get it out the way, but that hasn't worked because no-one is being particularly forthcoming on that front and also I've been thinking I'd like to get a head enlargement. I have a very small head, but I was watching Ricki Lake the other day and a woman got cheek implants put in through her eyelids and it put me off. So I have an alternative five-year plan, which involves me marrying a certain someone (*she mouths Devendra Banhart*) but if that doesn't work I'd like to go to Canada next year for a few months on my own, kind of like going into hibernation. Even if I come back mad that would be quite interesting,



don't you think? Better than coming back with a new fridge and a lipstick.” Add this to a list of modest aspirations such as being in a Wes Anderson film, buying

collaborators include the likes of Vetiver, John Martyn, Bon Iver, Devendra Banhart, Joanna Newsom and Adem), the only information she deems interesting enough to relay is about a suspected anatomical curiosity. “The thing about Charlie [Fink] was,” she says, “he had Y-front boxers on but the wrong way round, so when he bent over there was the Y-front crotch at the back. I couldn't tell if he'd done it on purpose or if he had a tail.” Ninety nine times out of 100 she will choose to talk about her experiences rather than her music. Asked about her last gig she tells a long story about meeting a drunk man with toothpaste round his mouth in a dark alley who told her future.

“I do get more influenced by people's personalities than by music,” she says, her face crumpling in concentration. “My parents influenced me in the way that they never made me go to college. If I wanted to do this they were really happy to help me and I always knew that if I wanted to do something else that would be fine as well. If I wasn't a musician I'd like to live self-sustainably like Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall and make my own cider and soup. Or be a fashion designer. Material stuff doesn't generally make me happy, but clothes make me happy because I portray myself through the way I look. How I dress up is how I'm feeling on that day. I've always dressed up anyway. I like the idea of fancy dress on a weekday and I like the idea of putting on a show.”

Perhaps her most shocking touring anecdote of the day is her story about a game her and her bandmates play called ‘Spit’. She explains while we wretch quietly to ourselves: “You basically get a mouthful of food and the person across the table opens their mouth and you get points depending on how much food you get into their mouth by spitting it. We were at Green Man and I was eating my spaghetti bolognese in a particularly shifty manner and someone who had never played it before moved at just the wrong moment and I hit this little girl in the face. Her mum was horrified, obviously, because I'd spat on her child and I tried to help her wipe it up and I already felt so guilty. I just wanted to kill myself and I ended up going off on my own and crying because I felt so bad, but the kid didn't really mind.”

Beth also writes in her own language because synesthesia means looking at things written in English makes her feel “heart sick” and she reels off the colours of the word Wednesday (“days of the week have different colours to the letters that are in them if they weren't a day. Basically, Wednesday is a grey day, but separately it's brown, grey, brown, green, red, grey, black and kind of flesh colour”). It's fitting, a colourful language for the most colourful of new talents.

We mentioned Beth Jeans Houghton is only 19, right? God knows what'll happen when she's 20.

Lennon, or is it actor Aaron Johnson?

WELCOME TO

INDIE

Last month's London Film Festival premiered some of the world's best music flicks. *NME* movie buff **James McMahon** ate a lot of popcorn...

From multiplexes to indie theatres, you can't move for good music at the movies right now. *Jennifer's Body*, *Twilight*, *Where The Wild Things Are...* and that's without mentioning the new White Stripes doc/the new Nirvana DVD/that Michael Jackson documentary...

It's fitting, then, that last month's 53rd Times London Film Festival premiered some of the world's best new music films. From Jarvis hogging the opening night red carpet at the premiere of *Fantastic Mr Fox* to the new John Lennon film closing the two-week run, *NME* was there every step of the way. Sit back, shove your face in your popcorn and let us rate the moments where rock'n'roll took over the big screen...

OIL CITY CONFIDENTIAL

Dir: Julien Temple
Cast: Lee Brilleaux, Wilko Johnson, John Martin

When self-anointed Spirit Of '77 historian Julian Temple describes Canvey Island pub punks Dr Feelgood as "four estuarine John-the-Baptists to Johnny Rotten's anti-Christ" in his latest conceptual rock documentary, you can't help thinking, 'Yeah, but why should I trust you? You did propagate Malcolm McLaren's revisionist bullshit in *The Great Rock N' Roll Swindle*

after all...' Yet while it's hard to trust Temple's narration after such a career blooper (although he did redeem himself in 2000's astonishing *The Filth And The Fury*, while his closeness with the surviving Pistols suggests they don't hold a grudge) the archive footage of Wilko Johnson and co in action presents an unquestionable case for the 'Thames Delta' four-piece being one of rock's great lost bands. Punk rock or pub rock - both's output was always better when the propagators were pissed, in terms of intake and outlook. And Dr Feelgood were nearly always fucking battered.



NOWHERE BOY

Dir: Sam Taylor-Wood
Cast: Scott Thomas, Aaron Johnson, Julia Duff

A defining trait of John Lennon's life was that he was surrounded by remarkable women, so it comes as no surprise that the stars of this early-years biopic are not 19-year-old Aaron Johnson in the lead, but the actresses playing his aunt [Scott Thomas], and mother Julia [Duff]. Johnson's Lennon may never get anywhere near Ian Hart's fire-cracker turn as the Beatle in controversial 1991 homo-expose *The Hours And Times* and 1994's *Backbeat*, not least because his accent is closer to Lily Savage than to the bespectacled one - but Scott Thomas and Duff are revelations. The former plays her part with stoic formality; Duff is mesmeric as the

flighty mum, even when her actions inspire contempt. It's hardly a spoiler to say that there are tragedies aplenty, yet Sam Taylor-Wood's directorial debut weighs these up with musical segments as inspiring as they are imaginative - the first meeting between John and Paul (Thomas Sangster) is as thrilling as you would hope, while a montage of mundane domestic life entwined with Lennon playing a banjo like a butcher hacking meat does much to reinforce the dark spark that makes pretty much any movie about Lennon watchable. And this more so than most.



WOOD



WHEN YOU'RE STRANGE

Dir: Tom DiCillo
Cast: John Densmore, Johnny Depp, Robby Krieger

Oliver Stone's 1991 *The Doors* movie spent its time blurring fact from fiction (Morrison putting his girlfriend in a closet and setting it on fire! Morrison being a bit of a Nazi! Vultures and stuff!), so much so that keyboard player Ray Manzarek commented on Val Kilmer's portrayal of Jim Morrison by saying, 'the guy I knew was not on that screen'. As such, it's fitting that this new documentary has seen him touting the Johnny Depp-narrated tale as "the true story of *The Doors*". It's a shame it's so fucking boring. This shouldn't be the case; after the first cut premiered at this year's Sundance Film Festival, director DiCillo's original narration was almost universally derided for its monotonic delivery and Depp was brought on board to voice a re-cut version. Yet the problem remains that the film follows the VH1 rock profile format fastidiously – the band's rarely equalled, none-more-sensational real-life story, deserves a retelling with dynamic and drama sadly absent from *When You're Strange*.



NO ONE KNOWS ABOUT PERSIAN CATS

Dir: Bahman Ghobadi
Cast: Amir Ghobadi, Behzad Dabestani, Amir Ghobadi, Behzad Dabestani

Iranian president Ahmadinejad imposed a ban on "Western and decadent music" soon after he came to power in 2005, yet this document of dissidence (albeit one disguised as a fictional tale about the nation's indie scene) suggests many of his subjects aren't listening. Director Bahman Ghobadi demonstrates a flair for conveying a zingy script, while I heard more good underground rock in these 106 minutes than all last month in Camden.



STILL BILL

Dir: Alex Vlack and Damani Baker
Cast: Bill Withers, Cornel West, Tavis Smiley, Jim James

Considering he penned 'Ain't No Sunshine' – one of the most covered songs of all time – Bill Withers' prominence in popular culture rarely extends beyond the joke about a duck in a microwave. Vlack and Baker's documentary portrays a man still flustered by a music industry filled with "a whole bunch of guys trying to tell you what to do" – the film starts at a point where the singer hasn't made a record in 23 years. What we find from there on in is a man restless in retirement, yet while the wounds amassed from his time in the spotlight are still relatively raw, we quickly learn he's searching for something. The rich and unsaggy character portrait that unfolds therein not only follows one man's quest to get his mojo back, but serves as a vivid reminder of why that can only be a good thing.



BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE

Dir: Mandy Stein
Cast: Hilary Kristal, Debbie Harry, Patti Smith, Richard Hell, Steven Van Zandt

It's testament to the storytelling, splicing and star access of director Mandy Stein (who, being the daughter of late Ramones manager Linda S Stein, probably never had to worry about that latter point) that this documentary about CBGB's battle against closure remains enthralling throughout, despite the conclusion being grim public knowledge. Much of this hangs upon Stein's decision to centre the story on Hilary Kristal rather than the club itself – tales of flesh and blood are always more enthralling than bricks and mortar – and while the club owner comes across as stubborn, pedantic and waywardly principled, *Burning Down The House* succeeds in eking out a wealth of feeling for the man who cashed the tills at the most famous punk rock club in the world for over 35 years.

I interviewed the man for *NME* in 2005, and found him a bullish, prickly sort of man who wanted to talk more about the venue's lucrative T-shirt line than what the Dead Boys were like in '77. I wish I'd known he was undergoing treatment for lung cancer at the time – Kristal died on August 28, 2007, less than a year after CBGB shut its doors.

And so while the film contains some great performances – there's sensational footage of Joey, Johnny, Dee Dee et al in there, and a closing night reading from Patti Smith where, from Johnny Thunders to her own handmate Richard Sohl, the singer stammers through the names of those who couldn't be around on that emotional last night – it's Kristal's story which makes Stein's film essential viewing. Here is a man who devoted his whole life to music, and when it was gone, so was he. At the screening I attended, it was his sudden death that provoked the most howling, not the iconic overhang being taken down from the Bowery storefront.



THIS VERY INSTANT

Dir: Manuel Huerfano
Cast: Matias Cella, Carlos 'Campi' Campon, Jorge Drexler

Uruguayan singer Jorge Drexler is best known for the Oscar-winning song he composed for *The Motorcycle Diaries*, 'Al Otro Lado Del Rio', yet in Latin America, he's a very big deal. I'm sure this black-

and-white character study would be rewarding viewing if you have even the slightest interest in the subject matter, but it left me wanting to watch *Robocop* or something.



NME.COM

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WHAT ROCK'N'ROLL HAS TAUGHT ME...

by **50 CENT**

The hip-hop star will sell you condoms, but not booze – just don't give him any shit!

I DON'T MIND PEOPLE THINKING I'LL FUCK THEM UP.

"If you push a lion into a corner then you shouldn't expect him to give you a kiss and rub noses, you should expect him to attack given how far you've pushed. If you don't say things aggressively and do things aggressively then people take you for a pushover. If you are approachable then people approach you in the wrong way more often. There are artists like... well I don't want to give any examples, they don't count for very much, they don't generate the same interest, but they have made themselves more approachable. People do things to them, maybe walk on their stage while they are performing because they look at them like complete pushovers, because they're safe. Meanwhile, the guys who sets himself in a place where people know there is a possibility that things will go wrong, they don't play games with them."

BOOKS ARE REALLY GREAT.

"Reading has become a larger form of entertainment for me since I've been touring. I've started reading books for different things, for my personal pleasure, while I'm commuting. Magazines are great but I haven't found one yet that can last me from LAX to JFK on a five-hour flight."

ONE SONG CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE.

"Artistically, every song has a certain time for you to create descriptions, about three minutes before you reach your overkill point. So you can make cool descriptions of things, whether it's about a relationship and you writing a love song, or it's a traditional hip-hop song or a club record, for three minutes. There is no time for cause and effect. It's just hello, bye. If you work it out in a cool way, you become world-famous. I haven't been to a place in the world at any period, from 2003 to this point, where 'In Da Club' hasn't demanded a response. And I think that is because of what I wanted to write about at that point. I had made a lot of dark material, and when the time came I wanted to release 'In Da Club' because it is a celebration of life."



I DON'T ALWAYS UNDERSTAND WHO I AM – BUT YOU DON'T EITHER. I'M COMPLICATED.

"A public persona is someone's interpretation of what you are doing. People interpret my actions and say, 'This is who he is because we want him to be like his persona.' Meanwhile, if you ask if I'm misunderstood, I say yes, because the way I convey my energies comes from my experience and how I was raised and the environment I was raised in. I've met people and they've said, 'He's such a nice guy.' I mean, what did they expect me to do? Shoot them? When I meet people for the first time... OK, they know the songs and they have heard of me, but what happens with musicians is that they become their hits, they become their records. That is why the fans behind them are so intense. From my perspective I look at me and say, 'Who the fuck is this guy?'"

"WHAT DO PEOPLE EXPECT ME TO DO WHEN I MEET THEM? SHOOT THEM?"

DEATH BECOMES A PART OF LIFE.

"We aren't really conscious of death until we are facing that threat and what we are dealing with at that moment. It's the fear factor. When we watch things for entertainment, most action films place people in life-threatening situations traditionally, and what makes action films good is when we believe it. The more they can make it look like the real deal the more we're gonna say that was good."

AMERICA ISN'T STRUGGLING, THERE IS HOPE.

"I think Obama is amazing. He is a representation of everything that America wanted, that anything is possible, he provides hope. I wasn't sure America was ready for an African-American president – the

confederate flag was waving in front of households across Middle America. But it is great that Obama is President, although it will take time for him to do anything at this point. People are looking for a quick fix to the economic problems. I think eventually things will turn around. The majority of the companies on the Fortune 500 List were established in the recession. So when people become fearful of parting with what they have and what they have saved – it might actually be the best time to start something, would you believe."

I BELIEVE IN MY BUSINESS CHOICES.

"All of them feature in my lifestyle, like I am obviously health conscious. The condoms situation came from the motivation to spearhead a safe sex campaign. If you look at condoms in general then you will find out that the companies who make them make more out of party balloons than they do condoms. Condoms are only profitable for selling to other countries. Selling them to Africa is where you make a whole lot of money. You would have to be a hell of a dealmaker to sell them to outside companies opposed to the existence of condoms. That was why I wanted to lend my face to a safe sex campaign. Alcohol is the leading beverage worldwide, I am aware of this but I didn't create a vodka because it's not a big part of my life."

I WILL BE REMEMBERED.

"I want to be remembered based on how people enjoyed my work. I make more work than I actually put out. People are gonna appreciate me after I'm gone more than they do now. Like Michael Jackson, but without the

child molestation stuff, I don't want that. I haven't achieved the same success alive as Michael Jackson did, so I can't expect exactly the same when I pass. Like most artists, I want respect."

DID YOU KNOW?

■ Fiddy rose to prominence on the back of mixtapes that made their way to Eminem, via his lawyer

■ Among his other businesses, Fiddy has his own brand of condoms. The range goes by the name of Magic Stick

■ Last year, Fiddy was the subject of a reality TV show modelled on *The Apprentice*. Entitled *50 Cent: The Money And The Power*, we don't think Alan Sugar's got anything to worry about

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A CELEBRATION OF THE DECADE

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&

**THE 50 GREATEST
ALBUMS**

ALBUMS

ALL THE RELEASES THAT MATTER *Edited by Emily Mackay*

Brief history of scuzz



COMANECHI
CRIME OF LOVE
(MERO)

9

Filthy duo's long-awaited debut brings salacious and mesmerising thrills aplenty

The moment the introductory 'Prologue' stutters to life with a sound akin to Frankenstein's monster getting his thousand-volt wake-up call, it's pretty obvious that we're going to be subjected to a violently uncompromising half-an-hour. Detuned Sabbath riffs pile relentlessly over glitching screams reminiscent of a scrambled SOS call from a plummeting aeroplane. And that's just the first 30 seconds...

Yet despite the palpable sense of spontaneity, few debut albums have a gestation period as long as this one. Four years back, Comanechi were at the epicentre of an anti-scene in London that saw a multitude of young folk forming bands, starting club nights and generally doing it for themselves. The ethos was simply to be louder, more abrasive and in yer face than everyone else around. It was an exciting

time and one where the possibilities seemed endless.

All good things must eventually come to an end but, as people drifted apart and key venues shut their doors, Comanechi had pricked up enough ears to score support slots with the likes of Gossip and Yeah Yeah Yeahs. And who could argue with the duo's entitlement to such an opportunity? It was damn near impossible not to fall in love with singer/drummer Akiko Matsuura's inhuman yowling and guitarist Simon Petrovich's otherworldly, bowel-loosening guitar riffs. Live, the tiny but ferocious frontwoman would writhe and contort on the drum stool, her face hidden behind waves of hair like a Japanese horror movie baddie. It was pure catharsis, plain and simple.

Despite the building momentum, Akiko took time out to lead noiseniks Pre, and when she recently resurfaced as a full-time member of The Big Pink it

seemed as though Comanechi's run might be over. Thankfully, it appears they were merely biding their time and the astonishing 'Crime Of Love' smashes any doubt they'd run short of ideas.

Taking a handful of the stand-out tracks from their clutch of vinyl-only singles for the White Heat label, along with some superlative new songs, their first long-player weaves together stoner rock and punk attitude with a captivating flair. Early, breathless moments like 'Naked' still bubble with an oversexed impudence (*"Naked, I wanna be naked/Washing my body with a toothbrush"*), loading rudimentary lyrics with suggestive imagery – made all the more authentic as its protagonist is renowned for regularly taking to the stage wearing just a T-shirt and panties. Equally salacious is the delightfully dirgey 'Mesmerising Fingers', with its thundering centrifugal riff and chanting verse (*"I'm licking his fingers/I'm looking for his fingers"*). It is moments like this that Petrovich's obsession with doom metal goliaths Electric Wizard fully reveals itself and the result is a colossal wall of pulverising force.

A brighter pop edge is applied to the perversely catchy 'Close Enough To Kiss', courtesy of a harmonious bout of 'ooohing'; however, it is former single 'My Pussy' that provides the eerie centrepiece of 'Crime Of Love': a gut-wrenching recollection of the kidnapping of Akiko's pet cat from her childhood. As she reels off a list of goodies left out to coax back her wayward friend, you can almost taste the youngster's naive hope raining away. The slow, inevitable rumble of the song is torturous and its defeated pay-off deliberately agonising (*"I was two years old/That was my first loss/That's how I learned about loss"*).

Comanechi's genius is encapsulated right there, with their unique ability to tantalise and torment within a single breath. *Tom Edwards*

DOWNLOAD: 1) 'My Pussy'
2) 'Close Enough To Kiss'
3) 'Mesmerising Fingers'

DID YOU KNOW...

Hannah Blilie from Gossip plays drums on 'ROMP (Revenge Of My Pussy)'

NME.COM

Listen to the album in full at NME.COM/artists/comanechi from December 1

GYRATORY SYSTEM
THE SOUND-BOARD BREATHES (ANGULAR)

8



This evocative instrumental album, created using what the group mysteriously refer to as "The Process",

conjured up a cinematic sci-fi showreel. After a nuclear leak, giant insects raid the military barracks of our dead civilisation and form a band to march triumphant through abandoned thoroughfares – that's 'Barons Court Turret'. 'Tinseltown' has a dark throb, while 'Sea Containers House' shrieks and pulses with a paranoid air. Throughout, the electronically-treated brass, woodwind and toy noise rave is as if Miles Davis had been kidnapped by aliens and forced to play an eternal concert that we're hearing beamed back to us, millions of light years from his extra-terrestrial prison cell. *Luke Turner*
DOWNLOAD: 'Barons Court Turret'

LUKE HAINES
21ST CENTURY MAN (FANTASTIC PLASTIC)

6



We fear the adulation that greeted Luke Haines' waspish Britpop memoir *Bad Vibes* may have turned his head...

Welcome as it is, this return could have come in, say, 1998 and wouldn't have sounded one whit different. Maybe that's the point, given the title track's talk of "escaping the 20th century" and admission *"I was all over the '90s/I was all over in the '90s"*, but its Auteurs-ish acerbic indie-rock and social history feel almost caricature-ish: *"Thatcher tried to get rid of the coal/Everyone went on the dole... Bowie died a death in his slap-bass phase/Everybody else died of Aids"*. If he's hamming it up, though, it's still enjoyable. 'English Southern Man' is the sun-dappled keeper, with Haines hissing evilly about golf. *Emily Mackay*
DOWNLOAD: 'English Southern Man'

AMORPHOUS ANDROGYNOUS
A MONSTROUS PSYCHEDELIC BUBBLE... VOL 2 (PORCUPINE/PLATINUS)

8



Noel Gallagher gave his patronage to Vol 1 of this series – easily 2008's best compilation. Amorphous Androgynous returned the

favour with their remix of Oasis' 'Falling Down' (present here), which sets the tone for a heady mix of rock, folk, sitar, electronica and plain old weirdness. The first CD, complete with names as varied as Bo Diddley, David Holmes and Faust, leans heavily on atmospherics, while the second is more tune-focused, with Holy Fuck and Animal Collective. Scattered throughout are performances by AA themselves, at their zenith on 'Elysian Feels'. Any album that's got Dumbledore (aka late actor Richard Harris) and Oasis together has to be heard to be believed – minds will be blown, again: guaranteed. *Anthony Thornton*
DOWNLOAD: 'Elysian Feels'



ROYAL BANGS
LET IT BEEP (CITY SLANG)

9

Given that punk-funk revivalism is as relevant to 2009 as throwing a goat's intestine at the floor is to successful weather

forecasting, it's a shame to be reviewing this album now. In every other way this is a treat, however, as it calls to mind under-appreciated San Franciscan synth punks The Units, and is close to being a perfect dance/punk hybrid. Not only does the quality here knock patchier efforts (The Rapture's 'Echoes' and !!!'s 'Myth Takes') into a cocked hat, they've found a near-perfect balance between anthemic songsmithery and dancefloor irresistibility. Add to this the fearlessly eclectic influence of The Human League ('Brainbow') and Mercury Rev ('Tiny Prince Of Keytar') and you have a stunning debut. **John Doran**

DOWNLOAD: 'War Bells'

MARTHA WAINWRIGHT
SANS FUSILS, NI SOULIERS, A PARIS (DOMINION IN SOUND/CO-OPERATIVE)

8

As well as being stupidly talented, the Wainwright sprogs are impressively multilingual. First, brother Rufus wrote a whole

opera in French, and now it's Martha's turn to get all Gallic on us. Plundering the back catalogue of Edith Piaf on this live album, Wainwright doesn't attempt to mimic her tremulous tones, but follows in her tiny footsteps when it comes to no-holds-barred emotion on the weepy 'Adieu Mon Coeur' and the perky 'Marie Trottoir'. Steering clear of Piaf's signature tunes, 'La Vie En Rose' and 'Je Ne Regrette Rien', 'Sans Fusils...' stand-out moment is a triumphant rendering of 'L'Accordéoniste', a belter in which Wainwright's raw diva side sparkles brightest. **Leonie Cooper**

DOWNLOAD: 'L'Accordéoniste'

GENTLE FRIENDLY
RIDE SLOW (UPSET THE RHYTHM)

7

If No Age had woken up one morning to find their drums, guitar and a wall full of noisepop set-up invaded by a barrage of samplers, the result may have ended up remarkably similar to the debut of South Londoners Gentle Friendly. With the CocoRosie-on-a-glitch-trip opener of 'No Infinity On', 'Ride Slow' sets itself up as a pleasantly aggressive listen but, a mere one minute and 50 seconds later, we're on the comedown - all woozy distortion and staccato vocals. 'Clean Breaker' takes us up again, 'LA Welle' puts us down, 'Real Fighters' up, 'Police And Love' down - and so on. There are so many convoluted about-turns throughout the 16 tracks that any kind of coherent tone is almost impossible to fathom but, luckily, it all just adds to the general anarchic headfuck. **Lisa Wright**

DOWNLOAD: 'Ride Slow'

CONVERGE
AXE TO FALL (EMTAPH)

7



This, the seventh studio album by the Salem, Massachusetts hardcore heroes, is a more collaborative effort than

their past six, featuring contributions from the likes of Cave In and Neurosis. The end result is a little bit like if the end of Live Aid had solely consisted of angry tattooed men shouting. That's not to say this isn't worth your time - if you're contemplating engaging with a Converge record, one imagines you're already aware they sound like a pitbull being kicked in the dick - and for those willing to dig deep, there's some great stuff to be found within. Consider 'Reap What You Sow', which features the kind of innovative, mathy heaviness which reaffirms Converge's place at the top of the hardcore game. **James McMahon**

DOWNLOAD: 'Reap What You Sow'

PAUL HAIG
RELIVE (RHYTHM OF LIFE)

4



The opening song here, 'Trip Out The Rider', sounds like a menacing post-punk version of Girls Aloud's 'Wake Me Up'.

That's not to suggest that the erstwhile frontman of early '80s indie gods Josef K had a well-worn copy of 'What Would The Neighbours Say?' in the studio - rather that it's ironic that 'Ambition', a listless synth number lampooning the transparency of X Factor aspirations, sounds like an embarrassingly diluted version of his former self. Only 'Round And Round' harks back to the structural chaos and interplay of his band's old material, which comes as welcome respite - listen to any Josef K song, and it could easily have been written today; listen to this, and it sounds like a dated throwback. **Laura Snapes**

DOWNLOAD: 'Round And Round'

COSMO JARVIS
COSMO JARVIS (WALL OF SOUND)

1



It doesn't matter that Cosmo Jarvis is a white American who grew up in Devon, but sings like a cross between Danny Dyer

and Sting. It doesn't matter that he's a skinhead whose face resembles 27 pounds of Spam vacuum-packed into a condom. It doesn't matter that he keeps on mentioning his balls and playing his school recorder right through this record. However, it does matter that he wouldn't recognise a good song even if it were fired out of a bazooka right into the centre of his fat fucking head. Jarvis is like the prick on the night bus who insists on 'entertaining' you all the way home. Except backed by session muskian types who sound like they've played with Newton Faulkner, The Ordinary Boys and Black Lace. **John Doran**

DOWNLOAD: 'Are you kidding?'

ALBUMS



Game, cassette and match

MEMORY TAPES

SEEK MAGIC (SOMETHING IN CONSTRUCTION)

8

Snuggle up - Davyd Hawk's bedroom-birtherd electronic pop is to dream of

Pop music and the bedroom are entwined like sheets around an insomniac's leg: tunes are both made there and aimed squarely at it, like the new box set cum mobile sex shop recently released by Teutonic saucepots Rammstein. Just one glance of it will make *Daily Mail* readers choke on their breakfast, for, alongside brilliantly gruff metal, it includes lube, handcuffs and six (six!) dildos of varying degrees of veininess, each representing a member's actual girth. Sometimes, boys, mystery has its benefits.

In a more decorous boudoir far away is rising electronica star Davyd Hawk. Pleasingly abstruse and rather less likely to turn his cock into a quivering tower of translucent rubber, he's a New Jersey suburbanite who's chosen to woo us in seductive fashion.

Hidden beyond deep velvet curtains, or so his rich, textural electronica would suggest, we know little about this 28-year-old aside from the usual biog fluff. He's a stay-at-home, rock-loving dad, and he doesn't drive or own a mobile phone. Yet there's been a surge of cyber lust for Hawk ever since his sonic sweet-nothings (remixes of Yeah Yeah Yeahs and Peter, Bjorn And John) turned up online under the monikers Weird Tapes and Memory Cassette.

Convening those two names, this is Hawk's first full-length of bedroom-reared dreamwave. Clearly, his working environment colours all he does, by which we mean there's a flickering, half awake glaze and tog 10 softness to his sun-dappled disco, pillow rave and downbeat pop, rather than a series of grunts and snores that loop forever on.

It's through this spaced-out mindset that Hawk feeds snapshots of the '80s - from Cocteau Twins' swirl, Talking Heads' tribal strut and breaking falsetto to New Order and the Balearic beginnings of rave - to craft a creamy, nostalgic trip that is one gently euphoric whoosh beyond pastiche.

For all the sleepy comfort of 'Bicycle', a three-way conflag between New Order, David Byrne and Bollywood, and lo-fi opener 'Swimming Field', there's a libidinal strut that halts things from slipping into a whimsy. Tennis shoes squeak and slick basslines twist around Johnny Harris breaks on 'Green Knight', 'Pink Stones' transforms Tricky Disco's bleep-rave into Japanese folk, and 'Stop Talking' sounds like an existential Rapture playing 'The Bongo Song'. Although these exhilarating frolics peter out into a less satisfying slumber after 'Graphics', 'Memory Tapes' still offer more bedroom options than a bunch of anatomically correct dildos. **Chris Parkin**

DOWNLOAD: 1) 'Bicycle' 2) 'Green Knight' 3) 'Pink Stones'

DID YOU KNOW...

Hawk is obsessed with Cocteau Twins' Elizabeth Fraser and almost worked with her as a teen when the band invited him to the UK... only they split

NME.COM

Hear the album in full at NME.COM/artists/memory-tapes from Nov 9

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STEREOPHONICS

KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON (MERCURY)

2



It's perhaps a continuing desire to be seen as plucky underdogs that has led these multi-millionaire Welshmen to call their

seventh album after the wartime exhortation recently revived on tea towels across the nation. Linking both their bunker mentality and everyman appeal, it can't disguise the fact that, aside from a few electronic bolt-ons, this is more of the same: an alloy of thumbs-aloft indie emoting and trad-rock dynamics, all overlaid by Kelly Jones' rasp. Stereophonics remain hulking in their fortified comfort zone, deploying the trite 'Could You Be The One?', the beer-fist stodge of 'I Got Your Number' or the accurately-titled 'Stuck In A Rut'. Should be fought on the beaches, this type of thing. **Luke Turner**

DOWNLOAD IF YOU MUST: *Some Vera Lynn*

LOCAL NATIVES

GORILLA MANOR (INFECTIOUS)

8



What's that? Percussion pushed upfront while singers harmonise over the top? Why, if it isn't the sound of US Indie Now!

LA's Local Natives seem to combine the white funk of Vampire Weekend with the choral melodies of Fleet Foxes, except, fucknuts, it doesn't quite scan. No, because these poetic songs, which billow, churn and explode into light, give Local Natives a mystery all of their own. 'Airplanes' is Arcade Fire discovering hope, 'Sun Hands' an Icarus tale which swoops between opaque beauty and punk thrash, and there's a neat cover of Talking Heads' 'Warning Sign'. Like David Byrne, this lot are enigmatic, unpredictable and utterly addictive. Lose the moustaches though lads, this isn't a porno. **Martin Robinson**

DOWNLOAD: *'Airplanes'*



Frat party



CODEINE VELVET CLUB

CODEINE VELVET CLUB (ISLAND)

7

A side-project from a Fratelli? No, come back! This doesn't suck!

Side-projects are fast becoming *de rigueur* for many a frustrated guitarist keen to take a little adventure into the strange; just ask Alex Turner, Simon Neil or Jack White. So, when head Fratelli Jon Lawler revealed his band's hiatus had birthed a new venture, *NME* was intrigued. Would the Glaswegian indie brawlers' energetic backyard chants be thrown to one side, perhaps discarded for a foray into the stale scapegoat that is Auto-Tune? Thankfully, there's nothing quite so garish in Codeine Velvet Club's heady mix, although it marks a definite departure from The Fratellis' sound.

Lawler initially penned some tracks for Glasgow songwriter Lou Hickey's debut

album and, feeling a musical click, he decided instead to team up with her: thus the Codeine Velvet Club were inaugurated. Hickey's oft-soft voice drips with a noir-ish menace alongside Lawler's grizzly barks, a delicious contrast in 'Vanity Kills' and 'Time'. 'Hollywood' encapsulates some of the tuxedoed swagger of The Last Shadow Puppets. While some tracks can feel like scraps from the table Fratelli, the scope of slow-burner 'Nevada' makes up for it with its orchestral, cinematic sweep.

Classy as it is, CVC are still fuelled with some of the testosterone filled frenzy of The Fratellis: "Hey little sister/just slow down, slow down/Hey little sister/just watch them go", Lawler croaks lasciviously on 'Little Sister'. Boosted by

jazz club horns and a boozy, burlesque chorus, it captures the mood of this record perfectly; gritty Brit music tainted by soul-sucking Hollywood.

A deft rebuff to those who consider The Fratellis a by-word for run-of-the-mill indie, Codeine Velvet Club haunt the indie stereotype like glamorous spectres. **Chris Mandle**

DOWNLOAD: 1) 'Hollywood' 2) 'Nevada' 3) 'Time'

DID YOU KNOW...

The orchestral score for 'Nevada' was composed by Belle & Sebastian's **Thick Cooke**

UNSPUN HEROES

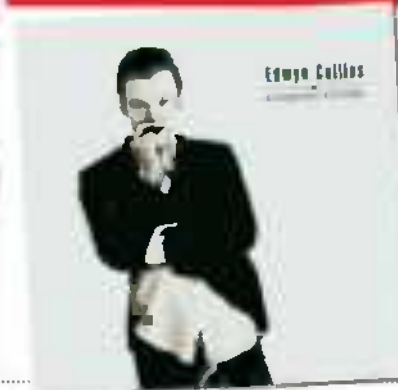
DIGGING UP BURIED TREASURE FROM THE DEPTHS OF OUR COLLECTIONS

THIS WEEK...

Jamie Crossan basks in the lesser-known melodies and dry wit of the magic piper of love

EDWYN COLLINS

GORGEOUS GEORGE (SETANTA, 1994)



Considering the waves of overdue and well-deserved respect that's lapped on Edwyn Collins' doorstep of late, it's remarkable that 'A Girl Like You' remains his only solo commercial hit. His elder statesman status and the admiration which his determined recovery from his 2005 brain haemorrhage earned him has obscured the fact that, for many years, his records went pretty much unnoticed bar one radio hit.

Edwyn epitomised Scotland's new wave of cool art-rock troubadours during the '80s as frontman for Postcard Records' hippest band Orange Juice, writing instant classics such as 'Rip It Up' and 'Blue Boy' that inspired so many. The Orange Juice influence still remains strong, with both Franz

Ferdinand and The Cibs - who loved Edwyn so much they got him to produce arguably their finest album 'The New Fellas' - borrowing from their iconic sound; but, sadly, his equally brilliant solo work has failed to inspire the same legion of copycats.

This is Edwyn's third solo album, and his most perfect

'Gorgeous George' is Edwyn's third solo album and his most perfect. Yes, it is the album with THAT song on it; but it isn't even close to being the best tune on here. In fact, we're gonna put it in fourth place behind the snarling 'The Campaign For Real Rock', the sweeping weepy 'Low Expectations' and one of his

finest songs, the tender, heartstring-tugging paranoia of 'Make Me Feel Again' - whose stunning chorus has taken on new meaning since his illness: "When you turned your head/When I called your name/All I need's your love/To make me feel again".

'If You Could Love Me' bleeds the heart with its sensuous northern soul and is a true testament to Edwyn's lyrical craftsmanship, while the alt.country of 'North Of Heaven' shows Edwyn's humorous side with the brilliant line: "Some mother's talking 'bout Guns N' Roses/As if I give a fuck/At best I think they suck".

'Gorgeous George' is a true gem, as captivating, if not more so, than Edwyn's stunning output with Orange Juice. You'll have never heard an album like this before.

The death of a Party?

BLOC PARTY

BOURNEMOUTH INTERNATIONAL CENTRE, BOURNEMOUTH
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31

Band pull out all the stops at what may prove to be their final ever gig

On first glance, it seemed these was the last rites for Bloc Party. Interview innuendos suggested tonight would mark their finale, or, at the very least, the severing of ties with disgruntled drummer Matt Tong. Yet as they cannon out defiant opening volley 'One Month Off', at least for this evening, the only living dead are assembled fans sporting ghoulish Halloween attire.

The fancy dress doesn't extend onstage, aside from Matt's Bournemouth football shirt, commemorating his hometown return. Indeed, Kele Okereke is more immediately concerned with soldiering through 'flu, grinning bullishly that "mama Okereke didn't raise a quitter". If this is the end, nobody could accuse either of

creaking into retirement like weary journeymen fit for Matt's beloved lower league soccer side.

The spine-tingling refrains of 'Positive Tension' lend the first 'Silent Alarm'-shaped memory-jog, the album's original wide-eyed exuberance fleshed out just as Kele has bulked up in the interim. The introspective extremes of 'A Weekend In The City' are represented by the triple dose of 'Where Is Home?', 'Hunting For Witches' and 'Song For Clay (Disappear Here)', while third album 'Intimacy' is also aired, though 'Trojan Horse' transforms its gauche lyricisms into lung-filling euphoria.

A brace of encores are the true telling of the tale, though. All four re-emerge in (sort of) scary garb, Kele confirming – while dressed as, er, a banana – that this is indeed "our final

show for the foreseeable future" 'Flux' revs up before a monumental rendition of 'Helicopter', and with that, Bloc Party take a final bow and the lights go up. But that's not quite it: as hundreds file out, the band swiftly return for "the song that started it all off", 'She's Hearing Voices', as a collection of cadaverously costumed roadies scramble onstage. Kele vanishes into his disciples, and Matt is last to leave the stage, imploring us all to "keep the faith". Whether tonight is revealed as a full stop or comma in their story (the subsequent revelation that Kele's working on a solo album adds to the uncertainty), it's equal parts exhilarating and poignant; fittingly, the very juxtaposition that has made Bloc Party so essential these past five years. *Adam Kennedy*

Jack doesn't actually have any make-up on



Black mass hysteria

THE DEAD WEATHER
ST LEONARD CHURCH, LONDON
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31

Posers? On a night when spectacle is all, it works

Everyone is standing on the church pews. Some are forcing their way onto friends' shoulders, wobbling uncertainly under the ruined ceiling of St Leonard Church in Shoreditch, which tonight is lit toxic blue (blue movie-style, in fact). Shirts are ripped, hair flails and heads crash-bang into each other. The Dead Weather – all dressed for Halloween – stand totally still, centre-stage. They're looking at the audience, but not bothering to greet them. Hold that pose... a little longer... ignore the madness... ignore everything... repeat ad infinitum. Messrs Mosshart, Fertita and Lawrence have clearly been studying at the Jack White school of method acting.

Are they the four horsemen gone psych? Or maybe just a junked-up KOL auditioning for a *Back At The Ranch: Halt The Lynchin'*, *Ma!* TV special? Whatever, all of them look garishly amazing. They win over the crowd by simply standing there. When White breaks off and removes his huge fur coat (half '50s Hollywood, half grizzly bear), flinging it to the ground harshly, the whole place erupts.

Both he and Mosshart seem blatantly unarsed about the band's sod-all status among Mr & Mrs G Public ('Horehound' is White's lowest charting UK album since 'White Blood Cells'). Instead, they just get on with the job of

playing straight into the hands of the uber-obsessives, like the kids down the front tonight who hang onto the stage like they're at Hyde Park watching the Stones in '69. Mosshart is a revelation, preaching to the converted like a Persian she-devil. As she leans full-tilt into the scrum during 'Treat Me Like Your Mother' and unleashes – proper primeval style – the lyric "stand up like a man!" she is, for one night at least, the coolest frontwoman on earth. Bizarrely, when she finally stops straddling the mic-stand, midway through beat-laden newie 'I Can't Hear You', it's to physically launch herself upon one unassuming punter. With her legs rooted to the edge of the stage, she falls forward and, in faux-biblical fashion, plants a hand straight on the guy's head. So now she's semi-floating above the first few rows. It's absurdly brilliant.

Only when White breaks his silence to award two audience members prizes for wearing the bloodiest drag do the band appear vaguely human, but that doesn't matter – The Dead Weather's shtick works best because of their willingness to act up and play dead... cool. Tonight, they drop a shell right in the heart of undignified and gormless east London, and explode with nothing more than purity, Machiavellian swagger and loud, loud, loud headfuckery. **Matt Wilkinson**

SHORT SETS

GLISS
ELECTRIC CIRCUS,
EDINBURGH,
03/11/09

It can't be good for the soul to walk on stage to a measly 20 people, many who are leftovers from an earlier pub quiz. But this LA trio, who play energised garage rock to pulverise the senses, are forced to work their magic in front of a pretty stale crowd this evening. Even the thunderous pop-growl of '29 Acts Of Love' and the epic mind-bending distortion of 'Anybody Inside' fail to garner any reaction. It all feels a bit like mouldy bread out in the crowd. Shame, 'cos Gliss are more like the all-butter croissant of the LA lo-fi rock clique: put simply, the finest.

Jamie Crossan

THE CHEEK
NIGHT AND DAY CAFE,
MANCHESTER,
03/11/09

They dress like they've just left the Department Of Geeks in an office in 1963 following a stationery check; ruffled and sweaty, and yet still sharp in the clothes department. Previously known as Cheeky Cheeky And The Nosebleeds, The Cheek aren't exactly new, but their penchant for hooks and frankly plain odd frontmen isn't old yet. "Hang about after and get fucked up with us," suggests singer Rory Cottam as a cover of La Roux's 'In For The Kill' starts. Somehow we don't doubt their own killer instinct. **Kelly Murray**



GREAT ACOUSTICS

GLASVEGAS
PARKER MCMILLAN, LONDON
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30

We're packed like happy, drunk sardines into a basement bar for a Glasvegas couldn't-be-more-intimate-even-if-it-was-held-in-a-shoebox charity gig. There are only a couple of hundred people here and probably only a quarter of them can actually see the band, who tonight consist of cousins James and Rab Allan playing an acoustic set in aid of the Team Continuum's cancer fund.

A white sheet has been draped over the bar to form an impromptu backdrop, and beer taps cast shadows onto it like a city skyline at night. It seems like their mere presence can make the mundane romantic. Looking like McCartney and Lennon in Hamburg in 1960, the duo hold the crowd in place like a butterfly secured to card with a lepidopterist's pin. The songs are left bare and vulnerable, almost wound-like, with the post-Oasis bombast and neo-shoegaze haze removed, leaving James' songwriting to shine through. Speaking to *NME* backstage later, the singer confirms, "It's a rarity to do the songs that sparse. I haven't heard them that stripped back since they were written." In this context, 'Daddy's Gone' becomes a '50s doo wop torch song. Even the closest thing they have to an Achilles heel – 'Go Square Go' – which seems to have been adopted as a non-ironic beer boy anthem in some quarters because of the "here we fucking go" refrain – has its original childhood simplicity rescued tonight.

During the encore James jokes, "People say, 'Look at that pretentious cunt, wearing sunglasses indoors', but it's only 'cos my eyes are going in different directions and I don't want my mam to see." This warm-hearted banter seems at odds with the seemingly troubled guy who went AWOL in NYC recently, but tonight he genuinely exudes serenity. When his voice breaks and cracks with emotion during a version of The Ronettes' '60s classic 'Be My Baby' the crowd form a devotional choir that drown all other sound out. On this form, the second album will be nothing short of sublime. **John Doran**

A full-page photograph of Snoop Dogg performing on stage. He is wearing a black Adidas tracksuit with yellow stripes on the sleeves and a black beanie. He is holding a microphone and looking towards the camera. In the background, a woman in a yellow top and a large, colorful floral skirt is dancing.

No bite

SNOOP DOGG
NOKIA THEATRE, NEW YORK CITY
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29

A bona fide legend he may be, but the rap icon struggles to stop the crowd from yawning

You have to hand it to Snoop Dogg – he's definitely no slacker when it comes to making music. His upcoming 'Malice N Wonderland' album is his 10th since 1993's chronic-infused 'Doggystyle'

both reshaped the gangsta rap mould and created a boom for late night snack retailers. But what, after all this time, has his music taught us about the man himself? Well, he likes weed, obviously. A bit of booze never goes amiss in the Dogg Pound, as he's prone to mentioning. Having rampant sex with well-endowed hot girls is pretty important to ol' Snoopy Doopy too. And let's not forget how much he's into making as much money as possible and then telling everyone how loaded he is. And... that's about it.

Of course, it's hard to deny that he's earned his bragging rights to some degree. Still shamelessly flash (to the point of having a blinged-out microphone), his smooth and slick-sounding rhymes remain undoubtedly some of the most instantly recognisable in rap and, with a full band

in tow, classics such as 'Gin And Juice' sound unassailable. But fatigue sets in disappointingly quickly when watching Snoop. Gangsta royalty though he may be, one 30-minute cycle of songs about sex/weed/money is all anyone needs.

Indeed, it's a telling state of affairs when a punter turns to *NME* midway through the show and asks us, "Wait, didn't he already do this song?"

As attention levels visibly start to wane, Snoop attempts to get the show boiling over by throwing in a cover of House Of Pain's 'Jump Around'. But it feels like a desperate measure, and by the time he finally brings out the big guns in the shape of 'Drop It Like It's Hot' and 'What's My Name?' it seems that at least half of the spliff-toking massive are more concerned with scoring a six-pack of Boston Kremes at the Dunkin' Donuts around the corner. Living in this kind of ultra-decadent groundhog day must be great fun for Snoop Dogg, but hearing him constantly rap about it is becoming a chore for everyone else. *Hardeep Phull*

Snoop was pleased with his blinged-up fajita holder



Furtissimo!

GRIZZLY BEAR WITH THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA/ST VINCENT
BARBICAN CENTRE, LONDON
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31

Beefed up with strings, they're almost too good

As far as incongruous pairings go, this takes some beating. Watching a dignified gig, nay, *concert*, at London's high culture hub in the company of four epic Brooklynites and a full classical orchestra while thousands of sugared up kids in *Scream* masks and skimpily clad teens (barely) dressed as "cats" terrorise the streets is about as well-matched as Jason Statham popping along to see Africa Exprez. But we like our over-Americanised Hallmark holidays served with a touch of class, thank-you-very-much, so, with broomsticks safely stashed in the cloakroom, *NME* settles down for an aural overload of the lushest proportions. Hold onto your pointy hats.

Before the orchestral descent, however, comes St Vincent (aka Annie Clark and onstage amigo Daniel Hart) whose elfin frame seems almost entirely swallowed by the vast and instrument-laden surrounds of the imposing Barbican stage. But, small in stature as she may be, with some canny looping tricks and pre-recorded drum tracks she turns what is on record a sparse take on the swirling CocoRosie-esque, sample-tinged acoustics into a haunting, otherworldly live experience. Gorgeously ethereal and, with the glitchy 'Marrow', truly innovative and original stuff.

If there's one thing Grizzly Bear don't have to worry about, though, it's keeping it fresh 'cos,

you know, they've got a frickin' massive orchestra behind them. It's the kind of coup that very, very few bands could pull off without coming across as incredibly pretentious or embarrassingly under-par; Grizzly Bear are at the forefront of that few. It probably doesn't hurt that a quarter of their number can also be found night-shifting with chronically underrated outfit Department Of Eagles (and, indeed, there's clearly crossover in style between the two), but, three albums of increasingly intricate and rich chamber-pop in, GB's epic tendencies find themselves more than comfortable bed-fellows with tonight's stage partners.

With a string of lanterns and various coloured spotlights upping the theatrical factor to operatic proportions, the show is, from the opening hypnotic hurls of 'Easier' to the swelling encore of 'Colorado', a triumph. The already achingly gorgeous harmonies of 'While You Wait For The Others' and 'Foreground' take on an added cinematic element. 'Knife' croons and twinkles its way delicately through every harp string and percussive flourish, while 'Southern Point's' dramatic layers and peaks find their ultimate representation. 'Two Weeks' even elicits a full-on joyful cheer – and that's pretty rare in these pomp and splendour parts.

The only problem now is how to push it even further. Frighteningly good. *Lisa Wright*

SHORT SETS

KING CHARLES

THE LEXINGTON, LONDON, 28/10/09
He doesn't make things easy for himself, this one. Flying in the face of opprobrium with a towering mound of dreadlocks and a gypsy Keith Richards-by-way-of-Tots-TV get-up, he'll have your every cell screaming 'trustafarian!'. But it's worth dropping that inverted snobbery and sticking around for an intriguing mix of Devendra-esque alt-folk and lively psych workouts. "You're all my family now," he tells the crowd after a euphoric rush through new single 'Love Lust'. We don't know if we'll be sharing his Kool-Aid just yet, but the folk-punk fervour of 'Mr Flick' has us filled with brotherly feeling. *Duncan Gillespie*

KAP BAMBINO

THE OLD BLUE LAST, LONDON, 03/11/09
They're not really so much a band as a strange ecstatic cult, an assault-by-spectacle, a weird thing that people do to each other in upstairs rooms in pubs. Bleach-haired, mad-eyed, Caroline Martial is a born star, if slightly terrifying. From the moment they crash in with 'Red Sign' she's a magnetic, thrilling, scary ball of headbanging, demonically-possessed movement. Their digital hardcore sound is almost as compelling, a demented pulse of fight-or-flight energy that leaves us wanting to stomp on car bonnets all the way home. *Emily Mackay*



HE IS THE PARTY

FRANK TURNER
O2 SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE, LONDON
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29

"We're definitely going to hell," howl 2,000 rapturous souls, expertly conducted by a spindly dude onstage who's grinning like he just won life. Everyone continues with 'The Ballad Of Me And My Friends', Turner's manifesto of hope, at ear-splitting volume: "But we'll have all the best stories to tell". And what a story this is – in three short years he's gone from playing in shitty pubs to a handful of punk kids to selling out the Empire. The roars that greet the inspirational 'Try This At Home' and 'Nashville Tennessee', from opposite ends of his career, prove this is no temporary success but a genuine phenomenon built on solid ground.

'Love Ire & Song' is belted out with an almost religious fervour, and 'Long Live The Queen', normally tender and bare, is tonight richly energised and ecstatic in its catharsis. The party mood is fuelled by 'Smiling At Strangers On Trains' from his Million Dead days, and he's not above potentially ruining the night by inviting a fat-fingered mate onstage to play harmonica on 'Dan's Song' (full disclosure: that mate is me, and it was a total riot) just for kicks. 'Photosynthesis' raises the volume further, and 'The Road' and 'I Knew Prufrock Before He Got Famous' are welcomed blissfully.

The thing about being onstage is that when you stand in the right place, you can see every face in the crowd. Tonight I saw a rammed venue singing every single word of every single song – and it wasn't just the hardcore down the front but everyone right at the back, upstairs and at the bar. Tonight is Turner's greatest achievement to date, a rousing, deserved victory powered by a homegrown fanbase in love with his honesty. And it's obvious there's so much more to come. *Ben Patashnik*

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ALBUMS

ALL THE RELEASES THAT MATTER *Edited by Emily Mackay*

Brief history of scuzz



COMANECHI
CRIME OF LOVE
(MERO)

9

Filthy duo's long-awaited debut brings salacious and mesmerising thrills aplenty

The moment the introductory 'Prologue' stutters to life with a sound akin to Frankenstein's monster getting his thousand-volt wake-up call, it's pretty obvious that we're going to be subjected to a violently uncompromising half-an-hour. Detuned Sabbath riffs pile relentlessly over glitching screams reminiscent of a scrambled SOS call from a plummeting aeroplane. And that's just the first 30 seconds...

Yet despite the palpable sense of spontaneity, few debut albums have a gestation period as long as this one. Four years back, Comanechi were at the epicentre of an anti-scene in London that saw a multitude of young folk forming bands, starting club nights and generally doing it for themselves. The ethos was simply to be louder, more abrasive and in yer face than everyone else around. It was an exciting

time and one where the possibilities seemed endless.

All good things must eventually come to an end but, as people drifted apart and key venues shut their doors, Comanechi had pricked up enough ears to score support slots with the likes of Gossip and Yeah Yeah Yeahs. And who could argue with the duo's entitlement to such an opportunity? It was damn near impossible not to fall in love with singer/drummer Akiko Matsuura's inhuman yowling and guitarist Simon Petrovich's otherworldly, bowel-loosening guitar riffs. Live, the tiny but ferocious frontwoman would writhe and contort on the drum stool, her face hidden behind waves of hair like a Japanese horror movie baddie. It was pure catharsis, plain and simple.

Despite the building momentum, Akiko took time out to lead noiseniks Pre, and when she recently resurfaced as a full-time member of The Big Pink it

seemed as though Comanechi's run might be over. Thankfully, it appears they were merely biding their time and the astonishing 'Crime Of Love' smashes any doubt they'd run short of ideas.

Taking a handful of the stand-out tracks from their clutch of vinyl-only singles for the White Heat label, along with some superlative new songs, their first long-player weaves together stoner rock and punk attitude with a captivating flair. Early, breathless moments like 'Naked' still bubble with an oversexed impudence (*"Naked, I wanna be naked/Washing my body with a toothbrush"*), loading rudimentary lyrics with suggestive imagery – made all the more authentic as its protagonist is renowned for regularly taking to the stage wearing just a T-shirt and panties. Equally salacious is the delightfully dirgey 'Mesmerising Fingers', with its thundering centrifugal riff and chanting verse (*"I'm licking his fingers/I'm looking for his fingers"*). It is moments like this that Petrovich's obsession with doom metal goliaths Electric Wizard fully reveals itself and the result is a colossal wall of pulverising force.

A brighter pop edge is applied to the perversely catchy 'Close Enough To Kiss', courtesy of a harmonious bout of 'ooohing'; however, it is former single 'My Pussy' that provides the eerie centrepiece of 'Crime Of Love': a gut-wrenching recollection of the kidnapping of Akiko's pet cat from her childhood. As she reels off a list of goodies left out to coax back her wayward friend, you can almost taste the youngster's naive hope raining away. The slow, inevitable rumble of the song is torturous and its defeated pay-off deliberately agonising (*"I was two years old/That was my first loss/That's how I learned about loss"*).

Comanechi's genius is encapsulated right there, with their unique ability to tantalise and torment within a single breath. *Tom Edwards*

DOWNLOAD: 1) 'My Pussy'
2) 'Close Enough To Kiss'
3) 'Mesmerising Fingers'

DID YOU KNOW...

Hannah Blilie from Gossip plays drums on 'ROMP (Revenge Of My Pussy)'

NME.COM

Listen to the album in full at NME.COM/artists/comanechi from December 1

GYRATORY SYSTEM
THE SOUND-BOARD BREATHES (ANGULAR)

8



This evocative instrumental album, created using what the group mysteriously refer to as "The Process",

conjured up a cinematic sci-fi showreel. After a nuclear leak, giant insects raid the military barracks of our dead civilisation and form a band to march triumphant through abandoned thoroughfares – that's 'Barons Court Turret'. 'Tinseltown' has a dark throb, while 'Sea Containers House' shrieks and pulses with a paranoid air. Throughout, the electronically-treated brass, woodwind and toy noise rave is as if Miles Davis had been kidnapped by aliens and forced to play an eternal concert that we're hearing beamed back to us, millions of light years from his extra-terrestrial prison cell. *Luke Turner*
DOWNLOAD: 'Barons Court Turret'

LUKE HAINES
21ST CENTURY MAN (FANTASTIC PLASTIC)

6



We fear the adulation that greeted Luke Haines' waspish Britpop memoir *Bad Vibes* may have turned his head...

Welcome as it is, this return could have come in, say, 1998 and wouldn't have sounded one whit different. Maybe that's the point, given the title track's talk of "escaping the 20th century" and admission *"I was all over the '90s/I was all over in the '90s"*, but its Auteurs-ish acerbic indie-rock and social history feel almost caricature-ish: *"Thatcher tried to get rid of the coal/Everyone went on the dole... Bowie died a death in his slap-bass phase/Everybody else died of Aids"*. If he's hamming it up, though, it's still enjoyable. 'English Southern Man' is the sun-dappled keeper, with Haines hissing evilly about golf. *Emily Mackay*
DOWNLOAD: 'English Southern Man'

AMORPHOUS ANDROGYNOUS
A MONSTROUS PSYCHEDELIC BUBBLE... VOL 2 (PORCUPINE/PLATINUS)

8



Noel Gallagher gave his patronage to Vol 1 of this series – easily 2008's best compilation. Amorphous Androgynous returned the

favour with their remix of Oasis' 'Falling Down' (present here), which sets the tone for a heady mix of rock, folk, sitar, electronica and plain old weirdness. The first CD, complete with names as varied as Bo Diddley, David Holmes and Faust, leans heavily on atmospherics, while the second is more tune-focused, with Holy Fuck and Animal Collective. Scattered throughout are performances by AA themselves, at their zenith on 'Elysian Feels'. Any album that's got Dumbledore (aka late actor Richard Harris) and Oasis together has to be heard to be believed – minds will be blown, again: guaranteed. *Anthony Thornton*
DOWNLOAD: 'Elysian Feels'



ROYAL BANGS
LET IT BEEP (CITYSLANG)

9

Given that punk-funk revivalism is as relevant to 2009 as throwing a goat's intestine at the floor is to successful weather

forecasting, it's a shame to be reviewing this album now. In every other way this is a treat, however, as it calls to mind under-appreciated San Franciscan synth punks The Units, and is close to being a perfect dance/punk hybrid. Not only does the quality here knock patchier efforts (The Rapture's 'Echoes' and !!!'s 'Myth Takes') into a cocked hat, they've found a near-perfect balance between anthemic songsmithery and dancefloor irresistibility. Add to this the fearlessly eclectic influence of The Human League ('Brainbow') and Mercury Rev ('Tiny Prince Of Keytar') and you have a stunning debut. **John Doran**

DOWNLOAD: 'War Bells'

MARTHA WAINWRIGHT
SANS FUSILS, NI SOULIERS, A PARIS (DOWNED IN SOUND/CO-OPERATIVE)

8

As well as being stupidly talented, the Wainwright sprogs are impressively multilingual. First, brother Rufus wrote a whole

opera in French, and now it's Martha's turn to get all Gallic on us. Plundering the back catalogue of Edith Piaf on this live album, Wainwright doesn't attempt to mimic her tremulous tones, but follows in her tiny footsteps when it comes to no-holds-barred emotion on the weepy 'Adieu Mon Coeur' and the perky 'Marie Trottoir'. Steering clear of Piaf's signature tunes, 'La Vie En Rose' and 'Je Ne Regrette Rien', 'Sans Fusils...' stand-out moment is a triumphant rendering of 'L'Accordéoniste', a belter in which Wainwright's raw diva side sparkles brightest. **Leonie Cooper**

DOWNLOAD: 'L'Accordéoniste'

GENTLE FRIENDLY
RIDE SLOW (UPSET THE RHYTHM)

7

If No Age had woken up one morning to find their drums, guitar and a wall full of noisepop set-up

invaded by a barrage of samplers, the result may have ended up remarkably similar to the debut of South Londoners Gentle Friendly. With the CocoRosie-on-a-glitch-trip opener of 'No Infinity On', 'Ride Slow' sets itself up as a pleasantly aggressive listen but, a mere one minute and 50 seconds later, we're on the comedown - all woozy distortion and staccato vocals. 'Clean Breaker' takes us up again, 'LA Welle' puts us down, 'Real Fighters' up, 'Police And Love' down - and so on. There are so many convoluted about-turns throughout the 16 tracks that any kind of coherent tone is almost impossible to fathom but, luckily, it all just adds to the general anarchic headfuck. **Lisa Wright**

DOWNLOAD: 'Ride Slow'

CONVERGE
AXE TO FALL (EPITAPH)

7

This, the seventh studio album by the Salem, Massachusetts hardcore heroes, is a more collaborative effort than

their past six, featuring contributions from the likes of Cave In and Neurosis. The end result is a little bit like if the end of Live Aid had solely consisted of angry tattooed men shouting. That's not to say this isn't worth your time - if you're contemplating engaging with a Converge record, one imagines you're already aware they sound like a pitbull being kicked in the dick - and for those willing to dig deep, there's some great stuff to be found within. Consider 'Reap What You Sow', which features the kind of innovative, mathy heaviness which reaffirms Converge's place at the top of the hardcore game. **James McMahon**

DOWNLOAD: 'Reap What You Sow'

PAUL HAIG
RELIVE (RHYTHM OF LIFE)

4

The opening song here, 'Trip Out The Rider', sounds like a menacing post-punk version of Girls Aloud's 'Wake Me Up'.

That's not to suggest that the erstwhile frontman of early '80s indie gods Josef K had a well-worn copy of 'What Would The Neighbours Say?' in the studio - rather that it's ironic that 'Ambition', a listless synth number lampooning the transparency of X Factor aspirations, sounds like an embarrassingly diluted version of his former self. Only 'Round And Round' harks back to the structural chaos and interplay of his band's old material, which comes as welcome respite - listen to any Josef K song, and it could easily have been written today; listen to this, and it sounds like a dated throwback. **Laura Snapes**

DOWNLOAD: 'Round And Round'

COSMO JARVIS
COSMO JARVIS (WALL OF SOUND)

1

It doesn't matter that Cosmo Jarvis is a white American who grew up in Devon, but sings like a cross between Danny Dyer

and Sting. It doesn't matter that he's a skinhead whose face resembles 27 pounds of Spam vacuum-packed into a condom. It doesn't matter that he keeps on mentioning his balls and playing his school recorder right through this record. However, it does matter that he wouldn't recognise a good song even if it were fired out of a bazooka right into the centre of his fat fucking head. Jarvis is like the prick on the night bus who insists on 'entertaining' you all the way home. Except backed by session musician types who sound like they've played with Newton Faulkner, The Ordinary Boys and Black Lace. **John Doran**

DOWNLOAD: Are you kidding?

ALBUMS



Game, cassette and match

MEMORY TAPES

SEEK MAGIC
(SOMETHING IN CONSTRUCTION)

8

Snuggle up - Davyd Hawk's bedroom-birthed electronic pop is to dream of

Pop music and the bedroom are entwined like sheets around an insomniac's leg: tunes are both made there and aimed squarely at it, like the new box set cum mobile sex shop recently released by Teutonic saucepots Rammstein. Just one glance of it will make *Daily Mail* readers choke on their breakfast, for, alongside brilliantly gruff metal, it includes lube, handcuffs and six (six!) dildos of varying degrees of veininess, each representing a member's actual girth. Sometimes, boys, mystery has its benefits.

In a more decorous boudoir far away is rising electronica star Davyd Hawk. Pleasingly abstruse and rather less likely to turn his cock into a quivering tower of translucent rubber, he's a New Jersey suburbanite who's chosen to woo us in seductive fashion.

Hidden beyond deep velvet curtains, or so his rich, textural electronica would suggest, we know little about this 28-year-old aside from the usual biog fluff. He's a stay-at-home, rock-loving dad, and he doesn't drive or own a mobile phone. Yet there's been a surge of cyber lust for Hawk ever since his sonic sweet-nothings (remixes of Yeah Yeah Yeahs and Peter, Bjorn And John) turned up online under the monikers Weird Tapes and Memory Cassette.

Convening those two names, this is Hawk's first full-length of bedroom-reared dreamwave. Clearly, his working environment colours all he does, by which we mean there's a flickering, half awake glaze and tog 10 softness to his sun-dappled disco, pillow rave and downbeat pop, rather than a series of grunts and snores that loop forever on

It's through this spaced-out mindset that Hawk feeds snapshots of the '80s - from Cocteau Twins' swirl, Talking Heads' tribal strut and breaking falsetto to New Order and the Balearic beginnings of rave - to craft a creamy, nostalgic trip that is one gently euphoric whoosh beyond pastiche.

For all the sleepy comfort of 'Bicycle', a three-way conflag between New Order, David Byrne and Bollywood, and lo-fi opener 'Swimming Field', there's a libidinal strut that halts things from slipping into a whimsy. Tennis shoes squeak and slick basslines twist around Johnny Harris breaks on 'Green Knight', 'Pink Stones' transforms Tricky Disco's bleep-rave into Japanese folk, and 'Stop Talking' sounds like an existential Rapture playing 'The Bongo Song'. Although these exhilarating frolics peter out into a less satisfying slumber after 'Graphics', 'Memory Tapes' still offer more bedroom options than a bunch of anatomically correct dildos. **Chris Parkin**

DOWNLOAD: 1) 'Bicycle' 2) 'Green Knight' 3) 'Pink Stones'

DID YOU KNOW...

Hawk is obsessed with Cocteau Twins' Elizabeth Fraser and almost worked with her as a teen when the band invited him to the UK... only they split

NME.COM

Hear the album in full at NME.COM/artists/memory-tapes from Nov 9

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STEREOPHONICS

KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON (MERCURY)

2



It's perhaps a continuing desire to be seen as plucky underdogs that has led these multi-millionaire Welshmen to call their

seventh album after the wartime exhortation recently revived on tea towels across the nation. Linking both their bunker mentality and everyman appeal, it can't disguise the fact that, aside from a few electronic bolt-ons, this is more of the same: an alloy of thumbs-aloft indie emoting and trad-rock dynamics, all overlaid by Kelly Jones' rasp. Stereophonics remain hulking in their fortified comfort zone, deploying the trite 'Could You Be The One?', the beer-fist stodge of 'I Got Your Number' or the accurately-titled 'Stuck In A Rut'. Should be fought on the beaches, this type of thing. **Luke Turner**

DOWNLOAD IF YOU MUST: *Some Vera Lynn*

LOCAL NATIVES

GORILLA MANOR (INFECTIOUS)

8



What's that? Percussion pushed upfront while singers harmonise over the top? Why, if it isn't the sound of US Indie Now!

LA's Local Natives seem to combine the white funk of Vampire Weekend with the choral melodies of Fleet Foxes, except, fucknuts, it doesn't quite scan. No, because these poetic songs, which billow, churn and explode into light, give Local Natives a mystery all of their own. 'Airplanes' is Arcade Fire discovering hope, 'Sun Hands' an Icarus tale which swoops between opaque beauty and punk thrash, and there's a neat cover of Talking Heads' 'Warning Sign'. Like David Byrne, this lot are enigmatic, unpredictable and utterly addictive. Lose the moustaches though lads, this isn't a porno. **Martin Robinson**

DOWNLOAD: 'Airplanes'



Frat party

CODEINE VELVET CLUB

CODEINE VELVET CLUB (ISLAND)

7

A side-project from a Fratelli? No, come back! This doesn't suck!

Side-projects are fast becoming *de rigeur* for many a frustrated guitarist keen to take a little adventure into the strange; just ask Alex Turner, Simon Neil or Jack White. So, when head Fratelli Jon Lawler revealed his band's hiatus had birthed a new venture, *NME* was intrigued. Would the Glaswegian indie brawlers' energetic backyard chants be thrown to one side, perhaps discarded for a foray into the stale scapegoat that is Auto-Tune? Thankfully, there's nothing quite so garish in Codeine Velvet Club's heady mix, although it marks a definite departure from The Fratellis' sound.

Lawler initially penned some tracks for Glasgow songwriter Lou Hickey's debut

album and, feeling a musical click, he decided instead to team up with her: thus the Codeine Velvet Club were inaugurated. Hickey's oft-soft voice drips with a noir-ish menace alongside Lawler's grizzly barks, a delicious contrast in 'Vanity Kills' and 'Time'. 'Hollywood' encapsulates some of the tuxedoed swagger of The Last Shadow Puppets. While some tracks can feel like scraps from the table Fratelli, the scope of slow-burner 'Nevada' makes up for it with its orchestral, cinematic sweep.

Classy as it is, CVC are still fuelled with some of the testosterone filled frenzy of The Fratellis: "Hey little sister/just slow down, slow down/Hey little sister/just watch them go", Lawler croaks lasciviously on 'Little Sister'. Boosted by

jazz club horns and a boozy, burlesque chorus, it captures the mood of this record perfectly; gritty Brit music tainted by soul-sucking Hollywood.

A deft rebuff to those who consider The Fratellis a by-word for run-of-the-mill indie, Codeine Velvet Club haunt the indie stereotype like glamorous spectres. **Chris Mandle**

DOWNLOAD: 1) 'Hollywood' 2) 'Nevada' 3) 'Time'

DID YOU KNOW...

The orchestral score for 'Nevada' was composed by Belle & Sebastian's **Thick Cooke**

UNSPUN HEROES

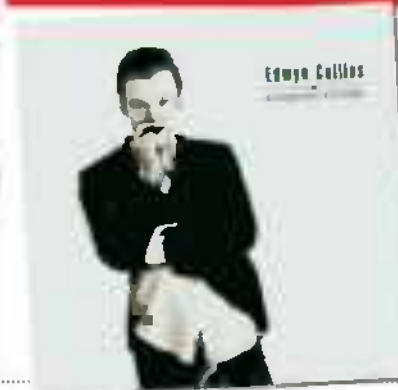
DIGGING UP BURIED TREASURE FROM THE DEPTHS OF OUR COLLECTIONS

THIS WEEK...

Jamie Crossan basks in the lesser-known melodies and dry wit of the magic piper of love

EDWYN COLLINS

GORGEOUS GEORGE (SETANTA, 1994)



Considering the waves of overdue and well-deserved respect that's lapped on Edwyn Collins' doorstep of late, it's remarkable that 'A Girl Like You' remains his only solo commercial hit. His elder statesman status and the admiration which his determined recovery from his 2005 brain haemorrhage earned him has obscured the fact that, for many years, his records went pretty much unnoticed bar one radio hit.

Edwyn epitomised Scotland's new wave of cool art-rock troubadours during the '80s as frontman for Postcard Records' hippest band Orange Juice, writing instant classics such as 'Rip It Up' and 'Blue Boy' that inspired so many. The Orange Juice influence still remains strong, with both Franz

Ferdinand and The Cibs - who loved Edwyn so much they got him to produce arguably their finest album 'The New Fellas' - borrowing from their iconic sound; but, sadly, his equally brilliant solo work has failed to inspire the same legion of copycats.

This is Edwyn's third solo album, and his most perfect

'Gorgeous George' is Edwyn's third solo album and his most perfect. Yes, it is the album with THAT song on it; but it isn't even close to being the best tune on here. In fact, we're gonna put it in fourth place behind the snarling 'The Campaign For Real Rock', the sweeping weepy 'Low Expectations' and one of his

finest songs, the tender, heartstring-tugging paranoia of 'Make Me Feel Again' - whose stunning chorus has taken on new meaning since his illness: "When you turned your head/When I called your name/All I need's your love/To make me feel again".

'If You Could Love Me' bleeds the heart with its sensuous northern soul and is a true testament to Edwyn's lyrical craftsmanship, while the alt.country of 'North Of Heaven' shows Edwyn's humorous side with the brilliant line: "Some mother's talking 'bout Guns N' Roses/As if I give a fuck/At best I think they suck".

'Gorgeous George' is a true gem, as captivating, if not more so, than Edwyn's stunning output with Orange Juice. You'll have never heard an album like this before.

The death of a Party?

BLOC PARTY

BOURNEMOUTH INTERNATIONAL CENTRE, BOURNEMOUTH
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31

Band pull out all the stops at what may prove to be their final ever gig

On first glance, it seemed these was the last rites for Bloc Party. Interview innuendos suggested tonight would mark their finale, or, at the very least, the severing of ties with disgruntled drummer Matt Tong. Yet as they cannon out defiant opening volley 'One Month Off', at least for this evening, the only living dead are assembled fans sporting ghoulish Halloween attire.

The fancy dress doesn't extend onstage, aside from Matt's Bournemouth football shirt, commemorating his hometown return. Indeed, Kele Okereke is more immediately concerned with soldiering through 'flu, grinning bullishly that "mama Okereke didn't raise a quitter". If this is the end, nobody could accuse either of

creaking into retirement like weary journeymen fit for Matt's beloved lower league soccer side.

The spine-tingling refrains of 'Positive Tension' lend the first 'Silent Alarm'-shaped memory-jog, the album's original wide-eyed exuberance fleshed out just as Kele has bulked up in the interim. The introspective extremes of 'A Weekend In The City' are represented by the triple dose of 'Where Is Home?', 'Hunting For Witches' and 'Song For Clay (Disappear Here)', while third album 'Intimacy' is also aired, though 'Trojan Horse' transforms its gauche lyricisms into lung-filling euphoria.

A brace of encores are the true telling of the tale, though. All four re-emerge in (sort of) scary garb, Kele confirming – while dressed as, er, a banana – that this is indeed "our final

show for the foreseeable future" 'Flux' revs up before a monumental rendition of 'Helicopter', and with that, Bloc Party take a final bow and the lights go up. But that's not quite it: as hundreds file out, the band swiftly return for "the song that started it all off", 'She's Hearing Voices', as a collection of cadaverously costumed roadies scramble onstage. Kele vanishes into his disciples, and Matt is last to leave the stage, imploring us all to "keep the faith". Whether tonight is revealed as a full stop or comma in their story (the subsequent revelation that Kele's working on a solo album adds to the uncertainty), it's equal parts exhilarating and poignant; fittingly, the very juxtaposition that has made Bloc Party so essential these past five years. *Adam Kennedy*

Jack doesn't actually have any make-up on



Black mass hysteria

THE DEAD WEATHER
ST LEONARD CHURCH, LONDON
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31

Posers? On a night when spectacle is all, it works

Everyone is standing on the church pews. Some are forcing their way onto friends' shoulders, wobbling uncertainly under the ruined ceiling of St Leonard Church in Shoreditch, which tonight is lit toxic blue (blue movie-style, in fact). Shirts are ripped, hair flails and heads crash-bang into each other. The Dead Weather – all dressed for Halloween – stand totally still, centre-stage. They're looking at the audience, but not bothering to greet them. Hold that pose... a little longer... ignore the madness... ignore everything... repeat ad infinitum. Messrs Mosshart, Fertita and Lawrence have clearly been studying at the Jack White school of method acting.

Are they the four horsemen gone psych? Or maybe just a junked-up KOL auditioning for a *Back At The Ranch: Halt The Lynchin'*, *Ma!* TV special? Whatever, all of them look garishly amazing. They win over the crowd by simply standing there. When White breaks off and removes his huge fur coat (half '50s Hollywood, half grizzly bear), flinging it to the ground harshly, the whole place erupts.

Both he and Mosshart seem blatantly unarsed about the band's sod-all status among Mr & Mrs G Public ('Horehound' is White's lowest charting UK album since 'White Blood Cells'). Instead, they just get on with the job of

playing straight into the hands of the uber-obsessives, like the kids down the front tonight who hang onto the stage like they're at Hyde Park watching the Stones in '69. Mosshart is a revelation, preaching to the converted like a Persian she-devil. As she leans full-tilt into the scrum during 'Treat Me Like Your Mother' and unleashes – proper primeval style – the lyric "stand up like a man!" she is, for one night at least, the coolest frontwoman on earth. Bizarrely, when she finally stops straddling the mic-stand, midway through beat-laden newie 'I Can't Hear You', it's to physically launch herself upon one unassuming punter. With her legs rooted to the edge of the stage, she falls forward and, in faux-biblical fashion, plants a hand straight on the guy's head. So now she's semi-floating above the first few rows. It's absurdly brilliant.

Only when White breaks his silence to award two audience members prizes for wearing the bloodiest drag do the band appear vaguely human, but that doesn't matter – The Dead Weather's shtick works best because of their willingness to act up and play dead... cool. Tonight, they drop a shell right in the heart of undignified and gormless east London, and explode with nothing more than purity, Machiavellian swagger and loud, loud, loud headfuckery. **Matt Wilkinson**

SHORT SETS

GLISS
ELECTRIC CIRCUS,
EDINBURGH,
03/11/09

It can't be good for the soul to walk on stage to a measly 20 people, many who are leftovers from an earlier pub quiz. But this LA trio, who play energised garage rock to pulverise the senses, are forced to work their magic in front of a pretty stale crowd this evening. Even the thunderous pop-growl of '29 Acts Of Love' and the epic mind-bending distortion of 'Anybody Inside' fail to garner any reaction. It all feels a bit like mouldy bread out in the crowd. Shame, 'cos Gliss are more like the all-butter croissant of the LA lo-fi rock clique: put simply, the finest.

Jamie Crossan

THE CHEEK
NIGHT AND DAY CAFE,
MANCHESTER,
03/11/09

They dress like they've just left the Department Of Geeks in an office in 1963 following a stationery check; ruffled and sweaty, and yet still sharp in the clothes department. Previously known as Cheeky Cheeky And The Nosebleeds, The Cheek aren't exactly new, but their penchant for hooks and frankly plain odd frontmen isn't old yet. "Hang about after and get fucked up with us," suggests singer Rory Cottam as a cover of La Roux's 'In For The Kill' starts. Somehow we don't doubt their own killer instinct. **Kelly Murray**



GREAT ACOUSTICS

GLASVEGAS
PARKER MCMILLAN, LONDON
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30

We're packed like happy, drunk sardines into a basement bar for a Glasvegas couldn't-be-more-intimate-even-if-it-was-held-in-a-shoebbox charity gig. There are only a couple of hundred people here and probably only a quarter of them can actually see the band, who tonight consist of cousins James and Rab Allan playing an acoustic set in aid of the Team Continuum's cancer fund.

A white sheet has been draped over the bar to form an impromptu backdrop, and beer taps cast shadows onto it like a city skyline at night. It seems like their mere presence can make the mundane romantic. Looking like McCartney and Lennon in Hamburg in 1960, the duo hold the crowd in place like a butterfly secured to card with a lepidopterist's pin. The songs are left bare and vulnerable, almost wound-like, with the post-Oasis bombast and neo-shoegaze haze removed, leaving James' songwriting to shine through. Speaking to *NME* backstage later, the singer confirms, "It's a rarity to do the songs that sparse. I haven't heard them that stripped back since they were written." In this context, 'Daddy's Gone' becomes a '50s doo wop torch song. Even the closest thing they have to an Achilles heel – 'Go Square Go' – which seems to have been adopted as a non-ironic beer boy anthem in some quarters because of the "here we fucking go" refrain – has its original childhood simplicity rescued tonight.

During the encore James jokes, "People say, 'Look at that pretentious cunt, wearing sunglasses indoors', but it's only 'cos my eyes are going in different directions and I don't want my mam to see." This warm-hearted banter seems at odds with the seemingly troubled guy who went AWOL in NYC recently, but tonight he genuinely exudes serenity. When his voice breaks and cracks with emotion during a version of The Ronettes' '60s classic 'Be My Baby' the crowd form a devotional choir that drown all other sound out. On this form, the second album will be nothing short of sublime. **John Doran**

A full-page photograph of Snoop Dogg performing on stage. He is wearing a black Adidas tracksuit with yellow and rainbow-colored stripes on the sleeves and a black beanie. He is holding a microphone and pointing towards the camera. In the background, a woman in a yellow crop top and a large, colorful floral skirt is dancing. The stage is lit with warm, orange-toned lights.

No bite

SNOOP DOGG
NOKIA THEATRE, NEW YORK CITY
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29

A bona fide legend he may be, but the rap icon struggles to stop the crowd from yawning

You have to hand it to Snoop Dogg – he's definitely no slacker when it comes to making music. His upcoming 'Malice N Wonderland' album is his 10th since 1993's chronic-infused 'Doggystyle' both reshaped the gangsta rap mould and created a boom for late night snack retailers. But what, after all this time, has his music taught us about the man himself? Well, he likes weed, obviously. A bit of booze never goes amiss in the Dogg Pound, as he's prone to mentioning. Having rampant sex with well-endowed hot girls is pretty important to ol' Snoopy Doopy too. And let's not forget how much he's into making as much money as possible and then telling everyone how loaded he is. And... that's about it. Of course, it's hard to deny that he's earned his bragging rights to some degree. Still shamelessly flash (to the point of having a blinged-out microphone), his smooth and slick-sounding rhymes remain undoubtedly some of the most instantly recognisable in rap and, with a full band

in tow, classics such as 'Gin And Juice' sound unassailable. But fatigue sets in disappointingly quickly when watching Snoop. Gangsta royalty though he may be, one 30-minute cycle of songs about sex/weed/money is all anyone needs. Indeed, it's a telling state of affairs when a punter turns to *NME* midway through the show and asks us, "Wait, didn't he already do this song?" As attention levels visibly start to wane, Snoop attempts to get the show boiling over by throwing in a cover of House Of Pain's 'Jump Around'. But it feels like a desperate measure, and by the time he finally brings out the big guns in the shape of 'Drop It Like It's Hot' and 'What's My Name?' it seems that at least half of the spliff-toking massive are more concerned with scoring a six-pack of Boston Kremes at the Dunkin' Donuts around the corner. Living in this kind of ultra-decadent groundhog day must be great fun for Snoop Dogg, but hearing him constantly rap about it is becoming a chore for everyone else. *Hardeep Phull*

Snoop was pleased with his blinged-up fajita holder



Furtissimo!

GRIZZLY BEAR WITH THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA/ST VINCENT
BARBICAN CENTRE, LONDON
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31

Beefed up with strings, they're almost too good

As far as incongruous pairings go, this takes some beating. Watching a dignified gig, nay, *concert*, at London's high culture hub in the company of four epic Brooklynites and a full classical orchestra while thousands of sugared up kids in *Scream* masks and skimpily clad teens (barely) dressed as "cats" terrorise the streets is about as well-matched as Jason Statham popping along to see Africa Exprez. But we like our over-Americanised Hallmark holidays served with a touch of class, thank-you-very-much, so, with broomsticks safely stashed in the cloakroom, *NME* settles down for an aural overload of the lushest proportions. Hold onto your pointy hats.

Before the orchestral descent, however, comes St Vincent (aka Annie Clark and onstage amigo Daniel Hart) whose elfin frame seems almost entirely swallowed by the vast and instrument-laden surrounds of the imposing Barbican stage. But, small in stature as she may be, with some canny looping tricks and pre-recorded drum tracks she turns what is on record a sparse take on the swirling *CocoRosie*-esque, sample-tinged acoustics into a haunting, otherworldly live experience. Gorgeously ethereal and, with the glitchy 'Marrow', truly innovative and original stuff.

If there's one thing Grizzly Bear don't have to worry about, though, it's keeping it fresh 'cos,

y'know, they've got a frickin' massive orchestra behind them. It's the kind of coup that very, very few bands could pull off without coming across as incredibly pretentious or embarrassingly under-par; Grizzly Bear are at the forefront of that few. It probably doesn't hurt that a quarter of their number can also be found night-shifting with chronically underrated outfit Department Of Eagles (and, indeed, there's clearly crossover in style between the two), but, three albums of increasingly intricate and rich chamber-pop in, GB's epic tendencies find themselves more than comfortable bed-fellows with tonight's stage partners.

With a string of lanterns and various coloured spotlights upping the theatrical factor to operatic proportions, the show is, from the opening hypnotic hurls of 'Easier' to the swelling encore of 'Colorado', a triumph. The already achingly gorgeous harmonies of 'While You Wait For The Others' and 'Foreground' take on an added cinematic element. 'Knife' croons and twinkles its way delicately through every harp string and percussive flourish, while 'Southern Point's' dramatic layers and peaks find their ultimate representation. 'Two Weeks' even elicits a full-on joyful cheer – and that's pretty rare in these pomp and splendour parts.

The only problem now is how to push it even further. Frighteningly good. *Lisa Wright*

SHORT SETS

KING CHARLES

THE LEXINGTON, LONDON, 28/10/09
 He doesn't make things easy for himself, this one. Flying in the face of opprobrium with a towering mound of dreadlocks and a gypsy Keith Richards-by-way-of-Tots-TV get-up, he'll have your every cell screaming 'trustafarian!'. But it's worth dropping that inverted snobbery and sticking around for an intriguing mix of Devendra-esque alt-folk and lively psych workouts. "You're all my family now," he tells the crowd after a euphoric rush through new single 'Love Lust'. We don't know if we'll be sharing his Kool-Aid just yet, but the folk-punk fervour of 'Mr Flick' has us filled with brotherly feeling. *Duncan Gillespie*

KAP BAMBINO

THE OLD BLUE LAST, LONDON, 03/11/09
 They're not really so much a band as a strange ecstatic cult, an assault-by-spectacle, a weird thing that people do to each other in upstairs rooms in pubs. Bleach-haired, mad-eyed, Caroline Martial is a born star, if slightly terrifying. From the moment they crash in with 'Red Sign' she's a magnetic, thrilling, scary ball of headbanging, demonically-possessed movement. Their digital hardcore sound is almost as compelling, a demented pulse of fight-or-flight energy that leaves us wanting to stomp on car bonnets all the way home. *Emily Mackay*



HE IS THE PARTY

FRANK TURNER
O2 SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE, LONDON
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29

We're definitely going to hell," howl 2,000 rapturous souls, expertly conducted by a spindly dude onstage who's grinning like he just won life. Everyone continues with 'The Ballad Of Me And My Friends', Turner's manifesto of hope, at ear-splitting volume: "But we'll have all the best stories to tell". And what a story this is – in three short years he's gone from playing in shitty pubs to a handful of punk kids to selling out the Empire. The roars that greet the inspirational 'Try This At Home' and 'Nashville Tennessee', from opposite ends of his career, prove this is no temporary success but a genuine phenomenon built on solid ground.

'Love Ire & Song' is belted out with an almost religious fervour, and 'Long Live The Queen', normally tender and bare, is tonight richly energised and ecstatic in its catharsis. The party mood is fuelled by 'Smiling At Strangers On Trains' from his Million Dead days, and he's not above potentially ruining the night by inviting a fat-fingered mate onstage to play harmonica on 'Dan's Song' (full disclosure: that mate is me, and it was a total riot) just for kicks. 'Photosynthesis' raises the volume further, and 'The Road' and 'I Knew Prufrock Before He Got Famous' are welcomed blissfully.

The thing about being onstage is that when you stand in the right place, you can see every face in the crowd. Tonight I saw a rammed venue singing every single word of every single song – and it wasn't just the hardcore down the front but everyone right at the back, upstairs and at the bar. Tonight is Turner's greatest achievement to date, a rousing, deserved victory powered by a homegrown fanbase in love with his honesty. And it's obvious there's so much more to come. *Ben Patashnik*

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DJ: MIKEY FOUR / ED WILDER

04 DEC
THAT PETROL EMOTION
DJ: JEFF AUSTIN / ED WILDER

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SO HOW ARE YOU GOING TO TAKE MY INCOME ESCALATOR TO THE NEXT LEVEL?

Dan Cooper (laptop/sampler/keyboard): "We're an experimental noise, drone and ambient project from Cheltenham Spa. We use a lot of 8-bit and circuit-bent sounds and create these huge, boisterous, free-form soundscapes. It verges on no-wave, it's a bit shoegaze, and we'll also take you back to the euphoria of your first Game Boy."



ION WHISTLE

I THINK YOU COULD BE OUT OF THE LOOP REGARDING CAPITAL RESONANCE. "Yeah, it's a cruel fact that freeform noise isn't everyone's cup of tea."

INCENTIVISE ME. WHO ARE YOUR INSPIRATIONS? ANY SHILLING HEADS THERE?

"It's a mixed bag, we like other noise acts like Black Dice, Wolf Eyes, Mike Patton, that kind of thing. Also drone metal. Anything slightly punishing."

MY BOXES AREN'T BEING TICKED, THEY'RE BEING ASS-FUCKED. ANY POTENTIAL FOR RADIO?

"No, the last CD we gave out was two tracks both about 45 minutes long. The last track we gave out was called 'Guantanamo Belge'. It has a colourful sound, with jet noises and explosions over the top."

HMM, THERE COULD BE TAKE-UP WITH THE POST-GOOD IRONIC MARKET. DOES YOUR LIVE SHOW HAVE FUN LEVERAGE?

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I WANT TO SOUND LIKE... LA ROUX



Marcia Grimaldi, 20, Fulham: "How do I sound like La Roux? I had piano lessons when I was a kid, but I've forgotten them. Does that matter?"

THE SOUND

La Roux's self-titled debut album has brightened up the tail end of the noughties by resurrecting the stark dynamics of early-'80s synth-pop. Singer Elly Jackson was raised on folk legends such as Joni Mitchell, but both Elly and her non-performing partner Ben Langmaid were inspired by synth outfits such as Blancmange, Heaven 17 and early Depeche Mode.

THE GEAR

Classic '80s synths like the **Roland Jupiter 8** are highly prized because their sounds are seen as warmer than the ones modern digital synths can produce. If you want to do this on the cheap, get **GarageBand** on your computer and then get some **SynthPop** for GarageBand on your computer (around £30) which has lots of synth, drum and bass sounds to play with. You can also buy/download specific sounds online (type "80s synth WAV samples" into Google). And let's not forget instruments; get a cheap **MIDI controller keyboard** to create and play your own melody lines. An **M-Audio Oxygen 8** (£60) is a small keyboard that doesn't make any sound on its own, but plug it into your computer and you're good to go. Same for the **Korg Nano Pad** (around £50), which allows you to tap out your own drum patterns.

IN THE STUDIO

Get every part down separately. This way it's easy if you want to change just one thing. Then for a more '80s sound add reverb and echo for some emotion, but don't bulk up the sounds too much

by using multi-tracking and compression; the La Roux sound is thinner than on many modern records, and all the better for it.

THE TECHNIQUE

You don't need to be a virtuoso musician, so don't worry about remembering that Chopin. Some of the best melody and synth basslines can be done with one finger. Get a musical phrase you like - it can be as little as two notes - and repeat it: that's a verse. Now think of something that can go nicely with it: that's a chorus. When you've got a third phrase, you have an instrumental bit. Find a drum beat, write lyrics and you've got a song...

BEST TRICK

Minimalism. The space on La Roux records allows the melody and vocals to shine through.



WHO DO YOU WANT TO SOUND LIKE?
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NEXT WEEK:
The Dead Weather

Words by John Callaghan from...

Guitar December issue
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THE UK'S BIGGEST GUIDE TO THE WEEK AHEAD *Edited by Ash Dosanjh*

684 GIGS
ACROSS
THE UK &
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PICK OF THE WEEK...



PICK OF THE WEEK

ATLAS SOUND

WHERE: LONDON CARGO (SUN)

Bradford Cox swaps Deerhunter for his Atlas Sound solo project. Be sure to catch the nicest man in indie rock on this one-off visit, following the release of the exquisite 'Logos'.

WWW.NME.COM/artists/atlas-sound



DON'T MISS

THE FALL

WHERE: MANCHESTER MOHO LIVE (WED), OXFORD O2 ACADEMY (SUN), LONDON KOKO (TUES)

Still as barmy and angry as ever, Mark E Smith defies battered hips and wheelchairs to take his ever-morphing line-up out on the road.

WWW.NME.COM/artists/the-fall

EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT

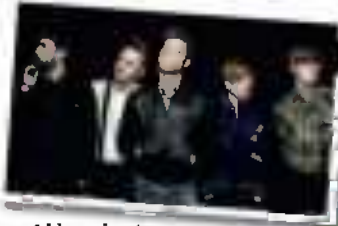
FRANKIE & THE HEARTSTRINGS

WHERE: LEEDS NATION OF SHOPKEEPERS (SAT)

They're on course to release their debut single 'Hunger'/'Fragile' on Rough Trade, so you'd be wise to

catch the crooning dream-pop of this Sunderland five-piece in a small setting while you still can.

WWW.NME.COM/newmusic



PICK OF CLUB NME

CITADELS

WHERE: LONDON KOKO (FRI)

London ensemble Citadels make Club NME London their fortress of choice this week for their fleeting, electro indie-pop. Support comes from 12 Dirty Bullets.

WWW.NME.COM/clubnme

RADAR STAR



WAVVES

WHERE: BRIGHTON AUDIO (TUES)

Nathan Williams brings his noise onslaughts back to the UK with Hell drummer Zach Hill in tow.

WWW.NME.COM/artists/wavves

The Fall are playing O₂ Academy Oxford. If you're on O₂ you can get Priority Tickets to all gigs at O₂ Academy Oxford up to 48 hours before general release.

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NOVEMBER 11

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01224 624642

Ugly Duckling Moles 01225 404445

A Place To Bury Strangers Auntie
Annie's 028 9050 1660
David Lyttle Black Box
00 35391 566511

Babybird O2 Academy 3
0870 771 2000 **WA**
Just Jack O2 Academy 2
0870 771 2000 **WA**
Oxbow/Light Trap/Transitional
Vivid 0871 230 1094
Steve Tromans Glee Club
0870 241 5093

Alexander O'Neal O2 Academy
01202 399922 **WA**

Alabama 3 Concorde 2 01273 673311
Exit Calm Engine Room
01273 728 999
The Field Audio 01273 624343
Luke Haines Hanbury Ballroom
01273 605789
Romance Freebutt 01273 603974

Adelaide's Cape Louisiana
0117 926 5978

Alberta Cross The Cooler
0117 945 0999

The Mission District O2 Academy 2
0870 771 2000 **WA**
Taking Tiger Mountain Start The
Bus 0117 930 4370

Lyrebirds Buffalo Bar 02920 310312

Steve Earle Opera House
00 35321 270022

The Cave Singers/Espers/Woods
Crawdaddy 00 3531 478 0225
The Dead Flags Whelan's
00 3531 475 9372

Marina And The Diamonds
Academy 00 3531 877 9999
Mark Eitzel Village 00 3531 475 9372
Yellowman Button Factory
00 3531 670 9202

The Proclaimers Usher Hall
0131 228 1155

Screaming Lights The Electric Circus
0131 226 4224

Deep Purple Clyde Auditorium
0141 248 3000

Emmure Cathouse 0141 248 6606

The Enemy O2 Academy
0870 771 2000 **WA**

Frankmusik Classic Grand
0141 221 4583

Jay Reatard King Tut's Wah Wah Hut
0141 221 5279

Tukoo Nice'n'Sleazy 0141 333 9637

Gliss Boilerroom 01483 440022

Southside Johnny & The Asbury
Jukes The Assembly 01926 313774

All The Damn Kids Sandinista!
0113 305 0372

Black Joe Lewis Hi-Fi Club
0113 242 7353



**Marina And
The Diamonds,
Academy, Dublin**

Paul Thomas Saunders Wardrobe
0113 222 3434
Zombina And The Skeletones
Mine 0871 230 1094

Beyonce Echo Arena 0844 8000 400
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Hundred Reasons Garage
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The Jacks 93 Feet East
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Kelbie The Fly 0870 907 0999

King Of Spain 12 Bar Club
020 7240 2622

Life In Film Rhythm Factory
020 7247 9386

Lucy Noble Troubadour Club
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Mr Hudson O2 Shepherd's Bush
Empire 0870 771 2000 **WA**

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The Fall Moho Live 0161 834 8180

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New Beautiful South Academy 2
0161 832 1111

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Biffy Clyro UEA 01603 505401

Mary Epworth & The Jubilee Band
Arts Centre 01603 660352

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01603 632717

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01603 441118

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A Skylit Drive O2 Academy 3
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Beyonce NIA 0121 780 4133

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0121 444 2081

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01273 603974

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01273 673311

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0117 930 4370

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01223 511511

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01223 357268

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029 2023 2199

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02920 310312

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Bees Barfly 029 2066 7658

Seasick Steve Millennium Centre
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Blue Devil Duo The Pavilion
00 35321 427 6228

Viking Skull The Box 01270 257 398

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Firestone Zanzibar 0151 707 1558

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Rumble Strips Bumper
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Alesha Dixon O2 Shepherd's Bush
Empire 0870 771 2000 **WA**

Aluminum Babe Good Ship
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Babybird Hoxton Square
Bar & Kitchen 020 7613 0709

Biffy Clyro O2 Brixton Academy
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Circulus Borderline 020 7734 5547

Cold In Berlin 93 Feet East
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Cinema Club The Lexington
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Union Chapel 020 7226 1686

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Mr Hudson The Royal

01332 367720 **+14**

Backstreet Boys The O2 01 819 8888

David O'Doherty Whelan's

00 3531 475 9372

Invasion Captain Americas

0871 230 1094

We Have Band Crawdaddy

00 3531 478 0225

Japandroids Sneaky Pete's

0131 225 1757

Roy Henderson/Colin Hay

The Caves 0131 557 8989

Steve Aoki Cabaret Voltaire

0131 220 6176

Above Them 13th Note Cafe

0141 553 1638

Breed 77 Ivory Blacks 0141 221 7871

The Cave Singers/Espers/Woods

Stereo 0141 576 5018

The Chapman Family

King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

The Darien Venture Capitol

0141 331 0140

Des McLean O2 Academy

0870 771 2000 **WA**

The Drones Nice'n'Sleazy

0141 333 9637

The Fall Renfrew Ferry 0141 429 1010

Odyssey Boilerroom 01483 440022

Neck Square 01279 305000

Good Shoes Club 85 01462 432767

The Bazaars Elbow Rooms

0113 245 7011

Dark Arches The Owl 0113 256 5242

Exit Calm/The Lazy Darlings

Cockpit Room 3 0113 2441573

Gentlemen's Dub Club Faversham

0113 245 8817



La Roux Stylus 01132 431751

Pinch Wire Club 0870 444 4018

The Voices Primrose Bar

01132 621368

VV Brown Cockpit Room 2

0113 244 3446

Elephants Firebug 0116 255 1228

Mas Fina Sumo 0116 285 6536

Mundy Dolans Warehouse

00 35361 314483

Field Music Bumper 0151 707 9902

The Baker Brothers Luminaire

020 7372 7123

Black Joe Lewis & The Honeybears

Garage 020 7607 1818

Bruised Beauties Good Ship

020 7372 2544

Carter USM Forum 020 7344 0044

David Cronenberg's Wife Windmill

020 8671 0700

Dead Kids Cargo 0207 749 7840

Friction 93 Feet East 020 7247 6095

Ghost Of Lemora Scala

020 7833 2022 **+16**

Jay Reatard Underworld

020 7482 1932

The King Blues Fridge 020 7326 5100

The Legendary Too Drunk

Hope & Anchor 020 7354 1312

Little Red The Lexington

020 7837 5387

Maxwell O2 Brixton Academy

0870 771 2000 **WA**

Muse The O2 Arena 0870 701 4444

Nell Bryden Borderline

020 7734 5547

New Beautiful South O2 Islington

Academy 0870 771 2000

No Reply At 109 Barfly

0870 907 0999

Oh! The Pretty Things 100 Club

020 7636 0933

The Omega The Fly 0870 907 0999

Sad Day For Puppets Buffalo Bar

020 7359 6191

Sidonie O2 Academy 2 Islington

0870 771 2000 **WA**

Ted Daniel Cafe Oto 0871 230 1094

Tegan And Sara O2 Shepherds Bush

Empire 0870 771 2000 **WA**

The Velvetines/The Beautiful

Game Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773

MANCHESTER

A Skylit Drive Roadhouse

0161 228 1789

Beat The Radar Deaf Institute

0161 330 4019

Gun Academy 3 0161 832 1111

Lyrebirds Ruby Lounge

0161 834 1392

Post Modern Gelsa Night And Day

Cafe 0161 236 1822

Seth Lakeman Academy 2

0161 832 1111

NEWCASTLE

Alabama 3 O2 Academy

0870 771 2000 **WA**

Hugh Cornwell O2 Academy 2

0870 771 2000 **WA**

NORTHAMPTON

The Dave Vegas Project Molly's

Music Bar 01604 602442

NOTTINGHAM

Darren Hayman And The

Secondary Modern Bodega Social

Club 08713 100000

The Mission District Rock City

08713 100000

OXFORD

Aeroplane O2 Academy 2

0870 771 2000 **WA**

Mr Scruff O2 Academy

0870 771 2000 **WA**

PETERBOROUGH

The Brink Met Lounge 01733 566100

PORTSMOUTH

The Flaming Lips Guildhall

023 9282 4355

READING

The Hustlers Old Orleans

0118 951 2678

SHEFFIELD

Reaper Corporate 0114 246 0262

SOUTHAMPTON

Our Time Down Here Joiners

023 8022 5612

STONE ON THE BENT

Twisted Wheel Sugarmill

01782 214991

ST ALBANS

Mezzanine 01727 851143

SUNDERLAND

Giles Independent 0191 565 8947

WAKEFIELD

The Cheek Escobar 01924 332000

Ever The Joker Snooty Fox

01924 374455

TONK

Dead Rebellion Fibbers

01904 651 250 **+14**

SATURDAY

NOVEMBER 14

Live from Topman on Oxford Circus, London,
NME Radio's James Theaker plays the latest
indie hits and timeless classics, from 11am

NME
RADIO

Cosmo Jarvis Moles 01225 404445

Bryan Josh Esquires 01234 340120

Great Lake Swimmers Speakeasy

028 9027 3106

Elliot Minor O2 Academy 2

0870 771 2000 **WA**

Pendulum O2 Academy

0870 771 2000 **WA**

Seyes Soundhouse 0871 230 1094

Johnny Oregon 60 Million Postcards

01202 292 697

Orange Goblin Concorde 2

01273 673311

Gay For Johnny Depp Louisiana

0117 926 5978

Jay Reatard Croft 0117 987 4144

Moody Goose Fleece 0117 945 0996

Nell Bryden The Cooler

0117 945 0999

Nobody Beats The Drum

Start The Bus 0117 930 4370

VV Brown Thekla 08713 100000

As We Climb Portland Arms

01223 357268

The Kathryn Tickell Band Junction 2

01223 511511

Mr Scruff Junction 01223 511511

Boom In The Diamond Industry

Club Ifor Bach 029 2023 2199

The Holloways Barfly 029 2066 7658

Jim Cornet The Pavilion

00 35321 427 6228

Time Is A Thief An Cruiscin Lan

00 35321 431 6428

In The Flesh Flowerpot 01332 204955

The Undertones Nerve Centre

028 7126 0562

China Shop Bull Leopard

01302 363054

Cymbals Eat Guitars Crawdaddy

00 3531 478 0225

David O'Doherty Whelan's

00 3531 475 9372

Mundy Button Factory

SUNDAY

NOVEMBER 15

Tune in from 11am as Bombay Bicycle Club join James Theaker for a live broadcast from Topman Oxford Circus, London

NME

RADIO

Alabama 3 Warehouse

0844 847 2319

Jonathan Coulton The Tunnels
01224 211121

Cymbals Eat Guitars Auntie Annie's
028 9050 1660

Emmure O2 Academy 2

0870 771 2000 **WA**

Great Lake Swimmers Glee Club
0870 241 5093

Nell Bryden O2 Academy 3
0870 771 2000 **WA**

Just Jack O2 Academy
01202 399922 **WA**

Paul Current! Freebutt 01273 603974

Black Joe Lewis & The Honeybears
Thekla 08713 100000

Blue Roses Louisiana
0117 926 5978

The Hair Police Croft 0117 987 4144
William Fitzsimmons The Cooler
0117 945 0999

Lisa Mitchell Portland Arms
01223 357268
Seasick Steve Corn Exchange
01223 357851

The Fall Of Troy Clwb Ifor Bach
029 2023 2199
The Mission District Barfly
029 2066 7658 **+16**

Charley Pride Opera House
00 35321 270022

I Haunt Wizards The Box
01270 257 398

David O'Doherty Whelan's
00 3531 475 9372

Mary Coughlan Button Factory
00 3531 670 9202

Rodrigo Y Gabriela Vicar St
00 3531 889 4900

The Specials Olympia
00 3531 679 3323

Yusuf Islam
The O2 01 819 8888

BRISTOL

Above Them Henry's Cellar Bar
0131 221 1288

Teenagersintokyo Sneaky Pete's
0131 225 1757

Tegan And Sara Picture House
0844 847 1740 **WA**

EXETER

Cinders Fall Cavern Club
01392 495370

GALWAY

Rich Wyman Roisin Dubh
00 35391 586540

GLASGOW

A Skylit Drive Cathouse
0141 248 6606

Emily Loizeau Nice'n'Sleazy
0141 333 9637

The Flaming Lips O2 Academy
0870 771 2000 **WA**

The King Hats King Tut's Wah Wah
Hut 0141 221 5279

Laura Marling Arches 0141 221 4001

The Northwestern Captain's Rest

0141 331 2722

LEEDS

After The Fire New Roscoe
0113 246 0778

A Place To Bury Strangers/Sad
Day For Puppets Cockpit Room 2
0113 244 3446

Bearfoot Beware Primrose Bar
01132 621368

Gavin Mart Sandinista!
0113 305 0372

Itch Royal Park Cellars 0113 274 1758

Joe Lally Brudenell Social Club
0113 243 5866

South View Juniors Shed Bar
0113 244 1198

Six Toys Hi Fi Club 0113 242 7353

LEICESTER

Gills Freight 0115 231 1228

LIVERPOOL

The Invisible Bumper 0151 707 9902

Jay Reatard Barfly Loft @ Masque
0151 707 6171 **+14**

LONDON

Atlas Sound Cargo 0207 749 7840

Cheek Tidiiane Seck Jazz Café
020 7916 6060

Deep Purple Apollo 0870 606 3400

The Dodos Scala 020 7833 2022

Havodah/Mastermindz Dublin
Castle 020 7485 1773

Kanako Moriuchi Café Oto
0871 230 1094

Kasabian Wembley Arena
0870 060 0870

The Lambrettas 100 Club
020 7636 0933

The Legendary Pink Dots Barden's
Boudoir 0770 865 6633

Me And The Beast Troubadour Club
0870 771 2000

Riverside O2 Islington Academy
0870 771 2000

Shapes Good Ship 020 7372 2544

Shotgun Alibi Bull & Gate
020 7485 5358

Venomous Concept Underworld
020 7482 1932

Alberta Cross Ruby Lounge
0161 834 1392

The Psychedelic Furs Academy 2
0161 832 1111

The Enemy O2 Academy
0870 771 2000 **WA**

The Holloways TJ's 01633 216608

Gomez/Frightened Rabbit
Roadmender Centre 01604 604222

New Beautiful South Waterfront
01603 632717

Steve Hackett UEA 01603 505401

Good Shoes Bodega Social Club
08713 100000

The Rumble Strips Rescue Rooms
0115 958 8484 **+14**

The Fall O2 Academy
0870 771 2000 **WA**

Amy Studt Mr Kyp's 01202 748945

We Were Promised Jetpacks
Oakford Social Club 0116 255 3956

SHEFFIELD

Gun Corporation 0114 276 3062

SOUTHAMPTON
A Silent Film Joiners 02382 5612

STOKE ON TRENT
Me Vs Hero Sugarmill 01882 214991

SWINDON
Glen Tilbrook 12 Bar 01793 535713

MONDAY

NOVEMBER 16



Jay Reatard,
Whelan's Dublin

Trashcan Sinatras Warehouse
0844 847 2319

The Specials St George's Market
0870 243 4455

Alberta Cross O2 Academy 3
0870 771 2000 **WA**

Thursday O2 Academy 2
0870 771 2000 **WA**

The Detachments Freebutt
01273 603974

Gary Moore Concorde 2 01273 673311

Gills Komedia 01273 647100

Ella/Hope Remains Lost
Croft 0117 987 4144

In Extremis Louisiana 0117 926 5978

David Geraghty Button Factory
00 3531 670 9202

Jay Reatard Whelan's
00 3531 475 9372

Rodrigo Y Gabriela Olympia
00 3531 679 3323

Sean Kingston Vicar St
00 3531 889 4900

Bassagnet Picture House
0844 847 1740

Cymbals Eat Guitars Sneaky Pete's
0131 225 1757

Filthy Dukes Cabaret Voltaire
0131 220 6176

Rich Wyman Roisin Dubh
00 35391 586540

Bill Wyman's Rhythm Kings
Sage Arena 0870 703 4555

The Fall Of Troy King Tut's Wah Wah
Hut 0141 221 5279 **+14**

La Roux ABC 0870 903 3444

We Were Promised Jetpacks
Boilerroom 01483 440022

The Enemy O2 Academy
0870 771 2000 **WA**

New Beautiful South
Stylus 01132 431751

The Rumble Strips/
The Bridport Dagger

Cockpit Room 2 0113 244 3446

Woods/Espers Brudenell Social Club
0113 243 5866

LIVERPOOL

Kasabian Echo Arena
0844 8000 400

LONDON

Alice In Chains Forum
020 7344 0044

Bap Kennedy Windmill
020 8671 0700

Beyonce The O2 Arena
0870 701 4444

Cheating The Reaper Bull & Gate
020 7485 5358

Cherbourg/Goldheart Assembly/
Young Rebel Set Hoxton Square

Bar & Kitchen 020 7613 0709

Chris Corsano Café Oto
0871 230 1094

Darker My Love/Sad Day
For Puppets/Speck Mountain

Borderline 020 7734 5547

The Ding Dong Daddies
100 Club 020 7636 0933

Editors Union Chapel 020 7226 1686

Fink Jazz Café 020 7916 6060

Flann Regan Social 020 7636 4992

Foreign Slipppers Barfly
0870 907 0999 **+14**

June 93 Feet East 020 7247 6095

Lisbee Stainton Source Below
020 7434 9130

Marlee Sioux Luminaire
020 7372 7123

Motion Picture Soundtrack
Monty Water Rats 020 7837 4412

Natalie Merchant Conway Hall
020 7242 8032

Peter Von Poehl Slaughtered Lamb
020 8682 4080

Pink Martini Apollo 0870 606 3400

Pitbull Indigo @ The O2 Arena
0870 701 4444

Sabotage Left Hope & Anchor
020 7354 1312

The Shivers/The Fusions
Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773

Towers Of London BH2
0207 474 3200

Wooden Bolts The Old Queen's Head
0207 839 7261

30 Seconds To Mars KOKO
020 7388 3222

Breed 77 Academy 3 0161 832 1111

The Flaming Lips Academy
0161 832 1111

Great Lake Swimmers Deaf Institute
0161 330 4019

Sixt0Repeater Ruby Lounge
0161 834 1392

The Northwestern O2 Academy 2
0870 771 2000 **WA**

Beverly Knight UEA 01603 505401

Portico Quartet Arts Centre
01603 660352

The Antlers Bodega Social Club
08713 100000

The Arusha Accord Rock City
08713 100000

Karl Culley Maze 0115 947 5650

VV Brown Rescue Rooms
0115 958 8484 **+14**

The Mission District O2 Academy 2
0870 771 2000 **WA**

Eliza Doolittle Cellars 0871 230 1094

Paloma Faith Wedgewood Rooms
023 9286 3911

Lily Allen O2 Academy
0870 771 2000 **WA**

Updowncleftcrightcabestart
Joiners 023 8022 5612

Good Shoes Sugarmill
01782 214991

Polly Poison & Her Electric
Antidote Horn 01727 853143

Audio Repeat Escobar 01924 332000

The Pineapple Thief Robin 2
01902 497860

Two Door Cinema Club Fibbers
01904 651 250 **+14**



The Rumble Strips,
Rescue Rooms,
Nottingham

TUESDAY

NOVEMBER 17

Dellrum Tremens Auntie Annie's
028 9050 1660

The Flaming Lips O2 Academy
0870 771 2000 **WA**

The Mission District O2 Academy 3
0870 771 2000 **WA**

Gary Numan Dome 01273 709709
Wavves Audio 01273 624343
The Xcerts Freebutt 01273 603974

If Not Today/The Following
Announcement Croft 0117 987 4144
New York Minute Louisiana
0117 926 5978

Towers Of London Fleece
0117 945 0996

Trace Bundy Thekla 08713 100000

A Place To Bury Strangers
Portland Arms 01223 357268

Cure The Disaster Barfly
029 2066 7658 **+14**

Steve Earle Olympia
00 3531 679 3323

Ben Taylor Cabaret Voltaire
0131 220 6176

Southside Johnny & The Asbury
Jukes Cheese & Grain 01373 455420

The Gandhis Roisin Dubh
00 35391 586540

The Antlers/Withered Hand/
Tangles 13th Note Café
0141 553 1638

Rise Against Barrowlands
0141 552 4601

Ash Ventnor Winter Gardens
01983 855162

The Fall Of Troy Cockpit
0113 244 3446

Gun Rios 0844 414 2182

Ivyrise Faversham 0113 245 8817

LINCOLN

The Enemy Engine Shed
01522 886006

LIVERPOOL

Paloma Faith O2 Academy
0870 771 2000 **WA**

LONDON

Akron Family Garage 020 7607 1818
Alberta Cross Bush Hall
020 8222 6955

Alexandra Burke Union Chapel
020 7236 1686

Alice In Chains Forum
020 7344 0044

Breakestra Dingwalls 020 7267 1577
Carus 12 Bar Club 020 7240 2622

Cats And Cats And Cats Buffalo Bar
020 7359 6191

Chris Corsano Cafe Oto
0871 230 1094

Crystal Fighters/Violens Hoxton
Square Bar & Kitchen 020 7613 0709

The Devil Barden's Boudoir
0770 865 6633

The Fall/Darker My Love/Orphans
& Vandals KOKO 020 7388 3222

The Field Luminaire 020 7372 7123

The Franklys Rhythm Factory
020 7247 9386

Galley Beggars Good Ship
020 7372 2544

Her Majesty's Request Comedy
020 7839 7261

The Hug The Fly 0870 907 0999

Iliff/Desolation Wilderness/The
Rayographs Social 020 7636 4992

Jace Everett Monto Water Rats
020 7837 4412

Manchester Orchestra Heaven
020 7930 2020

More Than Normal/Penfold Gate
Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773

Omar Puente Jazz Café
020 7916 6060

Other Lives Slaughtered Lamb
020 8682 4080

Plastiscines Barfly
0870 907 0999 **+14**

Romance/Gaggle/Oral
Madame Jojo's 020 7734 2473

Seasick Steve O2 Brixton Academy
0870 771 2000 **WA**

Simon Fagan Hope & Anchor
020 7354 1312

Third Cortex Bull & Gate
020 7485 5358

We Were Promised Jetpacks/
Swimming Borderline 020 7734 5547

Yes Apollo 0870 606 3400

Cymbals Eat Guitars Night And Day
Café 0161 236 1822

Espers/The Cave Singers/
Woods Academy 3 0161 832 1111

Exit Calm Deaf Institute
0161 330 4019

Joe Lally Roadhouse 0161 228 1789

65daysofstatic Academy 2
0161 832 1111

NEWCASTLE

Emmure O2 Academy 2
0870 771 2000 **WA**

Elliot Minor Waterfront 01603 632717

Emily Loizeau Rescue Rooms
0115 958 8484

Gay For Johnny Depp Bar 7
0115 970 4662

James Chadwick Maze
0115 947 5650

La Roux Rock City 08713 100000

New Beautiful South O2 Academy
0870 771 2000 **WA**

The City Calls Cellars 0871 230 1094

Scott Matthews Wedgewood Rooms
023 9286 3911

Alabama 3 Plug 0114 276 7093

Martha Tilston Boardwalk
0114 279 9090

SOUTHAMPTON
The Detachments Joiners
023 8022 5612

Hadouken! Sugarmill 01782 214991

Glenn Tilbrook Subscription Rooms
01453 760900

Rap Kennedy The Duchess
01904 641 413

La Roux, Rock
City, Nottingham

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT
NME.COM/TICKETS

BOOKING NOW



THE CRIBS

STARTS: BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY, DEC 2

The brothers Jarman announce a slew of dates with former Smiths guitar supremo Johnny Marr.

NME.COM/artists/the-cribs



THE HORRORS

STARTS: NOTTINGHAM RESCUE ROOMS, DEC 3

Following the critical acclaim for their album 'Primary Colours' the five-piece head out on the road.

NME.COM/artists/the-horrors



BOMBAY BICYCLE CLUB

STARTS: LIVERPOOL O2 ACADEMY 2, DEC 10

If you've got the blues then shake them loose with the crooning indie-pop of this Crouch End four-piece.

NME.COM/artists/bombay-bicycle-club



JULIAN PLENTI

STARTS: MANCHESTER ACADEMY 2, DEC 12

Paul Banks' alter-ego becomes the man about town following the release of '...Is Skyscraper'.

NME.COM/artists/julian-plenti



PEACHES

STARTS: LONDON KOKO, DEC 13

The filthiest mouth in electro-pop is back with a vengeance to tour her latest album 'I Feel Cream'.

NME.COM/artists/peaches



THE PRODIGY

STARTS: DONCASTER DOME, JANUARY 21, 2010

The dance three-piece tour their fifth studio album 'Invaders Must Die'. They'll be taking no prisoners...

NME.COM/artists/the-prodigy



TINCHY STRYDER

STARTS: SOUTHEND CLIFFS PAVILLION, FEB 4

Grime's latest star Kwasi Danquah proves that he's not just a star in the hood with his latest album 'Catch 22'.

NME.COM/artists/tinchy-stryder



MV & EE

STARTS: LONDON BORDERLINE, FEB 7

On the cusp of the release of new album 'Barn Nova', the American psychedelic experimentalists hit the UK.

NME.COM/artists/mv-ee



LADA GAGA

STARTS: MANCHESTER MEN ARENA, FEB 18

The 'Poker Face' starlet will be assaulting stages with her salacious tongue and oh-so-revealing costumes.

NME.COM/artists/lady-gaga



If you're on O₂ you can get Priority Tickets to The O₂ and O₂ Academy venues up to 48 hours before general release. Text PRIORITY to 2020 to register.

Tickets are subject to availability. Exceptions apply.

GEAR

STUFF WE LOVE Edited by *Leanie Cooper*

LIGHTSPEED CHAMPION COMIC BOOK

Lightspeed Champion and VV Brown have both got their pens out to contribute to *Ctrl.Alt.Shift Unmasks Corruption*. Flexing their arty muscles for the comic book, which is the brainchild of youth initiative Ctrl.Alt.Shift, Dev and VV's strips sit alongside 20 different stories from a bunch of artists and graphic novelists, all dealing with the corruption which sits behind poverty. Deep, but fun too! CtrlAltShift.co.uk

£80

KID BRITISH SHIRTS

Want the shirts off Kid British's backs? Well you can have them - all it takes is a quick nip down to River Island. You'll also have that warm fuzzy feeling inside which you get after you hand over dosh to a damn good cause, as the shirts are part of the River Island Presents... T's For The Trust line, which sees profits from these four tees going to yooof-friendly charity The Prince's Trust.

RiverIsland.com

£4.99

£8

£12.99-
£16.99

NME

ONLINE STORE

JAMIE T BAG

Wondering what to pop in this tidy Jamie T tote bag? How's about starting with a four-pack of Stella or a handful of sticks'n'stones? A brand new bass guitar might be a bit of a squeeze, but there's probably room for the man's machine, as long as it's just an iPod.

NME.COM/store

LADY GAGA HEADPHONES

Half-gushing-edge in-ear fashion accessory, half-state-of-the-art supersonic headphone; Heartbeats By Lady Gaga are as future-facing and pleasantly strange as the lass who helped develop them. The first artist-crafted line in the Beats By Dr Dre headphone range, they come in red, black and chrome. Sounds good to us. HMV.com

ATP FILM

If this DVD doesn't have you hankering for some hot chalet action with some mates, nothing will. Made up of recordings from the 10 years that All Tomorrow's Parties has been making holiday camps hip, it uses fan-made mobile phone clips alongside more professional footage and Super-8 shots with live action from Belle & Sebastian, Sonic Youth, Gossip, Grinderman, Iggy And The Stooges, Yeah Yeah Yeahs and tons more, as well as lots of amusing festival frolicking from the punters.

OurTrueIntent.com

ALL TOMORROW'S PARTIES



£17.99

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[illegible]14 November 2009 **NME** 73

PETER ROBINSON VS

RYAN JARMAN

The Cribs singer doesn't Google or eat puddings. But just ignore the ignorance...

Hello, Ryan. What are you up to?
"Nothing. Er, nothing at all. I got up early this morning because I couldn't sleep. I'm just sitting in the park now. It's a really nice day, it's proper autumn. That's one of the best things about not having a proper job, watching seasons."

And let's face it, autumn is the best season.
"It's definitely my favourite season. And it was my birthday recently. We were in Japan – we always seem to be in Japan on my birthday – and some fans bought me notebooks."

There is nothing better in life than a fresh notebook, although the pressure is on to start with neat handwriting and maintain that neatness for the notebook's lifespan. It never ends well.
"I wish I had better handwriting. My style has always been to press down as hard as possible and do everything in capitals. But if I'm not concentrating it looks like graffiti tags. I guess it's a bit like encryption in a sense."

Safety first – if it's some important lyrics then you don't want people to find the hook before they're ready.
"Especially the early versions!"

Are the early versions worse?
"Well, we always try to make our lyrics not too obvious but most people these days want to sound like some guy reading his blog or whatever. I feel like a lot of the best music this year has been made by people who've been around for a little while, know what I mean? It feels like there's more substance there."

Substance can be overly fetishised. To the point where a band have something substantial and important but also a racket nobody wants to listen to or enjoy.
"Yes, that's true. I dunno, you should definitely never edit the hooks out of songs on purpose. You get people who are purposefully awkward. What are they doing? Some people think that if you have a tune you're too mainstream!"

Who are you thinking of?
"I don't know. People on the internet I'll never meet! I don't use things like that a lot, it scares me."



His twin must be the smiling type

"IF OUR ALBUM WAS A PUDDING IT WOULD BE A BLACK PUDDING. IT'S SAUSAGE, ISN'T IT?"

Things like the internet?

"I go on to check my emails then get off as soon as possible. It just degenerates into the facile. There's not a lot of romance on the internet. It helped destroy that side of life."

I'm not sure about that, but if it gets to the point where posting 'LOL' in a comment box is the last word in public debate it's not ideal. Still, what can you do?
"I know."

No, what can you do? What can YOU do? What are you DOING?
"I'm sitting on a park bench grumbling about it. That's all I can do."

It's basically a scab on a plate.
"I'm a vegetarian as well! I think it's a cool concept, maybe..."

So to make this clear, your album wouldn't be a dessert.
"I don't eat desserts."

You sound like a difficult dining companion.
"I like to eat salads at the minute. It sounds like a dull answer but most of the time I'm locked in the bathroom thinking, or listening to my music."

What's the worst album in 2009?
"I should have an answer to that – I think this whole kind of 'pop', you know standard chart pop thing, has been pretty terrible. I don't know. I don't know enough about it to say, really."

With that sort of statement – and with the internet reference you made earlier – you sound like someone who's opted out of popular culture to an extent that seems rather blinkered.
"It is to a certain degree, but not in an elitist way. I just know what I like! You don't want to pollute yourself, do you?"

What can you see in the park?
"There's a tractor for some reason. People walking around. Leaves on the ground. It's peaceful. I've got a few days off before we go on tour, and I don't have anything to do. I'm trying to, well, not smell the flowers, but just sit and think. I'm enjoying it."

THE INTERNET: A GUIDE

As Ryan doesn't look at the web, here are some bits he's missed...

Veri's Heavy, Shreddy Hands
"I'm not sure if it's important to mention: if you see The Cribs, you won't be disappointed. They're one of the best."

From Wikipedia.com: "The Cribs are a four-piece indie rock band from London, England, consisting of Peter Robinson, Ryan Jarman, and two other members. They are known for their music, which is often described as 'indie rock'."

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