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INSIDE THIS WEEK

17/24 December 2011



GET A CHRISTMAS CARD FROM FARIS, RENI, YUCK AND GRAHAM COXON



"Demented clowns were cleaning up snake diarrhoea"

ALICE COOPER IS A VERY, VERY BAD SANTA



"THERE IS GOING TO BE A FIGHT"
JEREMY PAXMAN VS FRANKIE COCOZZA IN THE BIG SINGLES SMACKDOWN



"START ON LAGER, MOVE ON TO WHISKY"

CARL AND CO LIMBER UP FOR NME'S ANNUAL BOOZE FEST



"BIN LADEN'S DEATH WAS FAKED"
MARINA'S TEAM OF EXPERTS ANALYSE 2011'S BIG STORIES



"WHOEVER DID THIS CHART SHOULD BE SHOT"
SIR CLIFF RICHARD MIGHT (ALLEGEDLY) BE A VIRGIN, BUT BY CHRIST, HE'S A BADASS

PLUS

- 4 ON REPEAT
- 6 UPFRONT
- 12 VERSUS
- 46 THE BIG XMAS QUIZ
- 82 REVIEWS
- 84 LIVE
- 74 BOOKING NOW
- 78 GIG GUIDE
- 79 XMAS CROSSWORD
- 80 FANMAIL
- 82 BRAINCELLS



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ON THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS, AS YOU HIT THE BOOZE, THESE ARE THE SONGS WE'D SUGGEST THAT YOU CHOOSE



THE FLAMING LIPS & YOKO ONO PLASTIC ONO BAND

Atlas Eats Christmas
Two vanguards of full-frontal experimentalism get together under the mistletoe, as the Yoko Ono Plastic Ono Band pucker up to The Flaming Lips for a re-hash of their 2007 'secret' advent gift, 'Atlas Eats Christmas'. A marvellously shivering vocal from Yoko, the chiming ofleigh bells a plenty, terrifically syrupy sentiment: what more could ye ask for?
Ben Hewitt, writer

WOODS

Christmas Time Is Here
(Vince Guaraldi cover)
Dammit, what's a high-octane pop culture Crimbo without a viewing of *A Charlie Brown Christmas*? Woods are clearly *Peanuts* aficionados and so have taken it upon themselves to cover this Vince Guaraldi classic in creepy fashion. Watch out for something strange lurking at the bottom of your stocking.
Priya Elan, Assistant Editor, NME.COM

JOHN ZORN & MIKE PATTON

The Christmas Song
Nothing says Yuletide like fruitcake, so what better time for the avant-garde composer and the Faith No More man to pair up? Weirdly, though, this is actually quite straight, the depravity in Patton's voice reined in to a seductive, smugly croon over some supper-club jazz.
Emily Mackay, Reviews Editor

CAITLIN ROSE & KEEGAN DE WITT

You Never Come Home For Christmas
Rolling by on gentle piano and classily jangled bells, Caitlin laments the absence of a lover – "I'll send your Christmas card to that old downtown bar" – in littersweet tones that suggest his disappearance is as much a holiday tradition as turkey and bloating. Undoubtedly the best original track released this Yuletide.
Laura Snapes, Assistant Reviews Editor

DOG IS DEAD

Christmas Wrapping
(The Waitresses cover)
In which the Notts newcomers go all Yank on us and cover the greatest

Christmas pop song of all time. Yeah, it's pretty faithful to the original, but what's to complain about when that means we get to hear that brilliantly dumbass story about forgetting the cranberries again?
Matt Wilkinson, New Music Editor

SUMMER CAMP

All I Wonderful Christmas Is You
Seeing the indie Christmas thing as more of a competition than a tradition, Summer Camp have pulled in the big guns, splicing segments of Macca's 'Wonderful Christmas Time' with Mariah Carey's 'All I Want For Christmas Is You'. Which, incidentally, actually go together like excess brandy butter and a good snooze.
Tim Chester, Deputy Editor, NME.COM

MATT BERRY & EVERYONE

A Christmas Song
A warmly festive tune, a backing choir of fans and all proceeds going to Shelter: is it possible to be cynical about the *Mighty Boosh*/Garth Marenghi japester's addition to the canon? Actually, yes (it's pretty dreary) but this is a time for charitable sentiment and giving, so top marks for effort, Berry
Rick Martin, News Editor

LUCY ROSE

Driving Home For Christmas
(Chris Rea cover)
Lucy Rose's gossamer-thin, whispered opening verse to this cover is lovely and ephemeral and will melt your heart faster than Christmas cholesterol etc etc, but it's the second verse where things get interesting, when she swaps oh-so-trad Phil Spector drums for a more syncopated shuffle, and lets her voice bloom boldly.
Susana Pearl, writer



SPECTRALS

It's Christmas
Basically, this sounds like a T Rex Christmas song. And yes, there is a T Rex Christmas song already, but this is like a slowed down, sleazier thing, sung by a ginger guy from Leeds rather than a corkscrew-haired sex alien, and thus infinitely more family-orientated.
Liam Cash, writer

TRACK
OF
THE
WEEK

THE KILLERS

The Cowboys' Christmas Ball

Yeehaw! Tighten your necktie and rinse out the family spittoon – it's all round Brandon's for a yuletide Wild West barn dance. This is The Killers' sixth Christmas song in a row, and fair play to them for resisting the traditional indie temptation to do a self-consciously dismal 'indie Christmas' song. Seriously, we've had enough of those. I sat through Andy Burrows' and Tom Smith's funereal 'festive' album *Funny Looking Angels* the other day and – once I'd finished hacking wildly at my jugular with a penknife – it made me wonder if there was

a way of uninventing Christmas entirely.

But The Killers do it properly, channelling the authentic mood of the season by indulging in mindless jollity that they'll no doubt deeply

It's somehow both blustery and jaunty, like U2 covering '5-6-7-8'

regret come January 5. The video sees them dressed up like rednecks, cavorting with dancing robots (for some reason). At one point Brandon does a sort of comedy Yosemite Sam/Champ Kind (off *Anchorman*) cowboy voice. It's somehow both blustery and jaunty, like U2 covering Steps' '5-6-7-8'. You can imagine it getting played in old people's homes on Christmas Day, so that the depressed, paper-hat-wearing residents could jiggle about in their wheelchairs and "get the circulation going". And if that doesn't channel the true spirit of this wonderful season, I don't know what does.

Luke Lewis, Editor, NME.COM

A black and white photograph of a line of five men in suits, dancing in a room. They are all looking upwards and to the right, with their bodies angled in a line. The background is a dark grey wall with several large, colorful, stylized sound waves or musical notes in red, orange, and yellow. On the floor to the right of the men is a small, white, rectangular Sonos speaker. The floor is a light grey, reflective surface.

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UPFRONT

Edited by Rick Martin



THE BIG 2011 NEWS REVIEW

Kids rioting, royals marrying, legends reforming, tyrants dying – it all kicked off this year. Four of music's biggest motormouths discuss the stories that mattered

It was The Year When Everything Happened. Dictators and terrorists have fallen, newspapers have crumbled and media empires been exposed. We've seen musical reunions, heroes falling on their own swords, while across the world waves of protest have seen a new scent of revolution in the air – some of it noble, some of it ugly.

So as the newsiest news year in our memories shudders to a close, we assembled four luminaries from across genres of UK music to make sense of it all. Gathered together are the newest prince of UK hip-hop, Wretch 32; alterna-pop's shiniest vixen, Marina Diamandis; folk darling Emmy The Great; and one of indie's brightest (and most opinionated) young things, Fred Macpherson of Spector. Their mission: to sit together and spout opinions about the big events of 2011. And where better to begin than at the start...?

JANUARY

As revolutionaries rise up across Egypt, back home it's a fluffier start to the year as Rastamouse begins the journey on CBBC that'll eventually take him to Glastonbury, and Adele releases '21', which goes on to eat the world.

NME: So, who is still buying Adele's record?

Marina: "Babies, that's all that's left."

Wretch: "I was watching a show the other day about people sneaking into the country not declaring that they're here, maybe they're buying Adele on their way in."

Fred: "It doesn't seem like one of those cynical, cleverly planned major label campaigns, it's just real music that connects with people."

Marina: "She sings about

love and heartbreak, which pretty much everyone in the world has experienced."

FEBRUARY

The White Stripes split, Rihanna sees her 'S&M' video banned in 11 countries – and the Arab Spring revolutionary protests spread to Yemen, Iraq, Bahrain and Libya.

Emmy: "The Arab Spring was a really exciting time to be alive and just and see what happens."

Fred: "The way that news was reported and broadcasted changed. With Egypt, so much was happening on Twitter and there were all these alternative news sources."

Marina: "I don't think the Rihanna stuff was more 'sexual' than other things we've seen."



A rare shot of Rihanna



That's been covered before in art – that aggressive side to sex."

Emmy: "She's one of my women of the year."

Fred: "She's at that point now where she can't possibly get bigger than she is now. And she seems to release albums every nine months."

MARCH

The huge anti-cuts march across London passes peacefully. But in Japan, a devastating earthquake and tsunami claims thousands of lives. The world took its mind off things by laughing at Charlie Sheen's public breakdown.

Emmy: "My local library got shut down. There's definitely a feeling of anxiety and people feeling like they can't rely on their public services."

Wretch: "If you was to ask me how Buckingham Palace should be run I'd have absolutely no idea because I've never lived there. So it goes that it's difficult for someone who's never walked in *my* shoes [government ministers] to tell me how to live."

Emmy: "The government are ill equipped to deal with the people who are suffering most under the recession. They're equipped to look after the people who are cleaning up after the banks got bailed out because they know those people and they went to school with them. It's hard to trust them when you don't know if they have any empathy."

NME: Did you follow any of the Charlie Sheen chaos?

Wretch: "I just saw everybody saying 'winning, winning' and when I finally found out I was like... it's quite entertaining, but it's disturbing that it's entertaining because he's obviously not well."

Marina: "It was funny until a certain point when he started to take his show on the road, and then it was horrendous."

Emmy: "But that was our fault too."

APRIL

Between Easter and the Royal Wedding, the UK enjoys the biggest cluster of Bank Holidays in living memory, as the royals experience a massive popularity comeback.

Fred: "It felt like a day off from life. Everyone I know was drinking at roam and doing MDMA over breakfast."

NME: It was weird how everyone suddenly started liking the royals again...

Marina: "But if we're gonna do it anyway we may as well enjoy it. Mugs and everything, I love that shit."

Wretch: "I heard that Kate was wearing a bulletproof dress."

MAY

Osama Bin Laden is captured and killed amid conspiracy theories, while closer to home Ryan Giggs is publicly shamed as his super-injunction cannot withstand the power of Twitter.

Marina: "I think the Bin Laden thing was faked. Who drops a corpse in the sea?"

NME: What about Ryan Giggs and the whole super-injunction fiasco?

Wretch: "He should be allowed to do his thing."

Fred: "If Imogen from *Big Brother* was happy to share the information, why shouldn't she? If she does something with someone public, why should she be told that she can't tell anyone, just because a man decided? It's basic feminism."

NME: The point was that if you're rich you can get a super injunction and get away with it...

Fred: "But it didn't last because everyone on Twitter knew. Could there be any Wretch 32 illicit sex stories?"

Wretch: "Nah, because I'll just admit that I'm a cunt."

JUNE

U2 finally make it to Glastonbury, but it's Pulp and Beyoncé who steal the show. Meanwhile faux-reality tightens its grip, as *Made In Chelsea* and *Geordie Shore* hog the zeitgeist.

Fred: "MTV had already been doing that for so long with *The Hills* and stuff, and before that there was this burst of reality TV in the '90s. The only thing that's potentially damaging is that it sends up certain classes of people, so people think Essex is what it's like in TOWIE."

Fred: "Now Vice have made a pisstake of the whole thing called *Dalston Superstars*."

NME: Nobody can tell it's a pisstake, with Dalston.

Fred: "MTV wanted to make a reality show about supposed hipsters, and sent out a ridiculous email that read like a pisstake with ridiculous characters like 'part-time DJ' and 'independent fashion blogger'."

JULY

As the country mourns the death of Amy Winehouse, the *News Of The World* closes after the phone-hacking scandal erupts.

Wretch: "Amy going was surprising, because she was supposed to be getting better."

Emmy: "I cried myself to sleep that night. It felt like a Diana moment – the grief people who never knew her displayed seemed to be real."

Fred: "She was one of the few UK artists who really lived her art. People felt like they knew her more than a lot of artists."

NME: How did you react to the *News Of The World* closing?

Emmy: "The Milly Dowler thing was unbelievable. The journalists who did it, how did they get to the point in their lives where they thought that was OK?"

NME: It had become so commonplace that they all just lost sight of any ethics. But people thought that the buck stopped with celebrities.

Emmy: "And then with soldiers and the 9/11 victims."



Marina: "And it just being considered so normal."

Emmy: "The other papers must have been doing it too."

Fred: "That's a good example of what we're experiencing at the moment, and unless things change you're going to get it more – it's probably been going on for 20 years and now the technology's there for it to spread when it does get out. I think we'll end up seeing a lot more truths... like the whole Wikileaks thing, because there's the technology there to allow the information to spread."

AUGUST

Beyoncé announces her pregnancy at MTV's VMA ceremony amid wild prosthetic conspiracy theories, Liam Gallagher sues Noel over his claims about the Oasis split, and riots devastate cities across the UK, after a peaceful protest in Tottenham gets out of hand.

NME: Wretch, you're from Tottenham. How did the riots unfold for you?

Wretch: "I was in Ireland, so I was watching it on TV. It shouldn't get to that level, but after what happened [the death of Mark Duggan] it's almost like if they didn't riot then everybody in a certain area with a certain record or whatever could be afraid that the same will happen to them. But it's a terrible thing."

Marina: "I find it hard to believe that a 15-year-old doesn't know that they're destroying a family business. There were baby clothes shops looted."

Wretch: "Someone said the word 'opportunist' and that came into play – 'Shit, I'm excited, OK let me go and get stuff.'"

NME: You were involved with the clean up, Emmy?

Emmy: "I had time off because I'm a musician! It was me and Sam [Duckworth] and Kate [Nash]. The overwhelming thing the next day was community spirit rather than lying down and being afraid."

Fred: "In *Dalston* it was an amazing thing to see all the Turkish shop owners. Anyone who came near the area, they beat them with sticks."



SEPTEMBER

REM split, PJ Harvey wins her second Mercury Prize, and 2011's wave of protest continues as Occupy Wall Street begins before the movement spreads to London.

Emmy: "[The recession] isn't our fault – it was the banks who gambled with people's money. We hailed them out and they gambled again. They're still living in this culture and we can't just do nothing."

Fred: "But when Northern Rock collapsed nobody lost a pound out of their accounts – you need the government to bail out the banks so people don't lose their money. People get angry when stuff doesn't work but nobody's coming up with an alternative. That was what was good about Gordon Brown, he was just a really good economist."

Emmy: "I keep wanting him to swing down in a superhero costume and be like, 'Guys!'."

OCTOBER

Sir Jimmy Savile, Gaddafi and Steve Jobs all die – the world reacts differently to each. Meanwhile a little band called The Stone Roses announce their reunion.

Fred: "Steve Jobs did change the way we live forever."

Marina: "He was a revolutionary. Some people felt really sad about his passing but I didn't feel anything."

Fred: "My flatmate's reading his biography. He did loads of acid when he was young, didn't wash for over a year. He was an out-there guy, but at the same time he conceived things and thought of things that didn't exist. He screwed over all the labels with the deal that he did with iTunes because they thought MP3s would be a passing fad."

NMF: And what about The Stone Roses?

Fred: "I tweeted at the time that my favourite Stone Roses song was 'Unorthodox'."

Marina: "It would be so great if you performed with them, Wretch."

Wretch: "I don't think they need me. Their ticket sales speak for themselves."

NMF: Having called 'sellout' on bands who reform, are they taking the piss?



Clockwise from above: Marina & Emmy; London riots; The X Factor 2011 panel

Emmy: "But you can't not reform – you can't make money from album sales anymore."

Fred: "Money will force anyone to do anything, eventually it just corrupts. You get to the stage where it's impossible to say no."

NOVEMBER

Twilight: Breaking Dawn smashes more box office records, as Dr Conrad Murray is found guilty of the involuntary manslaughter of Michael Jackson.

Wretch: "I was in the airport looking through the newspapers and it was Michael Jackson's dead body. What the fuck, man?"

Marina: "Did you see that documentary the other night on Doctor Conrad? I think he seems a bit of a dodgy person. Michael obviously had habits."

Fred: "Because Michael wasn't dodgy at all!"

Marina: "I'm talking about drugs here!"

Fred: "I had a ticket to see him at the O2. I was very angry with the doctor."

DECEMBER

Amy Winehouse's posthumous album is released. Nirvana lead the charge in the latest

challenge to keep *The X Factor* winner off the Christmas Number One slot just as Courtney Love offers Janet Devlin permission to cover them. But with King Cowell gone, the show lurches from one crisis to another.

Marina: "I don't think there's anything gross about the Amy album. If there are good songs they should be released. Haven't both producers said that this is the final thing that's gonna go out?"

NME: Well, not quite...

Emmy: "If I died, I think I'd want my team to put out stuff I hadn't finished."

Marina: "I would too."

Wretch: "Yeah, I'd make sure I left behind some verses with instructions."

Emmy: "And then get Adele to sing it!"

NME: Has *The X Factor* gone off the rails?

Fred: "Barlow's no replacement for Simon Cowell, 'cos he's a songwriter and an artist. What's so great about Simon Cowell is that he's not interested in music. He's one of the cleverest people alive and that's why he's gone to America to make to times the money."

Emmy: "Tulisa keeps missing her own hand when she's clapping. It's just not good."



Jobs: without him, we'd still be on Discmen. And they were shit

NEXT
BIGTHING

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WHAT WAS YOUR ALBUM OF 2011?

You read our top 50, now it's time to have your say as NME Awards voting enters its third week

So, last week we crowned PJ Harvey's 'Let England Shake' as 2011's best album – but did we get it right? It's time for you to let us know as the voting for the NME Awards 2012 enters its third week. We want to know who you think released 2011's Best Album, Track and Reissue – along with your Music Moment Of The Year and Hero. And because it's not all about celebrating excellence and heroism, you can now also vote for this year's Worst Album and Villain. Head to NME.COM/awards/vote to make your voice heard – all categories are now open and ready for your votes. We'll be giving the hallowed middle fingers to your favourites at the O2 Academy Brixton on February 29 – so make sure you have your say

NME.COM Relive the history of the NME Awards at NME.COM/awards, where you can view photo galleries of previous ceremonies and get your votes in. Don't miss out on the chance to create more history next year!

The Cribbs to play Awards Show

Gigs happening throughout February

The Cribbs are the latest name to be added to our run of NME Awards Shows next year. The Jarmans will play at London's ULU on February 28 to round off our action-packed month of gigs across the capital. The Black Keys (Alexandra Palace, February 11), The Big Pink (Garage, 20), SCUM (Bush Hall, 24), Marina & The Diamonds (O2 Shepherd's

Bush Empire, 26) and The Drums (Roundhouse, 27) are among the other bands playing, while Justice will play five NME Awards Shows in Bristol, London, Birmingham, Glasgow and Manchester. To buy tickets for all shows ring 0844 858 6765 or visit NME.COM/tickets, where you can also find details of all 22 NME Awards Shows.



VOTING IS OPEN!

Take your vote in every category at NME.COM/awards/vote

BEST BRITISH BAND

What's new this year: *Best British Band*

LAST YEAR'S WINNER: *Blur*

BEST ALBUM

What's new this year: *Best Album*

LAST YEAR'S WINNER: *Arctic Monkeys - The Humbug*

Supposed to Play

BEST TRACK

What's new this year: *Best Track*

LAST YEAR'S WINNER: *Frank Ocean - Bad Religion*

Supposed to Play

BEST INTERNATIONAL BAND

What's new this year: *Best International Band*

LAST YEAR'S WINNER: *Daft Punk*

Supposed to Play

BEST SOLO ARTIST

What's new this year: *Best Solo Artist*

LAST YEAR'S WINNER: *Daft Punk*

BEST NEW BAND

What's new this year: *Best New Band*

LAST YEAR'S WINNER: *Daft Punk*

Supposed to Play

BEST LIVE BAND

What's new this year: *Best Live Band*

LAST YEAR'S WINNER: *Daft Punk*

Supposed to Play

BEST DANCEFLOOR ANTHEM

What's new this year: *Best Dancefloor Anthem*

LAST YEAR'S WINNER: *Daft Punk*

BEST MUSIC VIDEO

What's new this year: *Best Music Video*

LAST YEAR'S WINNER: *Daft Punk*

BEST FESTIVAL

What's new this year: *Best Festival*

LAST YEAR'S WINNER: *Daft Punk*

BEST SMALL FESTIVAL

What's new this year: *Best Small Festival*

LAST YEAR'S WINNER: *Daft Punk*

For the full list, see NME.COM/awards

NME EXTRA WIN A BUMPER CROP OF XMAS GOODIES

Own your own original piece of Stone Roses artwork!

Has Santa been a bit slack with the quality of your presents this year? Fear not! We've put together some amazing prizes to give away and save your Christmas!

WIN!

- Reni's Christmas card – your own piece of original Stone Roses artwork
- Loads of signed stuff – copies of The Maccabees' new album 'Given To The Wild', Alice Cooper's new album 'Welcome To My Nightmare' and Noel Fielding's latest book 'The Scribblings Of A Madcap Shambleton'
- A deluxe version of Kasabian's 'Velociraptor!' album, which is worth more than £100

DOWNLOAD!

Printable copies of Reni, Graham Coxon, and Faris Badwan's Christmas cards

LISTEN!

- The issue playlist, including tracks by the likes of Kasabian and Cerebral Ballzy

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ALL THE BEST



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VERSUS

PETER ROBINSON Vs STACEY SOLOMON

NME's gone to Iceland with the reality TV star to talk Christmas songs and ending the recession



• Stacey Solomon does not think Joe McElderry is too nice for his own good

• Stacey Solomon does not think Olly Murs wears too many hats

• Stacey Solomon does not think Ed Sheeran is an unlistenable bore merchant

Hello, Stacey. Good King Wenceslas looks out on the Feast of Stephen. What can you see from your window?
"I'm going past a massive HSBC on the A13."

I wish to purchase your version of 'Driving Home For Christmas' but cannot find it on iTunes. Is it coming out or what?
"It is – we never planned to release it! After the [Iceland] advert they said, 'We've GOT to release it, people are ASKING FOR IT!' So I said alright, but give everything to charity. 'Cos it's not off my album or anything."

Weren't you supposed to do 'Fairytale Of New York' last year, with Shaun Ryder?

"I KNOW! But it was such late notice, we literally just got out of the jungle and there was NO WAY we would have had time. It would have been great! I love Shaun! And I love the song, I think it's hilarious!"

I'm not sure it's a comedy song...
"Oh, is it not? It always makes me laugh!"

What's the funniest bit for you?
"Calling someone a maggot I think is hilarious!"

In the original version it also said "faggot".
"(Aghast) Well! That is NOT PC any more! (Pause) But still funny."

You could combine that with your love of Iceland, and change it to "You cheap lousy frozen faggots in rich gravy, only 99p for 20".
"Exactly! (Laughter like that of a fairy)"

What else do you like?
"If I were buying you CDs for Christmas I'd buy you Maverick Sabre, Ed Sheeran, Kate Nash... I love Kate Nash, even though she hasn't brought anything out in ages."

Kate Nash sings like you talk.
"Maybe that's why I like her."

Whereas when you sing, it's like the voice of an angel.
"OH YOU'RE TOO KIND! (laughs)"

On the Iceland website it says you are 'always shopping in Iceland'.
"Yeah I am 'cos I get free delivery! I'm Jewish, what do you want, I'm going to get everything free that I can!"



But you're not in a continuous state of shopping-in-Iceland-ness, even when asleep, are you?

"No. I mean, what a life that would be. I would just LOVE to spend all day every day shopping in Iceland, but time does not allow me such a pleasure."

What should NME readers get you for a Christmas present?

"At the top end, a Range Rover would be nice. Bottom end: I'm a sucker for a Crunchie. A Crunchie goes a long way."

TOO MUCH INFORMATION!
"(Giddy titter)"

What is the best and worst item of food available at Iceland?

"I have two favourites – smiley face potatoes and arctic roll."

The arctic roll is a design classic.
"IT'S SUCH A LEGEND! I just love it! It's the best food ever! Worst: I like prawns, but I don't like them enough to have a whole ring of them. So the Prawn Ring is my least favourite."

When someone says 'prawn ring' I just think of a whale's bumhole.
"Yeah! It doesn't sound nice, does it?"

There has been a lot of turmoil in the economy in 2011. How do you see that continuing in 2012?

"It depends on how high they rise the interest rates. It can only go up, but then we'll be in a massive recession. But if they keep interest rates low we'll be able to build ourselves back up gradually."

So you're saying keep interest rates low?

"Yeah, of course I am!"

THE XMAS TOP 20

THE NME CHART

- 1 2 LANA DEL REY 'VIDEO GAMES' Polydor
- 2 1 ARCTIC MONKEYS 'SUCK IT AND SEE' Domino
- 3 9 JUSTICE 'AUDIO, VIDEO, DISCO' Ed Banger
- 4 14 THE VACCINES 'WETSUIT' Columbia
- 5 6 THE DRUMS 'HOW IT ENDED' Island
- 6 21 BAND OF SKULLS 'THE DEVIL TAKES CARE OF HIS OWN' Electric Blues
- 7 20 THE BIG PINK 'STAY GOLD' 4AD
- 8 41 FOO FIGHTERS 'THESE DAYS' Columbia
- 9 17 THE VACCINES 'TIGER BLOOD' Columbia
- 10 15 COLDPLAY 'PARADISE' Parlophone
- 11 13 FLORENCE + THE MACHINE 'SHAKE IT OUT' Island
- 12 3 KASABIAN 'RE-WIRED' Columbia
- 13 39 NOEL GALLAGHER'S HIGH FLYING BIRDS 'IF I HAD A GUN...' Souf Mash
- 14 1 THE BIG PINK 'HIT THE GROUND (SUPERMAN)' 4AD
- 15 11 FOSTER THE PEOPLE 'CALL IT WHAT YOU WANT' Columbia
- 16 5 FRIENDLY FIRES 'BLUE CASSETTE' XL
- 17 4 SPECTOR 'GREY SHIRT & TIE' LUV LUV LUV
- 18 19 NIKI & THE DOVE 'THE DRUMMER' Mercury
- 19 7 DRY THE RIVER 'WEIGHTS & MEASURES' Mercury
- 20 16 SCUM 'AMBER HANDS' Mute

NME RADIO

Hear the chart rundown first every Monday at 7pm on NME Radio

NME TV

Watch the Top 10 video chart countdown every weekday on NME TV

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Listen to the Top 40 and learn more about each artist online



NEW TO NME RADIO PLAYLIST

'We Were Children'

'Born To Die'

'Devil's Work'

The NME Chart is compiled each week by NME Radio and is based on how many times each track has been played on the station over the previous seven days.

= (SAVILE ROW / URBAN DUKE) & (STYLING POMADE / MOULD & SHINE)



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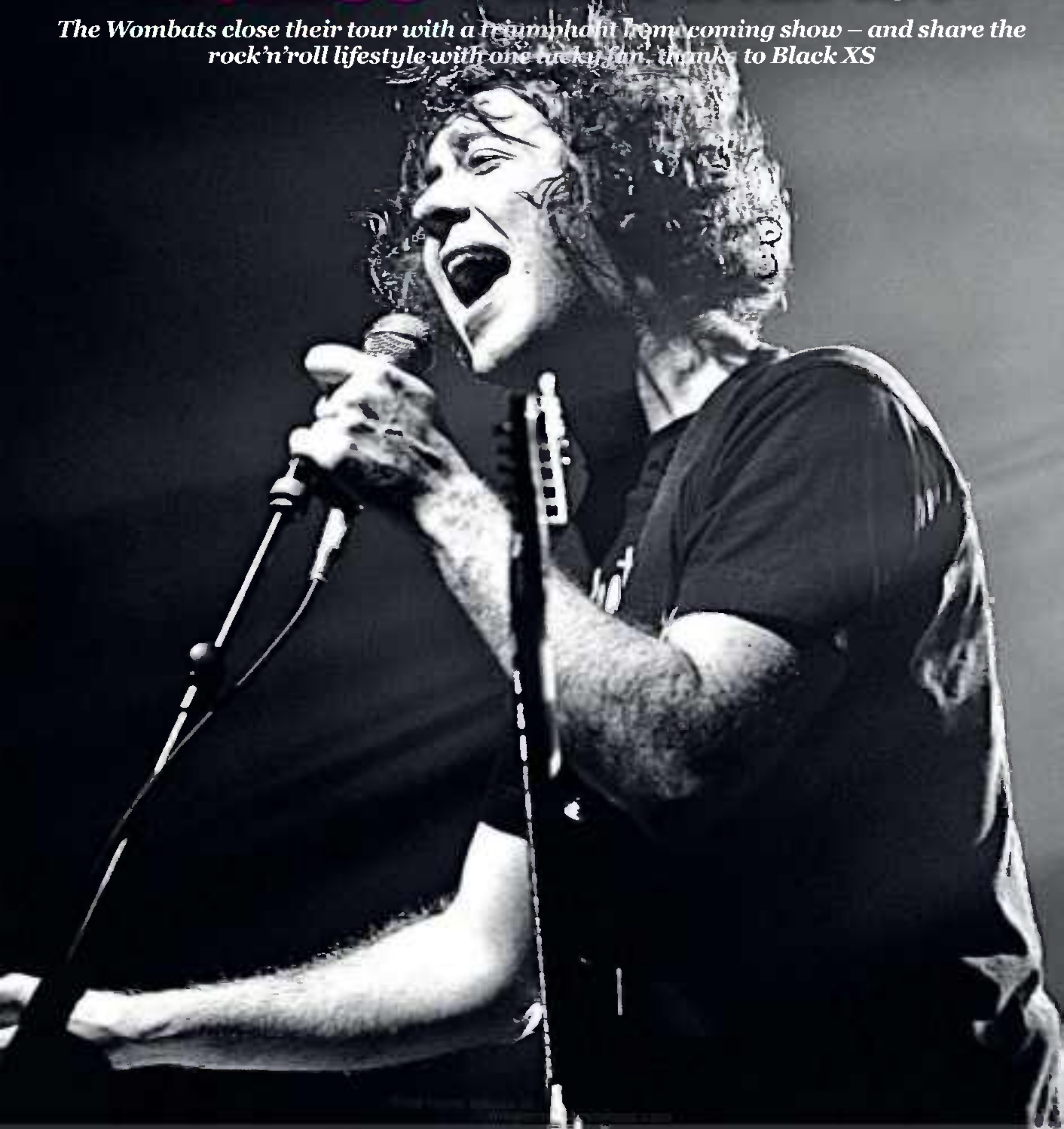
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EXCESS ALL AREAS!

The Wombats close their tour with a triumphant homecoming show – and share the rock'n'roll lifestyle with one lucky fan, thanks to Black XS



BE A ROCKSTAR

The Wombats might be one of Britain's best loved live bands, but after weeks out on the road living it up in the USA and Australia – not to mention a huge UK tour – all they want to do is get home. This being the mad world of The Wombats though, heading home means playing a massive sell-out show at the O2 Academy Liverpool in front of their most ardent, long-term fans.

As befitting local heroes, the lads saved their most epic set for Liverpool, rattling through anthems like 'Tokyo (Vampires & Wolves)' and 'Moving To New York', with frontman Murph transforming into a guitar god and meeting with a deserved hero's welcome. It was a legendary night – as lucky winner Mike Griffiths will always remember. Mike triumphed in *NME* and Black XS' One Night Of Excess competition, which took him past the barrier and the velvet curtains for a night of VIP thrills where he hung out with The Wombats and tasted the tang of rock star life.

MEET THE WINNER!



MIKE GRIFFITHS, 26, LIVERPOOL
What was the best part of the night?
 "Having our own private gig at the soundcheck. They

let us pick the songs and showed me a few chords."

What happened when you met?

"We discussed how they love playing their home city. They made us feel so welcome – we even had some drinks in their dressing room with them afterwards."



The Wombats with the lucky competition winners



BLACK XS: LIVE OUT YOUR ROCK'N'ROLL FANTASIES

As the bare three chords of punk taught us, you can do a lot with a little. Black XS adopts that minimal ethos for a fragrance that's striking, spare and 100 per cent rock'n'roll. Our lucky winner might have had their exclusive night of excess – but with Black XS, you can live out your rock'n'roll fantasies every day.

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from the likes of Interpol, Kaiser Chiefs and Cold War Kids.



paco rabanne





"I'm going to take these fuckers back to Poundland... (they're shit)!"

We're guessing it isn't socks?

REJOICE! KASABIAN UNVEIL THEIR DERANGED CHRISTMAS GIFT: NOEL FIELDING, BACK TO FILL THE WORLD WITH THE MADNESS IT NEEDS MORE THAN EVER. EMILY MACKAY UNWRAPS THE CHAOS

PHOTOS: DEAN CHALKLEY

There are some objects, like a wine bottle or a CD or a balalaika, that are impossible to disguise no matter how much shiny wrapping you use. Try as they might, Tom and Serge Kasabian, despite mummifying it from bottom to top in metallic red, are failing to cloak the identity of a distinctively shaped present. The large, glitter-lined eyes of Noel Fielding – for it is he – are popping with what looks like three-quarters expert camera-mugging, one-quarter genuine worry. “If I fell, it’d be like that YouTube video with Bobby Davro where he’s got his head and arms in the stocks,” he says. “I have you seen it? He just falls right forward onto his face.”

Tom playfully sniffs at Noel’s hair, causing him to giggle as hard as a man wrapped up like a human pupa can, as he turns back to Serge to share a reassuring grin. The excitement is infectious; it’s been four drab years since *The Mighty Boosh* last tumbled onto our screens with its one-off blend of wisecracks, weirdouts, costumes and cameos. At long last, in January, Noel returns with his first solo show, *Noel Fielding’s Luxury Comedy*, delivered with help from his good friend Serge, who wrote all the music. This news is just the gift we need at the end of a frankly pretty dire year, where the TV shows most talked about by young, apparently rational people are an old-school costume drama, *I’m A Celebrity... Get A Grip* and for the love of all that’s holy, a **TELEVISED BAKING COMPETITION**. He couldn’t have come back soon enough.

It’s not the first time Noel and Kasabian have collaborated; Noel of course starred as the moustachioed mutilator in the video for ‘Vlad The Impaler’, and performed with the band at this year’s Isle Of Wight Festival. When Noel decided he was going to do a new show, he thought it was time to return the favour. He and Serge certainly seem to be a seamless psychedelic fit: the clips of *Luxury Comedy* we watch while Noel’s getting his hair done open a window into a dreamlike domain of absurdity and glam rock stylings bound to raise a switchblade smile on the face of anyone who’s ever laughed out loud while reading a Kasabian interview.

Noel, playing an exaggerated version of himself with green skin and a Bowie does-Aling The Merciless sci-fi jumpsuit, lives in a treehouse in the jungle, with an anteater butler played by his brother, Mike (who you’ll know as Naboo), and a robot cleaner called Andy Warhol. Other characters include Roy Circles, an ex-army chocolate finger who’s now a PE teacher, but plays sad swingball on his own because his chocolate finger wife died. And Tony Reason, an old school music producer who also happens to be a manta ray and lives in the pond outside. The show smears together live acting, improv, animation and music with a gleeful, finger-painted creativity. It’s a riot of colour and curveballs that makes you realise just how bland mainstream TV and comedy has become, a gift from one man’s boundary-eating brain to yours.

Well, if we ever get the bloody thing wrapped that is. “I don’t give a fuck, man,” says Tom Meighan. Tom, it seems, is firmly of the ‘get four foot of

paper, bundle it round your book or DVD until it stops, stick some Sellotape on it and you’re done’ school of thought. “See, that’d drive me mad,” says Noel. “I like things to look good, or I just can’t give them to people.”

Noel is indeed a go-your-own-way perfectionist when it comes to gift giving, which is probably why we spend about 45 minutes at today’s photoshoot waiting for him to finish in make-up. Chat turns to how else, aside of a shall-we-say ‘idiosyncratic’ approach to gift-giving, the trippy trio might reinvent Christmas traditions. The birth of Christ and all that jazz. “I think we should celebrate the birth of Tom from Kasabian,” says Noel. “Hahaha! That’s great, that,” says Tom. “Nah,” continues Noel, “The birth of Christ, I don’t mind that bit. I think Jesus is quite cool. But the whole religion thing is weird. I went to a church on Sunday because my friend had their christening. It was SO BORING! I was going, ‘This is so dull... can you not jazz it up a little bit?’”

NME: So Noel, how would you conduct your own carol service?

Noel: “For a start I’d make the crucifix neon. I think Alan Vega from Suicide, one of his art installations was neon crucifixes. So I’d get him to design the crucifix and maybe have some sort of figure on the cross that jumps down and dances around the church while you’re praying, that would be amazing. Like a goblin. Definitely an animated puppet to liven things up a bit. Maybe a puppet doing the service. I think people should be able to express themselves a bit more. It’s very English – everyone just stands there. I’d like a glass church with loads of little colourful neon bits in there, and loads of dancing. Maybe a few exotic animals and maybe a hawk that they release into the crowd at some point, that would be amazing. My church would have a bouncy castle, because people need to loosen up. Get your shoes and socks off and get involved with the bouncy castle. Once you’ve been

pushed over a couple of times, you’re probably going to be quite loose.”

Serge, you’re in charge of finding a new Father Christmas. Who would you choose?

Serge: “Maybe He-Man could deliver the presents instead of Santa Claus. That’d be better. Power of Grayskull. I think he’d ▶

“MY CHURCH WOULD HAVE A BOUNCY CASTLE”

Noel



Tom remembers where he left the Sellotape



"I... it's those
oth... two blokes
out... Kasabian"

"Yes! Tracy Island!
Been waiting for
one since '92"

Mum! I Want A Diplodocus!

KASABIAN'S DREAM XMAS PRESENTS

SERGE

THE ORGAN FROM THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL

"I had a go on that and you think it's gonna be the biggest sound of all time."

ECTO-1

"The *Ghostbusters* car. When they originally buy it it's black and I'd keep it black. Imagine buzzing around in that."

A DINOSAUR

"A huge diplodocus, that in my garden would be incredible. All over that."

A DOCTOR DOOM HELMET

"The baddie in *Spider-Man* [as well as many other *Marvel* publications - *Comic Ed*]. He's got the best helmet I've ever seen, green and with this metal bit across the front. They'd have to make it for me especially because he's not in the film yet."

LAUGHING GAS

"With the mask. Just have one by your armchair."

TOM

THE DELOREAN SPORTS CAR FROM BACK TO THE FUTURE

"They've remade them, they've put a new inside in them so you can put your iPod in them. It's fucking cool as fuck."

A CASTLE

"Someone could build me one in the middle of Ireland, where my family's from. I reckon I'd drop the drawbridge going, 'You're not comin' in!'"

A TERMINATOR PINBALL MACHINE

"Or *Knight Rider*, something from the '80s."

DAMIEN HIRST'S SHARK

"I'd like one of them in my house, encrusted in diamonds."

A LION

"They're the most beautiful creatures. Either a lion or a cobra."

make a better Santa. You could look up to him as well, he'd sort of be a hero. With Santa, you're not really that arsed about him, whereas with He-Man you'd be like, 'Yeah!' And you could replace the sleigh with Cringer and Battle Cat. It'd be great. And because he's got a nemesis as well, that makes Christmas exciting. Santa had the Grinch, didn't he, so you could have Skeletor. Skeletor could be like if you'd been bad, he'd come round: 'Don't be naughty or Skeletor'll get you'. You'd have to get him a purple velvet suit. A bit like Prince."

And what about a tree, a centrepiece for the festive home?

Serge: "I think it'd be more like Castle Grayskull, it'd be like Halloween, you'd build a castle in your house. And then it'd be more, like, medieval food, big chicken bones and mead, hog roast..."

OK. Tom you're in charge of writing some new Christmas carols. What would they sound like?

Tom: "They'd sound bloody good. They'd sound like Bing Crosby, y'know, old-school sitting around by the fire, ba-rum-pum pum pum. The classics. Charles Dickens era."

Right, it's all coming together. But where in the world would such an '80s action cartoon, happy-clappy rave-up Christmas happen?

Noel: "My church would be somewhere really hot. Like the south of France... no, that wouldn't be hot in the winter. Somewhere really hot like Bali. I think that all of the stuff they talk about, the stories from the Bible, should be interpreted through dance, not spoken. I'm over words. I want images and dance movement. There'd be some sort of craft activity, like a collage. And I think everyone should make some music, there should just be instruments all over the walls, guitars, drums. And even if you can't play them, it doesn't matter, everyone just makes a big racket in the end. Then people might start coming together a bit and talking to each other a bit and stop watching television and stop driving to Argos to buy each other presents."

Would there still be presents, though?

Noel: "I'd keep the present-giving tradition, yeah, but you know what, the pressure's too great. You end up going to HMV or Waterstone's and buying a DVD or a book, and it's rubbish. I like presents that people make because there's a lot more thought goes into it. It was my mum's birthday recently and we made this little box and put loads of weird stuff into it, little notes and drawings and stuff. It was really good fun, she loved it. If you just get a DVD or a book it's so boring! I do like the Secret Santa thing, because there's a game aspect to that and it's a fun aesthetic. You wouldn't just get them a DVD or whatever, you have to think about the person, you have to try and make it fun. We need more fun!"

Do you make all your presents then?

Noel: "NO. Hahahahaha! I wish I had the time. What I do do, though, is I paint on plates all the time, so when I do something, like a TV show, I paint all the crew a plate each. People really appreciate a gift that you make them."

This homemade, off-the-beaten-track rather than off-the-shelf approach is what glues *Noel Fielding's Luxury Comedy* together. "No-one crafts anything anymore on TV," he argues. "Everything's just so easy, you just get a camera and follow someone around, showing what they do, is that television? It's frustrating because I want more psychedelic, interesting arty stuff and I don't get it, really."

So do you all agree that TV comedy's in a bit of a ditch at the moment?

Serge: "No-one's prepared to take any risks, all the shows on the telly are in the same format. Since the *Boosh* it's been really tired, so it's amazing that Noel's gonna come back. Thank God there's people like him out there, because people have given up."

It seems there's a thread that's been dropped, from Spike Milligan and Monty Python through Reeves & Mortimer to the *Boosh*...

Noel: "I thought after the *Boosh* and the *Conchords* there'd be loads of psychedelic stuff, and loads of



**"NO-ONE
TAKES RISKS.
THANK GOD
NOEL IS BACK"**

Serge



**"I JUST
WANNA BLOW
PEOPLE'S
MINDS"**

Noel

musical stuff and animation and more creative things, and everything seems to have stayed the same. Like, panel shows, these fucking awful panel shows. I mean, I do *Never Mind The Buzzcocks* because it's about music but at least it's been going quite a long time: it and *I Have I Got News For You*, they've almost become like institutions, and they maintain a high standard, you know. But there's so many panel shows and mainstream stand-up shows and it's like, is that it? Is that it now?"

It's your responsibility to weird shit up again?

Noel: "I just wanna blow people's minds, and it's quite joyful, my show. It's not cynical, it's quite fun and the tone of it's quite silly, and it's quite magical and it's quite romantic and it's quite beautiful."

When I came to make the show, I wanted to make this fucking extreme, mental, psychedelic, crazy show with animations and with music, with sketches and characters. It's not like there's 10 other people doing it. There's no, like, Spike Milligans or Kenny Everett or Peter Cooks."

Serge: "And when you see something like what Noel's done, the amount of ideas, and it looks like nothing else anyone has ever seen and it's inspiring. You think, it's not over. There are people out there who are quite bored and you can inspire people, you know. If you were a kid and you saw it, you'd just be like, 'What is this?' and you might form a band or paint something or write a script."

As well as sparking off each other creatively, you do seem to have established a sweet friendship.

Noel: "You meet a lot of people from bands and stuff, but we really gelled, we just got on really well and ended up becoming friends. We're almost like

brothers. He's like one of my best friends now, and I haven't known him that long, maybe two, three years. Tom always goes, 'You love each other a bit you two, don't you? You love each other.' Tom said that me and Serge had the only two faces you could see from the moon. The Great Wall Of China and mine and Serge's faces. We have got stupid extreme faces..."

How did the collaboration work on the new series?

Noel: "I just give him a rough idea and he really goes with it. And then I go down there and we just sort of like riff it, really... he calls it magic time, because we just have the best time and all of a sudden, four hours have gone by."

Serge: "The creative process has just been so easy. There's a lot of trust between us both, it's not like we've not really had any weird moments, it's just been like... we both know exactly how it should be."

Will you work together again soon?

Noel: "We're going to put it out as an album, maybe do a couple of gigs. Our band's called The Loose Tapestries. We might do a tour of forests. Or castles. Medieval castles... I'd like to do a couple of series of this and do a big tour and somehow combine it with

Donnie on
ack: not such
a idea

animation and live stuff and music. I'd like to do something else with Serge as well, like a film. I'd love to do a *Hard Day's Night*-style film with Kasabian. That whole band have got good personalities and Tom and Serge are stars. And they could write music specifically like that. That's something else that we keep talking about."

The idea of *Empire. The Movie* is almost too exciting to contemplate, but there's the small matter of 2012 to be starting with. What are the gang's plans for the world next year? "Everyone just needs to calm down. The whole world just needs to calm down," says Tom. "Everyone needs to relax and just take a minute out," agrees Serge. "Get a deckchair and watch the

world go by. And just enjoy what we have. It's gonna be an interesting year, 2012, it could go either way. It's been bubbling for a few years now and it amazes me how flimsy it all is, the world. It only takes a few little things to happen and it all stops working, and that's a frightening prospect. I'm hiding in a rock'n'roll band! I've escaped. I suggest everyone else does the same. I think it's always been the artist's job to give people an escape route. If you don't hold the answers to kind of change things politically or socially, then we can give people beauty or magic."

Beauty and magic: these are the shiny gifts that will light up the start of 2012. The Mayan Apocalypse, global depression and Europe falling apart like a soggy Rich Tea biscuit won't seem so bad for as long as you're pondering the fate of a Plasticine Joey Ramone who's ended up with a head made of gingerbread, or what will become of a Cockney spiv lion trapped in a private menagerie.

"Life's quite mundane and I like to create a bit of a fantasy world... I just wanna create something really magical and beautiful," grins Noel. "So we'll see if we've managed it! I feel really lucky because I'm getting to do what I want to do without interference or compromises. I've got an art book out, with drawings and short stories in it. I'm getting to make this show

with music by Kasabian. I couldn't ask for more."

And neither can we. The return of Noel Fielding is exactly what we needed. Here's to scaring the shit out of the January blues..

**NME
EXTRA**

To win one of five signed copies of Noel Fielding's book and a deluxe edition of Kasabian's *Velociraptor!* - worth over £100 - go to NME.COM/extra, or see pro for info

For a special Christmas message from Kasabian and Noel Fielding go to NME.COM/video



The Barrel Tree in Lynchburg, Tennessee. All 140 barrels of it.

THIS YEAR IN LYNCHBURG, THE BIGGEST GIFT ISN'T UNDER THE TREE. IT IS THE TREE. We may have our fair share of traditions here in Lynchburg, Tennessee, but there's always room for one more. This year marks the raising of our first-ever Barrel Tree—a 26-foot-tall tree made entirely of Jack Daniel's whiskey barrels. Raised with the help of family and friends, it's our gift to our hometown. Because it's not what's under the tree that matters. It's who's around it.

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AZEALIA BANKS

Hi Azealia! What was your best moment of 2011?

"When I was in my apartment, close to getting evicted, with all my shit in boxes. That's when I wrote '212'. It was just my moment to be like, 'WAAAAAARGH!' You know, like, 'What the fuck do you want from meeeeeee?' Then I was like, 'Good, got that out.'"

What's the naughtiest thing you've done over the festive season?

"There was one time there was, like, a big family party. I was, like, 18 and I was dating this guy who was, like, 33. I brought him with me, like a dickhead. I was just feeling bold. We came through with this big-ass bottle of rum, and that's back when I was having my first drinks of life. I just got *soooo* drunk. He was like, 'Azealia, slow down', and I was like, 'Noooo, I'm fine. I'm fiiiiine.' I just got so drunk and then threw up all over the hallway and everybody blamed him. He was like, 'I didn't do it', but he had to scrape me up and take me away and everyone was like, 'Where are you taking her?'"

Good work. Who do you want to kiss under the mistletoe?

"Never mind the mistletoe, I want to kiss Larry David under the dreidel, he's hot. Why aren't you shooting me for the Hanukkah issue?"

Any New Year's resolutions?

"Whatever grudges I have, whatever bullshit, I'm just gonna try and start afresh. But if I were to make one from this year maybe it'd be to be more fashionable and stuff. I'm a little rap girl, I just hang out, wear my T-shirts and my Mickey Mouse sweater and now it's like, I'm this artist, I feel like I should put more effort into my appearance. I mean, I got my Union Jack dress, I guess, but that's just because I fucking love the Spice Girls. But that's my New Year's resolution, to be more fashionable and feminine. Do you think I'm crazy?"

A little bit. You don't wanna end up like Fergie. That was probably her New Year's Resolution once. Now look at the state of her...

"I wouldn't ever get anything fake done. Sometimes I think about getting breast implants but then I'm like, cutting yourself open is kinda weird. It's kind of a rapper cliché. I dunno. I feel like if I started I couldn't stop. I got nine tattoos in three days when I first started getting them."

Back to Christmas... what happens in the Banks household?

"Pfff, my Christmases stopped when I

was 12. My mom cooks on Thanksgiving. She cooks a little bit on Christmas, but on Thanksgiving she'll make turkey, she'll make beef, she'll make a ham, she'll make fried chicken. She'll make everything. It's just about the kids. A lot of drinking and running back and forth to clean up wrappers."

Do you not have to watch your mouth in front of the family?

"Noooo. We watch our mouths in front of the kids though."

Your mum swears, like you?

"Where do you think I get it from? My mom is like, crazy (laughs)."

What's on your wishlist for this Christmas?

"If you're gonna get me something, probably some diamonds. I feel like that's the inner girl in me, I just like jewellery. People always ask me, 'Who are your favourite designers?', fashion this and fashion that. I'm like, no. I just want some diamonds."

What was the weirdest moment of 2011 for you?

"I don't think I really had one. It was more stagnant. I split with XL. I split with my manager, I went to Montreal and kind of did a lot of soul searching. The whole year was kinda insightful. I just had to get that kid stuff out of my system. Things like, 'Radio i can only do tonight, they can't do tomorrow', eugh, so then we have to cancel with Paul [Epworth, producer]. I hate doing that because he just wants to get working."

Are your exes nervous about getting a drubbing on your next song?

"No! It's like that boy who I ran away from to Montreal, who properly broke my heart. He's feenin' now. Like, he's *feeeenin'*. You know what I mean? He's like, 'I really miss you, let's go for dinner.' So I saw him the other night, we went for dinner and whatever. He's still, like, cute, whatever. He's still hot, whatever. But I'm not gonna make any moves. Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me. He's not going to play me again."

All Azealia wants for Christmas is another reunion with her exes.

Bleatings

Festive chit-chat
with the stars of 2011



A new capsule
for Christmas.
Helders? Nice...

"I'd have
Ross Kemp
round for
Xmas
dinner"

MATT HELDERS

Arctic Monkeys

Helders! What's your favourite Christmas treat to suck and see?

"Stuffing. Which is weird to suck. The 'suck it and see' aspect of stuffing is... well, there are a lot of varieties aren't there? I make me own Sunday dinners, so I'm not afraid of getting stuck in."

Do the band buy each other presents?

"Sometimes, but I never think about what they actually want. I just think,

"Well, that's something that looks a bit stupid."

What's the weirdest thing that happened to you all year?

"Probably when we were filming that video, 'Suck It And See'. I mean, it weren't weird, but it's a strange thing to do, isn't it? Was I ever worried people might not get the joke? I wasn't really that bothered. As long as people see that we don't take ourselves too seriously!"

Have you still got the leather trousers from the video?

"I do still have them. I might take them

out today on my bike, actually. They might be a bit hot for that kind of thing, though. I might have to get a short version for the Virgin Islands, where I'm going on holiday soon. Leather shorts, does anyone do them? Maybe the Germans."

What's on your wishlist this Xmas?

"My mum was asking me this last night, and I said an autoharp. I said, 'You can buy me a musical instrument that I'm not gonna buy myself.' It's like a piece of wood with strings on, and you press this button down the side that tells you what chord it is and you just strum it."

So you don't actually have to do anything. I need to learn guitar too. I might do that this Christmas. I can't play any chords but I can play a few riffs. Who needs chords? That's why I'm getting an autoharp."

What's the true meaning of Christmas?

"I could say something cheesy like 'Jesus' and 'giving', but... well, it's about getting up early and opening presents, innit? I'll wake up at six in the morning even though I know what I'm getting and where it's coming from."

What's the best present you've received from a fan?

"There's this girl who gets me stuff quite a lot. She's from America and she's been to England, and when we played in LA this year she sent me a package. It had some cream in it that was supposed to help your muscles repair, like a painkilling cream. I think it was for my arm, 'cos she knew I'd broken it. Saying that, it took me a little while to work it all out, because it were after a gig and we'd all had a bit to drink, and we came back and someone said I had a bit of fanmail, so I opened it and there was this tube of cream. She'll probably read this and freak out, but I'm not speaking badly of her! She just cares."

Who'd be at your dream Christmas party? What would you get up to?

"Gary Barlow, David Beckham, Richard Branson – this would be the post-dinner drinks, they'd be good for a bit of a chat. Thinking about who'd do the food... I was gonna say Gordon Ramsay, but I'd probably get Nigella, actually. Oh and Ross Kemp would be there as well. He'd have some good stories."

Who would you most like to meet under the mistletoe? And who would you like to meet there least?

"Most like to meet... Megan Fox. Well, why not? And the least would probably be Robbie from *EastEnders*. I mean, Wellard [Robbie's dog] was cool, and I did used to like Robbie. But I wouldn't wanna meet him under the mistletoe."

Ronnie Vannucci The Killers

What's the most festive party you've ever been to?

"The time my cousin tried to make out with me on New Year's. I was about 16."

Have you been naughty or nice this year?

"I think I was my worst cousin, to be honest."

What's the best gift you've had this year?

"One time we got a box full of weird photos of us with a note around the neck. That was a peep – right into the bin."

Do you have any presents?

"One year my dad was

filling in for our drum technician – he was actually really terrible, but it was fun to have him on the road, sitting up my drums incorrectly and not tuning them properly."

Anyway, he would sit behind me the whole show and on one seapped a picture of him and Brandon got it blown up and put it in a nice frame. So, that was really nice and quite sentimental of him."

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Father Christmas:
The Early Years



COLE ALEXANDER BLACK LIPS



What are your plans this festive season?

"There's an old Christmas legend of Krampus who's the demon of Christmas. He came if you were a

bad kid, and we have a song called 'Bad Kids'. I wanna teach people about him." **We bet you've had some messy New Year's Eve parties?**

"In 1999 everyone was totally schiz about this whole Y2K thing, all the power's gonna cut out and computers are gonna die and stuff. We were at this party and we found

the circuit breaker for all the power in this giant building. So everyone was counting down like, '5,4,3,2...' and then we pulled the circuit breaker so all the power cut out and people started losing their shit. We turned the power back after a couple of minutes and the place was totally trashed."



Any New Year's resolutions for 2012, Mr Garvey?

"I never usually make resolutions, I'm not really very good at abstinence. OK, in the

GUY GARVEY ELBOW

New Year I'm going to drink less and exercise more."

Are you sure that's realistic...?

"No, but it's the thought that counts."

Ha! So what has been your best festive season ever?

"Easy peasy, that one, me and [girlfriend] Emma Jane got back together on New Year's Eve a couple of

years ago. We left the party, left all our friends, despite being 10 minutes to midnight, and we were just walking down the street listening to everyone wishing each other happy New Year, while we were discussing how much we loved each other and wanted to get back together."

SINGLES *all the way*

TURN IT UP, PAXMAN! IT'S OUR STAR-ENCRUSTED REVIEW OF THE YEAR'S BIGGEST TRACKS



JEREMY PAXMAN

Job: Politician-devouring TV hellmsman
Biggest moment of 2011: Accidentally saying the C-word live on air
What he's like in real life: Less scary

JAMES 'ARG' ARGENT & LYDIA BRIGHT

Job: The Only Way Is Essex golden couple
When are they going to get married? How should we know?

LEE NELSON

Job: Being the creation of comedian Simon Brodtkin and star of BBC Three's Lee Nelson's Well Good Show
Is he really that stupid? No, Brodtkin is a qualified doctor. Fact!

JACK SAVIDGE

Job: The drummer out of Friendly Fires
Was he booked because Ed Macfarlane wasn't available? Shhhhhh!
What he's like in real life: Smart and polite

FRANKIE COCOZZA

Job: The X Factor-fired, drug-shamed ladies' man
Frankie! Will you remember me in the morning? No.
What he's like in real life: On it

KYLE FALCONER

Job: Good singer and guitarist in The View
First language: Hardcore Scottish
What he's like in real life: Incomprehensible

THE DEATH OF YOU AND ME

NOEL
GALLAGHER



Jeremy: "It's easily identifiable. It's derivative. Lee: "A h, jeezzer!"

Lee Nelson: "I miss Oasis. I like their music. I like their vibe. I like their Oasis drink that they do. I am called everyone 'Our Kid' because he was never sure if they was his kid."

Jack: "Oasis ran their course. I his is an example of why Oasis should be put down."

Lee: "I'm starting a campaign to get them back together - I am A and Noel's Bready Fye Birds."

Lydia: "I don't like Oasis."

Arg: "I like 'Whatever'."

Lee: "Go on. Sing it. Arg, Arg, Arg."

Arg: "(Sings a bit) This is nowhere near as good as 'Whatever'."

Kyle: "There's a lot of songs on Noel's album like 'If I Had A Gun...' which, you know, if I am was singing, would be a lot better."

Lee: "(To Kyle) Your accent is mental. Love it, you legend. Scottie boy?"

Frankie: "(Puts hand up) Can I have some water?"

Jeremy: "I thought you wanted to go to the loo."

Lee: "Frankie, slip off to the toilet. You'll be more comfy."

Lydia: "I love Ed Sheeran. I listen to this all the time. I get emotional when I watch the video."

Jeremy: "What sort of emotions?"

Lydia: "Really sad!"

Lee: "Was you drunk at the time, babe?"

Lydia: "I was paralytic."

Jack: "This is dreadful. It sounds like an open mic night."

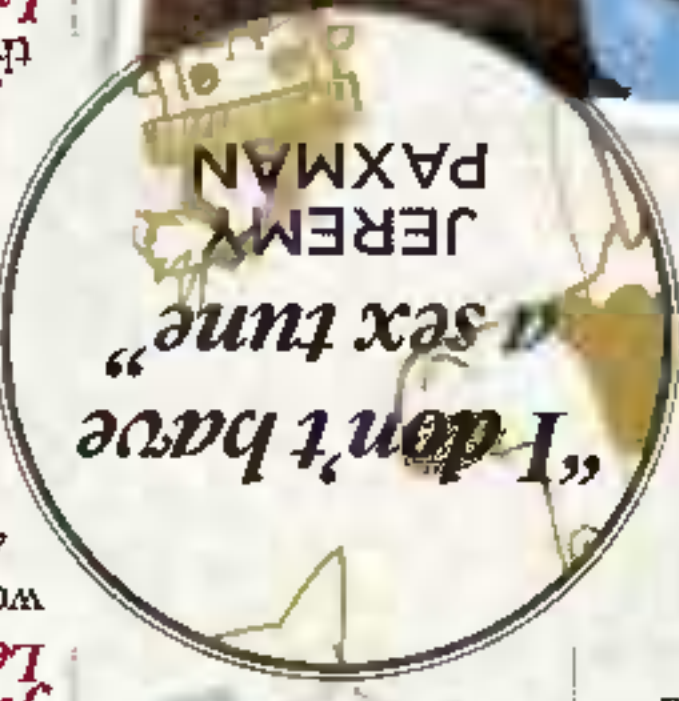
Kyle: "This isn't my cup of tea, but when you see him play live, it's great."

Jeremy: "I think it's a girl's song, you know. But I agree the lyrics do tell a story."

Lee: "It is a girl's story. Mind you, any song about Class A drugs and hookers gets a thumbs up from me. When I first heard it, I was expecting something more like this (sings theme tune from The A Team).

"What's funnier than Jack - my hat or your singer's dancing?"

"I don't have a sex tune"



What sort of plan are BA and the boys going to come up with if they've got this playing in their van?"

Arg: "I've got a great voice. But when you see a picture of him, you're quite shocked."

Lee: "He looks like a proper Muppet."

IF YOU WANNA
THE VACCINES



Kyle: "I love The Vaccines. They've got a Ramones vibe. I really like this tune."

Frankie: "No. Sorry. I just don't like this song at all."

Jeremy: "This is terrific. (To Lee) You like it too, don't you?"

Lee: "My missus loves this. If you want to come back/it's alright/it's alright. It's actually our banging tune."

Jeremy: "I don't think I want to know that. Lee: "A mber gets on all fours and changes the words to, 'If you want to cum on my back/it's alright/it's alright'."

Jeremy: "I'm going off it."

Lee: "What's your sex tune, Paxman?"

Jeremy: "I don't have one."

Lee: "Answer the question, Paxman!"

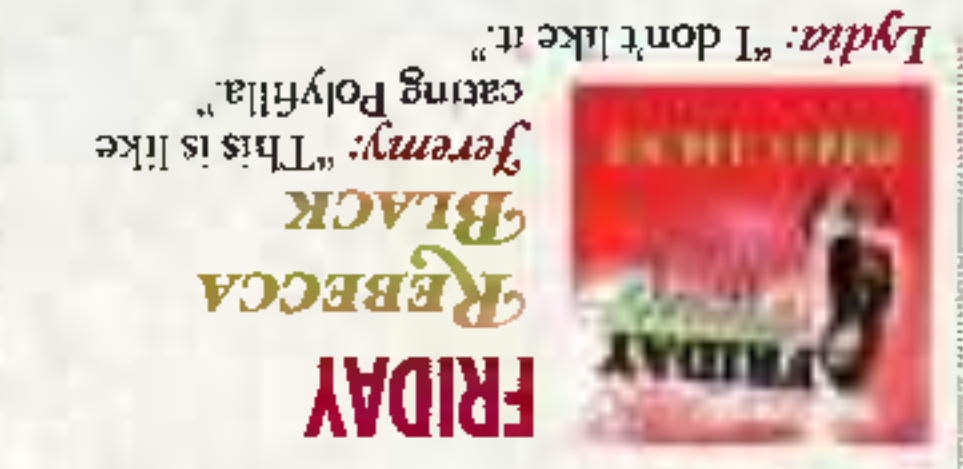
Jeremy: "I just answered it, dumbwit."

Lee: "A answer the question, Paxman! Do you want a mince pie?"

Jeremy: "You know what, I don't think that I do."

Lydia: "Does it make you think?"

Lydia: "Not about you and your girlfriend"



Friday
REBECCA BLACK

Jeremy: "This is like eating Polyfilla."

Lydia: "I don't like it."

Lee: "I'm trying my best, gccc?"

Jeremy: "There is going to be a fight"

Lee: "It wasn't a very funny one."

Jeremy: "It was only a joke, Jeremy."

Lee: "I'm not saying that at all. But the purpose of music isn't to write it down."

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Lee: "You're supposed to listen to it, you're not supposed to write it down."

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Lee: "Fair play to her. It shows that if you've got drive and ambition, you can make a dick of yourself worldwide."

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BERONCE RUN THE WORLD (GIRLS)

Lydia: "I love it. Everything Beyoncé brings out is amazing." **Frankie:** "I fucking hate her, man. This is fucking painful!" **Lee:** "Would you say that to her face?" **Frankie:** "Obviously not. I'd shit myself and probably do one." **Jack:** "What do you think, Jeremy?" **Jeremy:** "I don't like it." **Lee:** "Jezzz, have you got a girl? I can imagine

Jeremy: "I don't think this is her best at all." **Kyle:** "We had an argument around the fire at Gastonbury. I can't remember what about, but I felt like a right scumbag 'cos she was so posh." **Jack:** "It's very 'her' with all the harps kicking off and the bells. It's good to hear something put in on when you're asleep." **Lee:** "I'm going to sneak into your room and sleep, maybe." **Frankie:** "I can't think of any time when I'd want to listen to this. When I'm trying to

THE MACHINE

WHAT THE WATER GAVE ME + FLORENCE



you at a party, busy with the ladies." **Jeremy:** "I'm about 112, matey." **Arg:** "Lydia would be grinding away to this on the dancefloor."

ARCTIC MONKEYS

DON'T SIT DOWN 'CAUSE I'VE MOVED YOUR CHAIR



Lydia: "No I wouldn't." **Lee:** "Yeah, with all her mates and that. Go on! Do a little bit now." **Jeremy:** "Shall we move onto the next one?"

Jack: "The lyrics remind me of something you'd hear at primary school. Like a chair movement awareness song." **Kyle:** "Alex Turner is that much of a genius, he can do that." **Lee:** "You'd ask him, he'll probably say, 'Nah, it's not about the chair. He'll have

all other meanings." **Frankie:** "I like it. I think Arctic Monkeys are class in general. If they did a Beyoncé tune, I'd love it."

Jeremy: "I don't think this is by any means their best. It's unusual like that."

Jack: "There aren't many songs about velociraptors either!"

Jeremy: "We need more dinosaur rock."



Frankie gives an Xmas message to Gary Barlow

Kyle, you're so cool, I want to look like you!



"Thanks for the mince pies Frankie - that's definitely sugar, right?"

212 212 212

CAZALIA BANKS

Lee: "The lyrics are filthy. Tune, innit?"

Frankie: "It's fucking shit."

Lee: "Frankie, you're just on a comedown?"

Arg: "Harsh but true."

Kyle: "I like it when it starts up."

Lee: "Jezz, what do you think?"

Jeremy: "It's not for me. I just can't engage with it. But maybe next time we have David

Cameron on *Newsnight*, we'll put this on."

Watch exclusive footage from this bizarre meeting of minds at NME.COM/video

EVERY TEARDROP IS A WATERFALL COLDPLAY



Lee: "Er... Enemy?" **Jeremy:** "Do you know what it stands for?" **Lee:** "No messing there." **Arg:** "That's a Paxman-level question, that is. No messing there." **Lee:** "What does NME stand for exactly?" **Arg:** "Talking points of the year." **NME:** "Well, it's also because it's undoubtably been one of the biggest music to normal." **Lee:** "You've picked it just because you all like it in the office and it's a bit different doesn't develop." **Jeremy:** "She's got a good voice, but the song something dark as fuck." **Kyle:** "It should be in a Tim Burton film." **Lee:** "In a dressing gown." **Arg:** "I'm trying to work out when it'd be good to listen to. Chilling out?" **Lee:** "I'm trying to work out when it'd be with intensity." **Arg:** "I'm trying to work out when it'd be about a song that doesn't hit you over the head are suspicious. But there's something nice had a previous career and wiped it away. People **Jack:** "I here's been a lot of backlash. She's but with the sound turned down." **Lee:** "She's well bangable but this tune is not that good. I like the video

VIDEO GAMES JANA DEL REY



Watch exclusive footage from this bizarre meeting of minds at NME.COM/video



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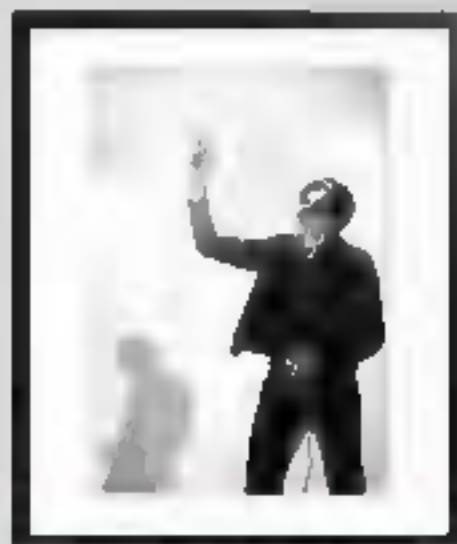
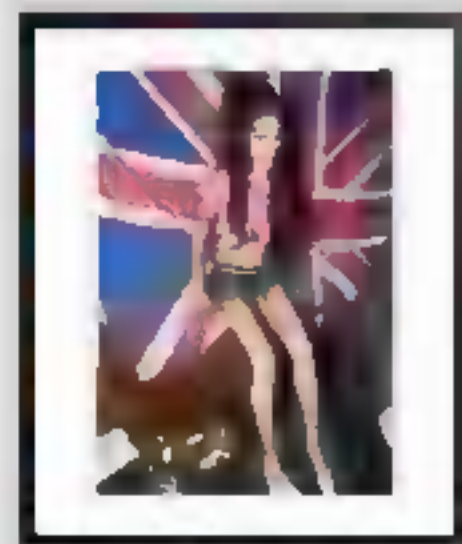
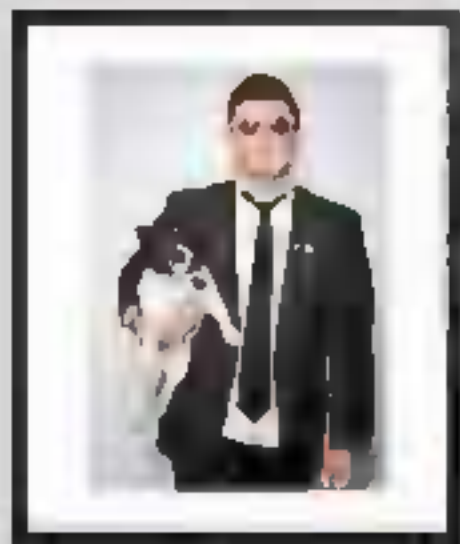
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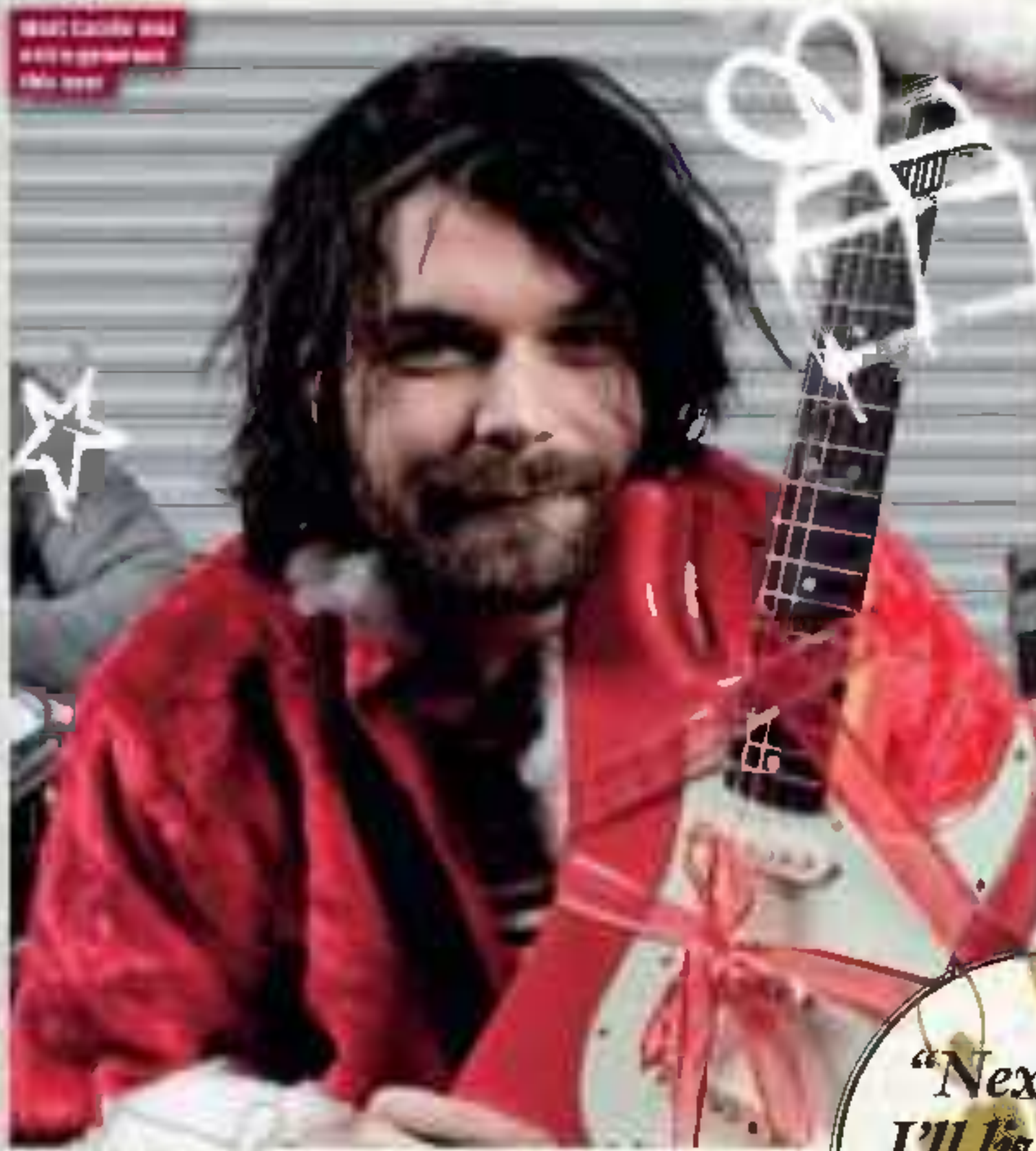
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Season's Bleatings

Festive chit-chat with the stars of 2011



SIMON NEIL

Biffy Clyro

Hello Simon. You're probably not going to have another Christmas Number One this year. Does this bother you?

"Ha. That seems like the weirdest dream ever now [X Factor winner Matt Cardle covering 'Many of Horror']. I'm glad we weren't here for that, because it doesn't feel like it physically happened."

Have you been watching The X Factor, then?

"It's really bad this year, isn't it?"

They need Cowell and Cheryl Cole. I don't think you can underplay the star power of Simon Cowell. People want the panto villain. Barlow doesn't have a laugh at all."

What was your highlight of 2011?
"Going to play in India with Metallica. It's a country we've always wanted to go to and it was just incredible, the people there are just the nicest people in any country we've ever been to. The culture is phenomenal and it's oozing out of every pore, but then there's also the shock of the poverty and the amount of people, the population is so dense."

There are four-year-old girls in the middle of a road where cars are doing 50 miles an hour, and they're doing cartwheels. But I have to say it was one of the best experiences of my life."

What was the most embarrassing thing that happened to you this year?

"When we toured with the Foo Fighters... it's not that embarrassing, but I kept getting mistaken for Dave Grohl a lot. We're not very popular in America – the amount of times I'd be walking to the gig and it's like, 'Dave! Dave!' So I'm gonna cut my hair and my beard pretty soon, so that doesn't happen again. I don't have the winning smile though."

What is the true meaning of Christmas?

"Family. That's what to me any Christmas is like, just the memories of growing up, whether it's good or bad, and I guess it's all based around family. Me and my wife still spend Christmas with both our families and that's what it's all about."

Do you have a New Year's resolution?

"I've been having quite a lot of 'brain expansive' moments in the last kind of few months, so maybe slow down my voyage of discovery. I think I might have explored the inside of my brain as much as a I should for the time being, so next year I'll live a slightly less chemical life."

What have you found on your voyage of discovery?

"Just more fucking questions! I'm a big fan of tripping and things and I do think every time you come out the other side you're slightly different. It always makes me open doors and consider things in my life, why am I doing certain things, you know, and just thinking of the bigger picture. It's such a cliché but we're such

a small drop in the ocean – just realising that what's in your mind is more in control of your life than anything else. I don't know if it gives you security, but I'm a lot less scared of the outside world because I realise that anything you're building up [in your thoughts] is in your mind, it's all just chemicals flowing through the air. Don't get me wrong, I don't know anything about the brain, but it can trick you as easily as it can tell you the truth."

Deep. Who would be your fantasy Christmas dinner guests?

"I'm going to see St Vincent tonight, she's phenomenal. The new record has blown my fucking mind. So I'd have her. And Brendan from *Couch Trip*. I'm addicted to *Celebrity Couch Trip*, it cracks me up."

Frankie Francis

Frankie And The Heartstrings

What's the best Christmas present you've ever had?
"The Tom Peaks box set, it's the best programme ever. It's insane that it got made in America in the '90s."

What's the oddest thing that's happened to you this year?
"I had a really bad trip one night and had to drag myself through it in

London – I couldn't stop going to the toilet. But I managed to avoid ending myself on stage. Also, we played in the pub and went to a bar where these Korean bullies were. We were having a dance-off to 'YMCA', and they really roughly scared us to be there. Oh yes."

A leather-clad rock star... and Frankie



JORDAN GATESMITH HOWLER



Jordan! Who would you most like to meet under the mistletoe?
"All the old queens. Every old queen out there. Or Justin Young from The Vaccines. But most likely my

dad. And that's not supposed to be weird or anything, it's just that I've never met my dad. I was told that he likes mistletoe..."
What's the true meaning of Xmas?
"Er... touching? Or maybe it's doing jazz hands and stuff. Possibly some sort of combination."
Who's your hero of the year?
"Princess Eugenie is

my hero. If you are reading this my sweet, sweet Eugenie, please call me at [very long number recital complete with international dialling code edited out].
Good, she'll, erm, like that. And who's your villain of the year?
"My villains of 2011 are Tesco sandwiches. They smell like an army of decomposing badgers."

JAMES ALLAN GLASVEGAS



James! Bet you've had some mad New Year's Eve parties?
"One was when I was playing football for Stirling Albion. I didn't think I'd be playing the next day,

so I went to this party and ended up drinking gin and sitting with these green tights on, like Peter Pan. But I was playing the next day. I was sick all over the place before the match. One of the other players came up to me in the dressing room going, 'James, are you pished?' I went, 'Yeah', and he went,

'Ach, don't worry about it man, I had two Es last night'. I then spent about four days unwell in bed. Paul, our bass player, bought me the *Cheers* boxset that year so I remember spending four days on the couch trying to get better again, watching that. Those boxsets are handy when everybody's hungover."

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HIGH FLYING WORDS

THE BEST OF WHAT'S BEEN SPAT OUT OF
ROCK STAR GOBS THROUGH NME THIS YEAR

Sexy Time

**"SHE WAS MY
COUSIN, BUT
GOOD TIMES..."**

CALEB FOLLOWILL,
KINGS OF LEON

**"I'M CLEAN AS A
WHISTLE! JUST GOT
CHECKED – PROPER
COCK SWAB!"**

KYLE FALCONER, THE VIEW

*"I like London a lot. The last time
I was there I had a fivesome"*

HONOR TITUS, CEREBRAL BALLZY

*'A good oyster
tastes like Poseidon
just jizzed in your
mouth'*

COLE ALEXANDER,
BLACK LIPS

**"When your
bass player's
wearing his
sister's pants
and he looks
like a hot
chick... we call
it 'road gay'"**

DUFF McKAGAN

CRYBABIES

*"I had to go on a
family holiday ~ I
spent the entire
time sat at the
bottom of the
swimming pool
screaming"*

FLORENCE WELCH

**"MAKING GIRLS
CRY IS EXACTLY
WHAT I WANT"**

JAMES BLAKE

**"(Through tears) God sent me lyrics and melody –
when you feel a message to give to the world and
people are shooting arrows... I need a cigarette"**

LADY GAGA

ANIMAL ATTRACTION

**"My ex is still looking
after my cat. So my
ex still has my pussy"**

AZEALIA BANKS

**"Trouble follows
us around the
US. Last time a
policeman shot a
dog in the face"**

JOHNNY ROGOFF,
YUCK

**"I'VE ALWAYS HAD A
CONNECTION WITH
THE GAZELLE BECAUSE
THE GAZELLE IS
ALWAYS OUTRUNNING
ITS PREDATORS"**

GERARD WAY,
MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE

BEST OF BITCHIN'!

**"This Interview is all
well and good, but
all I ask is that you
don't make me look
like someone from
The Wombats"**

FARIS BADWAN,
THE HORRORS

**"Have you heard
Everything
Everything? They
have fucking
adverts for Dove
soap on their website"**

ELLERY ROBERTS, WU LYF

**"The Only Way Is
Essex and Made
In Chelsea – all
cunts. Seriously"**

TOM MEIGHAN,
KASABIAN

DRUG TALK

"EVERYONE ALWAYS THINKS I'M HIGH. LAST TIME I GOT HIGH, I ALMOST TRIED TO COMMIT SUICIDE – THAT SHIT WAS HORRIBLE"

TYLER, THE CREATOR

"I was wasted, naked, cutting myself up with glass. I got the song done in two takes"

COREY TAYLOR, SLIPKNOT

"I would rather sing about cocaine than being inside someone's muff"

EXAMPLE

"AT COACHELLA I TOOK WHAT I THOUGHT WAS VALIUM. IT TURNED OUT TO BE ANIMAL TRANQUILISER"

JAMES ALLAN, GLASVEGAS

"WE EDITED PENTHOUSE – BEZ GAVE ALL THE BIRDS E, SOME OF THEM WERE E'D UP IN THE BATH SO THEY DIDN'T MIND WHEN WE GOT TOUCHY-FEELY"

SHAUN RYDER

"WE ALL DID ECSTASY BEFORE THE GIG – NEVER A GOOD IDEA, BECAUSE WE CAN'T KEEP TIME ON E"

BOBBY GILLESPIE, PRIMAL SCREAM

TOO MUCH INFORMATION

"Serge from Kasabian grabbed my balls once"

JAMES BUCKLEY, THE INBETWEENERS

"I GOT DRUNK AND SIMULTANEOUSLY PUKED AND PISSED MY OWN PANTS RECENTLY"

BETH DITTO

"At Freeze FM I was like, 'Do you have a toilet?' They showed me to a rusty bowl. Time to squat!"

KATY B

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE FANS...

"MY GIGS ARE FULL OF TATTOOED MEN CRYING"

FRANK TURNER

"There was an Estonian girl who sat outside my flat posting weird things and screaming through the letter box. Eventually I had to call the police"

THEO HUTCHCRAFT, HURTS

"I'VE BEEN ASKED TO SIGN TITS, I'VE BEEN ASKED TO SIGN A VAGINA – ONE TIME A MOTHER AND DAUGHTER ASKED IF I WANTED TO GO BACK TO THEIR HOTEL..."

NICK BROWN, MONA



VIVA BROTHERS

Noel

"I SAID TO THE GIRL WHO WAS DOING MY STRING ARRANGEMENTS, 'ALL THE STRING PLAYERS HAVE TO BE WOMEN'. SHE THOUGHT I WAS BEING A BIT OF A PERV"

"Liam talks a lot, doesn't he? Unfortunately for him, he's a born liar"

"That's the thing about Twitter, innit – 'Wooo, I've just seen Terence Stamp in Waitrose'"

"I don't ever see me being able to stand on stage in a stadium like a jobbing fucking minstrel"

"I'm not gonna go, 'Fuck you, I'm going to be bigger than Cliff Richard'"

Liam

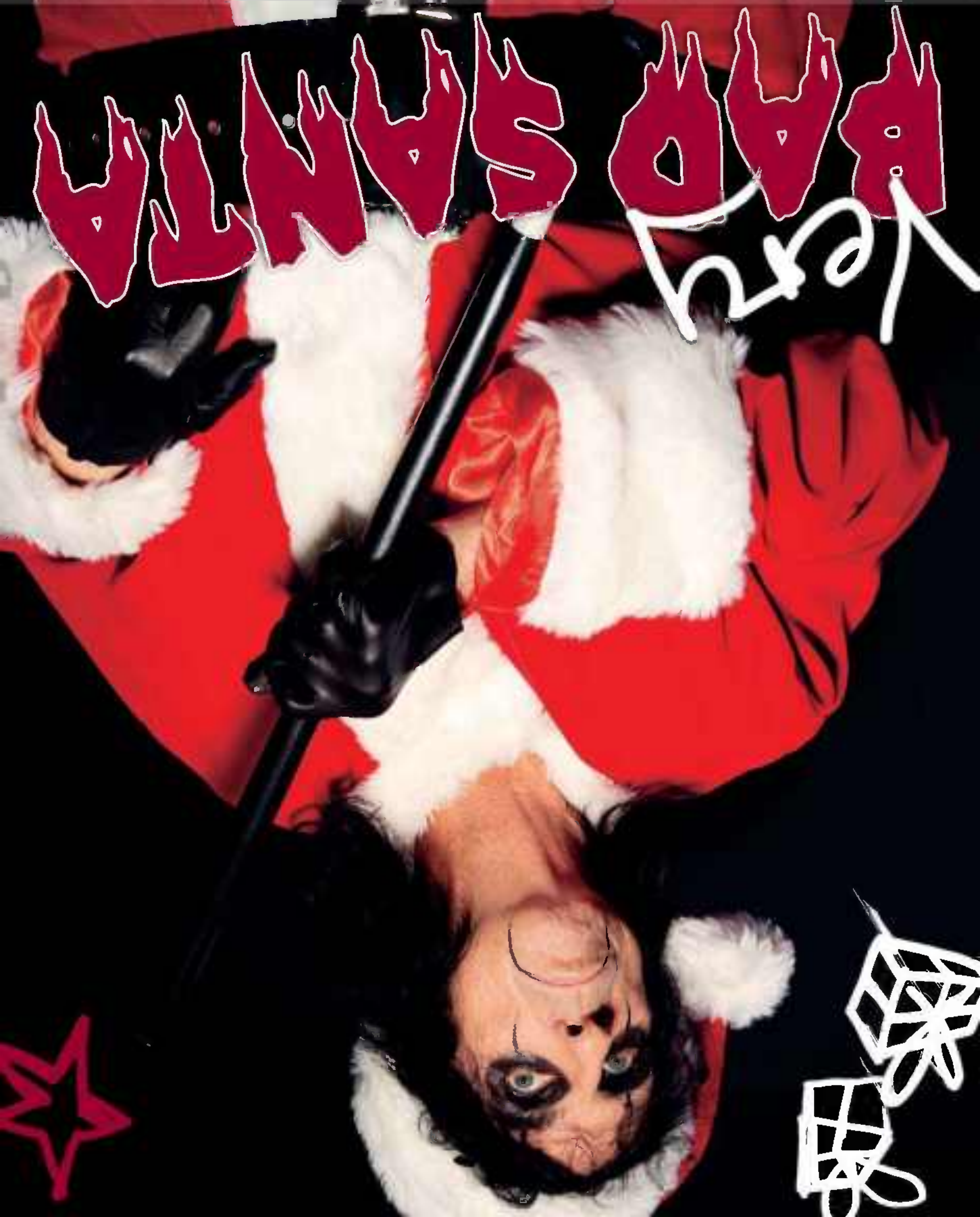
"SUPPORT THE STONE ROSES? I'LL FUCKING SELL HOT DOGS FOR THEM"

"ELBOW? NOW THAT IS A SHIT NAME FOR A BAND. IT'S LIKE CALLING YOURSELF THE CHINS OR THE KNEES"

"I've got one app, and that's fucking Waitrose"

"ANYONE WHO TWEETS ABOUT THEIR LUNCH SHOULD BE LINED UP AND FUCKING SHOT"

"I'm sure my mum plays Noel's songs as well. Just before she goes to bed"



Shitting snakes, puking clowns and brawling Hells Angels? It's Christmas with **Alice Cooper** as he gets kitted out as Santa and tells **Matt Wilkinson** what 2011's stars should expect under their trees

PHOTO: MATHIEU ZAZZO

NME's introduction to Alice Cooper is not how we imagined it would be. What he *should* be doing, see, is hanging from the rafters of his Parisian hotel room, dressed like death, biting off chicken heads and/or shagging snakes. But he's not. He's watching *Monsters, Inc* and eating some nuts. "Sup?" he says to us half-assedly as we enter his lair.

It quickly becomes clear that this is Alice in chill out mode. And what's wrong with that? The 63-year-old is halfway through a world tour right now, in which his head gets guillotined every night and a 13ft

Frankenstein's monster

(played by his tour manager) chases him around the stage. Loved and lauded by everyone from Johnny Depp and Johnny Rotten to Dave Grohl, when he's in character and

onstage he's both a punk rock overlord and a Lady Gaga-inspired fruitloop.

He also loves Christmas, and instantly jumps into the Santa suit we've brought along for our photoshoot while simultaneously sprouting amazing stories of festive times gone by. Like, for example, the year he took his snake Christmas shopping. "We had a bunch of snakes in the '70s – we had Boa Derek, we had Julius Squeezer," he explains. "And we had Yvonne. Yvonne was the big one. She went Christmas shopping with me and we caused absolute chaos. Oh, we did everything together back then!" Alice pauses, flashes a grin and adds coyly: "Well, everything for a publicity stunt..."

Has he ever had any snake mishaps? Just the one, actually. "We were playing at the House Of Blues in L.A. Kiss came down, the Sex Pistols were all there. *Everybody* was there. Johnny Rotten's there, and I'm the only rock star Johnny Rotten doesn't hate. So we've got the snake, and it's the carnival show – the Alice Cooper Carnival Of Horrors. I've got all the roadies dressed in clown outfits, but they're really demented clowns. And I pick up the snake and everybody starts laughing! I'm going, 'Why are they laughing?' They're laughing because the snake's crapping *everywhere*. It's like a Great Dane got diarrhoea and went five times. It's all down the side of my clothes, in my hair. And it's so awful that it's gagging everybody. And then the clowns have come out to wipe it up... but they're gagging and throwing up. So I've got clowns vomiting. I got a snake crapping on the stage. And meanwhile Johnny Rotten's standing there going, 'This is the greatest thing I have ever seen in my life!'"

There was also the year Alice spent his entire festive period holed up in Los Angeles' Landmark Hotel, playing his part in what was surely the coolest Christmas party EVER.

"It wasn't a big hotel, it wasn't a fancy hotel. It was almost just an overnight place, but for some reason bands went and lived there. Jim Morrison lived there. Jimi Hendrix was staying there. Janice Joplin was staying there. We were there. And you had the G.I.s too. They were these insane groupie girls who'd taken over two of the apartments. The Girls Together. Outrageously, as they were known. They were crazy."

Alice's face fills with glee when we ask him why.

"Well, [notorious groupie and *I'm With The Band* author] Pamela Des Barres was one of them. Need I say

more? There were about seven of them in total... and they just kind of made the rounds... in all the rooms. You know? It was all great fun, but things did get really weird a few times. There's this big football game called the Rose Bowl – it's like the Super Bowl but on New Year's Day – and it was Ohio State against Southern California. For some reason they booked Ohio State's team into the hotel on the Friday. Now, these were the guys who were supposed to *destroy* Southern California, but by the time the GTOs got done with them they got completely annihilated in the game, like 49 to nothing or something. I don't think those guys had ever seen anything like it! So, that's the kind of stuff I remember about Christmas..."

With this in mind, there can be nobody better than Mr Alice Cooper to take on the role of NME's Bad Santa for 2011. He's got pillows stuffed up his jumper. He's wearing a pair of

plastic Santa boots. His belt's as big as a boa constrictor. And he's been thinking very, VERY

seriously about what presents his fellow musicians deserve for being mad, bad and super-nice over these past 12 months...

"I TOOK YVONNE THE SNAKE XMAS SHOPPING ONCE, IT WAS CHAOS"

Alice Cooper

LADY GAGA

Present: A BETTY CROCKER COOKBOOK, GOOD HOUSEKEEPING MAGAZINE AND A BIBLE

"I know Lady Gaga really well. I get her. And for Christmas I'd get her a Betty Crocker cookbook. That and a subscription to *Good Housekeeping* – because those are two things I know she doesn't have. Do I like her music? Well, she created a character named Gaga. I created a character called Alice Cooper that I play. I'm not Alice now, I'll be Alice tonight. She writes songs for her, I write songs for Alice. We're actually closer than Rob Zombie and I are. I think she's great. Maybe I'd also get her a Bible, actually..."

BONO

Present: A STAGE

"You know what Bono needs? A bigger stage. I mean, that current one is only half the size of a state in the US! And when you see the size of the stage that they have, I think the only ironic thing is to get him a bigger stage. Let's get him one twice that size."

PETE DOHERTY

Present: MONOPOLY

"Pete... Oh man, what does Pete Doherty need other than Alcoholics Anonymous? He needs a Get Out Of Jail Free Card, that's what. Although maybe he's already had a few; every time I come to London he's either just going in or just coming out of jail."

With that in mind, I'm gonna get him a Monopoly game but with all Get Out Of Jail Free cards!"

IAN BROWN

Present: A VESPA MOPED



"Do I know about The Stone Roses? Of course I do – they just reformed! And Ian got a ticket for going 100mph on his way to rehearsal? Then he didn't get banned? How can anybody get off on that? For that reason I'm getting him a Vespa that only goes about 20mph. I'd tell him to leave earlier to get to the gigs."

JUSTIN BIEBER

Present: LEGO



"I know Bieber. Nice kid. When I met him it was at the Grammy Awards. It was Katy Perry and I giving out an award, and he's back there and he's nervous. And I said, 'Justin, C'mere. What's wrong?' And he goes, 'I... I... I've never done this before! I've never done the MC thing.' So I said, 'Can you read? That's all you have to do, you just read!' He's a little kid, so what I'm gonna get him is some Lego. Then when he goes on tour he can have something to play with."

KASABIAN

Present: THE SMALL FACES' WARDROBE



"Ah, these guys. We almost got in a row with these guys one time. It was in Transylvania. We did a show, it was Alice and Marilyn Manson in Transylvania, and Kasabian were drunk in the bar there too. My bass player, Chuck Garric – whose mum and dad are both Hells Angels – is a tough, tough kid. One of the guys in Kasabian was mouthing off, like, 'Hey, Americans! You're all ruining the world!' and all this stuff. Chuck's going, 'Yeah, yeah, OK, we are, you're right', 'cos he knew the guy was drunk. But at some point the guy gets right in Chuck's face. Chuck looks like some insane boxer, and calm as anything, he just says, 'I give you one minute to get out of here...'. And it ended there! But saying that, they're a good band! I like them. They wear cool clothes, actually. I think the singer wore some of Steve Marriott's clothes onstage once didn't he? So how about we get them *all* of the Small Faces' old stage gear?"

GARY BARLOW

Present: MIRRORS. LOTS OF MIRRORS



"Actually, we gotta get all the guys from Take That a room full of mirrors, just so they can see themselves all the time. No matter where they turn, they see themselves. 'Yi! Look at me from that angle! Don't I look good there?' So yeah, a room full of mirrors for them, so they never have to not see themselves."

NME EXTRA

To win a signed copy of Alice's new album, *Welcome 2 My Nightmare*, go to NME.COM/extra, or see p10 for info

Plus, check out our track-by-track guide to *Welcome 2 My Nightmare* at NME.COM/blogs

THIS IS CARD

We got some arty musicians to take a break from touring, recording and counting reunion cash to design a festive card. Check out the gallery – then see below right to get your hands on them



RENI
THE STONE
ROSES

Reni: "The illustration is called 'Santo Mani', as it represents Mani's arrival in The Stone Roses. John Squire is pictured checking his watch as he and I had left lucrative careers in graphic art to join a band whose career had stalled. We were

competent but evolving musicians, but Mani was the first complete player to join, pushing us to the next level."

WIN! Reni's original artwork!
Head to NME.COM/extra
for details



RUBAN NIELSON
UNKNOWN MORTAL
ORCHESTRA

Ruba: "My design was inspired by my huge collection of old sci-fi novels. I've never read them. I'm always reading something more interesting.

like a book about junkies or Sly Stone. I don't believe Jesus is anything more than a metaphor for the movement of the sun, but Merry Christmas to all."



ELIAS BENDER
RØNNENFELT
ICEAGE

The text on Elias' card says "glædelig jul mand", which translated from Danish means "happy Christmas man/dude/bro". Elias told us he drew a skull "because they're cool", and his festive message to NME readers is: "May you all have wonderful Christmas filled with quality time with your loved ones and cute decorations, man. May it never end." Awesome.

CORE!

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE HORRORS



FARIS BADWAN THE HORRORS

Faris: "To all the readers of NME, wishing you elf and 'appiness from the 'orrors. Merry Christmas!"



SEASONS GREETINGS



MAX BLOOM YUCK

Max didn't want to chat about his card, the big Scrooge, but he let Yuck drummer Johnny Rogoff explain. "Five years in the making, it depicts the journey from naughty to very naughty and finally to somewhat nice before becoming very naughty again," he said. "Happy holidays. Remember, if you don't get someone a nice gift, they won't like you."



GRAHAM COXON

Graham: "Merry Xmas NME-ers! 'Ope you get noisy joy and good goosings from the bearded beast of the north. My design was made experimenting with an app... it's King Crimson-esque in a way except there's not much nostril tunnel... it is the face of a man who has seen Santa dressed in black!"



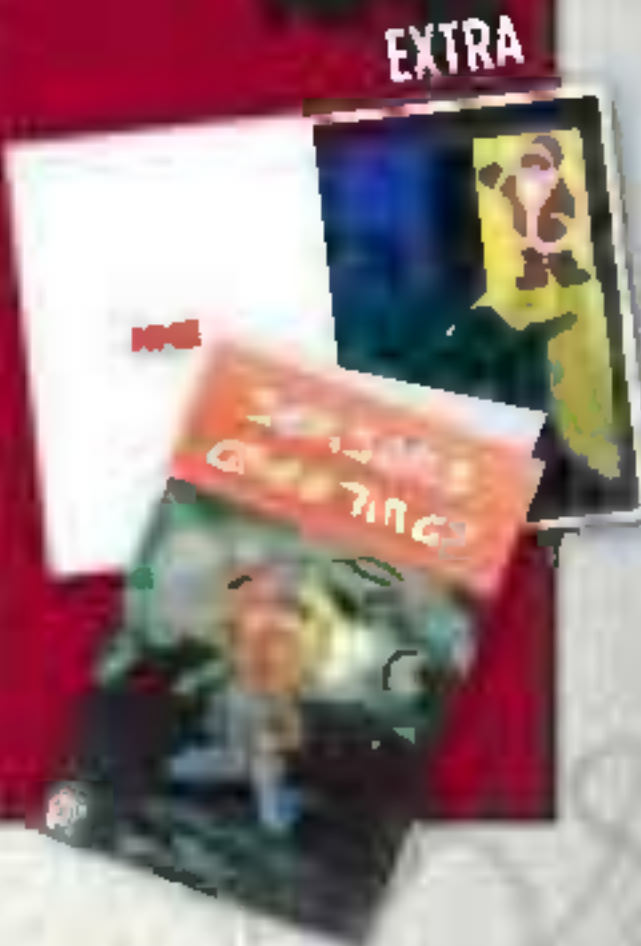
GIVE 'EM TO YOUR FRIENDS!

Download, print and spread some festive joy

STEP 1: Head to NME.COM/extra or scan the QR code below, then download the cards as jpegs. For info on QR codes, see page 10

STEP 2: Print out, fold in half and write a soppy message inside

STEP 3: Dish out the most awesome cards of the festive season to all your mates



NME PUB CHALLENGE

2011

Strap up your liver – it's time to get some indie types wasted and make them play silly games until they puke for our annual Christmas-time drinkathlon



The Line-Up



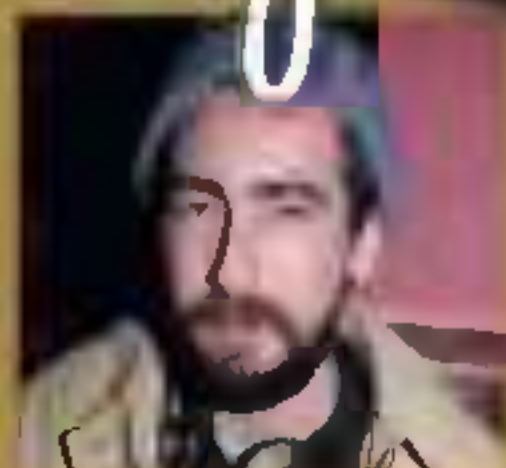
Carl Barat

Tipple: "Corona. Can I have two at once?" Will you win? "No idea. I've been on a 15-year pub challenge already. This lot look like the Groovy Gang from *Only Fools and Horses* (referring to a 1989 episode - Sitcom Ed)."



Rebecca Taylor
Slow Club

Tipple: "Vodka and soda." Will you win? "Someone with a vagina won last year [Kate Nash], so my odds must be good. My mum's told me to take it very steady and line my stomach."



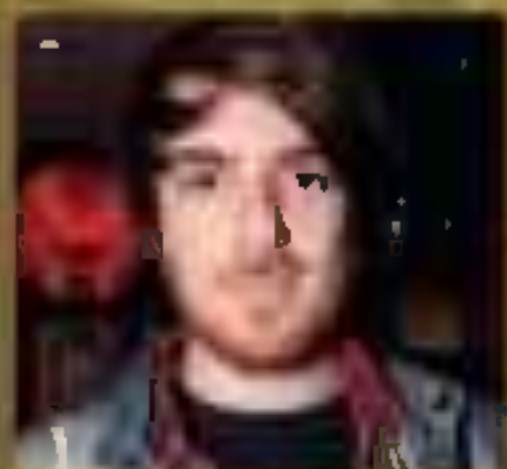
Charles Watson
Slow Club

Tipple: "A nice ale like Brewers Gold." Will you win? "I don't know, I haven't met anyone properly yet. I've not had any dinner either, so I might go and get some snacks first."



Kai Fish
Mystery Jets

Tipple: "Start on lager, move on to whisky." Are you going to win? "I was with a fortune teller last week and she said, 'You're going to go to a lot of pubs and win lots of things.' So, yes."



Tom Hudson
Pulled Apart By Horses

Tipple: "Light beers, then move on to dirty whisky." Will you win? "I'm going to drink this lot under the table. But then again, I've heard Carl's got an iron stomach..."



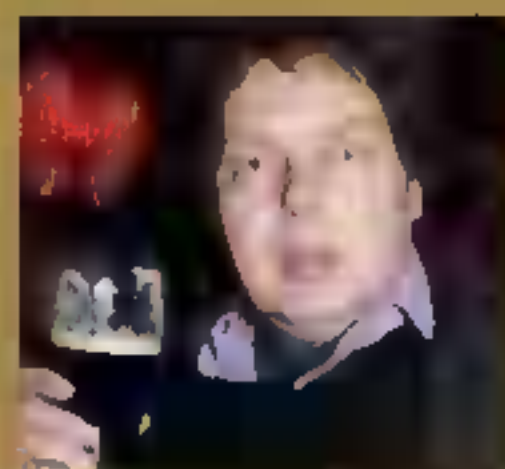
Alice Costelloe
Big Deal

Tipple: "Whisky!" Are you going to win? "It's the first time I've been on a pub crawl, period. So this is all a new thing to me. Can Big Deal form a team trio with Kai? No? OK."



Alice Costelloe
Big Deal

Tipple: "I'll have a vodka and Coke please." Will you win? "Of course I want to win tonight, I'm just not sure I will! But what I will say is that I'm pretty competitive."



Rich Fulcher
The Mighty Boosh

Tipple: "This pint, and then I'm off." Will you win? "No. My girlfriend's ill so I have to go home. Just wanted to show my face and apologise, really. Sorry."

This is a first: we haven't even started tonight's tour of booze-fuelled destruction and already we've got a dropout. Nothing unusual in that, you might think: the history of this chaotic NME festive tradition – taking inebriated rock stars around pubs playing drinking games until we find a winner/there's only one still standing – is littered with excuse-makers, quitters and lily-livered losers throwing the towel in. Well, this is different. This year's quitter has, er, actually shown up. Rich Fulcher, aka Bob Fossil from *The Mighty Boosh*, opts to deliver the news that he won't be taking part in person. He turns up at Camden's The Good Mixer, our start-off point, downs a pint, poses for a photo, and then beats a hasty retreat to look after his girlfriend, who's been taken ill. That's fair enough, to be honest.

However, we're not down a contestant for long. Paranoid that he's about to become the victim of a stitch up (oh, perish the thought), Carl Barat has brought along his 'wingman' Chris McCormack from defunct indie troupe Colours Red. "I remember doing this back in the '80s," the grizzled rocker grins as he wastes no time in plonking himself down in Rich's vacant chair as a (entirely unofficial) contestant. "Let's see what this lot are made of."

The answer being: mainly girl-boy cutesiness. If 2011's NME Pub Challenge will be remembered for anything, it's the fact that it's a timely representation of the epidemic of indie duos. There's two in our ranks: are they/aren't they cast London hipsters Big Deal (who apparently met when 18-year-old Alice Costelloe's mum hired 29-year-old KC Underwood as her daughter's guitar teacher) and Yorkshire's odd couple Slow Club (definitely aren't). Making up the eight alongside Carl and his tattoo-sporting booze brother Kai Fish, solo star and Mystery Jet, and Pulled Apart By Horses singer Tom Hudson, united by nothing more than the shared pressure of representing their respective bands in this infamous Christmas challenge.

Just like in *The Krypton Factor*, emerging victorious in tonight's games will involve great skill, knowledge, dexterity and raw physical prowess. However, unlike that great, long-running gameshow, it'll also involve some serious liver pickling. The rules are Dappy level simple: five points for downing a drink at the start of each round, plus a further five points for necking a shot within five seconds. There are also various points awarded for success in the evening's challenges, along with extra points at NME's discretion for clichéd rock'n'roll behaviour.

After a decidedly un-rock'n'roll 15-minute wait for Carl (no bonus points for that, lad) we're ready to kick off. Everyone takes a slug of their drink and a nervous glance around the table. Let the games begin.





The *NME* Libertines line-up is unveiled

Anyone else think Tom's enjoying this a little too much?

"It's a footballer who's also a twat. That narrows it down"

"That's for being mean about Dirty Pretty Things"



strays and uninvited wingmen get to know each other with a game of 'Who Am I?' – you know, the one where you have a celeb's name stuck on your forehead and have 20 'yes/no' questions to guess who it is, Kai (Rupert Murdoch), Rebecca (Bruce Forsyth) and Alice (Robert Pattinson) storm to victory, guessing theirs within a few



grip. Not that he's over-keen on showing the brute force that helped prop up the Libs during their Pete Dinko era. "I'm gonna get in shit for beating girls up," he declares before *NME* figuratively forces his hand and he agrees to join in. He breezes through his first round clash with Rebecca, thus getting a semi-final with Alice.

After a tense final, Carl emerges victorious. KC's cries of "I've got a tattoo of his own hand on his arm!" backfiring and inspiring his opponent to a hard fought victory. "I got a bit of a temper on when he said that," Carl frowns afterwards. "The red mist came down."

After loudly and bizarrely urging KC to "do it for vaginas", Rebecca's attentions momentarily turn to arses. Specifically, how her own will look when she's getting down to business on the Twister mat for the next physical challenge. "I want to look flexible and sexy, not flumpy and fat-arsed," she whines, insisting that *NME*'s snapper signs a hastily drawn up release form in our notepad before she'll join in. The document stipulates that we can't print any picture of her from behind – and thus the lens is inevitably pointed at her posterior throughout the round. To add to her discomfort, she ends up the filling in a Chris/Charles Yorkshire sandwich before finally

"I'm gonna get shit for arm-wrestling girls"
CARL BARAT

ROUND ONE: ICE-BREAKING

Bottoms up for the first downing challenge of the evening – a hurdle cleared with ease by everyone aside from Charles, who finds that knocking back a bottle of Corona is harder than it looks. In truth, he's already looking the 'man least likely to', especially given his admission that he's more accustomed to a pint of mild in a spit'n'sawdust northern boozer than the bright lights of Camden on a Tuesday night. Bandmate Rebecca, on the other hand, is in typically potty-mouthed form, shouting "vaginas" at every conceivable opportunity, for no apparent reason. Next to her, Alice has the quiet, steely determination of a true dark horse, while Carl is already pulling ranks on Kai, sending him to the bar to get tissues to mop up spilt booze. Suitably lubricated, it's time to help this gang of wiffs.

questions, but elsewhere the levels of stupidity are spectacular. Tom claims to have never heard of Andy Murray after a round of mindless queries. Carl fails to nail his namesake Carlos Tevez, while KC squeals "Who's A Deal?" when faced with the forename of everyone's favourite warbling gezerette, Adele. It means Kai, Rebecca, Alice and KC all start with a maximum of 20, Carl and Chris are behind on 15 and Tom and Charles are lagging already on 10.

Drinks drained, it's on to our next venue, The World's End – and the dreaded physical challenges.

ROUND TWO: PHYSICAL

Arm wrestling is the perfect way to test the mettle of our motley crew – and was chosen mainly after a tip-off that Carl's a demon when he gets an opponent in his icy

Kai just beats KC to the 'worst jumper' award

KC after Carl's mate bored him with stories about the '90s

By the way we forgot to clean the cup from last year

Rebecca looks away in horror as KC makes a bid for victory

We've sold this pic to the next round of anti-drinking ads

A time for heroes indeed - Carl triumphs

losing out on some much-needed points. With Kai off on a phone call, fixture B starts as a three-way face-off, Carl eventually claiming victory by deliberately knocking Chris and Alice over, insisting that cheating at a game designed principally for sex-starved teenagers constitutes the sort of rock'n'roll behaviour even Pete would balk at. We grudgingly agree, and share the points between Carl and Alice, meaning Carl steams ahead on 41, KC and Chris flank him with 34, Rebecca's on 31 and Kai, Tom and Charles are on 30. We stagger on.

ROUND THREE: KNOWLEDGE

What is now a bleary-eyed rabble heads across Camden High Street to tonight's third venue, The Dublin Castle. By this point the drinks are going down faster than we can order them – and a few of the gang look unable to remember their own names, let alone face the next challenge. 'Tens'. It sounds simple: you're given a topic, and you have to name 10 things that fall within it without hesitating. Rebecca stops gabbling about her crush on Alex Turner to name one solitary US band, while Charles fares little better, mumbling the names of two books. Tom barely manages to name one car. Only Kai manages to get a perfect 10, albeit by naming his own band's song titles.

KC, meanwhile, has been eyeing the bottle of Jägermeister left on our table by our accommodating hosts. Sensing he needs to pull something out of the bag to win, he declares he'll down as many shots of the stuff

as the trophy can hold in return for some bonus action. We agree on a point per shot. He necks eight in one go. The table erupts. But there's one man who isn't cheering: an agitated Carl, despite the fact that he's still ahead, on 58, with KC now on 51. Kai's liver is proving almost as leather-bound, seeing him third with 48, alongside Chris, then Alice (44), Tom (43), Rebecca (42) and Charles (32), who we're considering buying a lime and soda water.

KC
*necks eight
Jägermeisters.
The table
erupts*

ROUND FOUR: DEXTERITY

Well, where else could we finish up in Camden but The Hawley Arms? In the time it takes for the group to stagger there, Carl has come up with a solid gold plan for reversing the threat of a slide down the leaderboard – he's going to see KC's eight shots and... well, not raise it, but match it at least. While KC looks ready to pass out, Carl proves he's made of sterner stuff, barely flinching after gulping down the glop in one.

This, however, means he's unable to muster up any nimble-fingered dexterity for our final challenge. beer-mat flipping. Kai once again proves his drinking chops by coming out on top, albeit only managing two. His late charge has certainly put him in contention. But what about quietly determined Alice? Comatose KC? Er, quiet Charles? As Chris starts flinging bottles and spitting beer in NME's face in an attempt to win a challenge he was never officially involved in, we tot up the scores and deliver the verdict.

And the winner is... to literally no-one. Carl, with a total of 67. Second place on 52, Alice is third with 44 and Chris is only other to add to his score from the last round, ending fourth with KC on 43. We'd have accepted nothing less following The Libs' legendary years of excess – and neither would Carl, who delivers a less-than-gracious acceptance speech after receiving the hallowed trophy. "Unaccustomed as I am to public speaking, I see it only dutiful on this fortuitous occasion to mention one or two things that may have occurred to me on this night," he proclaims with such cut-glass eloquence that he must have prepared in front of a mirror before he headed out tonight. "To be honest I thought it was foolhardy to elect a bunch of pipe and slipper folklore heroes to hold up the head of English hedonism in the first place." Fr, quite. Dressing down duly noted, Rebecca, Charles, Tom, KC and Alice skulk off into the night, leaving Carl to lead Kai and a motley gang of mates to a lock-in to start the serious drinking. What a fucking waster, indeed.

Season's Bleatings

Festive chit-chat with the stars of 2011

JOHN LYDON

What's your plan this Christmas?
"Avoiding it. Avoiding Christmas TV, which is the worst thing ever, isn't it?"

Don't you have a Christmas wishlist? What's on it?
"A better pair of tweezers. I like magnified mirrors, the one I have is a bit under par as my eyesight's going – I'd like something times 60 and small, hand-held. And I love small torches. The reason I like these three things is I like to pull the snots out of my nose with the tweezers while holding a torch looking into the magnified mirror. I love doing it, since the lining in my nostrils collapsed years ago."

You've worn out a pair of tweezers doing it?
"I've worn out a pair of nostrils! Haha!"

What's the worst Christmas present you've ever been given?
"A neck scarf with a gold ring for men, from a set of aunts and uncles. Michael and Rita – family relatives. I love them very much, and Michael died recently. It was really more like a ladies' scarf, and it was really in the mould of cowboy wear. In the genre of the Milky Bar Kid, but with a camp angle on it."

What's the best present you've ever given anyone?
"A Christmas card in May. You can get them cheaper in the January sales and it takes a real long time for me to post anything. The PiL album coming out around then is just perfect!"

It should be a Christmas album
"It should! It started years and years and years back as kind of a joke, but many of my relatives were not amused with the late cards, or even the early cards."

What's the best New Year's Eve party you've been to?
"None really, I don't usually get invited. I'm a bit of a sourpuss about parties. I can never get used to a lot of people talking to me all at once. It fuddles my brain. That goes back to meningitis and that. It sends me into fits of nervous attacks and I don't like that."

You sink a few drinks over the festive period, though?
"Well, yes, we rented a small yacht once,



One man who won't be watching the Queen's speech

"Teaching young kids Monopoly is hilarious!"

out here in LA. That was seriously drunk. We drove out into the ocean for a couple of days and the boat had waterbeds on

it. If you can imagine a waterbed in the middle of the ocean on a yacht full of booze and a small group of lunatics, it was seriously wrong. Going back to the dock, the shaking! This was a good 20 years back, never forgot it because it's a good memory. It's like when I broke my ankle, that's a good memory because I hated school and it kept me out for a month. Fantastic!"

What's the true meaning of Xmas?
"The give and take of money. It could be a great thing if you've got a house full of little kids, then it's fantastic. Playing hide and seek or 'wreck

the kitchen'. Teaching young kids Monopoly is hilarious! You have to have the patience of a saint but it really is worth it."

Who'd be at your dream Christmas party? What would you get up to?
"Everyone would be in the room next door, I'd be on about 40 grams of amphetamine sulphate on the couch, watching TV with the door locked. I'm famous for it – don't do it now, you understand – but I love speeding out of my mind while not moving. I love that horizontal position on a comfy couch to watch 40 solid hours of TV."

Even though Christmas TV is infuriating?
"That's what I love America for, you've got the channels to escape that."

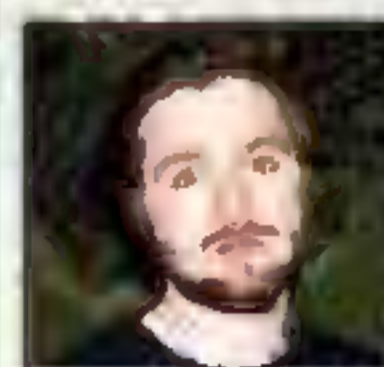
THEO HUTCHCRAFT HURTS



What's the best Christmas gift you've ever received?
"The best one was a skateboard for my 10th birthday."
We wouldn't have had you down as the skating type...
"Me and the 10-year-

old me are two very different people."
What's the weirdest thing you've been given by a fan?
"A bag of pig fat – we were in Ukraine and it's a delicacy there. A fan thought... well, that we'd want it."
Any New Year's resolutions?
"I don't know. I don't want to stop drinking and going out. Maybe just keep drinking? 'Don't stop drinking' – that's my resolution."

HAYDEN THORPE WILD BEASTS



What's been the weirdest moment of the year for you?
"We met a girl at a gig who had a tattoo of the 'Two Dancers' symbol, which is moving but also quite worrying, in a way. I mean I made that

album, I love that album, but I wouldn't want a tattoo of that album on myself."
What's on your Christmas wish list?
"An ice cream maker. I can see myself as a master ice cream maker."
Who would you like to meet under the mistletoe?
"I normally meet the other guys from the band under the mistletoe, share a little kiss..."

Katy

What's on your Christmas wishlist?
"I want to get presents to give to my friends and then they get mad with me. I'm buying a new car."
Do you still have your blowouts in those million-hit

What's the most embarrassing party you've been to?
"I don't sit at aunts' for the first time when I was 15. I was just in the middle of a song, I was singing up in my head naked with my hair tied back. I'd been sick."

When the credit crunch hit, you were on our list and the club closed down, they had to go to the end.



"Easy Please Me? Sucks it is then, Katy"

KOKO

PRESENTS



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Season's Bleatings

Festive chit-chat with the stars of 2011



"Don't buy me a fleece!" Justin's sticking with his stripey jumper

What's the weirdest thing a fan's bought you?

"It's not a strange thing, it's a nice thing, but I got a great gift the other day. A fan bought me some amazing presents, five or six of my favourite records on vinyl, a watch, a guitar strap which I'm currently using, all these nice photos..."

What's on your Christmas wishlist?

"I like buying people presents more 'cos you get to an age where people just get it wrong, don't you? I was thinking about doing an email, copying in my girlfriend, all my good friends and my family and putting a few dos and don'ts on there... if you don't want to waste your time and your money, don't buy me... a fleece... or something like that."

What's the best Christmas present you've received?

"Probably a PlayStation when I was about 11. My dad got it and I've since learned that he acquired it from questionable means... I think his mate got it cheaply i.e. off the back of a lorry. Obviously it doesn't make the gesture any smaller."

"It annoys me when I just get shower gel"

And the worst?

"It does annoy me when you get shower gel and you're just like, 'Why have you bothered?' You think 'I've got my hopes up, you've gone out and you've bought THAT. Why have you bothered?' So probably shower gel."

So that should go on the email list: no fleeces, no shower gel...

"Yeah! I get quite a lot of sports socks and considering I don't really play sports... Last year I got some white ankle socks - didn't really know why."

Maybe it's for encouragement?

"Yeah, it's a hint! In the same way that shower gel is a hint. Here's some sports

stuff and some stuff to clean yourself with - now go and sort your life out."

Do you have any New Year's resolutions?

"To be a better person. Probably clean more and play more sports."

Heroes and villains of the year?

"Berlusconi's probably both, isn't he?"

Who would be at your dream Christmas party and why?

"Noddy Holder, just so he could sing for us. I dunno, who else is there? Actually, just me and Noddy Holder."

And finally, who would you most like to meet under the mistletoe?

"Noddy Holder."

JUSTIN YOUNG

The Vaccines

What has been your highlight of the year, Justin?

"There's been a lot crammed into the year. I think Reading and Leeds. To come home, having had the start to the year we've had, and walk on - to feel that people cared. I just felt that we were really good that weekend and the crowd was really good. It just felt like things had come full circle, it felt good."

And the lowlight?

"Just having to cancel and cancel and cancel [because of throat problems].

You hear about bands who have been going for 10 years, who pride themselves on the fact that they've never cancelled a show - so the fact that we've had to cancel so many in one year, repeatedly in certain places, it's obviously... yeah, it's horrible."

Are you on the mend now?

"Yeah! I mean, it feels alright at the moment... I'm just trying to be more mindful of it, not getting in too many shouting matches and stuff. You can do more damage talking; all it takes is just an abrasive little 'Oi' and yeah... game over."

ALEX TRIMBLE Two Door Cinema Club



What's been your highlight of the year?

"I have this vague memory of one night in Byron Bay. Foals and us were playing a show in the same town two nights apart

and we were all at the afterparty; I left with Yannis and we ended up in the sea at four in the morning surrounded by sharks, which was one of the most freeing yet terrifying things ever." **Any New Year's resolutions?** "The big one is always to try and give up smoking. I've tried that for the past couple of years and it

used to only last a week at best and then... straight back to it. I just love a cigarette." **What's the best present that you've received from a fan?** "When we go over to Japan we always seem to get a lot of socks. The most important thing is your underwear. It's nice to put on a clean pair of socks."

JACK STEADMAN Bombay Bicycle Club



What are the best and worst Christmas presents you've had?

"The best was a Fender Jaguar guitar when I was 16. It's a very famous shoegaze, grunge guitar; My

Bloody Valentine used them. And the worst present is... I got a puzzle from a distant relative. A Brussels sprouts puzzle. It was very monotonous. It didn't have much to it, it was just a picture of Brussels sprouts."

What was the most embarrassing moment of 2011 for you?

"There's a well embarrassing story from Glastonbury when

I was walking around with my girlfriend and she was in fancy dress. This guy came over with a camera and was like, 'Oh, do you mind if I have a photo?' And I went, 'Yeah, of course, she can take it, just give her the camera'. And he was like, 'Well, I was asking her, I don't know who you are.' It was horrible."

Jonathan Pierce

The Drums

Jonathan! Are you looking forward to Christmas? "I'm not one to get into any kind of holiday, really. I don't even like my birthday, so I don't know what I should get. I don't like Christmas, but I like the day after Christmas, the day after that and see how long it takes before I catch pneumonia."

to be a year of no touring. And if I could lose about 15lbs I would be so happy. I haven't eaten anything today, and I'm going to try again tomorrow and the day after that and see how long it takes before I catch pneumonia."

Lose weight? Jonathan, there'll be nothing left of ya





Got it taped (l-r):
Felix, Sam, Rupert,
Orlando, Hugo

NEW YEAR EVOLUTION

Some people quit booze for New Year. Some hit the gym. **The Maccabees**, however, are launching a new album set to blast them to the big league. **Emily Mackay** dives into the ticker tape to hear the record's secrets

PHOTO: ED MILES

We're not very good with New Year's resolutions..." says Felix White. "I tried to stop smoking last year," offers his brother Hugo. "But that was before I started again."

Well, our plan to delve into The Maccabees' secret desires and crazy schemes for 2012 is going smashingly so far. It shouldn't have surprised us, really. They're not the kind of people to chase quick fixes or kid themselves. "I wouldn't like to think of it as a *resolution*," ventures singer Orlando Weeks, "but I like the idea that each year you get to start over. You should just make a decision that you're gonna have a go at trying to be more productive or whatever."

You just, in other words, get on with getting better. Which is what The Maccabees have been doing, and will still be doing next year. Their third album, out on January 9, sounds every bit as brilliant as we knew it would, and should be an even bigger game-change for them than 'Wall Of Arms'. No longer just indie darlings, from the start of 2012 The Maccabees are going to get on with becoming absolutely huge.

Their hard-earned and glorious triumph in 'Given To The Wild' is the product of the band breaking down their writing processes and branching further out than ever, only to arrive home at their true sound. "None of it really started as live songs," explains Felix. "We worked on bits and sent them back and forth. In the past we'd written in a group, in front of each other, and it was much more constricting. It was like, if we're gonna make this what we want it to be, we've got to let everyone have their say."

The band have also been venturing further into sampling, studio trickery and electronic textures (recording with DFA's Tim Goldsworthy) to craft an album that guides you from ambient plateaux through torrents of guitars and drums to summits of jaw-dropping beauty. "It felt exciting to make music where you weren't quite sure where it was gonna go," says Felix.

For next year, the band plan to stretch their legs into the US, Europe and — a new territory for them — Australia. "For the first time, this is a record that we really feel content with," says Felix. "We can play it live for a year or longer, take it round the world and collectively all feel happy doing that, and not feel as restless as we used to."

A world-crosser and a world-beater and a world all of its own, then. With the band's track by track guide, let's step out into '...The Wild'.

'GIVEN TO THE WILD' TRACK BY TRACK

GIVEN TO THE WILD INTRO/CHILD

Felix: "We wanted the intro to be that 'I Wanna Be Adored'-style zooming in to a record, setting the tone."

Orlando: "Being 'given to the wild', it's not a choice that you've made. It's something out of your control."

FEEL TO FOLLOW

Orlando: "A cab driver said to me, 'You never know it's too late until it's too late.' I tried to get it into songs over and over again, but it never felt right, until this one. He was a very deep cab driver. We had a real moment."

GLIMMER

Felix: "This is one of the softest songs on the record. It starts: 'With it all before you, how could it ever go wrong?'"

Orlando: "The title says it all. The glimmer at the end of the tunnel, really. Optimism."

AYLA

Sam: "We started this on the day you're meant to take down the Christmas tree, so for a time we called it 'Take Down The Christmas Tree'. There's a lot of programming, layered heaviness and a light, floaty vocal."

FOREVER I'VE KNOWN

Felix: "I decided I wanted to learn piano. I still only know three chords,

but even just D and G felt exciting. I was listening to 'Time Out Of Mind' by Dylan and I like that Daniel Lanois-type spooky, classic production."

HEAVE

Felix: "This has a string section, and it's mostly drumless."

Orlando: "It's about the most sparse thing on the album."

Hugo: "It's taken a few twists and turns. The vocal was redone while we were mixing the record."

PELICAN

Felix: "'Land was very keen on calling the record 'Pelican'..."

Orlando: "It conjures that idea of parenting, and the Christian Eucharist. You often see stained glass of a pelican parent feeding its offspring with its own blood. It's weird, everywhere I go

I see pelicans. Here's a make of fountain pen called Pelican, there's a briefcase called Pelican..."

WENT AWAY

Hugo: "This has ended up being one of the poppier ones. We'd been working on 'Unknow' and 'Heave' and it was like, these are... pieces. Scary pieces. This was a reaction, though not in a negative way. It really found its place on the album."

GO

Felix: "This has a lot of beats and loops against a live kit and huge guitars. I like the latest British Sea Power record and that big wall of guitar."

UNKNOWN

Felix: "Sam and I set ourselves the task of writing a song in one day. We had Philly cheesesteak sandwiches, then we wrote this song and called it 'Philly Cheesesteak'. We were trying to make it sound like LCD Soundsystem."

Sam: "It has a vocal by Catherine [Pockson] from The Alpines."

SLOWLY ONE

Orlando: "This was the first song that was written for the record. I found a way of delaying the guitar so that it meant I didn't have to play anything complicated (laughs), so I could record that and then work on it."

GREW UP AT MIDNIGHT

Hugo: "I'd written a song which was very different. We kept most of the original lyrics, but 'Land wrote a middle section that pulls it all together. It's about friends, really."

NME EXTRA

For exclusive hidden content, including the chance to win

a signed copy of 'Given To The Wild', go to NME.COM/extra. See page 13 for details.

To stream songs from the album, head to NME.COM/blogs



"FOR A TIME WE CALLED ONE SONG 'TAKE DOWN THE CHRISTMAS TREE'"

Sam

THE NME XMAS

Know your Wildhearts from your Wild Beasts? Get stuck into this lot and win a heap of Converse shoes



ROUND 1 20 QUESTIONS ABOUT 2011

- 1** The Horrors' 'Skying' is named after what?
- 2** Jarvis and The Strokes joined forces for a power-pop cover at this year's Reading Festival - but what song did they choose?
- 3** How much stock, to the nearest £25k, did Liam's Pretty Green store lose to looting during the Manchester riots?

4 The La's Lee Mavericks made his live return with the help of a former member of which defunct sub-Coral Scousers?

5 Lou Reed and Metallica's loopy collaboration 'Lulu' was inspired by the work of which German literary figure?

6 Which bass-slapping sock-lover did Damon Albarn start a band with in 2011?

7 How long was

Scarlet Pimpernel, Pete Doherty, sentenced to jail for this year? For a bonus point, how long he serve?

8 What country is Glasvegas' new drummer Jonna from?

9 How much did Insurers Lloyd's of London estimate the cancelled Kings Of Leon tour would cost them?

10 What fruit did Kasabian

announce would be the centrepiece of their Spinal Tap-ish stage set for their arena tour?

11 Alex Turner released a solo soundtrack for the film *Submarine* this year. Who directed it?

12 Which fashionable London slum did Wild Beasts say inspired the recording of their album 'Smoother'?

13 Which whispering nature guru did Björk say partially inspired her appy album 'Biophilia'?

14 How many versions of 'Watch The Throne' did Jay-Z and Kanye scrap before it was finally released?

15 To the nearest million, how much tax did Adele moan that she had to fork out on her income?

16 Bono blamed an "ice rink" stage for U2 dodgy Glasto showing. And what else?

17 Who replaced dead member Ol' Dirty Bastard in the Wu-Tang Clan at Glasto?

18 The Streets hung up their boots this year. But what's the name of Mike Skinner's new project? For a bonus

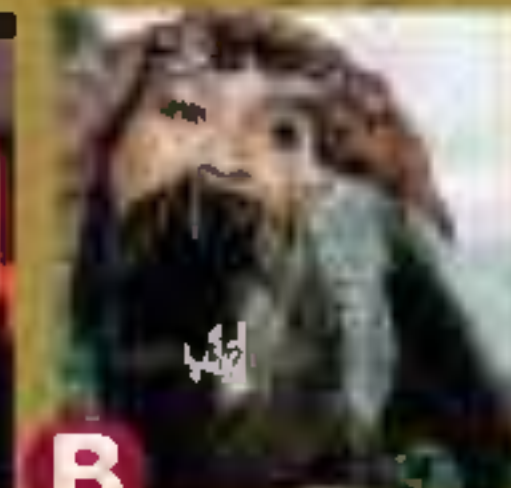
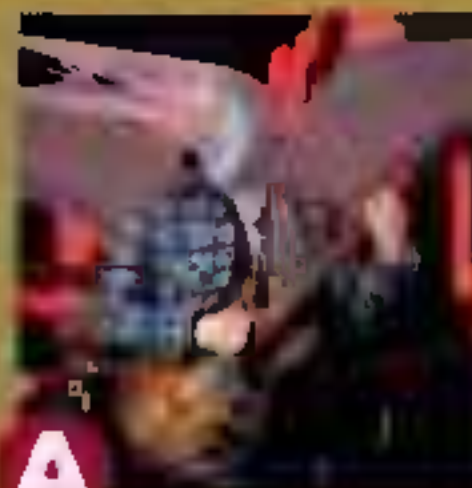
point, which indie nearly-man is it a collab with?

19 Apple's Steve Jobs died this year. But which '60s folk icon did he once date?

20 Which city were the band formerly known as Brother playing when they were served with a name-change writ live onstage?



ROUND 2 KASABIAN'S DINO SERGE-RY CHALLENGE



Serge has taken his dinosaur obsession to a new level - he's bred dinos with rock stars to make odd hybrid children. Can you guess the musicians whose genes he's pilfered?

AS QUIZ 2011



THE STONE ROSES



DFA 1979



THE DARKNESS



STEPS

ROUND 3 WE GET ALONG

IN 2011, THE BANDS OF YESTERYEAR BECAME THE STARS OF TOMORROW. MATCH UP THE ORIGINAL SPLIT REASON WITH EACH BAND. FOR BONUS POINTS, NAME THE YEARS THEY SPLIT.

SPLIT REASONS:

- Two of the members went solo, announcing this to the rest of the band in a letter, just minutes before a they were about to play a big show.
- The lead singer developed a coke habit that could be seen from space, checked into The Priory and then told the rest of the band he'd left via an interview in The Sun.
- The notoriously mardy fuckers only ever spoke to each other "before shows and during interviews" for a year before they finally decided to part.
- First the drummer left. Then the guitarist. Then the bassist and singer decided to dissolve the band after tunelessly lumbering through one of the worst festival sets ever.

ROUND 4 MISSING WORDS

FILL IN THE BLANKS ON THE TITLES OF THESE ALBUMS RELEASED IN 2011

- GO TELL FIRE TO THE _____
- NINE TYPES OF _____
- EUPHORIC /// _____ ///
- IN THE _____ OF YOUR LOVE
- AGAIN INTO _____
- THE FUTURE IS _____

ROUND 6 THE NOT ROUND

- Which, of the following is NOT a collaborator on Kate Bush's new album? Her 13-year-old son Elton John Stephen Frywg Elvis Costello
- Which of the following has NOT covered Lana Del Rey's 'Video Games'? Bombay Bicycle Club The Drums Kasabian Jamie Cullum
- Which of the following classic albums has NOT been played live, at least in 2011, this year?
 - Slayer - 'Reign In Blood'
 - The Stooges - 'Funhouse'
 - Primal Scream - 'Screamadelica'
 - Mercury Rev - 'Deserter's Songs'
- Which of the following did NOT die in 2011? Captain Beefheart Gerry Rafferty Bert Jansch Gil Scott-Heron
- Which of the following bands has NOT released a song called 'News Of The World'? The Jam The Screaming Trees Queen The Wildhearts

ROUND 5 METRONOMY'S DEVON QUIZLET

WITH THAT SHAGGY GINGER BEARD AND WONKY GRIN, JOE MOUNT IS THE EPITOME OF DEVONSHIRE CHIC. TO CELEBRATE HIM WRITING ONE OF THE RECORDS OF THE YEAR, WE'VE LET HIM SET A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT THE REAL ENGLISH RIVIERA.

- The (half) brain of which Devon-dwelling inventor now lies in the Science Museum? (Clue: his surname rhymes with 'cabbage')
- Two breeds of penguin, macaroni and African, can be spotted on the rocks at Torquay. True or false?
- The current world record for the largest rod-caught eel was set by Vic Evans fishing off Brixham in 1995. What was the weight of that slippery beast (the not Vic) to the nearest 10 pounds?
- In what year did Britpop also-rans Sleeper, Mansun and Silver Sun play at the Riviera Centre in Torquay?
- Europe's oldest purpose-built cinema (now sadly closed) stands in which town of the English Riviera? A) Torquay B) Paignton or C) Brixham



Joe... and the English Triviera

WIN LOADS OF SHOES!

GOT 44 POINTS OR MORE? YOU COULD WIN 10 PAIRS OF CONVERSE SHOES IN ALL KINDS OF STYLES AND COLOURS - SEND YOUR ANSWERS TO LETTERS@NME.COM WITH 'XMAS QUIZ' AS THE SUBJECT BY JANUARY 4 AND WE'LL PICK A WINNER AT RANDOM. INCLUDE YOUR SHOE SIZE! ANSWERS WILL APPEAR AT NME.COM/BLOGS AFTER JANUARY 4.





“...how much
we can
just
present
Christmas”

Anything but cold
Turkey (l-r): Mason,
Jason, Honor,
Mel, 'Crazy' Abe

'Tis the season to be wasted,
as *Cerebral Ballzy* show
how to have
the most fucked-up
Christmas ever

PHOTOS: [illegible]

Cerebral Ballzy are running late, as usual. The first *NME* learns of this is via their manager's Facebook feed "Is it possible to covertly inject five guys with a subcutaneous GPS tracking device?" he asks. We feel his pain. Three hours after schedule, they finally stumble into the grotty east London grotto – sorry, warehouse – that we've taken over and adorned with tinsel dicks and skateboard swings.

Honor Titus bounds in first, propped up by two worried-looking girls who sit at the back of our six-hour shoot, piss up and barely say a word. We wonder what Honor did to put them in such a state. "A threesome," he spits with a grin. Drummer 'Crazy' Abe Sanabria follows him in, barely able to open his eyes, while the rest of the band literally fall through the door a few seconds later. Bottles of beer, tequila and rum are opened, skins are ripped n' rolled and recent tour tales are regaled. The best of these concerns a fight Ballzy got into with another act in Leeds – no-one will say who – which came to a halt only when Honor decided to precision-launch a stray microphone stand "right into their singer's dick". This happened midway through the gig, apparently, and only serves to back up the claim we hear about this band time and time again: wherever Cerebral Ballzy go, chaos ensues.

"It has been a big year for us," Honor muses a little later. "We've been through a lot of partying, a lot of fights, a lot of fucking. Ups and downs. A lot of downers and uppers also. Next year? I wanna be in the charts. I'm serious. And I wanna support The Stone Roses."

**"IT HAS BEEN A BIG
YEAR: PARTYING,
FIGHTS, FUCKING"**

Honor Titus

Steady on tiger! The band's recent cover of 'I Wanna Be Adored' for Radio 1 was a serious statement of intent, Honor adds. And, as he soundtracks our afternoon with endless rare Beach Boys cuts and an indie-licious spate of Smiths and Roses classics, you can't help but take his word for it. "I'm saying this to you now – I'd totally love to support The Stone Roses. Nobody in New York City has really even heard of that band, but I love them. They're a band I look up to and, uh... well, they're a band that can draw a fucking quarter of a million people in 15 minutes, you know?"

Before all that can even be thought about, there's the important business of discussing exactly how fucked up the gnarliest, most stoned band on earth right now get on an average Christmas. "I like Christmas," Abe states defensively in response to *NME*'s question. "I like all the old women in my family coming around the house cooking and shit. Christmas is chill for me."

"My family think I'm off fighting in a war somewhere, man," guitarist Mason counters. "I haven't told them yet that I dropped out of military training camp..." This leads onto a conversation about what each of the Ballzy boys' nearest and dearest think of their escapades. Jason (guitar): "My family's supportive, even though obviously they keep reading things that put me in a bad light."

Mel (bass). "...Yeah, like the fact we snorted grease this year, that was pretty bad."

Honor: "No, man, that's not bad, that's just uncool! I just think we need to make it clear we're *not* a bunch of bacon snorters!" ▶

Honor was not
impressed by
this year's
Dr Who special



Coming soon to
the Web: Tony Hawk
Can F off, I'm
Honor F-ing Titus



Wheeler
and Emmy
The Great's
Xmas album
works its magic

NME: Will you be buying each other presents this year?
Honor: "We haven't bought anything 'cos we're too skint... I personally don't even care about Christmas. Do you care about Christmas?"

This is a lie. Ballzy love Christmas. It's just that their festivities are a little different to the rest of ours – and here's their guide to having the messiest Yuletide possible...

HAVE A FESCVIE FEUD

"Any excuse to get wrecked you need to take with both hands – I say from Christmas Eve to New Year's Eve, just make it one long thing where everyone gets wrecked for days on end" And so says Honor Titus.

"We usually just get drunk," Jason adds. "And I look forward to getting socks. This year I think I just want drug money, though." The band all nod in agreement, until Abe – his earlier "chill" comment having long since departed his mohawked head – remembers his favourite thing about Christmas. "Oh! The fights! There's always fights! I got really drunk on New Year's like five years ago and had five, maybe six fights in the one night. All with people I didn't even know. Well, actually that's a lie." How so? "Well, the last one was my best friend's father. I think I choked him on the sidewalk right in front of his house." Good times!

"I HAD SIX FIGHTS ON NEW YEAR'S EVE"

Jason Bannon

I feel like I need to make it clear that Nando's is the absolute best."

NME: Is this just a plug so you get one of those cards that gives you free food there?
Mel: [sheepishly] "Um... It pretty much entitles you to free Nando's forever, though! Seriously, you do not understand how important this is to us. And I am being honest – the closest thing to a Christmas dinner we're all gonna get this year is one of those meals."

NME: What's the most fucked up Christmas dinner you've ever had?

Mason: "One time I had what's known in America as a 'turducken' – a turkey, with a duck, with a chicken inside it. I have no idea how they make that shit, but it's all shoved in there. Only in America, dude..."

GIVE THE GIFT OF SEX

"My ideal present for somebody would be some weird shit from a Japanese sex shop," says Honor. "We toured there earlier this year and it was just fucking weird."

"We ended up being taken everywhere by minders," adds Abe. "The sex shops have these menus, like 'Men: pick size', and then 'small, medium, large'. I never worked out what the fuck it meant. Like, are

HIC UP NANDO'S

Mel: "We're actually having our Christmas meal at Nando's this year, the Ballzy one. Ballzy loves Nando's."

they talking about you, or what you're ordering...?"
Mel: "You could also give people dry fermented crabs from Japan. The kind you eat. They're like potato chips. And guess what? They're pretty fucking disgusting."

SWAP MISTLETOE FOR WEED

"Dude, I can't smoke anymore." These are words we never thought we'd hear from the Ballzy camp, but sure enough, Mason says he's been beaten. This is mainly because he's been trying to get our photographer to take a picture of "the perfect smoke ring" for the past half hour. "Weed is like a tradition in my house," Jason says. "It's a tradition for all the children of the family to get real stoned on Christmas Day. That's what I got from my brother last year – a fat bunch of weed. We grew up in California so..." He pauses. "...it's kind of like our mistletoe, actually."

...BUT DON'T GO TO JAIL

With all this debauchery, one thing you don't want to do is get banged up. As Ballzy well know. We'll let Mason take up the story...

"I went to jail for Christmas once, in Utah. Utah is a terrible place. They pulled me over for turning my blinker on in a car, and they found some weed on me. That was, like, December 23, and I called my mom and was like, 'Hey, I need you to come down here and post bail or I'm not gonna be home for Christmas Eve!'"

And? "And she just went, 'Well, it looks like you're not gonna be able to make it...'"

Game over. Merry Christmas one and all.

Season's Bleatings

Festive chit-chat with the stars of 2011

CHARLIE FINK

Noah & The Whale

So Charlie... what was your highlight of 2011?

"We played the Roundhouse in London on my birthday, and that was quite special. It was sort of a turning point for us; we could feel the reaction from the crowd responding to the third album. And there was a cake after the gig, too."

What was the low point?

"Well I don't know if you'd consider it a low point, but we were at Lollapalooza and went out to this restaurant. They'd been told we were an English band and it was booked under our manager's name, which is Chris. They treated us incredibly well – free drinks, free dessert – and then we found out afterwards it's because they thought we were Coldplay. So we didn't tell them the truth. We took the freebies and ran. But they took a bunch of photos with us and called Chris the next day to ask if they could put them up on their website, and he said, 'Just so you know, we're not actually Coldplay.'"

What's the weirdest thing that happened to you all year?

"The closing night of Ibiza Rocks was quite weird. There was a guy there wearing a luminous Borat-esque tankini, who also seemed to be with a five-year-old boy..."

What's the most embarrassing thing that's happened to you?

"My attitude towards everything is if I can get through it without total humiliation then it's a success. One time this year the rest of the band were on a train to Lincoln. Everyone was just reading their paper, quietly, until one girl just started screaming 'OH MY GOD YOU'RE NOAH & THE WHALE' at them. It's obviously flattering, but it's also a little embarrassing."

What's the best Christmas present you've ever received?

"When I was nine years old, I got a Sheffield Wednesday home kit with 'Fink 9' on the back. Football kits used to look so stylish. Now they look awful. I wore it everywhere; it's a shame it

"One year, I got my mum a copy of Hello mag"

doesn't fit now, because I'd still be wearing it."

And what's the worst present you've given someone else?

"Umm... I remember I bought my dad a fruitcake. I spent a fiver on it and I gave him the change. I was a broke musician, but I also forgot a little bit – I was living away from home and didn't know if I needed to get him a present or not. I got my mum a copy of Hello mag."

What are your New Year's resolutions for 2012?

"I think I may hold the record for visiting the broadest collection of cinemas around the world – I go to one in every town we stop in before a gig or a soundcheck. So I think I'm going to see if I can get the world record for the

most cinemas visited by one person."

What is the best New Year's Eve party you've ever been to?

"When I was about 16 – which is when all great things happen – I did that classic thing of going with about 15 friends to a country house. Every couple who went broke up at the party, one guy crashed his car, and there was some projectile vomiting, explosions and broken windows inbetween."

What's the best present you've ever received from a fan?

"Probably a hand-carved wooden seal. And someone's been requesting to paint me, which is quite strange – not as a life model. Someone threw a wallet onstage with their Twitter name written inside it and a £1 coin. I was paid a pound to follow them on Twitter, I guess."

Stop smirking Charlie, we know it's really just J20

FRANK TURNER



What's the weirdest thing that happened to you in 2011?

"I met a guy who has my face tattooed on his thigh..."

Did he just come up to you and pull his trousers down?

"That's exactly what

he did. He has a nice portrait of me on his thigh. Manners and etiquette hadn't prepared me for how to react to that."

What's the most messy New Year's Eve you've had?

"I once threw up off a balcony in Romford. It was over a busy high street which was full of people."

What's the true meaning of Xmas?

"To watch Star Wars repeats on telly."

XAVIER DE ROSNAY JUSTICE



What do you want for Christmas?

"We just want to have a good Christmas dinner and not feel sick after."

What's the worst present you've ever been given?

"My parents used to

give us the worst. One year they went to an exhibition and gave me the paper that they give you at the entrance..."

Who would you most like to meet under the mistletoe?

"What's mistletoe?"

It's a little leaf that you kiss someone under at Christmas...

"Oh, that's why Justin Bieber's album is called that. That makes sense. But I don't know..."

Robbie Jarvis The Big Pink

Any good Xmas party stories?

"Once I was in New York, I was about 18, and I counted down to New Year in Madonna's apartment. I don't even know how that happened, I don't remember that much."

Did you meet her?

"Yeah. We hung out and did that thing where you hold hands and dance round in a circle, and she was in the circle... Then we saw Grace Jones play."

Still traumatised by seeing Grace Jones naked

live in this club and she was naked!"

And what's the best present you've ever received from a fan?

"A wood etching of a portrait of me and Milo. Amazing."



REVIEWS

SMITH & BURROWS, GLEE

Edited by Emily Mackay



EMMY THE GREAT AND TIM WHEELER

THIS IS CHRISTMAS INFECTIOUS

The indie sweethearts' festive album should be as sickly as a Quality Street overdose, but it has ended up a geeky, gorgeous winter warmer



In 1853, Danish fairytale king Hans Christian Andersen wrote a short story called *Alt Paa Sin Rette Plads*. In it, our typically Andersen-ish pure-hearted goose girl heroine is tormented by a rakish aristocrat who cruelly flings her into the mud with the declaration that gives the story its title: "a place for everything, and everything in its place." In the end, though, this heartless cad's idea of a world placed and ordered according to wealth and nobility is subverted by (what else) a magic whistle, and the little goose girl ends up being the lady of the manor.

Unfortunately, in the real world, people who are pure of heart and good and kind and make

their living herding poultry generally end being shat upon by life, and no karma-flute ever comes along to make everything right. But Andersen got one thing right; there's a lot of validity in the idea that everyone eventually finds their own best context.

Take pop goose girl Emmy The Great, a doe-eyed creature so infuriatingly adorable that normally the sight or sound of her sends me into paroxysms of bitter rage and brings my cruellest instincts clawing to the fore. In a review of her debut album *First Love*, I seethed, "The warm blanket of Emmy's twinkly confessional soon starts feeling a bit wet, and by the lacklustre strums of the title track you're mentally slicing

through her strings with your punk-rock garden shears."

UNLESS! You put her in bobble hat and tinsel and fairy lights and team her up with her equally cartoonishly cute boyfriend, Ash's Tim Wheeler, for a Christmas album. Put your catechists away: once advent has begun, Emmy's most annoying traits, via the magic of Christmas, become boons. Yuletide, after all, is all about sugar and sentimentality, and Tim n Emmy drive headfirst into sweet-overload with a bouncy, power-pop, sleigh bell-shimmying cover of seasonal standard 'Marshmallow World'. If you're gonna do it, do it right, as a wise man once said, and his influence is also there on 'Snowflakes', a big Wham!-style key-spangled ballad, whose shiveringly emotive harmonies on the chorus fill you full of icy thrill.

It should be unbearable, but instead it's genuinely warming to hear something straight up fun and festive, revelling in sparkle and schmaltz without trying to shoehorn in some kind of 'darkness' in the belief that it makes them more artistically credible. There's enough darkness in the world already this year, and while you'd expect the likes of 'Christmas Day (I Wish I Was Surfing)', 'Jesus The Reindeer' and (sigh) 'Zombie Christmas' to be terrible, they're actually as nerdily, naffly lovable as watching repeats of *Spaced* in your pyjamas, Emmy's usual acoustic emotionalism tempered by Wheeler's shiny, bouncy riflage.

There are genuinely moving moments as well, where the couple's chemistry is used to great effect. 'Christmas Moon', a countrish, Roy Orbison slow-mo weepie, is as frostily pretty as you like and even when Emmy bleats "he's so meeeeee", you will not feel the slightest compulsion to stab your speakers full of holes.

'This Is Christmas' is effectively hate-proof, loved-up, entertaining stuff that strikes just the right balance of humour and heart-tugging. 'Don't Call Me Mrs Christmas' gives voice to Santa's aggrieved and abandoned wife, left alone on Christmas Eve while her husband brings happiness to others, and is doughty and Dolly Parton-ish in its sassy self-righteousness. 'Home For The Holidays', with its drum-machine shuffle and crisp sleigh bells, conjures that anything-is possible Christmas Eve feeling with its tale of teenage romance on the verge of being reignited ("I pass the corner and the cinema we used to go to... it feels like nothing's changed"), while 'Sleigh Me' earns that pun with a hopelessly romantic chorus. We'll worry about what to do with this pair for the other 11 months of the year later. For now, cynics, your goose is cooked. *Emily Mackay*

7

DOWNLOAD: 'Snowflakes', 'Sleigh Me', 'Don't Call Me Mrs Christmas'

THIS IS HARDCORE

what our numbers add up to

0 Not-even-funny bad	1 Barely one saving grace	2 Actively terrible	3 Woefully bad or lazy	4 Depressingly substandard	5 Dead-on average	6 Better than average	7 Really good	8 Exceptionally good	9 Of-the-year good	10 Of-the-decade good
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SMITH & BURROWS

FUNNY LOOKING ANGELS B-UNIQUE

Let's not blame Christmas for this kind of crap



Every family has its Christmas tradition. Round ours it's poring over the arrival of cringe-worthy Round Robin letters; last year one of my mum's school friends wrote of their "12ft

Christmas tree in the atrium" and the hardship of "replacing all 41 windows on the house".

The Christmas album can risk being a sonic Round Robin, of interest to few but its creators, dispossessed of all perspective as they've mired themselves deep in their cosy world. Editors' Tom Smith and Bob Lil's ex Andy Burrows' seasonal effort is the year's most egregious offender, a misanthropic that makes Editors' three albums look like good ideas.

The cr, best bits are Burrows' 'As The Snowflakes Fall' - Badly Drawn Boy trying to remember the lyrics to 'Fairytale Of New York' - and the stalling title track, in which Burrows intones, "It's in my pocket/You can have it if I got it". Is that a yule log or... just kill me now.

However, it's Smith's songs that hit hardest. "Goddamn this snow/Will I ever get where I wanna go?" he moos over a clonking old Joanna on 'When The Thames Froze', as if searching for existential succor on RAC Routefinder. After rhymes about the COLD making him feel OLD he exclaims: "Goddamn this government/Will they ever tell me where the money went?" Yeah man, politicians are well bad. 'This Ain't New Jersey' tries for REM's 'Nightswimming', but lands at a Chris Martin/Bono circlejerk, and is ostensibly about Smith and Edith having a barney over what film to watch on Christmas Eve.

I could go on, but now's a time for charity. This album is clearly meant to be a miserable foil to the season's gaudy cheer, but when Low's gloriously melancholy 'Christmas' exists and you can only produce an album that makes the sound of cattle lowing sound appealing, it's hardly worth writing home about. **Laura Snapes**

DOWNLOAD: Low's 'Just Like Christmas', The Long Blondes' 'Christmas Is Cancelled'

SHE & HIM

A VERY SHE & HIM CHRISTMAS MERGE



Christmas brings out the best in some: Scrooge, that pigeon woman in *Home Alone 2* and - yup - Zoëy Deschanel. A dreadful pleb in most movies (I'm looking at you, *(500) Days Of Summer*), give her a sprinkling of Elf powder and she transforms into a lovable seraph, giftwrapped by Santa himself. Alas, this coiled turd of a record undoes all that good work. Zoëy's breathy delivery sounds like a Sainsbury's ad, while M Ward grumbles on like the pissed-up uncle everyone hates. Feeling like a Grinch? Stick this in someone's stocking this holiday and watch their soul split in two. **Mike Williams**

DOWNLOAD: The Muppet Christmas Carol OST

GRUFF RHYS

ATHEIST XMAS TURNSTILE



There's something rather incongruous about Gruff Rhys turning his hand to a Christmas EP, like Damien Hirst proffering a simple sketch of a fruit bowl. Luckily, though, 'Atheist Xmas' avoids the dreary claptrap of other offenders. 'At The End Of The Line' recounts December 25 with a companion "diagnosed with manic depression", while there's little pulling of crackers in the nuclear-ravaged, Motown-tinged 'Post-Apocalyptic Christmas' as Gruff disconcertingly chirrups: "We lick our wounds to kill the hunger". We're guessing there's no roast turkey round those parts, then... **Ben Hewitt**

DOWNLOAD: 'Post-Apocalyptic Christmas'

THE RIDER

Santa, you have been told



Boxset
The Killing
- Series 1 and 2
The BAFTA-winning series isn't exactly cheery Xmas fare - it makes *EastEnders* look like *The Good Life* - but it compensates with some cracking Chrimble knitwear.



Book
House Of Cash: The Life, Legacy And Archives Of The Man In Black
Johnny Cash's son, John Carter Cash, digs into the family vaults for a book that promises previously unseen art, photos, poetry and stories.



Boots
The Clondyke
With its two-tone laces, padded ankle cuffs and three autumnal shades, Original Penguin's winter boot is perfect for stomping across roofs with a sackful of festive swag. And for stamping to the front at gigs.

JOSH T PEARSON

JOSH T PEARSON'S CHRISTMAS BONUS MUTE



Christmas is great an' all, but what's with the 'high spirits' and 'festive cheer'? Don't you just wanna take those chirpy carol singers and tell them that, actually, the world is a pretty harrowing and awful place and, just because it's December, that doesn't stop applying? Josh T Pearson knows what we're talking about, and to prove the point he's turned five Christmas staples into 20 minutes of dulcet-toned, minorly depressive, acoustic introversion. Hey, why change your shtick just because some fat dude in a red suit told you to? Good work Josh; glad to see somebody's thinking about the bigger picture here. **Lisa Wright**

DOWNLOAD: 'Silent Night'

SCOTT WEILAND

THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR WARNER



Even notorious Mafia-befriending, orgy-lovin' good-time racist Frank Sinatra sounded like a man you could send to your gran with a sherry on Christmas Eve once he'd crooned his way through the seasonal hits. Now, drug-addled former Stone Temple Pilot Scott Weiland attempts a similar dive for the present pile under the tree with this album of festive staples given a croon/jazz/massive-turd of a record. It does, however, have one wholesome use, as perfect listening in rehab centres that specialise in treating those who got into smack thanks to the Gen X influence of Weiland and his lank-haired chums. Pass the sprouts. **Luke Turner**

DOWNLOAD: Not under any circumstances

VARIOUS ARTISTS

FOR FOLK'S SAKE IT'S CHRISTMAS BANDCAMP



Many Christmas albums revel in the shiny sparkle and magic of the season, but you can rely on the beardies to evoke its sparer side; candles in small stone churches, snow on bony branches, warm hearths shored against the dark. From Caitlin Rose and Keegan DeWitt's plaintive country sleighbell strumalong, via Cocos Lovers' rawly recorded, mediocrally stark medley of 'Christmas Is Coming' and 'God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen', to Darren Hayman's snugly harmonised and graceful 'Lost In The Snow' and Kathryn Williams and Neil MacColl's sardonic 'Christmas In Hell', this is a mulled and measured marvel. **Duncan Gillespie**

DOWNLOAD: 'Christmas In Hell'

GLEE

THE CHRISTMAS ALBUM VOLUME 2 COLUMBIA



The first ever episode of *Glee* was undeniably great: well-written, smart, funny television that built up to the cast take on the phenomenon that was and still is 'Don't Stop Believin''. But it speaks volumes that the latter song is still - after two years - the show's signature. Since that first episode, it's been a steady stream of increasingly unappealing gunk, with this being superfluous egg number 3,203,674 in the *Glee* cake mix. I played this to a toddler, and he started crying instantly. It was, I believe, his way of saying: "I was into the early shit, but they've just sold out now, man." **Liam Cash**

DOWNLOAD: A partridge in a pear tree

LIVE

EXAMPLE, M83, PANDA BEAR

Edited by Emily Mackay



LITTLE DRAGON

THE ARCHES, GLASGOW WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30

The Swedes are an impressively eclectic outfit, but they're at their best when they keep it simple

Little Dragon have been together since their schooldays in Gothenburg and are now three albums into their career, but if you're aware of them, chances are it'll be through their various moonlighting assignments with their much more famous fans. Indeed, some of pop's most influential arbiters of taste – people like Gorillaz, Dave Sitek and SBTRKT – have called upon the Swedish experimentalists (emphasis on 'mentalists') to augment their work, but Little Dragon themselves have largely remained on the periphery of success.

There are good reasons for this. While you sense that if they really wanted to, Little Dragon could make an awesome outright R&B pop record,

the truth is they're only half-interested, at best, in doing that. Their other preoccupations are chilly electronica, sonic eclecticism, and a profound desire never to let anything sound too conventional. The paradox is that, in frontwoman Yukimi Nagano, they are possessed of a true star.

Emerging onto the stage as the elongated intro of 'When I Go Out' finally slips into gear, Nagano is a beguiling vision in Day Glo nail polish, and a much-needed visual countermeasure to the sight of four Swedish dudes hunched over their synthesisers. She's a natural hook on which the whole band hangs, and Little Dragon are always at their best when she has something to do. When she doesn't, the set is prone to long

electronic lulls and that, frankly, is a bit of a problem.

Still, let's focus on the positive. The likes of 'Ritual Union' and 'Nightlight' are taut, sexy and self-contained future-

trying to bake our noodle with long, semi-improvised electro-jams.

'Summertearz' is another example of this, though a few other tunes – 'My Step' and 'Precious', to name but two

– do feel like good ideas that were never quite made into great songs.

Journalists tend to characterise Little Dragon as a band who are still

evolving their 'sound'. Three albums in, it now seems more accurate to say that they're determined not to settle on one. Watching them can be a frustrating experience, but it can also be eye-opening. That's probably how they like it. *Barry Nicolson*

Watching them can be a frustrating experience, but it can also be eye-opening

pop, to which Nagano lends some subtle R&B undertones, with superb results. Ironically, Little Dragon are probably at their most interesting and out-there when they're messing around with the conventions of the humble pop song, rather than consciously

PANDA BEAR/SONIC BOOM

ELECTRIC BALLROOM, LONDON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1

Is Noah Lennox the grandfather of chillwave? That is what the cool kids are asking these days. And if so, is he effectively now a legacy act like Chuck Berry, touring up and down the country so that people can 'see where it all began'? He sets out tonight to play the whole of his 2011 effort 'Tomboy' in order, accompanied in this wanton act of casual-fan baiting by Spacemen 3 veteran Peter 'Sonic Boom' Kember, 'Tomboy's mixer, who stands scowling over racks of gizmos, a spiritual yin to the doughy hippy family-yang to his left.

The album in question met with muted response compared to Panda's 2007 solo breakout, but hearing it live reveals how much it gets under your skin, in part because of the drip-drip-drip of Panda releasing each track as a seven-inch single first – a working method which makes it read like the 'Thriller' of melted pop. Even the self-descriptively dour likes of 'Drone' work well in sequence, and the more melodically spry moments, like reggae-ish gibberish-poem 'Slow Motion' or the Moroder-ish 'Afterburner', positively light up. An encore rewards patience with hits: 'Comfy In Nautica' gives way to a 'Bros' that is cruelly interrupted when the sound cuts out at the apex of the celebrations. 'Tomboy' may not have been the legacy deal-sealer Panda was looking for, but tonight shows why he's still chillwaving, not childdrowning. *Gavin Haynes*

M83

HEAVEN, LONDON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1

A terrifying space-beast stands, alone, amid the blackness: a face blemished by a protruding snout and electric pink bug-eyes, its paws outstretched and a demonic grin painted onto its mug. Frankly, given it's the gig mascot of M83 – creators of the sumptuous 'Hurry Up, We're Dreaming' – it's positively nightmarish. No sweet dreams could be made of this.

It's not the darkest creatures of your sub-conscious that Anthony Gonzalez is summoning tonight at Heaven, though. Instead, it's a journey into the final frontier, right down from the woozy, moon-tread synths of 'Intro' to the star-studded guitar strap he's sporting. Under the gleam of garish, hyper-speed red and blue lights, 'Reunion' sounds like a cosmic re-imagining of *The Breakfast Club*.

Gonzalez still has the knack for conjuring up moments of simple pop brilliance; even the most mind-expanding of celestial adornments couldn't bolster his croon of "Send your dreams/Where nobody hides" on the gorgeously fragile 'Wait'. And, we'd wager, there's no finer way of signing off for the evening than the stonking sax solo of 'Midnight City', which honks triumphantly over the dizzying electro-shrills. Truly, M83 are no myths of the near future; whichever destination they boldly travel to next, it would be madness not climb aboard with them. *Ben Hewitt*

FIELD MUSIC

KOKO, LONDON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30

Today marks canny timing for Field Music to unveil songs from fourth album 'Plumb'. Public sector workers are on strike against government cuts, something that Sunderland brothers Peter and David Brewis are very familiar with – their previous three albums were recorded in the local community centre (which also spawned the likes of *The Futureheads*), recently forced to close after having its funding slashed. They built a studio to record their new album, into whose opening triple salvo they launch tonight with unapologetic stridence.

'Start The Day Right' opens with elegant violins, a red herring before typically atypical, wonky funk grates against glam piano arpeggios as Peter questions, "I was sure I was dreaming/Or was I just tired?". It flips into the tattoo drums and low grind of 'It's Okay To Change', before the Jethro Tull-ish 'Sorry Again, Mate' swaggers in. It's chaotic, and more like watching weird theatre than a gig.

"We were gonna go on strike today as well!" he jokes afterwards. Thank goodness they didn't – 'A New Town', another new cut, deals with the worry that then escapes "now the day is done" on the bendy 'Who'll Pay The Bills?'. Closing song '(I Keep Thinking About) A New Thing' sounds brilliantly like the Foo Fighters reinvented as an angular artrock band, rooted around weightier chords, the perfect tool to hammer in the song's timely message: "Narratives are so familiar..." *Laura Snapes*

My BEST GIG



Caroline Polachek, Chairlift

"The one that comes to mind is seeing PJ Harvey in Denver, Colorado, in 2004. I was 19. That was on the 'Uh Huh Her' tour, and I just remember being so completely in awe and entranced by her, how raw, emotional and vulnerable she was. I think I cried three times during that show!"



EXAMPLE

O2 APOLLO, MANCHESTER THURSDAY, DEC 1

The gobby Fulham rapper has the talk and the tunes – but is he missing that star quality?

After being hailed as the new straight-talking mighty mouth of pop – thanks to dissing pretty much anyone who has swung by the Top 40 – Example's confidence is at an all-time high. Tearing into 'Skies Don't Lie', the chart rapper is bouncing like a wind-up Tigger. 'See The Sea' comes next, a more energetic live version of the low paced commentary, drawing on a booming bassline for its reggae-infused components. "You won't like me when I'm angry, now I'm close to limit" he insists, like the Hulk's pop star brother.

Luckily, Example's biceps remain under wraps and, when 'Won't Go Quietly' begins, so does some kind of audience interaction – the crowd a pick'n'mix of Mancunian allsorts; from the dads who lap up the atmosphere like it's 1987, to young girls in impossibly tall prototype PVC footwear. The crowds are ready to rave, but there's a transmission problem; while the front section are lapping up the frantic spotlight action in the standing area, private parties are going on elsewhere in the two-tier, half-seated venue just to keep the entertainment going.

On the slowed-down, almost dream-rock territory of 'Playing In The Shadows', Example finds a comfort zone so cosy that he even jokes about the

first half of his set being wack – at least, to those that can hear him. "Now we've got the crap out of the way, we can get to the good bits," he laughs. On the song's breakbeat climax, he insists on knowing "Where all the fucking lunatics at" and trying to demand the formation of a circle pit. In those heels though, the odds are stacked against commercial hip-hop.

Crowd-killer 'Kickstarts' drops before an encore of 'Stay Awake', which secures the night for most. While Example won't win any sceptics with gigs like tonight's, he does have more to say than his peers and he's got the balls to do it publicly. But he needs to connect better with the people who do have faith, and learn to work the room like seasoned performer. *Kelly Murray*

BIG MOUTH

What the punters thought



Ged Doyle, Manchester

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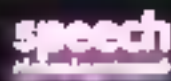
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www.xtramilerrecordings.com



SJM CONCERTS, LIVE NATION & PCL BY ARRANGEMENT WITH PRIMARY TALENT INTERNATIONAL PRESENT



NOAH & THE WHALE

MARCH 2012

TUESDAY	20	EDINBURGH HMV PICTURE HOUSE	0844 847 2487
WEDNESDAY	21	NEWCASTLE O2 ACADEMY	SOLD OUT
THURSDAY	22	SHEFFIELD O2 ACADEMY	0844 477 2000
SATURDAY	24	YORK BARRICAN	SOLD OUT
SUNDAY	25	PORTSMOUTH GUILDHALL	023 9282 4355
MONDAY	26	SOUTHEND CLIFFS PAVILION	01702 351 135
WEDNESDAY	28	PLYMOUTH PAVILION	0845 146 1460
THURSDAY	29	WOLVERHAMPTON CIVIC HALL	0870 320 7000
FRIDAY	30	MANCHESTER O2 APOLLO	0844 477 7677

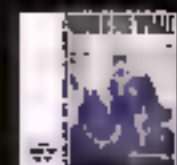
APRIL 2012

MONDAY	16	LONDON ROYAL ALBERT HALL	SOLD OUT
TUESDAY	17	LONDON O2 SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE	0844 477 2000

BUY ONLINE AT: GIGSANDTOURS.COM / LIVENATION.CO.UK / SEETICKETS.COM

NEW ALBUM 'LAST NIGHT ON EARTH' OUT NOW NOAHANDTHEWHALE.COM

PHOTO: TOM OLHAM



SJM CONCERTS & LIVE NATION BY ARRANGEMENT WITH WME PRESENTS

WME



SECOND REALITY TOUR

MARCH

8 TH	NEWCASTLE O2 ACADEMY	0844 477 2000	18 TH	BIRMINGHAM HMV INSTITUTE	0844 248 5037
9 TH	LEEDS O2 ACADEMY	0844 477 2000	19 TH	GLASGOW O2 ABC	0844 499 5990
10 TH	LIVERPOOL UNIVERSITY	0844 477 2000	21 ST	DUBLIN O2 ACADEMY	0870 243 4455
13 TH	BRISTOL MOTION	0844 811 0051	22 ND	CARDIFF UNIVERSITY GREAT HALL	029 2078 1458
15 TH	LEICESTER O2 ACADEMY	0844 477 2000	23 RD	NORWICH UEA	SOLD OUT
16 TH	MANCHESTER ACADEMY	0161 832 1111	24 TH	LONDON BRIXTON O2 ACADEMY	0844 477 2000
17 TH	SOUTHAMPTON GUILDHALL	023 8063 2601			

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ADULTS ONLY. NO CHILDREN. BY ARRANGEMENT WITH THE AGENTS

THE ANTLERS

PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS

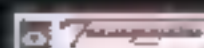


THURSDAY 26 APRIL
LONDON O₂ SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE

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www.antlersmusic.com

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GROUPLOVE



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- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 16 BRIGHTON THE HAUNT | 24 LIVERPOOL MOJO |
| 17 YORK FIBBERS | 25 MIDDLESBROUGH EMPIRE |
| 18 SHEFFIELD THE LEADMILL | (METROPOLIS CLUB NIGHT) |
| 19 MANCHESTER RUBY LOUNGE | 26 BIRMINGHAM O ₂ BAR ACADEMY |
| 21 GLASGOW KING TUTS | 28 LONDON THE GARAGE |

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A Live Nation & S&M Concerts presentation in association with WML

metropolis music present

Rizzle Kicks

APRIL 2012

- | | | |
|--------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| THU 26 | LEAMINGTON SPA ASSEMBLY | 0844 854 1358 |
| FRI 27 | CARDIFF UNIVERSITY | 029 2078 1458 |
| SAT 28 | LIVERPOOL O ₂ ACADEMY | 0844 477 2000 |
| SUN 29 | BRIGHTON DOME | 01273 709 709 |

MAY 2012

- | | | |
|--------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| TUE 01 | SOUTHEND CLIFFS PAVILION | 01702 351 135 |
| WED 02 | BOURNEMOUTH O ₂ ACADEMY | 0844 477 2000 |
| THU 03 | EXETER LEMON GROVE | SOLD OUT |
| FRI 04 | LEICESTER O ₂ ACADEMY | 0844 477 2000 |
| SUN 06 | LINCOLN ENGINE SHED | 0844 888 8766 |
| MON 07 | FOLKESTONE LEAS CLIFF HALL | 0844 847 1776 |

0844 847 1776 | 0844 811 0051 | GIGSANDTOURS.COM | ARTISTTICKET.COM

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M83

Plus guests PORCELAIN RAFT

January

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|---|
| 17 | BRISTOL TRINITY | 0845 413 4444 |
| 18 | MANCHESTER RITZ | 0161 832 1111 |
| 19 | GLASGOW ARCHES | CHANGE OF VENUE
ORIGINAL TICKET IS STILL VALID |
| 20 | LEEDS STYLUS | 0113 245 4650 |
| 21 | BIRMINGHAM
HMV INSTITUTE | 0844 248 5037 |
| 22 | BRIGHTON
CONCORDE 2 | |
| 24 | OXFORD O ₂ ACADEMY | 0844 477 2000 |

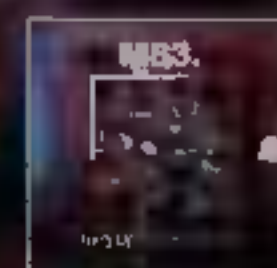
February

- | | |
|----|---|
| 16 | LONDON
O ₂ SHEPHERDS
BUSH EMPIRE |
|----|---|

24 hour ticket hotline: 0844 811 0051 or book online: gigsandtours.com

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LONDON LEXINGTON
020 7403 3331

SLOW CLUB
PLUS GUESTS
THURSDAY 9 FEBRUARY
LONDON HEAVEN
0844 847 2351

THE BLACK KEYS
PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS
SATURDAY 11 FEBRUARY
ALEXANDRA PALACE
020 7403 3331

PURE LOVE
PLUS GUESTS
TUESDAY 14 FEBRUARY
LONDON BUSH HALL
020 7403 3331

BAND OF SKULLS
DALE EARNHARDT JR JR
WEDNESDAY 15 FEBRUARY
LONDON XOYO
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PLUS GUESTS
WEDNESDAY 15 FEBRUARY
O2 SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE
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WILLY MOON
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PLUS GUESTS
FRIDAY 17 FEBRUARY
LONDON ELECTRIC BALLROOM
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THE BIG PINK
MOZART PARTIES
MONDAY 20 FEBRUARY
LONDON GARAGE
0844 847 1678

KURT VILE
SONIC BOOM
TUESDAY 21 FEBRUARY
LONDON KOKO
0844 847 2258

ALABAMA SHAKES
JESSIE WARE
WEDNESDAY 22 FEBRUARY
LONDON BOSTON ARMS
SOLD OUT

THE JEZABELS
PLUS GUESTS
WEDNESDAY 22 FEBRUARY
LONDON KOKO
0844 847 2258

Oh Land
PLUS GUESTS
THURSDAY 23 FEBRUARY
LONDON HEAVEN
0844 847 2351

Little Dragon
PLUS GUESTS
FRIDAY 24 FEBRUARY
LONDON HMV FORUM
0844 847 2405
IN ASSOCIATION WITH DEAN FIDLER

S.C.U.M
PLUS GUESTS
FRIDAY 24 FEBRUARY
LONDON BUSH HALL
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AND THE DIAMONDS**
PLUS GUESTS
SUNDAY 26 FEBRUARY
O2 SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE
0844 477 2000

the **DRUMS**
PLUS GUESTS
MONDAY 27 FEBRUARY
LONDON ROUNDHOUSE
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THE CRIBS
PLUS GUESTS
TUESDAY 28 FEBRUARY
LONDON ULU
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MASTODON



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MONDAY 06 FEBRUARY
MANCHESTER ACADEMY
0161 832 1111

TUESDAY 07 FEBRUARY
GLASGOW BARROWLAND
0844 498 9890

THURSDAY 09 FEBRUARY
NORWICH UEA
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FRIDAY 10 FEBRUARY
BIRMINGHAM HMV INSTITUTE
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SATURDAY 11 FEBRUARY
LONDON O₂ ACADEMY BRIXTON
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10 MANCHESTER
HMV RITZ
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11 GLASGOW O₂ ABC
0844 499 9000

16 LONDON HMV FORUM
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arrangement with primary talent international

BAND OF SKULLS

PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS
BROKEN HANDS



FEBRUARY

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SAT	18	LEEDS UNIVERSITY STYLUS	0113 245 5570
SUN	19	STOKE SUGARMILL	0115 945 4593
TUE	21	GLASGOW ARCHES	0141 565 1000
WED	22	ABERDEEN LEMON TREE	0122 46 1122
THU	23	INVERNESS IRONWORKS	0871 789 4173
SAT	25	BEI FAST TIMEIGHT	02890 327 007
MON	27	LEICESTER ACADEMY 2	0844 477 2000
TUE	29	NORWICH WATERLOO 1	0160 350 8050

MARCH

THU	01	OXFORD ACADEMY	0844 477 2000
FRI	02	WOLVERHAMPTON WULFRUN HALL	0870 320 7000
SUN	04	EXETER PHOENIX	013 245 7080
MON	05	BRIGHTON CONCORDE 2	0844 871 8803
TUE	06	LONDON ROUNDHOUSE	0870 182 8008

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FRI 10	LEEDS CITY VARIETIES	01132 430 808
SAT 11	LIVERPOOL O ₂ ACADEMY	0844 477 2000
SUN 12	MILTON KEYNES STABLES	01908 280 800
TUE 14	GATESHEAD THE SAGE	0844 477 1000
WED 15	LEAMINGTON SPA ASSEMBLY	0844 854 1358
FRI 17	FROME CHEESE & GRAIN	01373 455 420
SAT 18	LONDON SHEPHERD'S BUSH EMPIRE	0844 477 2000
MON 20	BUXTON OPERA HOUSE FESTIVAL	0845 127 2190

ticketweb.co.uk / 0844 477 1000 / seeickets.com / 0871 2200 260
stargreen.co.uk / 020 7734 8932 / ticketmaster.co.uk / 0870 534 4444

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ACROSS 3 ROOMS!!!

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12 DIRTY BULLETS

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DJ ED WILDER
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9.30pm - 4am FIRST 100 FREE ENTRY
£5 before 11pm £7 after
Students (with card) £2 b4 10:30pm £4 b4 12pm

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NYE BALL £12.50 adv **31 DEC**
DOG IS DEAD + ICONA POP

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JESUS JONES

plus special guest
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plus very special guests
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JOSIE LONG + THE PICTISH TRAIL
UNION CHAPEL Wednesday 21 December

TOY

SPECIAL GUESTS
SHACKLEWELL ARMS
18, 25 January, 1, 10 February

CASIOKIDS

SPECIAL GUESTS
CARGO Tuesday 24 January

THE DØ

SPECIAL GUESTS
BUSH HALL Thursday 26 January

THE UNSPEAKABLE
**CHILLY
GONZALES**

SOHO THEATRE 25-28 January, 1-4 February

**KING CREOSOTE
& JON HOPKINS**

SPECIAL GUESTS
O₂ SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE
Thursday 2 February

ERRORS

REMEMBER REMEMBER
XOYO Thursday 16 February

LONEY DEAR

SPECIAL GUESTS
BUSH HALL Monday 20 February

BAXTER DURY

SPECIAL GUESTS
XOYO Thursday 23 February

GOTYE

SPECIAL GUESTS
O₂ SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE
Wednesday 29 February

SBTRKT

SPECIAL GUESTS
KOKO Thursday 1 March

SPECTOR

SPECIAL GUESTS
100 CLUB Thursday 1 March

ANDREW BIRD

SPECIAL GUESTS
BARBICAN HALL Monday 5 March

YOUTH LAGOON

PATTERNS
ELECTROWERKZ Tuesday 6 March

**FLORENCE
& THE
MACHINE**

THE HORRORS ^{SOLD OUT} SPECIAL GUESTS
ALEXANDRA PALACE 8, 9, 10 March

**SUMMER
CAMP**

SPECIAL GUESTS
SCALA Wednesday 21 March

SHEARWATER

SPECIAL GUESTS
SCALA Tuesday 3 April

DARK DARK DARK

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ANDREW BIRD
BAXTER DURY
BEIRUT
COM TRUISE
ERRORS
FENNESZ
FRANZ FERDINAND
GOLD PANDA
HERE WE GO MAGIC
HUDSON MOHAWKE ^{LIVE}
JEFFREY LEWIS
& THE JUNKYARD
JULIO BASHMORE
METRONOMY
MAYA JANE COLES
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PEAKING LIGHTS
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02-06-12

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FEB 10TH MANCHESTER - ISLINGTON MILL
FEB 11TH LIVERPOOL - KAZIMER
FEB 12TH BIRMINGHAM - THE RAINBOW
FEB 13TH CARDIFF - CLWB IFOR BACH
FEB 14TH BRISTOL - FLEECE
FEB 15TH BRIGHTON - THE HAUNT
FEB 16TH LONDON - XOYO
FEB 17TH LEEDS - COCKPIT 2
FEB 18TH DUBLIN - GRAND SOCIAL
FEB 24TH DUNDEE - DOGHOUSE
FEB 25TH ABERDEEN - THE LEMON TREE
MAY 11TH GLASGOW - THE ARCHES

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NEW ALBUM
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RELEASED 30TH JANUARY 2012



DHP & friends by arrangement with CAA presents



dog is dead

2011
SATURDAY 17 DECEMBER
ROCK CITY, NOTTINGHAM

2012

NORWICH ARTS CENTRE 18 FEB	02 MAR ULLAPOOL THE ARCH
OXFORD O2 ACADEMY2 19 FEB	03 MAR STORNOWAY WLANDS CENTRE
BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY3 20 FEB	04 MAR AVIEMORE OLD BRIDGE INN
BRISTOL THEKLA 21 FEB	06 MAR GLASGOW KING TUTS
LEICESTER O2 ACADEMY2 23 FEB	07 MAR EDINBURGH ELECTRIC CIRCUS
STOKE SUGARMILL 24 FEB	10 MAR LANCASTER LIBRARY
HULL FRUIT 25 FEB	11 MAR SHEFFIELD PLUG
LEEDS COCKPIT 26 FEB	13 MAR MANCHESTER DEAF INSTITUTE
NEWCASTLE RIVERSIDE 27 FEB	14 MAR BRIGHTON KOMEDIA
ABERDEEN CAFÉ DRUMMONDS 29 FEB	16 MAR SOUTHAMPTON JOINERS
INVERNESS HOOTANANAYS 01 MAR	17 MAR CARDIFF ARTS INSTITUTE

TICKETS ON SALE 9AM WEDNESDAY 14 DECEMBER

WWW.ALT-TICKETS.CO.UK

FOR A FREE EP VISIT WWW.DOGISDEAD.CO.UK



TO KILL A KING

FEBRUARY

23 OXFORD, BULLINGDON alt-tickets.co.uk

24 LIVERPOOL, SHIPPING FORECAST ticketweb.co.uk

25 NOTTINGHAM, BODEGA alt-tickets.co.uk

27 MANCHESTER, THE DEAF INSTITUTE alt-tickets.co.uk

28 NEWCASTLE, O2 ACADEMY2 ticketweb.co.uk

29 LEEDS, BRUDENELL SOCIAL CLUB jumborecords.co.uk

MARCH

01 WOLVERHAMPTON, SLADE ROOMS wolvescivic.co.uk

03 SOUTHAMPTON, JOINERS joinerslive.co.uk

04 BRIGHTON, PRINCE ALBERT seeetickets.com

05 BRISTOL, COOLER alt-tickets.co.uk



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WILD FLAG

JANUARY 2012
27 THEKLA, BRISTOL
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28 RESCUE ROOMS
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29 THE COCKPIT
LEEDS
lunatickets.co.uk

30 ORAN MOR, GLASGOW
pcipresents.com

31 SOUND CONTROL
MANCHESTER
alt-tickets.co.uk

FEBRUARY 2012

01 ELECTRIC BALLROOM
LONDON
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3m/WILDFLAG • Album 'Wild Flag' out now
A DHP, PCL and Futuresound Events presentation in association with Art & Industry



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3rd June NOTTINGHAM
4th June MANCHESTER

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29 Feb Komedia BRIGHTON
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special guest

Daniel Simonsen



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EMPIRE
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THURSDAY 03 MAY
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KASBAH
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LIQUID ROOMS
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TUESDAY 08 MAY
MANCHESTER
HMV RITZ
GIGSAMOTOURS.COM / 0843 221 0575
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THURSDAY 10 MAY
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25-27 May 2012

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Mogwai (Saturday)

The Afghan Whigs (Sunday)

Archers of Loaf

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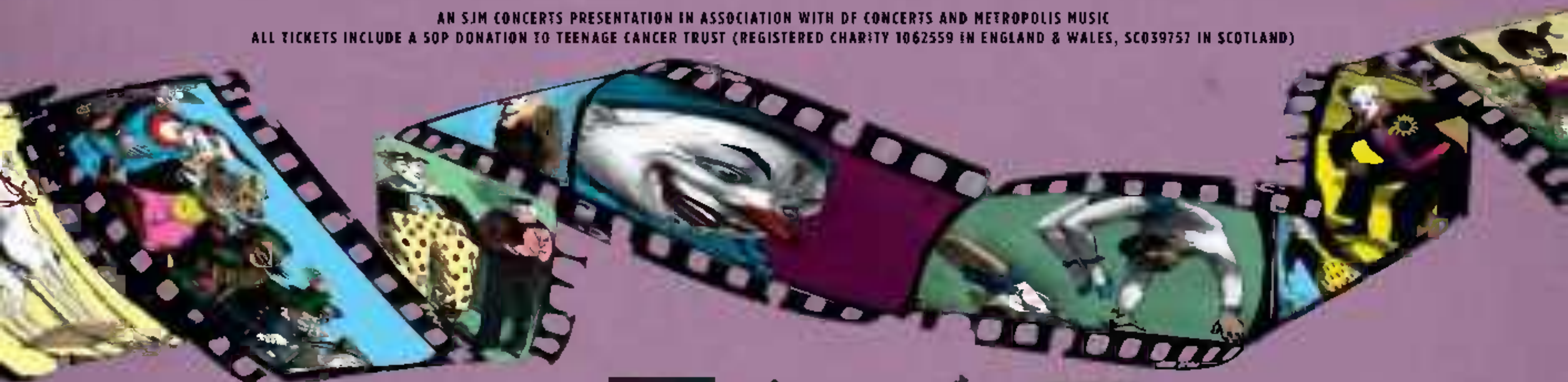
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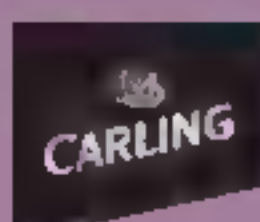
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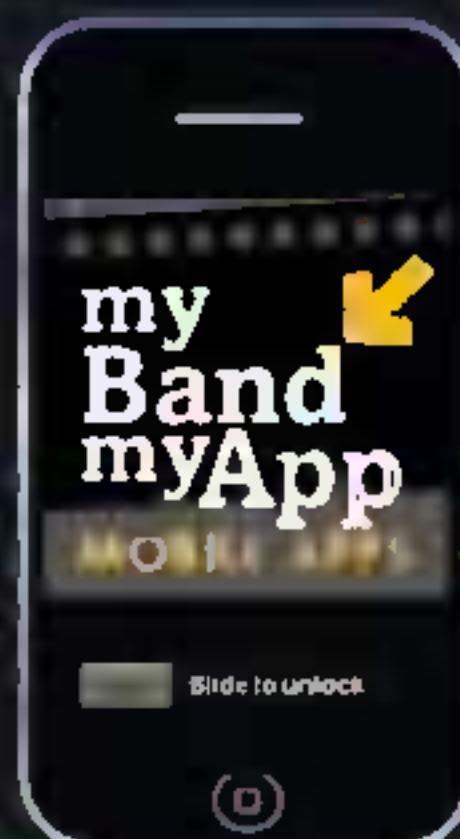
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THE UK'S BIGGEST GUIDE TO THE WEEK AHEAD

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BOOKING NOW



NME AWARDS SHOWS

STARTS: London Lexington, Feb 8

DON'T
MISS



Book February off work, start practising your pogoing – our 2012 NME Awards celebration is going to be our biggest ever. As well as the cooing nationwide tour – featuring Two Door Cinema Club, Metronomy, Tribes and Azcalia Banks – and a mini Justice jaunt, the roster of one-off London shows is expanding rapidly. SCUM have just been announced to headline Bush Hall (February 24) and The Jezabels will play London's KOKO (21). Plus there's apocalyptic queen Charli XCX (8), Slow Club (9), Tune-Yards (15), Totally Enormous Extinct Dinosaurs (16), Kurt Vile (21), much-feted new garage heroes Alabama Shakes (22), and old favourites Marina & The Diamonds (26) and The Drums (27) – and too many more to list!



THE TWILIGHT SAD

STARTS: Glasgow Grand Oie Opy, Feb 9

The Scottish miserablists announce darker new album 'No One Can Ever Know' – in hock to Depeche Mode and NiN – and tour.



JONATHAN RICHMAN

STARTS: Bangor Hendre Hall, Feb 23

Ex-frontman of The Modern Lovers, Richman has inspired The Killers, Iggy, Art Brut, Weezer and heaps more. Find out why here.



WILD BEASTS

STARTS: Warwick University, Mar 11

The Beasts kick off a tour of lesser-played British towns and cities, taking in Norwich, Exeter and Falmouth on what could be 'Smother's' last outing...



PROFESSOR GREEN

STARTS: O2 Academy Glasgow, Apr 23

The rapper released album 'At Your Inconvenience' in October – his tour takes in Plymouth to Southend, Brixton to Glasgow.



PLACEBO

STARTS: O2 Indigo London, Apr 28

The Utah-based Sundance film and music festival plans a one-off edition in London, bringing Brian Molko (above) and his moody mates along for this one-night-only show.



MYSTERY JETS

STARTS: O2 Academy Brixton, May 18

To coincide with the release of their as-yet-untitled fourth LP, the expanded Mystery Jets are back from across the pond to play their biggest hometown show to date.



COLDPLAY

STARTS: Coventry Ricoh Stadium, May 29

Chris Martin and company are set to play four enormodomes next summer, lugging 'Mylo Xyloto' through Coventry, London, Sunderland and Manchester.



BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

STARTS: Sunderland Stadium of Light, Jun 21

The Boss hits Blighty next summer for two stadium shows (Manchester Etihad, 22), and to headline the Isle Of Wight Festival (24) and Hard Rock Calling (Jul 14).



WAKESTOCK FESTIVAL

STARTS: Cardigan Bay, Jul 6

Ed Sheeran (above) has been announced as the headline act for Wakestock, with advance tickets available to buy now.



RIHANNA

STARTS: London Hyde Park, Jul 8

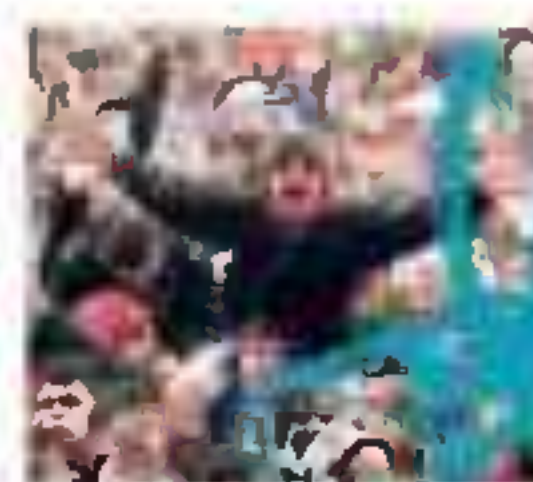
Ri-Ri plays her only UK date of 2012 (to be fair, she's practically lived here for the last few months) as she closes the last night of the Wireless Festival.



THE DARKNESS

STARTS: The Fford Fore, Jul 11

Rock's silliest play the leafy thatch, satisfying frontman Justin Hawkins' undeniable "urge to fill the trees with music of my own", apparently. Lawks.



READING AND LEEDS

STARTS: Reading/Leeds, Aug 24

Early bird tickets are onsale for the summer's biggest now, and all bets are still on for who'll headline festival season's crowning glory...

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O₂

PICK of the WEEK

What to see this week? Let us help



FRIENDLY FIRES

STARTS: O2 Apollo Manchester, Dec 15

NME
PICK

Would it be cruel to compare Ed Macfarlane and co to prime era Wham? Deal with it, because we're going to do it anyway: it isn't just Friendly Fires' perpetual summer holiday vibes and Ed's gaudy shirts that have made them fully paid-up members of Club Tropicana this year, but the fact that they froth their exotic excellence with unabashed, '80s George Michael silliness rather than boring, po-faced knowing. While it's probably – and sadly – unlikely that the Fires will be whacking out any covers of 'Last Christmas' as they end the year on a pretty glorious high, you can count on them to provoke enough dancing to work off a firm, a teaspoon of festive brandy butter, and to transport you away from dull, dark Blighty to a place of fun and sunshine, enough for everyone...



Everyone's Talking About MANIC STREET PREACHERS

STARTS: The O2 London, Dec 17

"No reunions. No comebacks. No encores." When we spotted this at the foot of a recent Manics ad, a ripple of panic went around the office – before we realised there was no need to fret. In true Manics style, it's an allusion to bands that rhyme with 'gulp' and 'wade' – and affirmation of MSPs' loveable ethics.



Don't Miss EMMY THE GREAT & TIM WHEELER

STARTS: London Bush Hall, Dec 14

Emmy and Tim's festive union is so wretch-inducingly perfect that Richard Curtis would refuse them a part in *Love Actually 2: The Turkey Bloat Years* on account of lacking grit. Yep, it's a tale of matching Santa hats, stockings hung at the foot of the bed and lots of sloppy mistletoe snogs. If their *Chrimble* album weren't so sweet, we'd hate them for it.



Radar Stars GROSS MAGIC

STARTS: Bristol Start The Bus, Dec 15

Sam McGarrigle's been a good lad this year, honest, St Nick. We've got the sweet, Ariel Pink-indebted wooze pop of 'Sweetest Touch' to thank him for, and we heard that American Apparel are sending over a basket in gratitude for kickstarting the tie-dye resurgence. So, Santa, lend Sam's frayed stocking some love this Xmas: some shampoo for those lanky locks?

WEDNESDAY

December 14

BIRMINGHAM

100 Monkeys HMV Institute (Temple)
0844 248 5037

BOURNEMOUTH

Subhumans Champions
01202 757 000

BRIGHTON

Band Of Holy Joy The Hope

01273 723 118

Ellen & The Echo Latest Music Bar

01273 687 171

Example/Fenech-Soler Centre

0870 900 9100

Lalsh/Magic Lantern Ballroom

01273 605789

Seth Lakeman Concorde 2

01273 673 311

BRISTOL

The Pineapple Thief Fleece

0117 945 996

Professor Green/Rizzle Kicks O2

Academy 0870 477 2000

The Red Jumpsuit Apparatus/

Hawthorne Heights Thekla

08713 100000

Sparrow/Comrades Croft (Front Bar)

0117 987 4114

CAMBRIDGE

Death In Vegas/Von Haze Junction

01223 511511

CARDIFF

Angels Chapter Arts Centre

029 2031 1050

Huw M/Georgia Ruth Gwdihw Cafe

Bar 029 2039 7933

The Treatment Cwb Ifor Bach

029 20 11199

EDINBURGH

Malcolm Middleton/Human

Don't Be Angry Electric Circus

0131 226 4224

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Architects O2 ABC 0870 903 3444

Kevin McGuire King Tut's Wah Wah

Hut 01 41 721 5279

Miracle Fortress Captain's Rest

0141 331 2722

LEICESTER

Boo Howerdine Musician

0116 251 0080

Saxon/Hammerfall O2 Academy

0870 477 2000

12 Dirty Bullets Soundhouse

07830 425555

LIVERPOOL

Jay Lewis/Steve Pilgrim Zanzibar

0151 707 0633

LONDON

Bryan Ferry O2 Shepherds Bush

Empire 0870 771 2000

Dan Michaelson & The Coastguards

St Pancras Old Church

Def Leppard/Motley Crue/

Steel Panther Wembley Arena

0870 060 0870

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Mensah Bedroom Bar 020 7613 5637

Emmy The Great/Tim Wheeler Bush

Hall 020 8222 6955

Euros Childs Vortex Jazz Club

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Finley Quay Monto Water Rats

020 7837 4112

From The Ashes O2 Academy 2

Islington 0870 477 2000

Godsized Borderline 020 7734 5547

I Am The Avalanche/Hostage

Calm/Apologetics I Have None Barfly

0870 907 0999

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Jeru The Damaja Garage

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Horrors/Ben Howard/Tribes/We

Are Augustines O2 Academy Brixton

0870 477 2000

Kasabian The O2 Arena

0870 701 1114

Kyla La Grange Servant Jazz Quarters

Kypke/Damn Vandals/Fulangchang

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December 15

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01224 642230

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The Treatment Moles 01225 404445

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Academy 3 0870 477 2000
Heart In Hand The Ballroom
0121 448 0797Lionsex Hare & Hounds
0870 64 3333The Wonder Stuff/The Levellers O2
Academy 0870 477 2000

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Apples & Eve Prince Albert
01273 730 499

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0117 936 2187Franz Nicolay/Chris T-T Croft (Front
Bar) 0117 987 4144Gross Magic Start The Bus
0117 930 4370

Subhumans Fleece 0117 945 0996

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Path To Perdition Sugarmill
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The Wholls Horn 01727 853 143

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Ginger Wildheart Wulfrun Hall
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0870 477 2000The Subways The Ballroom
0121 448 0797Templeton Pek/My Own Agenda O2
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Missing Andy Sticky Mike's Frog Bar
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0117 987 4144Dragonflies/Future Pilots/Rough
Money Thunderbolt 07791 319 614

Halo Louisiana 0117 926 5978

The Hats/Rukus Collective/
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0870 477 2000

GBH Ivory Blacks 0141 221 7871

The Phantom Band/Holy Mountain/
Tut Vu Vu Stereo 0141 576 5018

Saint Jude O2 ABC 0870 903 3444

The Saw Doctors Barrowlands
0141 532 4601We Were Promised Jetpacks O2
ABC2 0141 204 5151

LEEDS

Brutus Gold O2 Academy
0870 477 2000

David Ford Empire 01132 420868

Earthtone9 The Well 0113 244 0474

Holy State/Hookworms/That
Fucking Tank Brudenell Social Club
0113 211 5500

Jon Windle Cockpit 0113 214 3446

These Citizens Cockpit 0113 214 3446

LEICESTER

Levellers/Dreadzone/Back To The
Planet O2 Academy 0870 477 2000

Maybeshewill Somo 0116 285 6536

LIVERPOOL

Attica Rage Mello Mello
0151 707 0898Echo & The Bunnymen O2 Academy
0870 477 2000

LONDON

Alfred Abel/The Machine Gunners
Silver Bullet 020 7619 3639Andrew Roachford Jazz Cafe
020 7916 6060Architects HMV Forum
020 7344 0044The Business Boston Arms
020 7272 8153

FRIDAY

December 16

DJ Yoda Jamm O20 7274 5537

Ed Harcourt/Jodie Marle Bush Hall
020 8222 6955Emily & The Woods/Pete Roe St
Pancras Old Church

Hard Skin Grosvenor 0871 223 7992

Hatcham Social/Carl Barat Barfly
0870 907 0999Kings Of The City Rhythm Factory
020 7247 9386Luke Vibert/Ragga Twins/
Ceephax Acid Crew Electrowerkz
020 7837 6419

Maths Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478



The Men They Couldn't Hang

Borderline 020 7734 5547

Mucky Pups Barfly (Upstairs)
0870 907 0999Napalm Death Underworld
020 7482 1932New Model Army/Dinosaur Pile-Up
Electric Brixton 020 7274 2290Nightvision Kiddier's Elbow
020 7485 3269Parkbench/Emma Ringqvist Band
Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773Red Roulettes/The Laymanites 100
Club 020 7636 0933

Sabaton KOKO 020 7388 3222

The Saturdays Wembley Arena
0870 060 0870The Sea Kings/Stereo Electric
Mistress Cavendish Arms
0207 627 0698Shrag/Just Handshakes (We're
British)/Baaneex Wilmington Arms
020 777 7141Skinny Machines/Picture Book The
Lexington 020 777 5987Soulwax/2ManyDJs O2 Academy
Brixton 0870 477 2000

The Trinity Band/The Yesmen

Nambucca 020 7272 7366

The Wonder Stuff O2 Shepherds Bush
Empire 0870 771 2000

Zun Zun Egul Nest 020 7354 9993

100 Monkeys O2 Academy 2 Islington
0870 477 200012 Dirty Bullets Club NME @ Koko
0870 4325527

MANCHESTER

Duran Duran Evening News Arena
0161 950 5000The Paris Riots Deaf Institute
0161 330 4019Purescence Sound Control
0161 236 0840This Is The Kit Band On The Wall
0161 832 6625

MILTON KEYNES

The Wondersmiths Watershed
07935 641 660

NEWCASTLE

Betty & The Bad Cats The Station
0871 230 1094

Black Sun Dog & Parrot 0191 261 6998

The Gaslighters O'Neills
0191 269 3001Glamour Of The Kill/DearSuperstar
O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000O'Messy Life/Grandfather Birds
Cluny 0191 230 4474Status Quo Meiro Radio Arena
0870 707 8000

NORWICH

Adam Ant UEA 01603 505401

Jess Morgan Jurnets Bar
01603 666021

OXFORD

Hot Hooves/Secret Rivals/
The Cellar Family Wheatsheaf
01865 721 156

Mosca Celler 01865 244 761

The Original Rabbit Foot Spasm
Band O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000

READING

Modestep Sub89 0871 230 1094

SHEFFIELD

Playground Mafia/Searching 4
Evidence/The Gazelles Corporation
0114 276 0262Tarka Dawn O2 Academy 2
0870 477 2000

SOUTHAMPTON

The Cropdusters Talking Heads
023 8055 5899Friendly Fires Guildhall
023 8063 2601The Pineapple Thief Joiners
023 8022 5612

STOKE ON TRENT

OK Corral Underground 01782 219944

ST ALBANS

Knights Of The Realm/Bomber
Command Horn 01727 853 143

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Tom Williams & The Boat The Forum
0871 277 7101Aloe Blacc
Dome, Brighton

SATURDAY/SUNDAY

December 17/18

SATURDAY, Dec 17

ABERDEEN

Ryan Shirlow & The Bloody Marys
Lemon Tree 01224 642230

BIRMINGHAM

Architects HMV Institute
0844 248 5037
A Poetic Yesterday/The Dirty Youth
O2 Academy 3 0870 477 2000
Ellyslum The Ballroom 0121 448 0797
The Kooks O2 Academy
0870 477 2000
Love/Hates/Silent Jack/Loveless
Luck Eddie's Rock Club 0121 643 2093
Title Fight/Balance &
Composure/Transit O2 Academy 2
0870 477 2000

BOURNEMOUTH

Death Of An Artist Champions
01202 757 000
Stereophonics O2 Academy
0870 477 2000

BRIGHTON

The Black Fields/Ellen & The
Echo/The Wasp Factory The Hope
01273 723 568
The Electric Soft Parade/Thirty
Pounds Of Bone/Something
Beginning With L West Hill Hall
01273 327976
Euros Childs Unitarian Church
01273 330520
The Red Jumpsuit Apparatus/
Hawthorne Heights The Haunt
01273 770 847
Shrag/Tender Trap Green Door
Store 07894 267 053
The Unthanks Dome 01273 709709

BRISTOL

Jerry Dammers Thunderbolt
07791 319 614
Vintage Trouble Thekla
08713 100000
Zliguidum Fleece 0117 945 0996

CARDIFF

The Beat The Globe 07738 983947
Candela Gwdihw Cafe Bar
029 2039 7993

CARLISLE

Fish Brickyard 01228 512 220

COVENTRY

Cast Kasbah 024 7655 4473

DUNDEE

The Rezillos/Patrol/Diddums Beat
Generator 01382 229226

EDINBURGH

Fuzzy Star Sneaky Pete's
0131 225 1757
EXETER
Mark Morris Cavern Club
01392 495 370
GLASGOW
Filipville O2 ABC2 0141 204 5151
Gun King Tut's Wah Wah Hut
0141 221 5279
James Yorkston/Pictish Trail/
Lisa O'Neill Wellington Church
0141 339 0454
Kassidy Barrowlands 0141 552 4601
Ms Dynamite/Doorly/Murkage The
Arches 0141 565 1000
The Phantom Band/Take A
Worm For A Walk Week Stereo
0141 576 5018
The Silencers Oran Mor
0141 552 9224

LEEDS

Humanfly/Lavotchkin/
Himself Brudenell Social Club
0113 243 5866

LEICESTER

The Boobytraps Shed 0116 262 2255
The Kite Runners Musician
0116 251 0080

LIVERPOOL

Antisect Kazimier 0871 230 1094
Cheap Thrills/Notion/
The Endings O2 Academy 2
0870 477 2000
Echo & The Bunnymen O2 Academy
0870 477 2000
The Pipettes Eric's Club
The Springtime Anchorage Zanzibar
0151 707 0633
The Treatment Masque
0151 707 6171

LONDON

Andrew Roachford Jazz Cafe
020 7916 6060
The Bronx Rhythm Factory
020 7247 9386
Brown Biogues Old Blue Last
020 7613 2478
Jehst Garage 020 7607 1818
Kete/D/R/U/G/S Electric Brixton
020 7274 2290
Kong Shacklevell Arms
020 7249 0810
Machine Box/K-Nitrate Electrowerkz
020 7837 6419
Manic Street Preachers The O2
Arena 0870 701 4444
Mariachi El Bronx Kings College
020 7834 4740
Martha Tilston Slaughtered Lamb
020 8682 4080
My Little Empire Barfly
0870 907 0999
Orange Goblin Underground
020 7482 1932
Pink Crudge Caravan/The
Unbreakables Dublin Castle
020 7485 1773
Santiago Street Machine/The
Heartbeats Cargo 0207 749 7840
Shed Seven O2 Shepherds Bush
Empire 0870 771 2000
Soulwax/ZManyDJs O2 Academy
Brixton 0870 477 2000

Stop Press Stories Camden Rock
0871 230 1094

UK Subs/The Defects Garage

(Upstairs) 0871 230 1094
Voodoo Glow Skulls/Anti Vigilante
Borderline 020 7734 5547
White Lies Wembley Arena
0870 060 0870

The Young Jack/Echoes Of An Age O2
Academy 2 Islington 0870 477 2000

MANCHESTER

Betraeus/Ageless Oblivion Satan's
Hollow 0161 236 0666
Half Man Half Biscuit HMV Ritz
0161 236 4355
Madison State/Candid Iniquity/
Kranlus Academy 4 0161 832 1111
Marlon/Lowline Academy 3
0161 832 1111
Purescence Sound Control
0161 236 0340
The Saw Doctors O2 Apollo
0870 401 8000
TV Smith/The Valentines Night And
Day Cafe 0161 236 1822

NEWCASTLE

The Chapman Family/
The Generals/Alblon Row Cluny
0191 230 4474
The Dee Tees O'Neills
0191 69 1001
Duran Duran Metro Radio Arena
0870 707 8000

Post War Glamour Girls Head Of
Steam 0191 232 4379

NORWICH

The Barlights/Hello Bear/Disco Of
Death Of Discotheque Arts Centre
01603 660 352

NOTTINGHAM

Earthtone9/Illuminatus/The
Barnum Meserve Rescue Rooms
0115 958 6484
Swimming/Hymns/August Actually
Bodega Social Club 08713 100000
OXFORD
Alasdair Roberts/David A Jaycock
Modern Art 01865 722733
Dappy O2 Academy 0870 477 2000
Jonquill/Pet Moon/Sisterland O2
Academy 2 0870 477 2000

PORTSMOUTH

Beggars Belief Cellars 0871 230 1094

SHEFFIELD

Buzzcocks/Subhumans/English
Dogs Corporation 0114 276 0262
The Crookes Queen's Social Club
0114 272 5544
Former Lover/Black Gold Of The
Sun Nether Edge Bowling Club
0114 281 9803
Jon Windie Plug 0114 276 7093
Levellers/Dreadzone/Back To
The Planet O2 Academy
0870 477 2000

STOKE ON TRENT

The Blue Collars Sugarmill
01782 214 991
Heart In Hand Underground
01782 219944

ST ALBANS

Waiting For Katherine Horn
01727 143

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Anti Nowhere League The Forum
0871 277 7101

YORK

Glamour Of The Kill/DearSuperstar
The Duchess 01904 641 413

SUNDAY, Dec 18

BATH

Vintage Trouble Moles 01225 404445

BIRMINGHAM

Saint Jude O2 Academy 2
0870 477 2000

BRIGHTON

Earthtone9 The Haunt 01273 770 847
Laura Nixon/Paul Roberts/Jim
Deveraux Komedia 01273 647 100
Pirate/Reality Check/Harting The
Hope 01273 723 568

BRISTOL

Architects O2 Academy
0870 477 2000
Hard Skin/The A-Heads Croft (Main
Room) 0117 987 4144
Title Fight Fleece 0117 945 0996
The Wurzels The Tunnels
0117 929 9008

CAMBRIDGE

Dappy Junction 01223 511511

CARLISLE

Bad Manners Brickyard
01228 512 220

EDINBURGH

Fish The Caves 0131 557 8989

GLASGOW

Fatherson/DiscoPolls The Arches
0141 565 1000
Gun King Tut's Wah Wah Hut
0141 221 5279
Ian Wallace Stairway
0141 221 1009

THE MCGEE Stereo 01904 612237

The Beat Guildhall Arts Centre
01452 503050

LEEDS

The Kooks O2 Academy
0870 477 2000
The Solicitors New Roscoe
0113 246 0778

LEICESTER

Attica Rage Lock 42
Glamour Of The Kill Soundhouse
07830 425555
Nine Below Zero Musician
0116 251 0080
LONDON
Black Lips Heaven 020 7930 2020
Crazy Arm/Great Cynics/Above
Them Windmill 020 8671 0700
Eastern Front Underground
020 7482 1932
Giants Barfly 0870 907 0999
Ginger Wildheart Garage
020 7607 1818
Good Dangers Old Blue Last
020 7613 2478
Kiosk/Radio Tehran XOYO
020 7729 5959

Levellers/Dreadzone/Back To
The Planet O2 Academy Brixton
0870 477 2000

The Red Jumpsuit Apparatus Scala
020 7833 2022

Shed Seven O2 Shepherds Bush
Empire 0870 771 2000

Slade KOKO 020 7388 3222

Subhumans Borderline
020 7734 5547

The Wave Pictures MacBeth
020 7739 5095

MANCHESTER

Badly Drawn Boy/Jesca Hoop/Gary
Briggs Deaf Institute 0161 330 4019
Falling Red/Velvet Star Satan's
Hollow 0161 236 0666
John Bramwell/Thea Gilmore Royal
Exchange 0161 833 9833
The Rainband HMV Ritz
0161 236 4355

NEWCASTLE

Friendly Fires/SBTRKT/Chad Valley
O2 Academy 0870 477 2000

NORWICH

Chris T-T/Franz Nicolay Olives
01603 230500

Napalm Death Waterfront
01603 632 717

NOTTINGHAM

Kate Walsh Glee Club 0871 472 0400

PLYMOUTH

Voodoo Glow Skulls/Anti Vigilante
White Rabbit 01752 227522

SHEFFIELD

Affliction Lost/Stone Free/Majority
Vote O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000
Chantel McGregor Greystones
0114 266 5599

SOUTHAMPTON

Lindsey Buckingham Guildhall
023 8063 2601

STOKE ON TRENT

Talk Is Cheap Sugarmill 01782 214 991

ST ALBANS

The Wholls Horn 01727 853 143

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Twuents The Forum 0871 277 7101

WOLVERHAMPTON

Mariachi El Bronx Slade Room
0870 320 7000

YORK

Captain Zippy/The Blueprints The
Duchess 01904 641 413

MON/TUE

December 19/20

MONDAY, Dec 19

ABERDEEN

The Rezillos Lemon Tree
01224 642230

BRIGHTON

Glenn Tilbrook Komedia
01273 647 100
Prehab/Linten Splinters Latest
Music Bar 01273 687 171

BRISTOL

Sloppy Joe/The Black Swan Effect/
Goodnight Lols Fleece 0117 945 0996

CARDIFF

Vintage Trouble Glee Club
0870 241 5093

EXETER

Fire Thesaurus Cavern Club
01322 495 370

GLASGOW

The Dirty Demographic King Tut's
Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
The View O2 ABC 0870 903 3444

LEEDS

Joseph & David Holy Trinity Church
01132 454268

LEICESTER

Mother Hubbard Donkey
0116 270 5042

The Pipettes Musician
0116 251 0080

LONDON

Blanck Mass Shacklevell Arms
020 7249 0810
Dappy Indigo @ The O2 Arena
0870 701 4444
Devil Sold His Soul Barfly
0870 07 0999
Howling Owl/Ivan's House Social
020 7636 4992

Lindsey Buckingham Palladium
020 7494 5020

Saint Jude Scala 020 7833 2022

Shaun Ryder/Dixie Dingwails
020 7267 1577

Slow Club Union Chapel
020 7226 1686

Stereophonics O2 Shepherds Bush
Empire 0870 771 2000

Tulipa Ruiz Cargo 0207 749 7840

Two Wounded Birds Old Blue Last
020 7613 2478

MANCHESTER

Cherry Ghost Deaf Institute
0161 330 4019

Kong/The Blacklisters Ruby Lounge
0161 834 1392

Paul McCartney Evening News Arena
0161 950 5000

NEWCASTLE

Beako/Warm Digits/Young Liar
Cluny 0191 230 4474

Euros Childs/New Clay Lit & Phil
0191 232 0192

Pointless View O2 Academy 2
0870 477 2000

NORWICH

Bad Manners Waterfront
01603 632 717

NOTTINGHAM

Friendly Fires/SBTRKT/Chad Valley
Rock City 08713 100000

PORTSMOUTH

Title Fight Wedgewood Rooms
023 9286 3911

SHEFFIELD

Saxon/Hammerfall O2 Academy
0870 477 2000

STOKE ON TRENT

Translucid Sugarmill 01782 214 991

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Mikill Pane The Forum 0871 277 7101

WAKEFIELD

Betraeus Escobar 01924 332000

YORK

Tomorrow We Radio Stereo
01904 612237

TUESDAY, Dec 20

BATH

The Feeling Komedia 0845 293 8480

BIRMINGHAM

The Twang O2 Academy
0870 477 2000

BRISTOL

Bats About Bats Croft (Main Room)
0117 987 4144

Before The Storm/The Wolfhounds
Fleece 0117 945 0996

CARDIFF

Fat City Gwdihw Cafe Bar
029 2039 7933

Kids In Glass Houses Clwb Ifor Bach
029 2023 2199

GLASGOW

Aberfeldy O2 ABC2 0141 204 5151
Aidan John Moffat/Bill Wells The
Arches 0141 565 1000

Friendly Fires/SBTRKT/
Chad Valley Barrowlands
0141 552 4601

Kong/The Blacklisters Captain's Rest
0141 331 2722

Make Sparks/Orphans/
Scarlet Shift Stereo 0141 576 5018

The Temperance Movement King
Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

The View O2 ABC 0870 903 3444

LEEDS

Dopamine Cockpit 0113 244 3446
Shed Seven O2 Academy
0870 477 2000

LIVERPOOL

Paul McCartney Echo Arena
0844 8000 00

Vintage Trouble O2 Academy 2
0870 477 2000

LONDON

Maefted Setting/Vedanta Barfly
0870 907 0999

The Minutes The Lexington
020 7837 5387

More Diamonds/My Private
Life/Stickman Cartel Garage
020 7607 1818

New Kid In Town 93 Feet East
020 727 7609

The Oscillation Old Blue Last
020 7613 2478

Proxy Music/Mr Solo Buffalo Bar
020 7359 6191

Rihanna/Calvin Harris The O2 Arena
0870 701 4444

Saxon/Hammerfall KOKO
020 7388 3222

Stereophonics O2 Shepherds Bush
Empire 0870 771 2000

NOTTINGHAM

Thunder Rock City 08713 100000

OXFORD

Go West O2 Academy
0870 477 2000

POOLE

Bad Manners Mr Kyps
01202 748945

STOKE ON TRENT

Troops Of Mafeking Sugarmill
01782 214 991

WED/THU

December 21/22

WEDNESDAY, Dec 21

BIRMINGHAM

Go West O2 Academy 0870 477 2000
Johnny Kowalski/Slick Boy Club/
Lobster O2 Academy 3 0870 477 2000

BRIGHTON

Kidda The Haunt 01273 770 847

BRISTOL

Gaz Brookfield Fleece 0117 945 0996
High Contrast/Visionquest Motion
Ramp Park 01179 723111
Hold To This Croft (Front Bar)
0117 987 4144

The Hook'em Boys Croft (Main Room)
0117 987 4144

CARDIFF

Mike Fantastic Club Ifor Bach
029 2023 2799

Talons Undertone 029 2022 8883

GLASGOW

Death By Ambition King Tut's Wah
Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

LEICESTER

Echolocation Donkey 0116 270 5042

LONDON

Airhead Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478
Alasdair Roberts Wilmington Arms
020 7837 1384

Cross Wires 93 Feet East

020 7247 6095

The Darlington's Arts Club
020 7441 4459

Dirty Revolution Buffalo Bar

020 7859 6191

Dopamine O2 Academy 2 Islington
0870 477 2000

The Feeling Scala 020 7833 2022

James Yorkston Union Chapel

020 7226 1686

Mayans/Adults, The Elderly &

Children Windmill 020 8671 0700

The Pipettes Nambucca 020 7272 7366

Rihanna/Calvin Harris The O2 Arena

0870 701 4444

Stereophonics O2 Shepherds Bush

Empire 0870 771 2000

The Suburbans/The Famous Class

Garage 020 7607 1818

The Superficial Barfly 0870 907 0999

SBTV KOKO 020 7388 3222

NORWICH

The Vagabond/Feral Mouth/

Loose Leaf Drifters Arts Centre

01603 660 352

NOTTINGHAM

Lock Up/The Rotted/Dripback

Rescue Rooms 0115 958 8484

Thunder Rock City 08713 100000

PORTSMOUTH

UK Subs/The Lurkers/Dragsler

South Parade Pier 023 9273 2283

STOKE ON TRENT

The Fears Sugarmill 01782 214 991

ST ALBANS

The Carolines Horn 01727 853 143

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Mothhead The Forum 0871 277 7101

WOLVERHAMPTON

One Direction Civic Hall 01902 552121

YORK

Shed Seven Barbican Centre

01904 656688

THURSDAY Dec 22

BIRMINGHAM

Kill Timers O2 Academy 3

0870 477 2000

Naaquarley Hare & Hounds

0870 264 3333

BRIGHTON

The Feeling Komedia 01273 647 100

BRISTOL

Archimedes Fleece 0117 945 0996

Madnomad Croft (Main Room)

0117 977 4144

CAMBRIDGE

The Treatment Portland Arms

01223 357268

DERRY

The Japanese Popstars Saggins's

028 7130 9297

EDINBURGH

Make Sparks Sneaky Pete's

0131 225 1757

GLASGOW

Catcher King Tut's Wah Wah Hut

0141 221 5279

Mogwai Barrowlands 0141 552 4601

The Rezillos O2 ABC2 0141 204 5151

LEEDS

Little Chief New Roscoe

0113 246 0778

LEICESTER

Ann Duggan Donkey 0116 270 5042

By The Rivers Sub 91

LIVERPOOL

Chasing The Legion/Last Baron/

Draw The Line Masque 0151 707 6171

Space O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000

LONDON

Apocalypse Tree Garage

020 7607 1818

Death Remains/Devolver Nambucca

020 7272 7366

The Dirty Angels/Shadow Honey

Barfly 0870 907 0999

Dopamine/Gavin Butler Buffalo Bar

020 7359 6191

Kyrb Grinder Boston Arms

020 7272 8153

Lock Up Underworld 020 7482 1932

The Lone Groover Windmill

020 8671 0700

Resando Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358

Rihanna/Calvin Harris The O2 Arena

0870 701 4444

MANCHESTER

Ben Ottewell Moho Live

0161 834 8180

NEWCASTLE

Bad Manners O2 Academy

0870 477 2000

John Power Riverside 0191 261 4386

PORTSMOUTH

Shaun Ryder/Dixie Highlight Comedy

023 9229 8563

READING

Sylosis Sub89 0871 230 1094

SOUTHAMPTON

The Wurzels Brook 023 8055 5366

STOKE ON TRENT

Swon To Oath Sugarmill

01782 214 991

ST ALBANS

Misty's Big Adventure Horn

01727 853 143

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Origami Dinosaur The Forum

0871 277 7101

YORK

Hot Fudge/Crafters The Duchess

01904 641 413

Shed Seven Barbican Centre

01904 656688

FRI-TUE

December 23-27

Shaun Ryder,
Sub89, Reading



FRIDAY, Dec 23

ABERDEEN

Flood Of Red/Dweller The Tunnels

01224 211121

The Ruckus Lemon Tree

01224 642230

BEDFORD

Lionsex Enquires 01234 340120

BIRMINGHAM

Bloom/Dr Scardo/Minimum O2

Academy 3 0870 477 2000

BRIGHTON

The Denim The Hope 01273 723 568

BRISTOL

Talisman Fleece 0117 945 0996

CAMBRIDGE

Ill Murray/Dirty Cousins Portland

Arms 01223 357268

CARDIFF

Desecration Bogiez 029 2034 1463

CARLISLE

Teenage Mary Brickyard

01228 512 220

DUNDEE

Make Sparks Dexter's

01382 228894

EDINBURGH

The Gothenburg Address Sneaky

Pete's 0131 225 1757

The Rezillos Liquid Room

0131 225 2364

GLASGOW

Living In Hiding O2 ABC2

0141 204 5151

Pete MacLeod & The Cancerians

King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

LEICESTER

Diesel Park West Musician

0116 251 0080

Platforms Donkey 0116 270 5042

LONDON

Bad Guys Old Blue Last

020 7613 2478

The Blockheads Monto Water Rats

020 7837 4412

Chas & Dave Indigo @ The O2 Arena

0870 701 4444

Death In June Underworld

020 7482 1932

The Handwritten Constitution

020 7387 4805

The Hitmen & Her Bar Music Hall

020 7613 5951

Suzerain 100 Club 020 7636 0933

MANCHESTER

One Direction O2 Apollo

0870 401 8000

NEWCASTLE

The Fontaines Black Bull 0191 414 2846

NORWICH

Liqueur Waterfront 01603 632 717

NOTTINGHAM

The Money Rescue Rooms

0115 958 8484

READING

Shaun Ryder/Dixie Sub89

0871 230 1094

SHEFFIELD

Key Sholay Harley 0114 275 2288

SOUTHAMPTON

The Delays Brook 023 8055 5366

STOKE ON TRENT

The Control Sugarmill 01782 214 991

The Rivalry Underground

01782 219944

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Joeyfat The Forum 0871 277 7101

YORK

Skylights Fibbers 01904 651 250

With One Last Breath/You Cried

Wolf/River City Ransom The Duchess

01904 641 413

SATURDAY, Dec 24

BIRKENHEAD

The Kranks Revolver 07871626557

BIRMINGHAM

Misty's Big Adventure Hare &

Hounds 0870 264 3333

EXETER

Metronica Cavern Club 01392 495 370

GLASGOW

The Mickey 9s/Datzell King Tut's Wah

Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

LEICESTER

Moonlight Sinatras Donkey

0116 270 5042

PORTSMOUTH

The Racketeers Cellars

0871 230 1094

MONDAY, Dec 26

BRISTOL

The Members Fleece 0117 945 0996

GLASGOW

Art of Fighters Soundhaus

0141 221 4659

The Imagineers Oran Mor

0141 552 9224

LEEDS

Danny Bond/Mark Howarth O2

Academy 0870 477 2000

LEICESTER

Toy Hearts/The Drugstore Cowboys

Donkey 0116 270 5042

LIVERPOOL

Mumu Picket 0151 708 5318

NEWCASTLE

The Boneshakers The Tyne

0191 265 2550

TUESDAY, Dec 27

GLASGOW

Delgetti King Tut's Wah Wah Hut

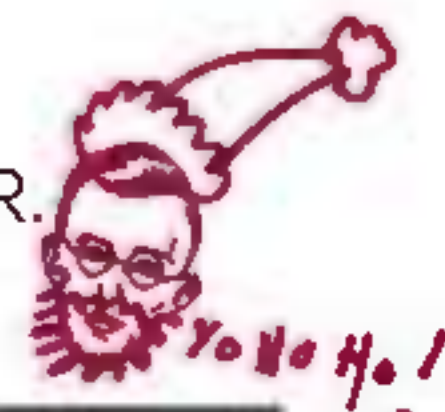
0141 221 5279

LEICESTER

E1 Pussycats/Kingsize Musician

BIG FAT XMAS XWORD

RELATIVES STUFFED FULL OF CAKE AND BOOZE AND FINALLY ASLEEP ON THE SOFA? GOOD - SETTLE DOWN WITH THE BIGGEST NME CROSSWORD OF THE YEAR. YOU COULD EVEN WIN A HUGE BAG OF NME SWAG *Compiled by Trevor Hunger-for-sprouts*



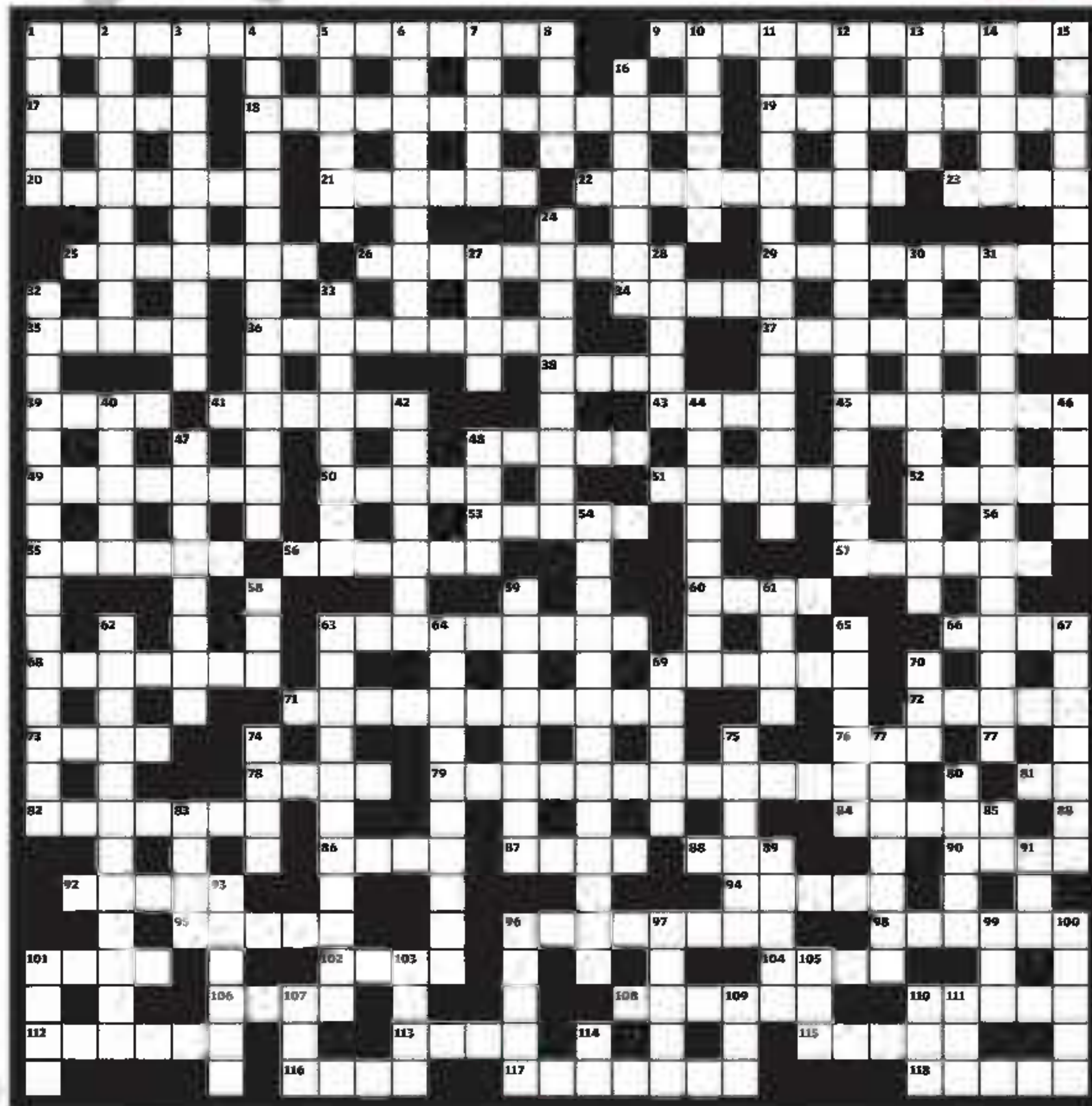
CLUES ACROSS

1 This was the first Noel had thought of having two turtle doves instead of the usual turkey (4-6-5)
9 The Manic Street Preachers have noted their diary (4-2-3-3)
17 It's not a nice matter, but The Girls brought it up (5)
18 "And so it's my assumption I'm really _____", 1979 (2-3-8)
19 The title of a recent Duke Spirit single? Um, I give up (9)
20 Rap trio turn up with version of a 70's hit from The Motors (7)
21 Klaxons' single, the sound of which we've heard before (6)
22 Profound respect for both Faithless and The Jesus And Mary Chain (9)
23 Rhys _____ of The Horrors or Jimmy _____ US songwriting legend (4)
25+71A The Fratellis have gone and blown it all for the want of some singers (7-3-3-5)
26 She was very nasty about The Electric Light Orchestra (4-5)
29 Chicane and Clannad's Maire Brennan were all at sea performing this (9)
34 Group that had hits in '80s with 'Only You' and 'Nobody's Diary' (5)
35+41A As Mark McLachlan of Wet Wet Wet is better known (5-6)
36+60A That little prick that got under the skin of The Eurythmics (5-2-2-4)
37 They looked thin and drawn working on My Vitriol's album (9)
38 In the '90s they were 'Olympian' and 'Fight 'n' Fit' but 'Where Are They Now' (4)
39 "Actin' funny but I don't know why / 'Scuse me while I _____ the sky", from Jimi Hendrix's 'Purple Haze' (3)
41 (See 35 across)
43 "Once upon a time you dressed so fine / You threw the bums a _____ in your prime, didn't you?", from Bob Dylan's 'Like A Rolling Stone' (4)
45 A nasty blob and a terrible din finds man with 'Elusive Butterfly' (3-4)
48 "If there's hope in your heart it would flow to every part", Editors (5)
49 So very outgoing to include a number by Cat's Eyes (4-3)
50 "I drive a Rolls Royce 'cos it's good for my _____", from T Rex's 'Children Of The Revolution' (5)
51 Bad Manners are able at the double to do this dance (3-3)
52 Visage banded out their metal on 'The _____' in 1982 (5)
53+108A Suede single or robot character in early '80s kids TV programme (5-6)
55 Nick Cave song from 1985 celebrating the birth place of Elvis Presley (6)
56 Arab Strap fee ing the effect of hallucinogenic drugs (6)
57 No Doubt album 'Return Of _____' or Inspiral Carpets single '_____ 5' (6)
60 (See 36 across)
63 Jam's xx keeps his distance from the too intimate sort (3-6)
66 Kubh were going to get bigger after this hit single (4)
68 The Vaccines do a cover and it's very light (7)
69 A real muddle I get into with Kate Bush (6)
71 (See 25 across)
72+84A It went to number one, even though it sounds like

Chipmunk made a mistake recording it (5-5)
73 "He waves goodbye to the he grew up in / He knows that he'll never come back", from Noah And The Whale's 'Tonight's The Kind Of Night' (4)
76 Ne-Yo recording is a bit homemade (3)
78+70D "It doesn't matter to me 'cos all I wanted to be is a million miles from here", 2004 (2-2-3)
79 Arcade Fire were in the district where people live on their debut album 'Funeral' (13)
81 Pulp's debut album from 1983 obtained from Littlewoods (2)
82 Rock band fronted by Ritchie Blackmore whose numbers include 'Since You've Been Gone' (7)
84 (See 72 across)
86 Band from Georgia get into this song (4)
87 Wu Lyf sounding like Mud with this song (4)
88+115A Eric came around with Battles' single (3-5)
90 US alt-rock band The Wet Sprocket (4)
92 Ned's Atom c Dustbin's last chart entry (can't think of the answer to this one?) (5)
94 Rob _____, drummer with PJ Harvey or Shirley _____, had '60s hit with 'The Clapping Song' (5)
95 Apollo 440 are into UK rap perhaps (5)
96 (See 62 down)
98 "_____ do what you do / I can't live without my _____ movies", Ash (4-2)
101 (See 65 down)
102+117A "Dying all the time, lose your dreams and you will lose your mind, ain't life unkind / Goodbye _____", The Rolling Stones (4-7)
104 From the beginning, the new album from Sigur Ros (4)
106 Touched by band who were on Creation and Cherry Red labels (4)
108 (See 53 across)
110 Is NME upset with Angelic Upstarts' vocalist (5)
112 Patsy _____, actress and singer who fronted Eighth Wonder in the '80s (6)
113 The Tube especially included a band from The Isle Of Wight (4)
115 (See 88 across)
116 Hurts to remain in one place (4)
117 (See 102 across)
118 Ash in reformation with drummer from old US punk band The Wipers (5)

CLUES DOWN

1+16D "San Francisco Bay, past pier thirty nine", 2001 (4-1-4-3)
2 Wrongly charge REM with naming a member of Beady Eye (3-6)
3 As Norman Cook is also known (6-4)
4+63D "I've got to stop smiling, it gives the wrong impression, I love you all the same", 1999 (3-5-3-3-4-2-5)
5 The kind of person who joins bands like The Music or Chumbawamba (6)
6 (See 33 down)
7 Strangely sure about nothing in naming Josh _____ US singer / songwriter (5)
8+44D More 'Humbug'? There's one way to find out (4-2-3-3)
10 A craving for Frankie & The Heartstrings (6)
11 Goth rock band, led by Andrew



Eldritch into the 'Temple Of Love' (7-2-5)
12 The Defamation Of _____, album from Plan B (10-5)
13 (See 100 down)
14 Along with Eminem and Skylar Grey he advised 'I Need A Doctor' (2-3)
15 Legendary British band whose rendition of 'I'm A Man' features in an episode of The Simpsons (9)
16 (See 1 down)
24 A single by White Lies or electro pop duo from New York (4-5)
27 "He's got this dream about buying some _____ / He's gonna give up the booze and the one night stands", from Gerry Rafferty's 'Baker Street' (4)
28 'Let It Be... _____', was a stripped-down version of The Beatles' album released in 2003 (5)
30 Domino Records label band fronted by Hayden Thorpe (4-6)
31 Lovers end trips around with Secret Machines (3-6-5)
32 Did the fire go out of Deep Purple's riff laden classic? (5-2-3-5)
33+6D Chuck Berry number that

begins "I'm gonna write a little letter, gonna mail it to my local DJ" (4-4-8)
40 "So I'm moving to New York 'cos I've got problems with my _____", The Wombats (5)
42 "Every _____ of every waking hour I'm choosing my confessions", from REM's 'Losing My Religion' (7)
44 (See 8 down)
46 'Rag _____' by The Four Seasons or 'Parts' by Ho e (4)
47 Perhaps give Amy leg up to see Slipknot performance (2-6)
48+103D The Ronettes looking for a sweetheart in 1963 (2-2-4)
54 "It was a cold and wet December day when we touched the ground at JFK", 1988 (5-2-6)
58+83D "Sweet Loretta Martin thought she was a woman but she was another man", 1969 (3-4)
59 The boy has grown up with Neneh Cherry (8)
61 Take action with Nelly Furtado (2-2)
62+96A Heavens above, this song must have been penned during the night by Paul Weller (3-7-2-3-5)
63 (See 4 down)

64 In denial that this Lynsey De Paul hit was the theme song to 70's TV sitcom (2-8)
65+101A Everything's up to date in the house, including music by The Jam (3-3-4)
67 Terrible wet days spent with heavy metal band (7)
69 A bit of vulgar gossip concerning man with Art Brut (5)
70 (See 78 across)
74 Depressed listening to Blink 182 (4)
75 Keith West was talking shop in 1967 with 'Excerpt From A Teenage Opera' concerning the character _____ Jack (6)
77 His hits in 1990 included 'N-R-G' and 'Killer' (7)
80 Perhaps not as identical twins Jay and Mike _____ who founded Gene Loves Jezebel (5)
83 (See 58 down)
85 MC Hammer hit '_____ Sweetness' (2)
89 The woman who accompanied Brian Fallon out of Gaslight Anthem to The Horrible Crowes (5)
91 Alison Moyet music in Halfords (3)
93 "Some people get up at the

break of day, gotta go to work before it gets too late', New Order (6)
96 Do a '60s dance to Goldfrapp number (5)
97 Portishead bronze themselves (5)
99 "Got a _____ in the back of my car" which doesn't help Biffy Clyro in 'Living Is A Problem Because Everything Dies' (3)
100+13D Rock band named after character in Charles Dickens' David Copperfield (5-4)
101 They've fed us from the 'Motorcade Of Generosity' to the 'Showroom Of Compassion' (4)
103 (See 48 down)
105+110D Lou Reed album tells about him and where he's from (3-3)
107 Liverpool band whose first single was the uncharted 'Way Out' in 1987 (3)
109 "I find the _____ that lets you slip inside / Kiss the girl, she's not behind the door" (3)
110 (See 105 down)
111 Half of the emails are about the girl heading for 'California' (3)
114 Common music to come about (2)

NOVEMBER 26 ANSWERS
ACROSS: 1 Fallen Empires, 8+94 Tiger Blood, 12+14A Return To Sender, 16+31D Hey Joe, 18 Speed, 19 Denis, 20 Acid, 21 Skyking, 24 Heart, 25 Sheila, 27 Unit, 29 REM, 30 Frigid Pink, 32 East, 34+24D Amber Hands, 35 Moby, 36 Train DOWN: 1 Futureheads, 2 Light My Fire, 3 Errors, 4 Ebb, 5+26D Procol Harum, 7 Savage, 11 Kerbdog, 13+6D Nile Rodgers, 17 Rita, 21 Starkey, 22+15A You Me At Six, 23 Nails, 28 Mito, 33+10A Tom Vek

Festive FANMAIL

BUFF UP YOUR BAUBLES AND LET'S DELVE IN SANTA'S BULGING SACK

Edited by Santa Claus



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The Big Xmas Issue

What everyone's talking about this week

Win!
THE LETTER OF
THE WEEK WINS
50p TO SPEND AT
PRETTY GREEN



DIFFERENT YEAR, STILL MOANING

To: Santa
From: Liam

Alright, man. What would be fucking proper is if you could get our kid to pull his fucking head out his arse and finish flapping about with the Tie-Dying Nerds or whatever they're called because I don't fucking care enough to remember their name, right? So he's said he's not having 2015, yeah, well fucking neither am I, I never wanted to do fucking 2015 in the first place. 2012 is where it's fucking at for an Oasis comeback, man. The year we recorded the first demo tape with Noel in the band. We'll play that demo tape in full, and then, because it only had seven songs, we'll rewind it back to the start and we can all be walking backwards and talking wonky and that and it'll be mega man, proper fucking psychedelic. Then we'll play it all again. 2015 was too far away anyway, man, I can't keep coming out with classics like 'Three Ring Circus' for another three fucking years. Please. I mean, get fucked. I don't care. Except I do right, but I don't, 'cos no, he can go fuck himself. We're never getting back together, it's over, right? All about the Eye. So see you in 2012, you fat cunt.

Santa's response...

I'm so confused, Liam. Not quite as much as you, though, it seems. I'll give you some Christmas advice. Step away from this whole

mangled mess and do something no-one's expecting: front a reformed Ride! That way, you get your very own piece of the

lucrative reunion market (shoegaze is so hot right now) and you can leave all this pressure and nastiness behind as you

drift off into the haze of reverb. Come on, you've already got Andy Bell onside, so you're a quarter of the way there - SC

HARD ACT TO FOLLOW

From: Peter

To: Santa
Ohhhhhhhhhhhhh, right, the thing is, The Libertines were beautiful, it was a poignant picaresque novel of sweaty boys and beery boozers and backstreet beauty. But it's done, my sparrows, and I'm an actor now. I am at least as considerable an actor as my co-star Charlotte Gainsbourg is a credible musician. I don't understand why people are finding the transition so hard. I mean if you think about it, I've always been a two-dimensional, fraudulent representation of real life.

From: Santa

To: Peter

It is mystifying, isn't it? A copy of Justin Timberlake's autobiography is in the post for you - SC

CLAUS FOR CONCERN

From: Dave

To: Santa

Dude, I'm not trying to get all up in your beard, and this is a little uncomfortable because we're like, bros, but... you're kind of stepping on my toes. I mean, the 'nice guy' thing? That's my thing. The grinning, the generosity, the facial hair... I'm just saying, man, I'm flattered but it's getting uncomfortable. I just wanna be able to rock my best, you know, and I just can't rock with you on my coattails, man. Love you dude.

From: Santa

To: Dave

I will fuck you up, little drummer boy. You and all your crew. Step off - SC

MERRY CURSEMAS

From: Tyler

To: Santa

Yo fat bitch, imma rape your elf and take a shit in his tiny clogs. Oh, motherfucker I did it again! I mean, dang. Right. OK. Thing is Santa, I got some problems. My mom put a swearbox in the kitchen (the third-floor kitchen, I mean) and every time I cuss, I gotta put a dollar in it. It's cleaning me out, man! So I came to ask, man, you got any jobs going right now? I'm good with poles. And woodwork. He he... PIGEONS! No, I mean, I'm very reliable, and my private tutors can give me excellent references. I get along well with all kinds of people, and am a firm believer in equal opportunities.

From: Santa

To: Tyler

Sure, there's this new position I've just invented, especially for you. You can be Chief Mean Tester for the Naughty List. Your role will be to knock on the door of every child in the world and stand humbly and silently while they hurl puerile, thoughtless, banal and tiresome abuse, and possibly foodstuffs, at you in order to incontrovertibly prove that they are in fact hateful little bastards. You will then tick a box and move on to the next house. No holidays, no dental cover. You're hired - SC

BAH! HUMBUG

From: Miles

To: Santa

Dear Santa, could you fix it for me to join the Arctic Monkeys, la? I'm well better than Cookie on '505', and what with him in his

dad's old leather jacket and Alex in Shakin' Stevens fancy dress these days, frankly they could do with upping their style quotient. And if there's one thing I hate more than people going on about how I'm just Alex Turner's mate, it's not being in the Arctic bloody Monkeys. Sound, man, nice one.

From: Santa
To: Miles
Sorry, Miles, the Monkeys cashed in their one transfer gift token when they got rid of the bassist who hangs around with Toddla T all the time now, so it's dry cleaning vouchers for you again this year - SC

WIN-TER WONDERLAND

From: Win
To: Santa
Dear Santa, I am plagued with fret. When I'm not worrying about the souls of the kids, the kids on the streets with the wild eyes and the fiery dreams (which is a lot of the time), I'm thinking... how the fuckadoodle am I gonna follow that album up? What keeps me up at night, Santa (apart from Régine and her bloody accordion) is... what next?

From: Santa
To: Win
Well, if you started in your 'Neighborhood...' and you went via some '...Tunnels' and then kept the car

running until you ended up in 'The Suburbs' contemplating 'The Sprawl', I would suggest the only next step available to you is 'The Out-Of-Town Business Park'. Imagine the myriad inspirations! 'Despair #1 (24 Hour Tesco But No Poppy Seed Bagels)', 'Walking IKEA Backwards', 'My Restaurant Of Themes', 'Factory Outlet Baby'... all these and more could be yours for a fraction of the high street price - SC

THE POLLY AND THE IVY

From: Polly
To: Santa
'Christmas Day Truce': "Snow fell on the front like flakes of skin/The guns fell silent/A ball, Tommy, fetch a ball!/The games we played, in no man's land/The lines/Drawn in blood/On the mud/A tough call/For the ref".

From: Santa
To: Polly
I'm not having this - The Farm did that song back in 1990 and called it 'All Together Now', you doom-feathered plagiarist. And I'm not getting you any more white dresses until you take some to the charity shop - SC

LANA DEL REINDEER

From: Lana
To: Santa
Santa, I don't get it. All I did was write a good song with

a clever, timely video, and now these abject tossbags on the internet won't stop carping on at each other about the politics of authenticity and pop at the end of history and the semiotics of femininity. I just thought it'd be cool to sing about *Gears Of War* in a Bobbie Gentry voice, y'know? What's a girl to do?

From: Santa
To: Lana
I'm so sorry, doll, I feel your pain - but I live in fucking Lapland, and even I'm over it already - SC

XMAS RAPPING

From: Jay & Kanye
To: Santa
Everywhere we go, we try to tell people about SWEET BABY JESUS. We try to spread the good news about Our Lord, and His teachings on this, the anniversary of His birth. But for some reason, all people seem to want to hear about is how we're so sexy that women throw themselves under our feet and force us against our will to degrade them by calling them bitches, how we're pretty much picking Fabergé eggs out of our belly buttons, but how underneath all the glamour we're sad because we're bellends and we just don't know what to do about it.

From: Santa
To: Jay and Kanye
I don't know whether I hate or love you guys, but either way, it fucking hurts - SC

SO BAD FOR YOUR ELF

From: Rihanna
To: Santa
Whatever you're going to give me, I wish you would just give it to me already. Hard. Don't rein it in. Down my chimney and right into the toe-seam of my stocking. I've been a good girl gone bad, BAD, but you've got the list so you know already, ha! Wanna see what I've left out for you? You like that don't you? Brandy makes you randy you fucking fat filth YOU LOVE IT!

From: Santa
To: Rihanna
I got you some fucking clothes, OK? Now stop dry-humping the reindeer, it makes them skittish - SC

Stalkers



From: Alex
To: Santa
"I met NME's Laura Snapes at Glasto. I was pleased to meet her on the Friday, before she got more leathery than my jacket and fell down a bog on Saturday. Twice."



From: Surge
To: Santa
"Me and Tom and one of the others got Marian Paterson to pose for this. She laughed so hard at my knock knock jokes she didn't notice my left hand there!"



From: Rastamouse
To: Santa
"Me met da snappa Rich Johnson down Glasto man. Me saw him at 4am in da Dance Village too - dat man has serious riddim!"



From: Alex
To: Santa
"I met Matt Wilkinson shortly after Glasto. He loved my pic of Snapes falling down the drop-toilet."

NME

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DOES CHRISTMAS KILL BRAINCELLS?

TESTING MUSICIANS' MEMORIES AFTER A LIFE OF MISTLETOE AND WINE

This Year

CLIFF RICHARD

QUESTION 1

How many red soldiers are in the video to your 1988 Christmas Number One, 'Mistletoe And Wine'?

"Ten?"

Wrong. Six.

"I was only four out."

QUESTION 2

What colour jacket did you wear when you performed your Christmas Number One 'Saviour's Day' on Top Of The Pops in 1990?

"No idea."

Wrong. Silver. It's a Cliff classic

"Really? It's probably been auctioned off by now."



Cliff, in his brief gangsta rap period

QUESTION 3

What number did your 1999 Christmas charity single 'The Millennium Prayer' come in Channel 4's 2003 poll of worst single of all time?

"This question is null and void because it was the biggest-selling single of the year. Whoever did this chart should be shot. How can you sell 1.3 million in five weeks and be one of the worst chart records? I want you to write that down because no-one talks about this."

Wrong. Number Two

QUESTION 4

You were the first rock star to be knighted in 1995, before Sir Paul McCartney, Sir Elton John, Sir Mick Jagger and Sir Tom Jones.

In 'The 12 Days Of Christmas', how many lords are a-leaping?

"Six lords-a-leaping? 11?"

Wrong. 10 lords a-leaping.

When are they going to make you a lord, Sir Cliff?



"You need to be politically orientated to be a Lord. You have to sit in the House Of Lords. I'm not sure I would fit that role."

QUESTION 5

What vehicle were you standing in front of when you appeared on the front cover of NME on December 14, 1962 (left)?

"Er..."

Wrong. The bus from 'Summer Holiday'
"Of course. The bus!"

QUESTION 6

Which famous DJ (left) introduced you when you performed 'All My Love' on Christmas Top Of The Pops in 1967?

"No idea. Jimmy Savile?"

Correct

"That was a guess. There's no way I was going to remember that."

QUESTION 7

What free item do you get with the special edition of your new DVD, Cliff Richard - The Soulacious Tour?

"(Unaware that he's sitting in front of a giant poster that says 'Includes Cliff Richard 2012 diary' in massive letters) They've just told me. I can't remember. A jigsaw? A photo?"

Wrong. An official 2012 Cliff Richard pocket diary. The answer is actually right behind you

QUESTION 8

What is the name of the lady who sells official Cliff Richard jewellery (ideal for mums everywhere at Christmas) on cliffrichard.org?

"Oh dear. I'll probably know when you tell me."

Wrong. Sheila Pickles

"Oh yes. Miss Pickles."

QUESTION 9

You sing the line "But say a prayer; pray for the other ones" in Band Aid II's 'Do They Know It's Christmas?'.

Who sang it in the 1984 original?

"Boy George."

No. George Michael

"I got George right. Can I have half a point?"

Half a point. But only because it's Christmas, Sir Cliff



QUESTION 10

What do the 'C' and 'H' stand for in your cover of 'Christmas Alphabet'?

"(Sings) 'C' is for the candle light. No. 'C' is for the Christmas tree?"

Wrong. 'C' is for the candy trimmed around the Christmas tree. 'H' is for the happiness with all the family

Total Score
1.5/10

"That's not great. I've done so much, you move on from one project to the next. Every day is just wiped!"

Go to NME.COM/blogs for the full Braincells hall of fame (and shame)

2012



February

March

M T W T F S S
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30
 April

M T W T F S
 June



NME
The Stone Roses
by Tim Jarryd/Adam



OUT
WEDNESDAY
DECEMBER
28

In the next issue of NME...

ON JANUARY 1, 1962

THE

BEATLES

ENTERED A

PROFESSIONAL

STUDIO FOR

THE FIRST

TIME EVER

The resulting sessions were rejected by Decca Records, who told the band that "guitar groups are on the way out"

FIFTY YEARS ON

we celebrate just how wrong they were with this very

SPECIAL EDITION...

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pay as you go

free
headphones
worth £60



HTC Wildfire S £149.99



Barcelona from Orange £39.99

with any pay as you go phone from £30

This Christmas we'll give you a free pair of Angle & Curve® headphones worth £60 when you buy any pay as you go phone from £30, like the HTC Wildfire S or the Barcelona from Orange. Sounds good, doesn't it?

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