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**"NO GAME PLAN.  
NO COMPROMISE"**  
THE MACCABEES REVEAL  
THEIR 2012 DOMINATION PLAN

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# ON REPEAT

THE SOUNDS RATTLING ROUND THE SKULLS  
OF THE NME STAFF THIS WEEK



## GRIMES

Genesis

From a girl who denounced God at 12, you might expect something more unholy than this Noah's Ark of sex, sweetness and progressive synth-pop that sits somewhere between 'Deep Cuts'-era Knife, 'Hollaback Girl' and the soundtrack to some cunts-in-capes computer game. But subtlety is Grimes' virtue, and this sees 4AD's new signing on peak form.

**Mike Williams, Deputy Editor**

## THE XX

Open Eyes (demo)

A skeletal, dour triumph from the sessions for The xx's long-awaited new album. Coming off like a cousin of 'Shelter', here we find Romy Madley Croft providing a sadcore vocal bouquet over shadowy guitar, forsaking their old Chris Isaak vibe for entrancing, Chet Baker-indebted melancholy.

**Priya Elan, Assistant Editor, NME.COM**

## FIELD MUSIC

A New Town

Another taster from new album 'Plumb', which is out in February and, if there's any justice at all, could very well be this year's 'The English Riviera'. Its melodical beginnings soon evolve into an XTC-ish, falsetto-infused white funk romp; delectably inventive but forged of solid pop gold at its core.

**Hamish MacBain, Assistant Editor**

## EVIAN CHRIST

Fuck It None Of Y'All Don't Rap

"Anonymous electronic auteur" could be played as a marketing hook, but the clutch of Evian Christ tracks that snuck onto YouTube in the dying days of 2011 modestly suggest the arrival of a bright new talent. Here's the pick, a flurry of ghetto-tech raps, jittery footwork beats and gliding synth that glows with an illicit euphoria.

**Louis Pattison, writer**

## DESTROYER

Leave Me Alone (New Order cover)

Just as last year's excellent 'Kaputt' LP was an inspired re-calibration of smooth

'80s sounds rather than shameless grave-robbing, this cover of one of that decade's most important bands *more* than does the original justice – ironically sounding like Joy Division acolytes Interpol.

**Rick Martin, News Editor**

## SCISSOR SISTERS FT KRYSTAL PEPSEY

Shady Love

Currently cleaving *NME.COM* users' opinions in half, this very un-Scissor Sisters, Boyz Noise-produced track – featuring one Azealia Banks masquerading as Krystal Pepsy – is either a sub-Black Eyed Peas blip or the most exciting rave-pop thing to be released all short year. We're in the latter camp.

**Tim Chester, Deputy Editor, NME.COM**

## SKRILLEX FT ELLIE GOULDING

Summit

Say what you like about Skrillex's Transformer-heartbeat skronk, but you couldn't see Pendulum doing this. Here, Ellie G's wispy warbles are sliced'n'diced with serial killer precision for a stimulant-soaked, quasi-romantic banger that definitely won't be appearing on any department store adverts soon.

**Jamie Fullerton, Features Editor**

## KARIN DREIJER ANDERSSON

No Face

True to spooky-voiced form, The Knife's Karin has recorded a deeply unsettling solo track for a charity compilation to benefit victims of the Japanese tsunami. It features her obliquely going "ooh-ooh" for five minutes, like a melancholy ghost who's just trodden on an upturned plug. Bleak. But what did you expect, a rowdy cover of 'Whoop! There It Is'?

**Luke Lewis, Editor, NME.COM**



## LANA DEL REY

National Anthem

Despite singing, "Money is the anthem of success", LDR's probably *not* commenting on how the most solvent Republican candidate will win the caucuses this spring. Coming on like a deliciously stoned Katy Perry, this'll soundtrack a few summer months at least...

**Laura Snapes, Assistant Reviews Editor**

TRACK  
OF  
THE  
WEEK

## WILLIS EARL BEAL

Evening's Kiss

"Write to me and I will make you a drawing." So states the handwritten press release for Willis Earl Beal's debut single, 'Evening's Kiss'. Further down there's a phone number (001 773 295 2135). "Call me", it says, "and I will sing you a song". The Chicagoan has been hiding himself away for the past four years, picking up famous and not-so-famous devotees as a result of leaving his fractured but often brilliant home-recorded CDs around public places. He's kind of like Jandek meets the real-life, male, soul-stirring version of Audrey Tautou's

Amélie in the film of the same name – all about mystery and with just as alluring a backstory as the French enigma.

The newest signing to XL (via freshly launched imprint Hot

Charity), his debut single is an ever-so-slightly cleaned-up version of one of those early songs. We say 'slightly' because it's in no way polished – Willis strums harshly at a battered guitar, and background hiss cuts through like a razor. Then he whispers a heroically sad tale of denied love and loneliness. Sure, Willis might initially seem like *just another dude with a voice*, but he's roughly a billion times more captivating than the legion of lightweight singer-songwriter bozos who rule the mainstream at present. Listen to him, pick up your phone and get drawn deep into his shadowy world...

**Matt Wilkinson, New Music Editor**

*Like a male, soul-stirring version of Amélie – with as alluring a back story*

THE ULTIMATE MUSIC GUIDE

# THE CLASH

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COLLECTORS'  
SPECIAL



**'WE AIN'T  
ASHAMED  
TO FIGHT!'**

CLASSIC INTERVIEWS  
UNSEEN FOR YEARS

**WHITE RIOT!**

A NEW LOOK AT  
EVERY CLASH ALBUM

**'IT FELT  
LIKE A  
WHIRLWIND!'**

EXCLUSIVE  
INTRODUCTION  
BY MICK JONES

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# UPFRONT

WHAT'S HAPPENED AND WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MUSIC THIS WEEK

*Edited by Rick Martin*



Not sure why  
you're laughing,  
Graham - you're  
the one in a cravat

# BLUR EXCLUSIVE: "WE'RE DETERMINED NOT TO BLEMISH OUR LEGACY"

As Blur prepare to make their grand comeback at the Brit Awards next month, **Graham Coxon** discusses the Britpop legends' plans for the rest of 2012 – and beyond

## MAIN EVENT

If 2011 taught us anything about Damon Albarn – and, by extension, Blur – it's that it's near impossible to work out what music's biggest workaholic will do

next. In fact, at times in recent years it has appeared as if he's had little idea himself. As a recap: over the past 12 months alone he's reunited The Good, The Bad & The Queen, recorded a quick-fire album in the Congo with DRC Music and found the time to perform live with Gorillaz to celebrate their 10th anniversary. And that's before we even mention Rocketjuice And The Moon – his project with Flea and Tony Allen – and producing soul legend Bobby Womack.

However, there's one fixed point in Damon and the rest of Blur's diary this year – reuniting at The O2 in London to accept the Outstanding Contribution To Music Award at the Brit Awards next month. While for some the announcement was a bolt from the blue, it was less of a surprise to anyone who'd been keeping a close eye on Damon's comments in recent months. Only last November he was revealing to *NME* that the band had been meeting up regularly and had recorded new material together, a spoken word piece with Michael Horowitz that was intended as a plea to reinstate the Notting Hill Carnival (which it duly was before they could put the track out, rendering it "redundant"). "It's amazing playing all those old songs," he teased, before speaking of tentative plans for a live return, albeit across the Atlantic. "We've always wanted to play in America again. We think there might be an audience for us over there."

Three months on and, contrary to those comments, the reunion is instead landing back home here in Blighty. And while it's great to have them back, it has come at something of an awkward moment for Graham Coxon, given he's gearing up to relaunch his solo career with new album 'A + E' in March. "It's sort of strange that whenever I start to do anything, there's some sort of Blur event as well," he says with a trademark wry grin. "It should be a laugh playing the songs again, though." It's pretty obvious that the better received that Brits performance is, the greater pressure the band will feel to do some proper shows this summer, once Graham's completed his spring solo tour and Damon's tied up his loose ends with Rocketjuice and Womack.

One thing that has been mooted by Damon is an annual one-night-per-year knees-up

("Madness-style"). However, by the sounds of it, he'll need to win Graham round on that one. "I'm not sure we'd be satisfied doing a circus every year," he frowns. "Damon's really creative and intuitive and I don't know whether he'd like sitting still for that long. I don't know whether it'd be doing it much justice to roll out every year and just do bloody 'Parklife'." However, he can see a way where playing live could work: the band committing to serious recording sessions. And what are the chances of that happening this year? "We still like to meet up regularly and have a little bit of a bash about," he shrugs. "But we've got four individual brains, all going off on their own thing. If Blur record anything that's gonna be taken seriously by us four, it can't just be a casual thing. It's good to casually say we get together, but if we were gonna do anything to be taken really seriously, by ourselves or anyone else, it'd have to be a bit more than casual."

Alex James certainly thinks the band will record again, though, hinting to *NME* that it was a topic of conversation at their Christmas drink last year. He stops tantalisingly short of

*"Damon's really creative – he doesn't sit still for long"*

GRAHAM COXON

committing to an album, however. "Is there such a thing as an album?" he comments. "And does music have to come 12 tracks at a time?" With this in mind, we wonder if one-off singles or an EP might be a more likely avenue for the release of new music. "Maybe, yeah," Graham agrees. "For a lot of people it's wishful thinking and I guess for all four of us, it depends on how busy we are. But we really do still enjoy meeting up".

Ultimately, it seems, less may well be more when it comes to the future of Britpop's most complex four-piece puzzle. And it appears 2012 is as much about protecting the legacy of Blur as celebrating it with James Corden and co at The O2. "I don't think we tarnished the legacy in 2009 [at the reunion gigs]. We're very careful about that," Graham concludes. "We wanna keep our stuff unblemished, free from nonsense – and sometimes that's quite hard. Sometimes it's best to do nothing at all than do something shit."

So big summer reunion gigs and new material out this year? It's too early to say. But we'd wager there's still plenty of distance left to run for Blur in 2012 – and beyond.

**NME.COM** Head to [NME.COM/video](http://NME.COM/video) to watch exclusive video interviews with Graham Coxon and Alex James – and stay tuned to [NME.COM/news](http://NME.COM/news) for the latest updates on this year's Blur reunion

## Pick the bill for Graham's solo tour

The Blur guitarist is on the road to promote new album 'A + E' in April

**A**fter releasing his ninth solo album 'A + E' in March, Graham will hit the road for a solo UK tour in April. And rather than let his label/manager/agent pick the supports, he's putting the decision in his fans' hands, encouraging local bands in each city on the tour to submit their material for a fans' vote on his website.

"I don't know if anyone has done something like this before, it just seemed like quite a good way of having something a bit different every night," Graham explains. "And if the bands

have a local fanbase, all the better – we get to have a right old knees-up."

Interested in playing? Graham says he simply looking for "dynamism", regardless of genre. "I'll be very open minded to different-sounding groups – it'll be interesting to see who applies," Graham says. "I do like music that has a bit of urgency, a punk rock spirit to it, though."

**Graham Coxon plays the following dates:**

- O2 Academy Oxford (April 13)
- Gateshead Sage (15)

- Edinburgh Liquid Rooms (16)
- Manchester Sound Control (19)
- Sheffield Leadmill (20)
- Nottingham Rescue Rooms (21)
- Brighton Concorde (23)
- Cambridge Junction (24)
- London HMV Forum (25)
- Gloucester Guildhall (27)
- Bristol Trinity (28)
- Exeter Phoenix (29)
- Falmouth Princess Pavilions (30)

Vote for Graham's support bands for the forthcoming tour at [grahamcoxon.co.uk](http://grahamcoxon.co.uk)





James spent that entire O2 Arena gig trying not to look up Nicky's skirt...

# MANICS: 'THERE WILL BE GIGS THIS YEAR'

*Just weeks after their supposed send-off gig at The O2, Nicky Wire reveals the Manics have made some plans for 2012 after all – they just don't involve playing gigs in the UK...*

**I**t is a lady's prerogative to change her mind. And as we know, it is also the Manic Street Preachers'. Not weeks after pledging to go away for at least two years following their spectacular singles marathon, Nicky Wire has revealed to *NME* that they will indeed be playing shows in 2012.

What's this? The final contradiction, from the band who pledged to split after one album...? Well, perhaps not. Read their 'National Treasures' promise closely and you'll notice that they only said they'd leave the UK alone while they reinvent themselves. There was no mention of the rest of the world. So rejoice, those already suffering

withdrawal symptoms. "We'll be doing small bits, obviously [in] places you go less," says Nicky. "You've still got to satisfy fans' needs so there'll still be little gigs around the rest of the world."

But Nicky's feelings about the homeland are going to take a bit more time to work through.

"In terms of the UK, we just need to disappear into our own world, into our studio," he says. The plan is still very much to go away for a couple of years – "We've had a good run, we can't rush anything now" – but it seems we'll be

seeing Nicky, James and Sean sooner than anyone first thought.

"We're not really going to be taking a break from music," Nicky continues. "We'll be making music for ourselves

*"We'll be figuring out if we still have a place in the world"*

**NICKY WIRE**

and figuring out what we can do to still have a place in this ever-changing world, if we can."

Yet it still may not even be that simple. Last summer, before the band's current

iteration signed its death warrant, Nicky pledged to play some kind of anti-Diamond Jubilee celebration. "I mean, how fucking saturated have we been with the Royal Family this year?" he raged. "So there'll be one gig, just to avoid having to listen to Prince Phillip for an hour."

Pressed on this promise, he blushes. "Well, even if we just busk on the streets in Blackwood, we could do that. But as far as proper gigs in the UK, we said we'd go away and we will."

So it looks as if the term 'Manic Street Preachers' may be about to come full circle. And, if nothing else, the superfans now have some clues as to where to be camping out this June...

# NME EXTRA WIN NOEL GALLAGHER TOUR TICKETS!

Signed Maccabees albums also up for grabs – along with exclusive 'Given To The Wild' remix

## WIN!

- Miss out on Noel Gallagher's debut solo tour last October? Don't be too downhearted, though, as we've got a pair of tickets to the Chief's second solo jaunt to give away. You win the competition, you choose the date you want to go to, simple.
- If that wasn't enough, we've also got signed copies of two of the year's most exciting new albums – five each of The Maccabees' 'Given To The Wild' and Chairlift's 'Something'.

## HEAR!

- An exclusive band remix of 'Ayala' from The Maccabees' new album.
- Don't forget to listen to our issue playlist, with tracks from Primal Scream, Howler, Tribes and more.

## HERE'S HOW

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## POP WILL TWEET ITSELF

This week's Twittersphere gold



**KANYE WEST**  
DONDA is a design company which will galvanize amazing thinkers and put them in a creative space. We can collectively affect the world through design... we need to pick up where Steve Jobs left off  
@kanyewest

**JULIAN CASABLANCAS**  
I'd guess folks will prob remember 2011 as the year 'this last new great movement that I can join' started...  
@Casablanca\_J

**AZEALIA BANKS**  
@KREAYSHAWN  
You're a dumb bitch. And you can't rap. I'll sit on your face. Fall back slut.  
@AzealiaBanks



Liam has his eyes on the (NME) prize



## WHO THE BANDS ARE VOTING FOR

The Courteeners' Liam Fray reveals which singer "stirs" him, and shares his other top tips

### BEST BRITISH BAND

"Arctic Monkeys seem like a band who are really enjoying themselves at the minute. And why not, when you've just released an album that sounds as gorgeous as it does effortless? Hats off to them."

### BEST TRACK

"Dive In' by The Horrors. I thought the whole album was stunning, but this was the first track I heard. It sounded really strung out and relaxed, not something you'd associate with the men in black. They've got better with each record."

### BEST ALBUM

"Laura Marling stirs something inside of me – she has done since day one."

"A Creature I Don't Know" is a more earthy effort than before, but no less affecting. Her ability to transport you into the songs is unnerving and beautiful."

### BEST FESTIVAL

"Based on the fact that every time we've been, the crowds have been amazing. I'm going to say T In The Park. They're a high-spirited bunch up there over the border. Must be all that Tennent's."

Now it's time to have your say. Head to [NME.COM/awards](http://NME.COM/awards) to vote in all 26 awards categories – and keep checking [NME.COM/news](http://NME.COM/news) for more details of our glittering ceremony at London's O2 Academy Brixton on February 29



MacColl looks forward to seeing you on his February tour...

## BBC REVEAL 'HEAVIER' NEW DIRECTION

First reggae, now monster riffs: Jamie MacColl hints at Bombay's new sound

With three albums in three years under their belts, nobody would begrudge the lads from Bombay Bicycle Club taking a well-earned break in 2012. But, according to guitarist Jamie MacColl, the band have already got some new tracks bubbling under the surface. And while they included a reggae cover of 'Lights Out, Words Gone' on their 'Leave It' EP, released on January 1, it sounds like the new material will be somewhat heavier.

"Jack's [Steadman, singer] already written a couple of songs," says Jamie on the prospect of a fourth studio LP. "There's one song with this absolutely monster guitar riff, and then [there's] another one he wrote on tour that is very, very electronic and poppy. The first time I heard it I thought, 'What the fuck am I going to play on this?'"

Sadly, while Jamie says that he'd like to put out a new record in the next 12 months, the smart money's on an early 2013 release.



"We've got so much touring booked in the first six months of this year that we'll have to experiment with writing on the road, which isn't something we've done before," he explains. Still, if it lives up to 'A Different Kind Of Fix', we sure as hell won't mind waiting an extra month or two...

# SPEED DIAL

## DREW McCONNELL

### BABYSHAMBLES

*No Pete Doherty, no drummer, no sign of a new album... but an acoustic tour booked for the spring: what the fuck's going on?*

*There's a tour coming up, and Pete Doherty isn't playing with you. Is this the end of Babyshambles as we know it?*

"You know what, people have been asking me that since 2004 and I always have the same answer – it's not the band where you can make plans. It's a very volatile and unpredictable band to be in, but it's been incredibly rewarding, the last seven years or however long I've been playing with them. To keep my sanity you can never assume that there's anything else happening... if that makes any sense!"

**What does Pete make of you and Mik Whitnall heading off on the road together without him?**

"If he's in town I'm sure he'd love to come out [and watch us play], but he's in Paris at the moment nurturing his burgeoning career as an actor and, as far as I'm concerned, hopefully writing some new songs."

**Well, it appears he has been – he recently posted some demos on YouTube. Do you know if they're new Babyshambles songs or solo tracks instead?**

"Erm, has he (*sounding confused*)? I'm not very good at doing the whole internet thing. I'd love to hear them!"

**You're also touring without a drummer. Back in 2010 Danny Goffey – formerly of Supergrass – was playing drums after Adam Ficek left the band. Is Danny still involved with Babyshambles? Are there plans to get someone else drumming?**

"There's no plans – songs come first. When Peter's got a bunch of new songs together, and if he wants to play them with us, we'll probably sit around and have a jam and then think about who's going to play the drums for us. Danny would be my first preference – I had a great time with him and he's an amazing drummer and an amazing musician – but he's no longer around. Danny's just hilarious."



**Why go out on the road now with Mik, rather than wait for Pete?**

"Well basically, after my accident – I'd broken my spine in three places, it was pretty savage; this car ran a red light and I was on my bike and it was pretty horrific [in July 2011] – I had a lot of time on my own at home with guitars. I'd written a bunch of new songs, and I wanted to roadtest them. Pete is in Paris writing new songs and Mik said he'd been writing some new songs too..."

**How's your health now?**

"I'm mobile again – I've been going to physiotherapy every day. I'm on my feet again. I just wanted to get playing again. It's going to be acoustic 'cos it's just me

and Mik – if it was electric guitar and bass without drums it'd sound weird."

**What does your new material sound like?**

"There'll be a subtext of 'I've just broken my spine in three places'... Not really, they're more about isolation. I've written 25 songs in three months. I don't know how many of them I'll be playing at the shows. I don't know how long we'll have. We'll play a couple of mine, a couple of Mik's

and maybe a couple of 'Shambles ones too. I haven't heard Mik's stuff yet and he hasn't heard my stuff yet either! Will we be rehearsing new stuff? We'll probably get together a couple of times before the gigs, yeah."

### So WHERE'S PETE?

2011 was Doherty's quietest year since 'Up The Bracket' was released, with the singer spending most of his time out of the limelight and in his new home of Paris.

### Films

There are two films featuring Pete in the pipeline. One, French period drama *Confessions Of A Child Of The Century*, sees him star alongside Charlotte Gainsbourg, while the other is a cameo in Brit-horror flick *Rock And Roll Fuck'n' Lovely*.

### Music

New tracks are still being shared – mostly via YouTube and the singer's Letters From Albion blog. The quality varies wildly: some are unlistenable, but a couple show real promise, like the Morrissey-esque 'Down For The Outing' and 'Bird Cage', a duet with the female landlord of Camden's Torriano pub. We'll continue to expect the unexpected from indie's most unpredictable troubadour...

**Do you know which Babyshambles songs you'll be playing?**

"We'll probably work that out a bit closer to the time. A lot of people don't know this, but Mik's got quite a sweet kind of ska voice, so I guess some of the more jumpy songs will probably get played."

**Only two shows have been announced so far – in the salubrious surroundings of Luton and Scunthorpe. Will there be any more?**

"Yeah, there will be – there should be about eight or nine more shows. We're still sorting them all out."

**Does this mark the start of you and Mik working together more as a duo regularly? It feels like a contingency plan for the end of Babyshambles...**

"Oh no – we're not thinking of it as a career-minded thing. That's the first time I've even thought about it! It could end up being a set of old 'Shambles songs, it could end up being new stuff... We really haven't thought about it."

**Given you're keen to stress this isn't a Babyshambles tour, will you be giving yourselves a new name?**

"It's really not that contrived. It's literally just Mik Whitnall and Drew McConnell playing a few new ideas and some old songs on guitars – if you were going to call it anything, you'd literally call it 'Mik'n'Drew'."



TALKING  
HEADS

# MUSE? GIVE ME KING ADORA EVERY TIME

With *Haven* and *King Adora* the subject of books and films, **Hamish MacBain** discovers that their hard-luck, coulda-woulda-shoulda-been stories are perfect for a couple of true underdog tales



Of all the press releases that have filled my inbox this week, one stands out as the least expected. It proffers not the next gig by some

unfeasibly cool new band, or a reissue of a 'classic' album, but *Between The Lines*, a 240-page book, out in February, about a band called Haven.

Most likely, you don't remember them. Having relocated to Manchester from Cornwall, they arrived at the turn of the century plying over-emotive Verve anthemia (fashionable at the time). They caught the eye of Johnny Marr's manager Joe Moss and signed a major label deal. Marr guested with them, there were numerous buzz gigs and then a big ballad single, 'Say Something', that made Number 24. The album came out shortly after that, at the start of 2002, didn't sell much, they got dropped, soldiered on a bit, split up. That was that.

I emailed the only friend I knew who might remember them. "A fuckin'... book!" he fumed. "What next? A documentary on King Adora?"

Next day – I swear this is true – another email arrives, detailing, yup, *King Adora: The Documentary*, also out in February. Incredible. For those who don't remember this lot, they were an attempt to satiate fans of the early Manics, when the Manics were dressing like an M&S advert. They wore make-up and girls' clothes, and had songs about anorexia ('Big Isn't Beautiful'). Their 'big' single 'Bionic' made Number 30 in 2001, the album came out shortly after that, didn't sell much, they got dropped, soldiered on a bit, split up. There was a 2010 reunion for two small gigs, around which the film – film! – is hooked.

My initial reaction to both of these projects was to scoff at people dedicating what must be years of their lives to documenting such tiny corners. I mean, everyone loves the odd 'Where are they now?' piece, but books and films are for much bigger subjects, surely? Ones that might actually be of interest to more than a couple of hundred people?

A day passed. I started wondering, more and more, what the content of these two projects would be. I watched the trailer for the film. "I think," muses the guitarist over some over-emotive *X Factor* montage-style music, "everyone was a bit fed up of playing rubbish venues and feeling like we weren't getting anywhere." You don't say! As well as a biog, the Haven book is



described as "a critique of the demise of the music industry which has arguably lost its way, shrivelling under conservative conglomerates and allowing little room for innovation, creativity or true excitement". Now go listen to that Haven song on YouTube and see if you reckon they were shafted out of megastardom... or just not great.

Both of these bands had every opportunity they could wish for: a record deal, great support slots, hype, loads of press, TV appearances... The bottom line, the brutal truth, is that their songs were, barring a select few souls, met with indifference by the public. They weren't good enough. You can but-but-but about the evils of the music biz, timing, whatever, and bands do. Only a gutsy few will admit that they just were not

good enough. Most think their moment is about to come, that the day is just around the corner. The blind faith arising from a small venue of devotees screaming their words back at them makes them believe they are still onto something. If either band read this, they will say "fuck the NME" or whatever.

*They glimpsed what could have been and didn't get it. It's hard to admit defeat*

Because they are right. Everyone else is wrong.

Thing is, this is brilliant, BRILLIANT subject matter for a book or a film. Put a camera in front of Matt Bellamy in a backstage corridor in some arena, you're gonna get the whole "it's just an amazing feeling" schtick. Same for any successful

band. In fact: have you ever watched a film/read a book about a still-successful musician from the last 20 years or so, and really felt you're getting inside their head?

But these guys will give you it all. They glimpsed what could have been, didn't get it, and are now destined to spend the rest of their lives being defined by what was a couple of years of their lives. It's hard to turn your back on it, to admit defeat. So they don't. Someone rings up and says they want to do a book or a film, they think, 'Wow, we meant something!' and spill it all. Look at *Anvil! The Story Of Anvil* – a better piece of work than that Foo Fighters film could ever be. Because it's about the indefinable what could have been, rather than what was, and is.

So I guess what I'm saying is that you can count me in for *Between The Lines: A History Of Haven*, and *King Adora: The Documentary* – with bells on. Keep 'em coming, I say. *Viva Brother. The Musical?* You'd go, wouldn't you?

# DIZZEE'S NEW MIXTAPE: SHARP OR SHIT?

Old-school grime, an Example cameo and a shout-out to Noel Gallagher: we ask whether Dizzee's new tape is brilliant or just bonkers

## BIG QUESTION

On New Year's Day, Dizzee Rascal returned with his new 'DirteeTV.com' mixtape – not just a shameless plug for his new online video channel, but also a revealing insight into where his head's at after the chart-smashing madness of 2009's 'Tongue N' Cheek'. Here's our guide to its head-spinning 25 tracks.

### DIRTEE TV.COM INTRO/ GUTS N' GLORY

"The saga continues... this is the shit you've all been waiting for", begins Dizzee on his first proper release in almost three years. That shit, specifically, is rasping dubstep synths and old-school grime beats.

### I WANT IT ALL

As if the last six years never happened, Dizzee is bragging about cars, weed and girls with wideboy wit. A turn from D Double E shows Dizzee still commands respect from the UK underground, too.

### CATCH ME IF YOU CAN REMIX

If grime had ever gone mainstream it would have sounded like this: vicious lo-fi with just a smirk of a hook – oh, and Example on the chorus. Shockingly good.

### MINIMUS

"All I want to see is pain and suffering, coughing and spluttering, I don't want to hear no muttering, show no mercy just gutter him", raps Dizzee. Violent and spectacular stuff.

### HYPE!

The first time Dizzee's return to his roots sounds dated: scrappy production and cheeky bravado that would only have impressed a decade ago.

### SUCCESS OR FAILURE

Dirtee Stank signing Footsie signals how grime might progress as its stars mature: "Back when man was kids, tings was funny but nuttin ain't

funny now, because man's got kids and I need money for the food for their tummies now".

### KRYME

Rumoured to be one from the archives, this actually sounds bang on relevant in the wake of last year's riots. "The police are raw, so why change they'll only beat us more", Dizzee raps. "If they make new laws, I'll break them all".

### BOY DEM ABOUT

In a similar musical vein to 'Kryme', gunshots fire across a dash to hide everything – well, weed and knives at least – from the boy dem (police).

### AIN'T HAVIN IT

A bruising update of old-school UK garage production...

### PAPER CHASE

...followed by some classic Dizzee one-liners ("I'm like a broken TDK, you can't play me") and Scruffizer, famed for his super-fast flows, delivering a track-stealing feature.

### RIGHT PATH

Scruffizer does his thing again: 200-words-per minute of untainted fury.

### NANGFEST

Jokes about The Neptunes in a song called 'Nangfest'? 2005 called, it wants its filler tracks back.

### LEVELS

The lull doesn't last long. Dizzee, D Double E and Footsie on a furious club tune that wouldn't sound out of place on an old Skream mixtape – or even the Radio 1 A-list.

### GRIME SUPERIORS

Sounds like every video filmed in a stairwell and shown on Channel 4 in 2006...

### WARRIOR WITHIN

...while this is ruined by extra DJs Mistajam and Twin B blathering all over it.



Now he's got a video channel, Dizzee's perfecting his 'TV presenter' pose

### WAVESTATION

Footsie slurs between rhymes about Babestation and Buju Banton's incarceration on this slice of stoner stand-up.

### PUMPIN IT OUT REMIX

Kano and JME feature on this fast-paced open mic featuring every MC Dizzee knows. Best rhyme: "Take a picture with my 10 megapixel camera, different calibre, singer songwriter like Noel Gallagher".

### BEEF

Given he's now known for pop bangers, it'll be interesting to see how his new fans swallow this one. "I'll put my gun to your son", he spits. "I don't care if he's one, he's gonna get done, that's what you get when you run up your gums".

### ANSWER THE PHONE

Dirtee Stank signing Smurfie Syco excels on a track that'd feel at home on Dizzee's 2003 Mercury Prize-winning

debut album 'Boy In Da Corner'. Glitchy, repetitive and with a sick sense of humour, it exemplifies the best features of the mixtape.

### I AINT LIKE YOU

The obligatory dubstep track is actually one of the mixtape's standouts, as Dizzee talks candidly to the women in his life. Extra points for that MIDI harp.

### BODYWORKZ

But it's D Double E who has been the mixtape's revelation. On his final turn, he shows why Dizzee might want to leave grime to the young upstarts.

### GASSED UP

"Back on my breezy grimey shit for fun", begins Dizzee, finally revealing perhaps that this is less likely to be his new direction than the rest of the tape suggests, and is probably all a bit of a laugh.

## The verdict

If the riots were an outpouring of aggression from a silenced minority, this is a snatched scream of grimey fury after years of being muzzled by anodyne UK rap. But it was Dizzee who kickstarted rap's chart ascendancy and here he makes little attempt to justify his U-turn or speak specifically about any of the events that have happened in his absence. It feels more like nostalgia than a breath of fresh air. Dizzee's rediscovered his sharp tongue – let's hope he turns it towards the future and pray a rumoured collaboration with Good Charlotte is just tittle tattle.

# PIECES OF ME PINK EYES

*Fucked Up frontman Damian Abraham on his rap beginnings, political leanings and obsession with Alan Partridge*

## My first album

### 'RAISING HELL' BY RUN DMC

"When I was a kid, I used to get up so early in the morning, and my parents very wisely used the old 'television babysitter', so I would watch a lot of MuchMusic. Most the stuff that was on that early in the morning was religious, but MuchMusic would be playing videos. And at the time, that's when rap was breaking into the mainstream, and that's when I fell in love with it."

## My first gig

### DIE CHEERLEADER

"I went to see Die Cheerleader open for Filter in 1994. Die Cheerleader were a band that Henry Rollins had produced, and we were naive enough to think that meant that Henry Rollins was going to be there. We actually met the band; from that point on I decided that at a concert you should be able to meet the band."

## The first song I fell in love with

### 'OUR HOUSE' BY MADNESS

"I loved it as a kid. My dad was never a punk, but he was into current music at the time, and certainly the new wave stuff, and he had the 45. I was never really into ska, but Madness are one of those bands where they're as much a ska band as they are a cabaret band. So even if you're not into the ska sound, it's the cabaret songs like 'Our House' where everyone just sings along and knows the chorus."

## The book that changed me

### MANUFACTURING CONSENT BY NOAM CHOMSKY

"I think Chomsky is a brilliant intellectual and he demystifies power in a way that other intellectuals can't. He does it in a very populist way, and makes things very straightforward. This was a book that I got into because of Propagandhi - I'm not gonna lie - and pre-'Tubthumping' Chumbawamba, who were both artists that referenced him."

## My favourite painting

### ED GEIN BY JOE COLEMAN

"Joe Coleman is my favourite artist in everything he does. His paintings look like Russian portraits, or pre-Renaissance work, and consist of a thousand tiny brush strokes. His painting of [notorious murderer] Ed Gein is amazing because here's a horrible, horrible human being, but this painting tells the story of his life and how he became such a dark and horrible person."

## Right now I love

### CULO

"They're a punk band from Chicago, and they make exactly what punk should make: youthful, aggressive music. These kids are



smart, but sketchy as shit, and it's really awesome. I love when you see young bands playing music, because it's important for punk and hardcore to stay rooted in youth - it's such positive music to get into as a kid."

## My favourite TV show

### I'M ALAN PARTRIDGE

"In case you don't know it, Partridge is a character played by Steve Coogan who started on a radio show, then turned on-air sportscaster on *The Day Today*, before landing a talk show called *Knowing Me, Knowing You*. And he gets kicked off the air

at the end, gets another job in the backwaters of the radio market, and it's hilarious. One of the funniest shows ever."

## My favourite film

### PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE

"I love that movie. It's Brian De Palma's rock opera starring Paul Williams who plays a forever-young record producer who steals this guy's music and the guy gets his face crushed in a record plant and becomes the phantom of the Paradise theatre. Paul Williams co-wrote all the music, and he is just a phenomenal songwriter."



Clockwise from main: Damian 'Pink Eyes' Abraham; up-and-coming Chicago punk outfit CULO; the Steve Coogan-created Wings aficionado Alan Partridge in his legendary blazer; '80s hip-hop legends Run DMC in their pomp; The poster for Brian De Palma's cult film *Phantom Of The Paradise*

## VERSUS

# PETER ROBINSON *vs* FRANK TURNER

*The singer-songwriter on crap pizzas, frozen jeans and those lonely nights on the tourbus*



- One thing only noticed upon listening back to the audio of this recording was a "pretty much" in Frank's claim to daily underwear changes
- The ideal pizza would be half 'horrible amazing' and half 'amazing amazing'
- That jeans-in-the-freezer cleaning thing doesn't work with plates and cutlery

**Hello, Frank. Where are you?**  
"I'm in a diner by the side of the North Circular, near Hanger Lane [in west London]. I just had a nice burger."

**What do you mean by 'nice burger'? Let me frame my question in terms of pizza. There is proper, nice pizza. But then there's horrible pizza with a stuffed crust and so on. But the thing is, horrible pizza is amazing too. So do you mean nice, or 'nice' nice?**

"I know what you mean about the two types of pizza. I think they both have their time and place. When you've woken up and you went out heavy and you just require grease and carbs in your body, a crap pizza is what you need. In fact, if at that point in your life someone gave you a posh pizza, it wouldn't work. 'It's got leaves on it, I didn't ask for leaves', that kind of thing. Anyway, the burger was nice nice."

**Anyway, are you looking to change anything this year?**

"Are you talking about New Year's resolutions?"

**I'm talking about your clothes.**

"Do you know what? I'm actually wearing a really clean pair of jeans today. For me that's an advance. I change my underwear and my T-shirts pretty much every day."

**Between you and me, how often do you actually wash your jeans?**

"It can go for months of almost daily use. It's not nice. But it's a new year; I've treated myself to some clean jeans."

**Do you do them inside out?**

"Do you think that should be my look?"

**No, I mean do you wash them inside out like you're meant to?**

"I did not know that. I'm learning something today. I still struggle to figure out how washing machines go."

**Do you wash your own clothes or do you have someone to do that for you? I suppose you're sort of political, aren't you Frank? So you probably wouldn't have a cleaner.**

"(Laughs) It's not even really a question of being political – it's that I'd be way too embarrassed to actually ask people to wash my clothes!"

**What temperature do you use?**

"I use 40. The one that on the adverts it says is more green."



**Isn't that 30?**

"Is this oneupmanship?"

**I CLEAN MY CLOTHES AT TWO DEGREES!**

"I clean mine in ice."

**Some people clean their jeans in the freezer...**

"I've never put a pair of jeans in a freezer. Are you sure?"

**I'm going to put this in Google, hang on. Right I'm on the Eat Sleep Denim blog, on a post called 'freezer freshens jeans'. They've done an experiment over several days. This bit is good: "Day 1: Took them out to see if they smelled clean. They were cold, and smelled like the freezer."**

"I'm being educated now."

**But the conclusion they make is that the freezer DOES freshen your jeans. It's a bit like Febreze but with a freezer. It's literally Febreze. But without the smell of Febreze.**

"This is interesting. If the option is the smell of Febreze or the smell of months and months of miserable tourbus experience, I'd go for Febreze."

**I hope 'months and months of miserable tourbus experience' isn't a euphemism for what I think it is.**

"What do you think it is?"

**Sperm.**

"NO! I have not been on those tourbuses. (Thinks) Well, I probably have actually, they're just not the ones I have on my tour."

## THIS WEEK'S TOP 20

## THE NME CHART

### NME RADIO

Hear the chart rundown first every Monday at 7pm on NME Radio.  
[NME.COM/RADIO](http://NME.COM/RADIO)

### NME.COM

Listen to the Top 40 and learn more about each artist online 7PM EVERY MONDAY AT [NME.COM/CHART](http://NME.COM/CHART)



### NEW TO NME RADIO PLAYLIST

- CLOX OPERA 'Once And For All'
- TRIBES 'We Were Children'
- GOLDFRAPP 'Melancholy Sky'

- 1 3 JUSTICE 'AUDIO VIDEO DISCO' Capitol
- 2 8 FOO FIGHTERS 'THESE DAYS' Capitol
- 3 6 BAND OF SKULLS 'THE DEVIL TAKES CARE OF HIS OWN' Subterfuge
- 4 4 FOSTER THE PEOPLE 'CALL IT WHAT YOU WANT' Columbia
- 5 1 LANA DEL REY 'VIDEO GAMES' Parade
- 6 7 THE BIG PINK 'STAY GOLD' Capitol
- 7 19 DRY THE RIVER 'WEIGHTS & MEASURES' VCA
- 8 NEW ARCTIC MONKEYS 'BLACK TREACLE' Capitol
- 9 12 KASABIAN 'RE-WIRED' Capitol
- 10 20 SCUM 'AMBER HANDS' VAC
- 11 10 COLDPLAY 'PARADISE' Parlophone
- 12 25 BOMBAY BICYCLE CLUB 'LIGHTS OUT, WORDS GONE' Island
- 13 13 NOEL GALLAGHER'S HIGH FLYING BIRDS 'IF I HAD A GUN...' Sanctuary
- 14 5 THE DRUMS 'NOW IT ENDED' Capitol
- 15 13 FLORENCE + THE MACHINE 'SHAKE IT OUT' Capitol
- 16 17 SPECTOR 'GREY SHIRT AND TIE' Capitol
- 17 16 FRIENDLY FIRES 'BLUE CASSETTE' XL
- 18 19 NIKI & THE DOVE 'THE DRUMMER' Mercury
- 19 9 THE VACCINES 'TIGER BLOOD' Columbia
- 20 24 TRIBES 'WHEN MY DAY COMES' Capitol

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.

# RADAR

FUTURE STARS, BREAKING SCENES, NEW SOUNDS...

Edited by Matt Wilkinson



ABOUT  
TO  
BREAK

## FRIENDS

*The one where they form an indie disco-funk band and take 2012 by storm*

If you were an A&R in Brooklyn right now, you'd be staking out the vegan restaurants. Before he found his place in the musical cosmos, Darwin Deez worked at the same one in which Devendra Banhart used to toil over hot tofu salad. Now, NYC's newest heroes have emerged from another. When half of the restaurant's staff succumbed to bedbugs, they were forced to move in with each other for a few weeks. Together, they became, um, Friends.

"We discovered we had the same ideas about creativity," recalls Samantha Urbani (pictured above centre), the songwriter and up-n-coming sex siren at the heart of the five-piece. "We were all passionate – but also had a sense of humour about it. We understood that in the great scheme of things it didn't matter: what I'd call a sort of positive nihilism."

The pieces fell into place in short order: the rickety, sweet ESG-ish stalker anthem of 'Friend Crush' turned a few heads back in April, but it was October's 'I'm His Girl' that knocked off blocks: a sharply set piece of indie disco-funk that sleazed

straight onto NME's Tracks Of The Year rundown. It's their skill in mining the 'funk' side of that conjunction as much as the 'indie' that has set Friends apart from the hordes of cutesy post-punk things that Brooklyn has coughed up lately. "I like a lot of R&B," Urbani explains. "I grew up with things like Curtis Mayfield, Marvin Gaye, and more modern R&B stuff. It's definitely not forced."

Behind the frosty beauty, Urbani's cut from exactly the cloth you'd expect from someone who used to work in a vegan restaurant, believing that magic and quantum theory are "definitely linked", and sketching out a world view akin to what devotees of *The Secret* might call 'psychic ordering'. "We were home-schooled. My mom is this incredibly creative, spiritual person who taught us that you didn't need to be taught to be creative. If you want something, just go out and do it. Which is what I've always done – I didn't go to art school or anything like that. I just started doing things."

You don't have to be psychic to guess what larks 2012 has in store for these guys. *Gavin Haynes*

### NEED TO KNOW

**BASED:** Brooklyn

**FOR FANS OF:** ESG, MGMT

**HEAR IT:** Early track 'Friend Crush' is getting a re-release on Lucky Number on February 6

**SEE THEM LIVE:** They play Manchester and London in the first week of February

**BELIEVE IT OR NOT:** When he was 15, drummer Oliver was in a band who opened for Fugazi and The Misfits. They were called The Snobs



# RYAN JARMAN HAS THIS MANY BOYFRIENDS

*Cribs man produces Leeds band as they move forward after the death of guitarist Peter Sykes*



New Yorkshire looks to be on the rise again, as *Radar* can reveal that Ryan Jarman of The Cribs has teamed up with

Leeds indie-pop newcomers This Many Boyfriends. The collaboration, which saw Jarman produce three tracks for the band, took place at Edwyn Collins' studio in London last month, with the results going towards the band's as-yet-untitled debut album, due out in early 2012.

The sessions mark a defiant step forward for TMB following the tragic death of their guitarist Peter Sykes, who suffered

a brain haemorrhage last September. "We'd pretty much all decided we wanted to carry on," drummer Laura Black tells us. "There was a lot of going out and getting pissed and making big decisions. Pete's family and all his friends are really proud of how far he'd got in his music career, so they're all really pleased we're carrying on. We're trying to make sure all the music he was on is heard by as many people as possible."

"We're not forgetting about him," adds singer Richard Brooke. "It's been horrible, I'm not going to lie. It's been really hard. But it's onwards and upwards – we'll make everything we do from now on for him."

Speaking of the sessions, Jarman tells *Radar* he jumped at the chance to hop into the producer's chair. "I'd read about them in *NME* and it referenced our band, so I obviously notice stuff like that," he explains. "Even though I was really busy with our record, I was definitely up for doing it."

**"I read about them in *NME* and it referenced our band"**

**RYAN JARMAN**

The first fans will hear of the hook-up is likely to be in March, when one of the tracks – likely to be live favourite 'Communist' – comes out as a single. Before that though, TMB will release another song, 'Starling', as a tribute to Sykes. It'll be sold at their gigs in February, along with a Boys Own-style fanzine. "It means a lot to us," says Brooke. "It's the first song me and Pete had properly written together. It's a fitting tribute." *Mark Beaumont*

## BAND CRUSH



*Alex Hewett from Egyptian Hip Hop on his favourite new act*

"Weird Mirror are from Manchester, which was surprising to me as they're really different from other Manchester bands. It's really melodic, just one guy. They're kind of like My Bloody Valentine. I think I found them on Myspace a while ago, but I hadn't listened properly. But then I went to their show, and that sold it – I went home and downloaded everything."

# The Buzz

*The rundown of the music, videos and scenes breaking forth from the underground this week*



## 1 SHINIES 'SPENT YOUTH'

You've gotta love a band who wholeheartedly use the naughty side of one of those '80s Playboy playing cards as a PR tool. We've no idea why Manchester newcomers Shinies decided to include said image when they unveiled links to their first and, as yet, only song 'Spent Youth', but it got everyone talking about them. In fairness, the music's easily good enough to do the hype justice, with 'Spent...' powered by plenty of distorted urchin glory. It's a rabble-rouser of the highest order, sort of like the glam-grunge embodied by Gross Magic (if it was put through a Teenage Fanclub blender).



## 2 WILD SWIM

"If you're not happy then you're not alive!" scream Oxford's Wild Swim, with the kind of insanely manic glee that could only come from a band who know the art of lying through their teeth at every given opportunity. Little surprise that the rest of the track in question, 'Face The Music', is bleak as hell.



## 3 BLAENAVON'S DEMOS

The Brighton band are all still in school, but they're obviously wise beyond their years if their early tracks are anything to go by. There are six in total (you can hear 'em on [NME.COM/newmusic](http://NME.COM/newmusic) now), calling on Wild Beastsian guitars and Devendra-like vocals, while the epic, seven-minute 'Swans' is basically WU LYF gone indie-folk.



## 4 TROUMACA

Birmingham dub enthusiasts Troumaca have been exceptionally busy of late. They put a truckload of free downloads on their SoundCloud page, and followed that up by debuting the video to their ace Klaxons-recalling track 'Fire'. All of this was backed up by the release of their debut EP proper, 'The Gems'...



## 5 ROUNDHOUSE RISING

The esteemed venue in Camden curates a host of new music gigs and events on February 9-18. The bill includes shows by *Radar* faves The History Of Apple Pie and Beaty Heart, as well as Lady Leshurr, Jewellers and the excellent south London-based Drop Out Venus (formerly known as Rough Kittens).

SCENE  
REPORTHUW  
STEPHENS'  
ONES TO  
WATCH

*Blazing through the underground  
with Radio 1's new music overlord*



A belated happy New Year to you. Let's hope 2012 has enough good stuff to keep us entertained. I'm looking forward to hearing what **Post War Years** have up their sleeve this year. Their rhythmic, sensory overloaded pop has already been great, but it feels like the best is coming at us in 2012. **Mikill Pane** is a rapper who has such a sharp wit on him. He's constantly on Twitter, and his gigs have got me travelling across London in the dead of night. Check the weird topics, funny flow and quirky rhymes on his recent 'The Guinness & Blackcurrant' EP.

There are some hot new young Welsh producers making a name for themselves too. **Ifan Dafydd**, who released a glorious 12-inch on Push And Run last year, is one to listen out for. As is **DrumCunt** (sometimes DRMCNT) who now lives in Japan, and has a dark, joyful and cheeky side to his electronics. Also, if 2012 is the year when genres properly collaborate like they've never collaborated before, then

**Astroid Boys** might be the ones to take hip-hop and dubstep in a positive direction. They're a lot of fun too, which helps. Warp records are releasing the debut album from **Kwes** which I'm looking forward to – he's a talented producer who's worked with Micachu and Speech DeBelle, but now has his own live band together who I'll be going to see live. Same goes for **Troumaca** from Birmingham, whose track 'Fire' recently turned a lot of the show's listeners' heads, thanks to its subtle drum'n'bass beat and a fresh approach to the layering of vocals. Happy New Year, ya nutters!

Huw's  
TOP 5

**MIKILL PANE**  
'I Can Feel It'

**POST WAR YEARS**  
'All Eyes'

**ASTROID BOYS**  
'Women Are My Weakness'

**KWES**  
'Get Up'

**TROUMACA**  
'Fire'

NEXT WEEK'S COLUMNIST:  
Toddla T

5  
To SEE  
*This week's  
unmissable new  
music shows*

**YOUNG HUSBAND**,  
Hoxton Square Bar  
& Grill, London  
January 12

**TRAILER TRASH  
TRACYS**  
Kraak, Manchester  
January 14

**UNITED FRUIT  
(below)**  
King Tut's Wah Wah  
Hut, Glasgow  
January 16

**PORCELAIN RAFT**  
Trinity, Bristol  
January 17

**VARIOUS  
CRUELITIES**  
100 Club, London  
January 17

THE MEN/  
HOOKWORMS

MADAME JOJO'S, LONDON MONDAY, DECEMBER 12

CAUGHT  
LIVE

Pigfuck. A late 1980s style that predated grunge. Gnarly, loud, with filthy production. Think Butthole Surfers, Lubricated Goat, Pussy Galore and

now revived by (according to newspaper the *Village Voice* at least) NYC four-piece **The Men**.

They're who The Dudes, The Guys, The Mistres, The Bros (and the very few women) at White Heat are waiting to hear tonight but – as 8.30pm comes around – there's a problem. The band are stuck on the M4. Bummer...

At least Leeds five-piece **Hookworms** are here, pushing the night forward with their smoggy psychedelic noise. With a frontman who makes love to his pedal board – rather than anything with a curly tail – there are touches of The Horrors' 'Skying', a proggy Primal Scream and even a bit of LCD Soundsystem (although there's SO much reverb on tracks like 'Medicine Cabinet' that it's hard to tell whether Hookworms are into reciting hipster witticisms or just reading the football scores). Still, a few more fireworks and this

lot should be more than just the first-band-on.

Perhaps it's the long trip or the relatively glitzy and unfamiliar surroundings of a Soho burlesque club, but when it's finally time to get down to it, the usually to-the-point Men take a while to warm up. A sludgy take on 'Bataille' from recent LP 'Leave Home' is infectious and brutal in just the right measures, and the twangs of psych on 'If You Leave' are most-definitely head-screwingly

*The Men take a while to warm up, but then it's properly thrilling stuff*

brilliant. Sadly, neither earn even a raised claw from the pitiful pit, though. Sharp-tongued new tracks 'Open Your Heart' and 'Please Don't Go Away' fare little better, never starting more than a collective sway despite Nick Chiericozzi and Mark Perro giving it everything.

But all's not lost. The gut-churning '(O)' finally socks the crowd in the stomach enough to kickstart some sweat glands, and you know what? It's properly thrilling stuff. Sod Pigfuck, headfuck is way more apt. **Sian Rowe**



Mikill Pane:  
90 per cent beard,  
10 per cent rapper



LOVE  
YOU  
EVEN  
BETTER!

***The Maccabees'** amazing new album is about to blast them into the bigtime. **Hamish MacBain** hears how 'Given To The Wild' has transformed Brighton's best into one of our most important bands – and why they're not scared of embracing the arenas...*

PHOTOS: DEAN CHALKLEY



“**W**hat? Are you mad?” That’s Hugo. He’s laughing out loud at the idea just proffered. **Orlando:** “You’re really sticking your neck out here.” Well, not really.

**Felix:** “You’re the first person who’s said that.”

**Orlando:** “I’ll have a quid on it with you.”

**Felix:** “I’ll have 20 quid with you!”

We should probably move on at this point. We’re not here to gamble.

**Felix again:** “Really? You think it’ll go to *Number One*? Seriously?”

OK. Apologies to their label and management, who may have been trying to manage expectations, but... well, come on, it’s not that outlandish to think ‘Given To The Wild’ might be about to give The Maccabees their first Number One album, is it? We all witnessed the ever-increasing scenes of devotion on the victory lap for ‘Wall Of Arms’ that was the NME Awards Tour almost exactly two years ago. And then those Reading and Leeds sets a few months later where, as Felix notes, “We got a bigger crowd than people who’ve sold 10 or 20 times the records we have, and in felt like people were there especially for it.”

That was the public’s first taste of The Maccabees’ third album, in the shape of a song called ‘Forever I’ve Known’, which guitarist Hugo White says “is probably the most patient and long-winded thing we’ve written, but kind of held people’s attention even though it was drawn out. And that was really early in the writing.”

“It was six minutes long,” continues frontman Orlando Weeks. “Playing a new, six-minute song, at a festival... it made us feel we could get away with it.”

Since then a lot more of the third album’s songs have been tested in a live setting – at least half of them – and have elicited a similarly positive response. Without any doubt there is a huge, hugely attentive and devoted audience who have been waiting to get their hands on ‘Given To The Wild’ – and will have done so last Monday. To get statty for a second: if you look at the week ‘Wall Of Arms’ came out, The Maccabees managed Number 13 in a preposterously competitive week – ‘The Fame’, ‘I Am... Sasha Fierce’, ‘Only By The Night’, ‘It’s Not Me, It’s You’ and other monstrous unit shifters were in full stride. That was in May 2009. And as we have established, things have come a long way for Brighton’s finest since. Plus, their third album arrives in the second week of January, when – hopefully – the casual purchasers of Adele *et al* are hibernating for a bit, but their now-much-larger fanbase are not.

Oh yeah, also in their favour: ‘Given To The Wild’ is an absolutely, undeniably brilliant record, sure to be there or thereabouts at the top of all them lists at the end of 2012. It unquestionably deserves to propel its creators into the big league. And we’re not just saying that because we’ve now got 21 quid on it.

**T**he preamble thus far has found guitarist Felix White (brother of Hugo) hailing ‘Given To The Wild’ as being “what we’ve always wanted The Maccabees to sound on record”. You can believe this.

The bashful fragility that inhabited their earliest, indie recordings is retained. But more to the fore than ever is the inventive spirit, the spreading of their wings that seemed to spark with ‘No Kind Words’. The stop-start ‘Pelican’ you will be most familiar with. But that is just the beginning, and positively conservative in

## “GETTING BIGGER BUYS CREATIVE FREEDOM. WE’VE EARNED IT”

**Felix White**

are short, sharp pop songs. There are synthesisers, samples and off-kilter drum loops, none of which smother the band who have put them down – always a danger when bands get ambitious.

Because make no mistake: ‘Given To The Wild’ is supremely ambitious. It has been very much crafted as a masterpiece – and as An Album in the old, classic sense

comparison to the rest of its parent album.

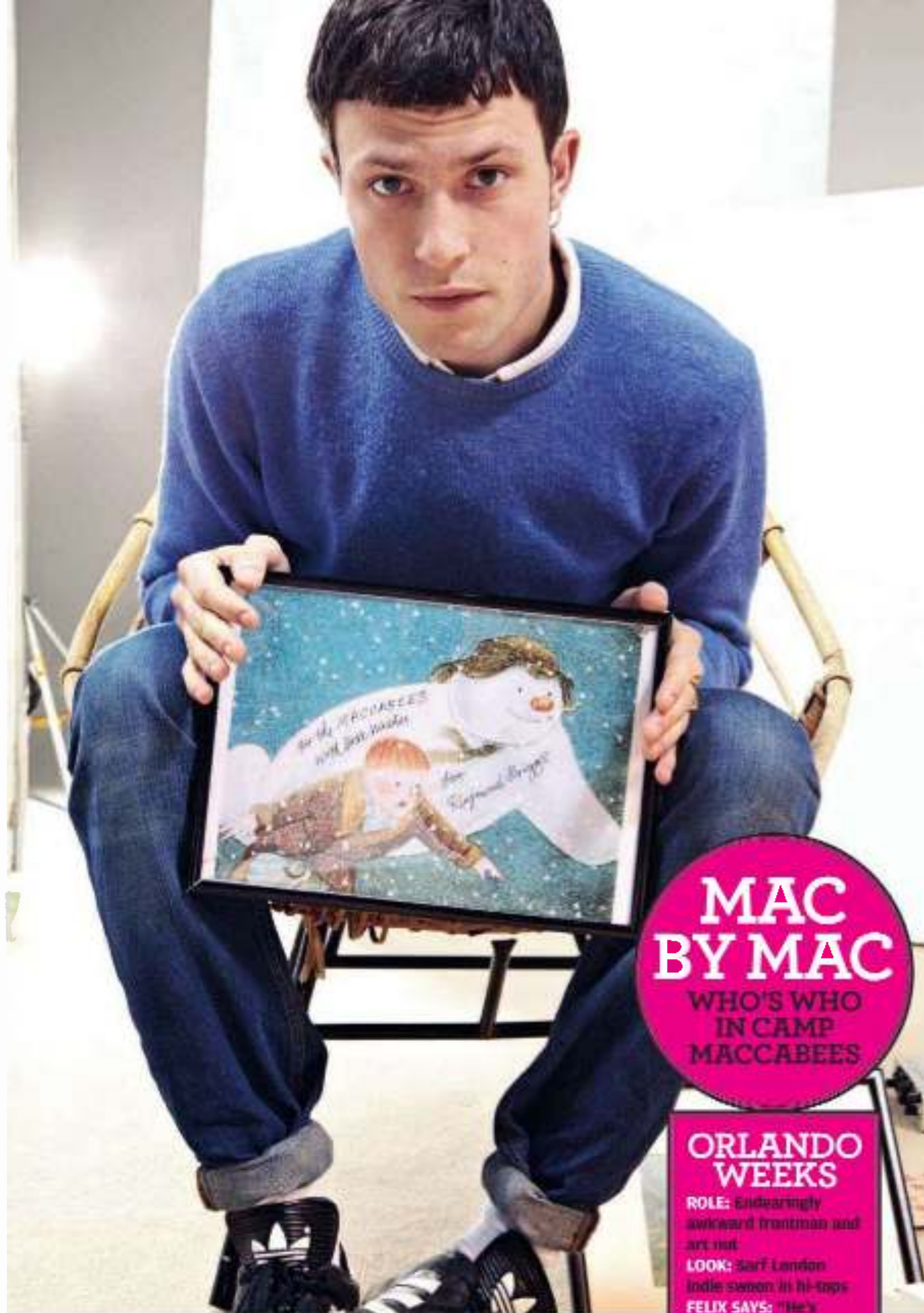
Over its 13 songs, The Maccabees define their sound in the effortless manner that bands at their peak do. There are tracks (or “pieces”, as Hugo has them) that stretch through intricate, epic arrangements. There

of the word, with a definite beginning, middle and end.

“All of the songs do just work in their context,” enthuses Felix. “Heave’ is the middle, and really works there. There’s

obviously this deliberate beginning to the whole album [with ‘Given To The Wild (Intro)’ segueing into ‘Child’] and ‘Grew Up At Midnight’ is this finale that really works if you listen to the album the whole way through. And there’s an overall effort to have a side A/side B.”

This vision began “about a year ago” with the finished demo of ‘Ayla’ – still one of the album’s best songs. An epic by anyone’s standards, its piano arpeggios, brass and wall-of-echo guitars was what ‘Given To The Wild’ was to be about.



**MAC BY MAC**  
WHO'S WHO  
IN CAMP  
MACCABEES

### ORLANDO WEEKS

**ROLE:** Endearingly awkward frontman and art nut

**LOOK:** Surf London indie sinner in hi-tops

**FELIX SAYS:** “He’s written his best ever lyrics on this record, and I only noticed that when I read them back. Quite minimalist, as well. That’s a huge part of the record.”



## HUGO WHITE

**ROLE:** Needly guitar equaliser  
**LOOK:** Bulled-sleeves uniform, jeans far skinnier than his brother's  
**FELIX SAYS:** "He's getting incredibly good with production. In the latter stages of making of this record, when we brought it home to work on, Hugo really took control."



## RUPERT JARVIS

**ROLE:** Bassist and all-round good guy  
**LOOK:** Broody beanpole, known to wear shorts onstage  
**FELIX SAYS:** "I like his baseline on 'Pelican', but I noticed the other day that it's similar to 'Killing in the Name'. That he managed to slip that one in unnoticed is a feat in itself."

"There was no kind of game plan at first," notes Orlando. "Once we had all these bits and pieces we'd collected from home recordings, the challenge was then making it all fit. And piecing together the puzzle we had set ourselves."

**Hugo:** "Everything starts by existing on someone's computer, that's kind of how it is now. It's not like we're all sat with acoustic guitars. It doesn't exist like that. It exists in like, 'I'm going to listen to it for weeks, and if I feel confident I'll play it to someone.' But for ages it's just left with you, no-one knows about it."

**Felix:** "We finished 'Ayla' as a demo, and that was the first benchmark, that set a tone we were happy with, and then the benchmark evolved into different things."

Hugo explains how the plot then went on to encompass two further epics – the aforementioned 'Forever I've Known' and 'Child' (which sounds like it could be off 'In Rainbows'). "We played them both live at a few shows at the end of the second record, and it was obvious from that they held a different atmosphere from other songs we'd written before. The restraint and what they kind of embodied, in those gigs it felt like it was going to be OK, it was going to work, it felt right."

From here, energised, The Maccabees had a clearer picture of what they wanted. This was to be a record

teeming with invention, but also one destined to be described as "widescreen". It next evolved through the shuffling pop of 'Feel To Follow' and the waltzing, beautiful textures of

'Glimmer' into the more experimental terrain of 'Go' and 'Unknow', two songs that are more driven by electronics than anything they'd previously done.

And then, in contrast to all this (and indeed, as "a reaction"), there is the pedal-to-the-metal, stadium-ready pomp of certain future single 'Went Away', and the even bigger gang-vocal chorus of 'Grew Up At Midnight'. Both of these could easily sit on a (good) U2 album. Driven towards creating something spectacular, all members of the band were involved in all aspects of the record, with Felix noting that "everyone has crossed over onto each other's bits and pieces. More than the other records, it feels like us working together."

**L**yrical, too, there is the sense of a cohesive vision, and of new ground. The Maccabees were never going to be the band of their generation to react to what is going on around them politically or socially (Felix: "We have opinions about a lot of things but I don't know if we all want to be talking in magazines and on the internet saying them all the time. There are enough opinions running around"). Neither are they going to become mouthpieces for and commentators on The State Of Music (Felix again: "You see people from the '90s, from that Britpop thing,

# THE MACCABAG

*NME staff write anonymous questions, we shove them in a bag and the band pick five*

**1** *Orlando, why are you obsessed with pelicans, and what is your favourite bird?*  
Orlando: "I'm not obsessed! I thought as a single title it suggested a lot of stuff, and it looks cool. I like the bowerbird the best, it's one of the only animals with an artistic eye..."

**2** *When was the last time you saw Robert Dylan Thomas, your former drummer?*  
Orlando: "I spoke to him the other night. He's going to come and have some tea this week. He's alright, he's got a dog – I'm jealous."  
Felix: "He's got a dog and a girlfriend. I see him about, it's weird."

**3** *Felix and Hugo: did you argue about who'd play rhythm and who'd play lead guitar when you started?*  
Felix: "We didn't argue about it."  
Hugo: "I was just miles better!"  
Felix: "I was in another band when The Maccabees first started. Me and Hugo had this conversation that I might join and the first

thing was, 'I'll join but I'll be rhythm and you're lead.' That was the deal. But since neither of us could play guitar solos for about six years that never came into effect."

**4** *What's the worst record that's ever been played on your turntable and who put it on?*  
Felix: "Danny, our lighting guy – and I only worked out recently that it's not ironic, he just loves Limp Bizkit. (Sings Fred Durst impression) 'It's just one of those days... everybody sucks!'"

**5** *Orlando, has the BBC's 'fake polar bear footage' shaken your love of David Attenborough?*  
Orlando: "(Explaining to rest of band) They used footage from something like a Dutch research centre of polar bear birthing as footage on Frozen Planet. I don't think David Attenborough would have been involved in that thing, but that's natural history Auto-Tune. It's fine. It maybe should have been more explicitly explained."

complaining that bands 'don't come out and say things'. I don't think that's a staple of a good group").

But The Maccabees do have something to say with this album, something that comes from a very human place. As a first single, 'Pelican's essential line was the one that went "One thing's for sure – we're all getting older". And this sense of a mourning of youth and of innocence explicitly continues through much of 'Given To The Wild'.

'Child' deals with similar themes; 'Ayla' announces that "The wait is over for an innocent life"; one line in 'Heave' – its very title a sigh – runs "Signs of love, wasted on the young"; 'Go' talks of "Skins we've known that no longer fit us". And the last line of the closing 'Grew Up At Midnight' – actually written largely by Hugo rather than Orlando – begins "We were only kids then..."

"I felt like I'd exhausted wanting to write about lost love and that kind of thing," Orlando says. "And if I ▶

## "I WANTED TO WRITE ABOUT FAMILY, THINGS THAT FELT IMPORTANT"

Orlando Weeks

# PIECES OF US

*The Maccabees on their personal treasures*

## PHOTO OF FELIX & HUGO AS KIDS

**FELIX:** "You know when you go back to your dad's house and you're fascinated by photos of when you were six or whatever? Hugo picked this one out. It's of us fishing in the Isle Of Wight. It's just a nice family photo, isn't it?"



## DRONE COMMANDER

**FELIX:** "It's a machine that drones, basically. [Producer] Tim Goldsworthy bought it while we were recording the album, and Hugo became obsessed with it."



## THE SNOWMAN PRINT

**ORLANDO:** "We're very proud of it. It was sent to us by [author/illustrator] Raymond Briggs because someone brought our cover of 'Walking In The Air' to his attention. He was kind enough to send us a signed print of his own."



## BLUE RICKENBACKER

**ORLANDO:** "We brought it along just because it's such a beautiful looking guitar, and Hugo used it quite a bit on the record."



## MACCABEES T-SHIRT

**ORLANDO:** "It's one of our new ones. We've worked with the same designer since the beginning, before we got signed."



## MACCABEES BEER

**ORLANDO:** "It just said 'Maccabees' on it, so we thought it was cool. It's not a promo thing, we just found it."



## O LUCKY MAN! POSTER

**ORLANDO:** "It's from a Lindsay Anderson film. It was one of the visual references we gave for the short film [released to tie in with the album]. We just liked the feel of it, those abstracted, muted colours."

## WHITE GUITAR

**ORLANDO:** "It's Felix's. He loves the look of it. I think the boys like having pictures taken with their guitars."

## INDIA CRICKET SHIRT

**ORLANDO:** "It's Felix's. He's a big cricket fan. We were trying to combine things that were relevant to the record, but that also looked good and had colour, and that shirt is a great colour."

wasn't going to have that, what was going to be worth spending that much time thinking about? And for me, that was family, and memories of things I hadn't tried to catalogue in songs that still felt like worthwhile, important things."

Such as?

"Well, there were a lot of things going on in terms of... I was quite affected by friends just all of a sudden starting to have children. People I'd known for a long time, who I knew were going to have children, but suddenly they did and they had to take on a whole different set of rules for themselves."

Difficult things to deal with anyway, made more so by being cooped up in a tourbus, or obsessing over guitar sounds in a studio, then coming back home.

**Orlando:** "It's really strange, having toured so much and coming back to it. It's a shock that people have mortgages and families now, and they're not just your mates – they're a dad or they're a mum. These are odd things. And just simple things, like my brother moved abroad. All of that was maybe what triggered it. I think I was more conscious of maybe not writing about lost love than I was about finding an alternative theme, but those just seemed to be the things that warranted the amount of time I was going to take."

## "MORE THAN THE OTHER RECORDS, IT'S US WORKING TOGETHER"

### Felix White

So you could say, given all this, that 'Given To The Wild' is – literally – the sound of a band maturing. And whereas that would be the last thing you'd want your favourite band to be doing, with The Maccabees, always wise beyond their years, it suits them. The previous two albums suddenly sound like playtime.

**A**nd so we come once more to the subject of impending massiveness – be it potential or otherwise. We've had the idea of a Number One album laughed off (Orlando: "It's just a cool thing to be able to say. But beyond that it doesn't mean a great deal"). Still, in their last feature with *NME*, Orlando and Felix did both say they were "up for" the idea of inhabiting the same sort of live spaces that yer Kasabians and Arctic Monkeys do. And that was before we'd heard the third album in full.

Now we have – there is little doubt that this is a band with their sights set on big spaces. Asked directly whether or not The Maccabees would fancy the idea of being an arena act, Felix smiles: "You can ask every member of the band that question and you will get a different answer." And certainly, sat around a table with The Maccabees, with a Dictaphone rolling in front of them, you get a sense of some very different characters. There are lots of "What d'you think?"s, lots of glances to check the others are all OK with what's being said. Thus, on such subjects, words are very carefully chosen. **Orlando:** "It's never been my ambition to say, 'Hello Wembley', know what I mean? But you want to play to as many people as will fill a room. I'm prepared for the band to get bigger, and if it happens I won't be shy."

"We ended the cycle of the last record playing Brixton," says Hugo. "This one we're starting with Brixton when it's out. And – I don't know if 'disappointed' is kind of the right word – but it feels like from Brixton, throughout the process, that with a bit of hard work there is no reason why we shouldn't be playing bigger venues than that."

There are two sides to this coin. On the one hand, you think, it would be a truly beautiful thing, a triumph, ▶



## SAM DOYLE

**ROLE:** *Lead singer, The Maccabees*  
*Robert Dylan (The Who)*  
*After 1966 album*

**LOOK:** *He's really a bit of a mess, but he's got a really nice sense of humor and he's really into his music.*

**FELIX SAYS:** *He's got a really nice sense of humor and he's really into his music. He's got a really nice sense of humor and he's really into his music.*

for The Maccabees' devoted fans to collectively watch "their" band breaking through onto bigger stages. But there might also be a danger of this most intimate of bands collecting a glut of casual observers who would then become part of a much more impersonal experience. Or, to put it better...

"When we played Brixton," Felix says, "I got stopped by a kid who said, 'Me and my mates, none of us want you to get bigger, 'cos we want to keep you. But we *do* want you to get bigger so you can see a bit of money.' I was like, 'Awww!'. He was really sincere about it."

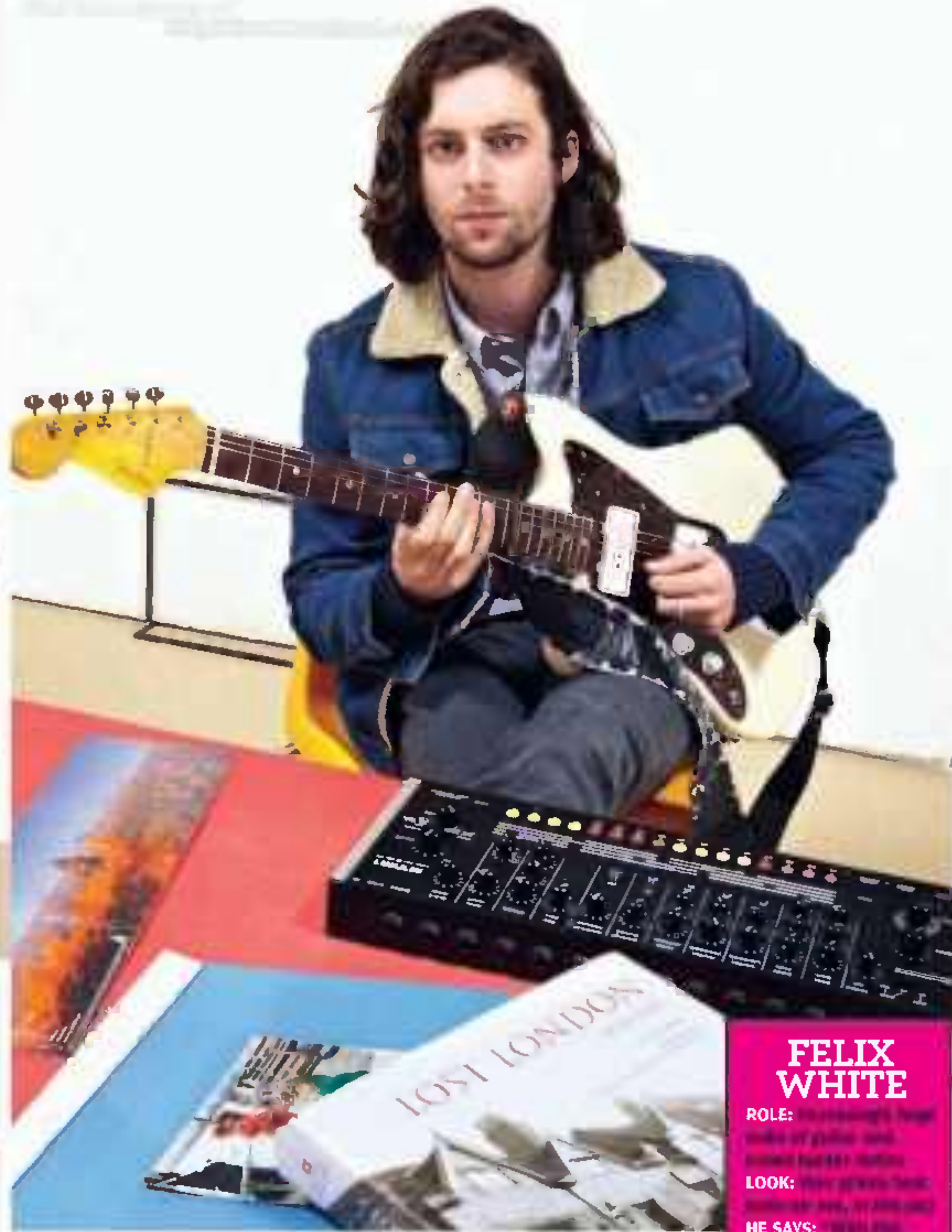
"There is a lot of that thing," Hugo continues. "Of seeing bands get big, and then you go and see them play an arena or whatever, and it's like, 'Oh, man...'"

And we've all been *there*, haven't we? Orlando certainly has.

"I went and saw Arcade Fire do The Oz, and I just didn't get it," he recalls. "I love that band to pieces, and I still love that band, but it just didn't make sense. It was the first time I'd seen them and it didn't make sense. But then, I spoke to people who said that it was the most amazing gig they'd seen in years. And I don't think that I felt like I was sharing a band with more people than I wanted, it's just..."

# "WHEN BANDS GET SUCCESSFUL, IT CHANGES HOW YOU SEE THEM"

Hugo White



## FELIX WHITE

**ROLE:** *Lead singer, The Maccabees*  
*Robert Dylan (The Who)*  
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**LOOK:** *He's really a bit of a mess, but he's got a really nice sense of humor and he's really into his music.*

**HE SAYS:** *He's got a really nice sense of humor and he's really into his music. He's got a really nice sense of humor and he's really into his music.*

Hugo: "As much as you don't want your opinion to change of anything when it turns into something more successful, it *does* change the way you see things. And it doesn't mean that they've changed. It just happens. It's just weird and sort of unavoidable."

**A**s he says this, you can see The Maccabees collectively think about how they would deal with it, about what it would mean for them. And for their fans. Characteristically, it's left to Felix to provide a positive final outlook.

"I just think the thing about getting bigger, for us, the exciting thing is it buys you more creative freedom. And in fact it doesn't actually mean compromise, it means the opposite. It means you can do more things with what you want to do – there's more avenues to do stuff. And I feel that we've kind of earned ourselves

being in that position, and that once we get in that position it's something that we should really benefit from. So that's what I see as all the positives of putting ourselves in that place"

Felix is right to be positive. All of this stuff is

yet to happen for The Maccabees. And it is exciting, for them and for us. Of course, nothing is certain. By the end of this week, they could find themselves without a Number One album, and 21 quid's worth of *NME* wages richer. But, honestly, we still think that's unlikely. We still think they're about to blow up bigstyle, and are looking forward to being there every step of the way, watching it happen.

More important, though: after an afternoon in their company today, we're also pretty darn sure that if they do get there that they won't mess it up, and that they'll still be as special as they always have been.

**NME EXTRA**


For exclusive hidden content, including the chance to win one of five signed copies of 'Given To The Wild' and to hear an exclusive band remix of 'Ayla', go to [NME.COM/extra](http://NME.COM/extra), or see p9 for more info

Watch an exclusive new interview with the band and check out their latest videos at [NME.COM/video](http://NME.COM/video) now



**NOTHING GOOD COMES EASY.  
BOY, WHOEVER SAID THAT WASN'T KIDDING.**

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JACK DANIEL'S  TENNESSEE WHISKEY

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They sexed up  
Yoda for The  
Empire Strikes  
Back remake

**“MASS  
SLAUGHTER?  
IT WAS  
ONE PERSON...  
” ONLY**

Thought **Chairlift** were post-MGMT also-rans? Think again. For 2012 they've shook off the past, ditched a member and returned with an album full of murder and sex fiends. **Hazel Sheffield** meets the year's most disturbed breakthrough band

PHOTOS: PIETER M VAN HATTEM

**C**hairlift know the exact moment they finally cracked. It was January 2010 and the end of 18 months on the road. Their first album was patchy; its major single, 'Bruises', meant they were most famous for soundtracking an iPod advert. Caroline Polachek and Aaron Pfenning, the couple who started the band at university in Colorado, had split up a year before and were scraping through their final live dates in Australia. Then, one night, Caroline, Aaron and third bandmate Patrick Wimberly decided to go onstage topless, with fluorescent pink tape over their nipples. "We were in Tasmania on New Year's Eve," Patrick explains from the corner of a quiet bar in their home of Greenpoint, Brooklyn. "That's where the hole in the ozone layer is and it was very, very hot. All of the women had tape on their nipples!"

"That's not true!" Caroline shoots back. "But when you're that far from home and you've had such a crazy, strenuous day, you're like, 'Alright!'"

"Not even a crazy, strenuous day..." he starts.

"Well, you weren't the one fighting with your boyfriend!" she interrupts.

"This was not just a strenuous day, this was a strenuous fucking year and a half, and it was almost over," Patrick says with finality, and they look at each other over the tops of their cups of coffee.

If any band seemed destined to swallow the suicide pill, it seemed to be Chairlift. Yet, somehow, they have walked away from their miserable first album tour and the Brooklyn class of 2008, where they perennially played little cousins to the likes of MGMT and Vampire Weekend, to come back with brain blowing new album 'Something', out on January 23. Its sound – inspired equally by French new wavers Indochine and English pop totems Roxy Music and Tears For Fears – is a seductive, addictive combination of big, clean production and huge pop hooks that immediately sets the bar for new albums of 2012. It's a massive leap forward, especially given that the "strenuous fucking year and a half" seemed to be spelling out the end for them.

**T**he original foundations of the band disappeared when Aaron left after the Australian tour, walking away from their contract with Columbia and two years of hard graft pushing their debut, 'Does You Inspire You'. The album received mixed reviews when it was released in 2009, and early fans hoping for more of the cutesy 'Bruises' instead found a patchwork of other styles including a country ballad ('Don't Give A Damn'), French disco ('Le Flying Saucer Hat'), and new-world atmospherics ('Ceiling Wax'). Lacking a sound they could really call their own, exhausted from touring, and with one bandmember on his

way out, Chairlift could have called it quits. In the end it was Patrick, a school friend of Caroline's from Colorado, who knew they had to make it work.

His tactic was to get back in the studio straight away. They wrote everything together in one room, rather than separately, as Caroline and Aaron had written the first album. "On the last record every song had its own synth sound," Caroline explains. "Whereas this time I made a palette of 10 or 12 sounds. So 'Cool As A Fire' uses the same synth sounds as 'Amanacmonesia', and it's in the bridge of 'Sidewalk Safari'. There's a lot of crossover. Those are the kind of things you would never hear but you would feel."

**T**he album may feature ice-cool synths, soft drum machines and echoing vocals, but the main ingredients are rather more abrasive. Machine guns, fantasies about hit-and-run killings and Las Vegas vice are just three Patrick remembers, "We'd barely begun writing and we didn't have any direction for what we were going to write about. Caroline just walks into the

room, takes off her headphones and says,

"I want to write a song about

running people over!"

"No, running over one

person!" Caroline interjects. "It's not mass slaughter!"

While she won't say who she was thinking about wreaking death upon (although we obviously have our suspicions), there's plenty of sadness and anger under the surface of 'Something', beginning with the hit-and-run fantasy, 'Sidewalk Safari'. You can almost see the cartoon motorbikes from the start of A-ha's 'Take On Me' video driving right through the bass. Over the top, Caroline adopts a murderous purr: "I'm bad with bores and urrores, I'm not so good at guns/Poison seems old-fashioned and hired help's no fun. But I do know how to drive a car, faster than a man can run!"

"You stalk the animals too, you don't just kill them," Caroline explains of the fantasy safari she's envisaged in the song, half-smiling, half-serious.

It's amazing how, for a band that

Patrick loses it when NME calls them Chairlift. Again

started out singing about frozen strawberries and handstands, Chairlift now seem to be talking about violence. There's the gunshot that ricochets through 'Take It Out On Me', a song that, Caroline explains, started life in a dream. "In my imagination of what's happening in that song, something really bad is about to happen and I'm trying to scoot my whole family out before the bad thing."

Then there's the machine-gun range where Caroline spent her days during the band's week-long residency at a Las Vegas casino last April. Chairlift played twice a day to chain smoking gamblers. In between stage times, Patrick worked on his blackjack and Caroline drove out of town to shoot. "I had a lot of steam to let off, personally, so I figured that would be amazing!" she says brightly.

Chairlift are certainly tougher – and smarter – than they first seem. A lot of art theory goes into their work, from the photograph on their Man Ray-inspired album cover, to Caroline's spandex-clad ballet routine for single 'Amanacmonesia', which was inspired by sex-obsessed French choreographer Maurice Béjart. But at the heart of it, they're a band who know how to put a pop song together. You could have almost guessed it after 'Bruises', a track Caroline admits "plopped out in 20 minutes". And after two years learning how to turn that songwriting into an album's worth of gold, and pulling their band back from the brink of breaking up, they are ready to fulfil their potential.

"We're dying to go back on tour, absolutely dying," says Caroline. "We feel like we've really made something, as opposed to scraps of a bunch of things. It feels like a declaration of life."

Patrick smiles: "This is 'Something'."

## INSIDE SOMETHING

*Caroline on the influences behind the new album*

### MY BLOODY VALENTINE



**'Loveless' shoegazers**  
"The idea is being hard and soft, like, 'Met Before'."

Sonically we're not pulling from them, just the idea that something can be delicate and also have a muddy, masculine background."

### TEARS FOR FEARS



**Still the biggest thing to come out of the 80s**  
"That song 'Change', the synths are the way we'd want ours. They have a big hook out front but then they'll drag you off in the elevator shaft and then get you back again."

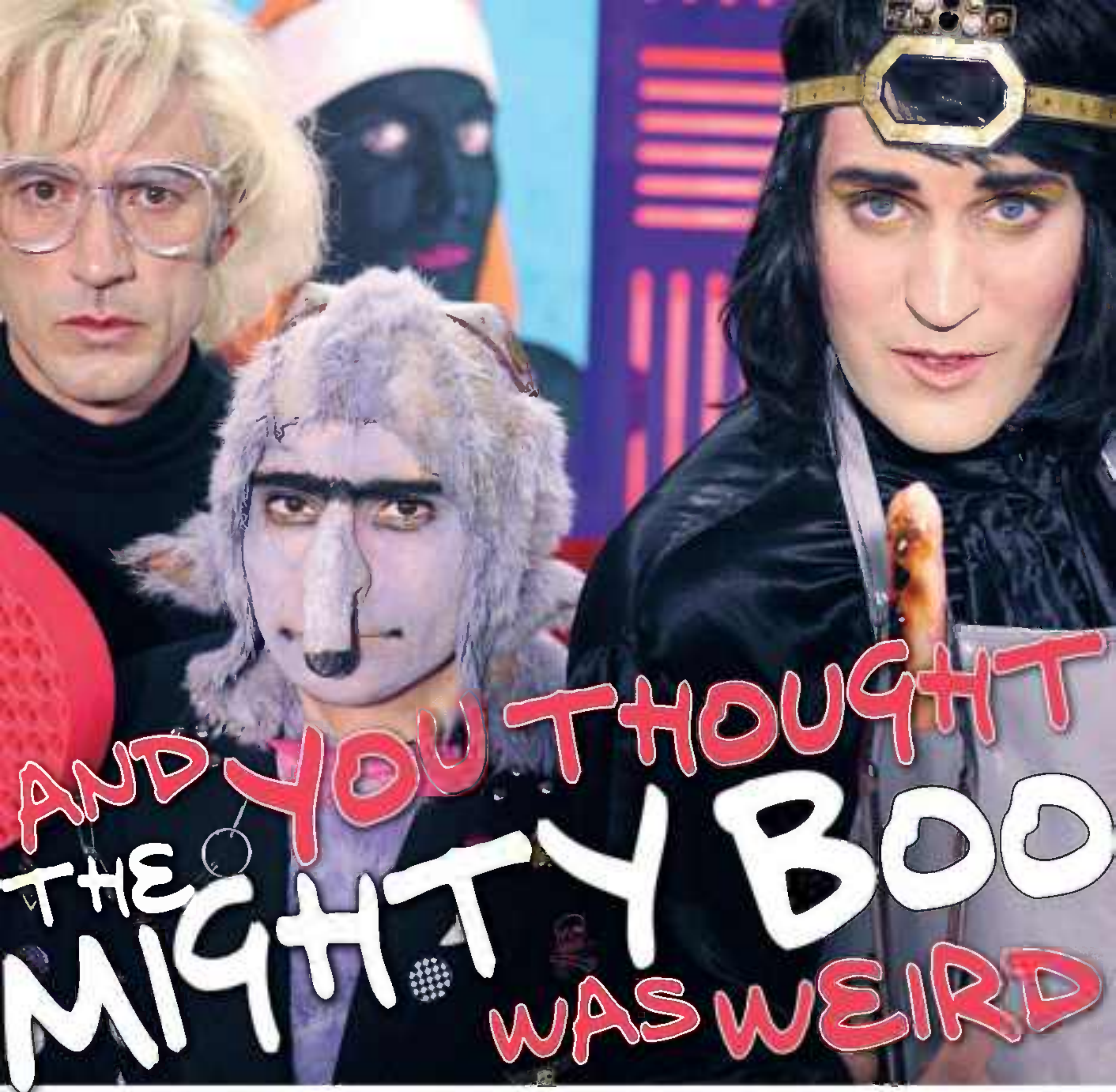
### INDOCHINE



**'80s French synth-fetishists**  
"John Malkovich showed me a video for

'L'Aventurier'. It looked like they were in a jungle, but then the guys all had these super gothy, fancy bangs. I was like, 'What is this world?'"

**NME EXTRA** For exclusive hidden content, including the chance to win one of five signed copies of Chairlift's new album, go to [NME.COM/extra](http://NME.COM/extra), or see p9 for more info



Come with us on a journey into the trippy, goofy and bloody mental world of **Noel Fielding** as **Emily Mackay** meets the crew of oddballs he'll unleash into our living rooms via his loopy new show

**F**or three weeks I did all these characters, and when I came to play myself, I couldn't remember who I was," laughs Noel Fielding. "I was saying to Nigel the director, 'Which one am I again? What voice do I do?' Because I'd just literally done, like, 30 characters in a row and I'd just lost my mind and couldn't remember who I was. I was like, 'Aw, no, I don't wanna be the Syd Barrett of the comedy world.'"

You can forgive Noel for being a little confused. His new TV show, *Noel Fielding's Luxury Comedy*, which debuts on E4 on January 26, is set to squish fans' minds with a vast array of mental characters and a heady mix of improv, animation, greenscreen, sketches, art and song (the latter provided by Noel's good mate, Kasabian's Serge Pizzorno). Although recognisably the work of the same strange mind, it's a very different world from *The Mighty Boosh*. "I think we'd [he and Julian Barratt] nailed that double act thing so well, and

that sort of verbal gymnastics, that I didn't want to try and just do the same thing," nods Noel. "There's a lot of stuff in the show where we've tried to cut down on the verbal stuff, to have more musical and visual stuff going on. You can almost watch it with the sound down."

Volume up or down, *Luxury Comedy* will be a brain overload to those who saw Noel as merely Vince Noir, opening a weird world of characters that will stretch perceptions and minds. But let's get Noel to 'explain' who's who in his new realm. If he can remember...

Luxury goods (l-r):  
Andy Warhol,  
Smooth, Noel, Dolly

## NOEL

"I play a bit of an extreme version of myself. I'm sat at a desk in this jungle treehouse in the middle of the forest. You don't even know why I'm there, or if it's my house. I'm called Noel in it - I thought I might as well, everyone thinks I'm this weird fairytale character anyway so I might as well play on that."

## ANDY WARTHOL

"He's a robotic Andy Warhol, and he's really naive, like a child, like, 'Oh, what's happening?' I have to teach him about stuff. He was only going to be in it once but it worked so well we just thought we should keep him on as my cleaner."

## SMOOTH

"My brother [Mike Fielding, Naboo in *The Mighty Boosh*] plays an anteater; a really cynical, deadpan anteater who's my butler. I had an idea that I wanted a purple anteater to be my butler. I don't know where it came from really..."

## DOLLY

"She's a fashionista Nico-type character who's German and really trendy, who gets on my nerves, but she's my best friend. So she's a bit like Vince was in *The Boosh*. She's always got a show coming out or a cabaret. She hasn't really got a proper job, she does pop-up jewellery shops and stuff. So she's kind of like all my mates I've ever had!"

## THE AUDIENCE

"The Audience is probably the weirdest character. It's kind of a person who processes mashed potato through his body and it comes out of a drawbridge in his dungarees in a different shape. There's his sidekick Doorag, who narrates the drama and describes what's going in a really slow, Californian sort of trippy way."

## THE ALIENS

"Me and my brother play two aliens that come down in a biscuit tin into a suburban English garden and create havoc in the middle of the night. When I was young I was obsessed with a biscuit

# SERGE'S LUXURY SOUNDS



*The Kasabian man on the inspiration behind the key tunes*

## LUXURY COMEDY

"The theme tune is inspired by the title track of Fleetwood Mac's 'Tusk'. We wanted it to sound like a musical, y'know, like *Hair*. Noel started off with this rhythm that we got off Fleetwood Mac, and the chorus is almost evangelical, kinda like *The Polyphonic Spree*. I wanted it to sound like a kids' theme tune. Something like *Rainbow*."

## THE DECISION

"It sounds a bit like Silver Apples and Suicide, with a strange kind of folk vocal. That's what's been so amazing about working with Noel, his ability to just sing and come up with things really quickly. 'The Decision' is AMAZING, actually. It's one of the ones where we looked at each other and were like, 'Shit, this is actually really good'. I'd be happy to go and tour that."

## SWINGBALL BLUES

"This is sort of Beethovenesque. It's sort of tribal but then it's also like a games teacher song, like a marching song. It's about a chocolate finger whose wife has died. He used to have a partner but now he only plays swingball on his own. That's why he's got the swingball blues. It's a sad story, but a great song."

## STRAWBERRY SUNRISE

"It's a bit like Prince and it's got a bit of a Barry White feel to it, we've pitched Noel's voice right down so he sounds really deep. But it sounds more like when the police change a criminal's voice... it's really trippy."

tin that my nan had. I used to really love it, and when I went to university she gave it to me and I've always kept it."

## LYSERGIC CASSEROLE

"I wanted to do a sort of acid-rock, Steppenwolf-type band who have taken so much acid that they're stuck inside their guitar case. Rich Fulcher plays one of them and we're on this motorbike just going round and round in this guitar case trying to get out. They do get out eventually and then get trapped in Diamond Back's [below] guitar case so they're out of the frying pan and into the fire. Except they're out of one guitar case into another guitar case."

## DIAMOND BACK

"He's a country and western singer from Putney who has 1,000 eyes. He shakes his head like a maraca. And he works in a pet shop. He's got a flamingo for a wife. He's quite visual, he wears a Nudie suit, a really amazing Nudie suit, and he's got Brillo Pad hair that's gold and his skin's sort of this really weird blue colour."

## FANTASY MAN

"He's a medieval knight, a bit like [17th-century novel character] Don Quixote, but in this electronic world like *Tron*. Tron Quixote! He's in a fantasy world on these adventures then he gets broken out of that into reality. So he'll be looking for the dream tiger, he'll find it and put it in his bag, then someone will go, 'Oi mate, what you doing?' And then it clicks and he's in a normal street in Hackney putting a cat in a bin bag and someone's going, 'That's my sister's cat, what the fuck?'"

## DONDYLION

"He's a lion who's given himself up from the plains of Africa thinking he'll get a cushy life in a safari park, but he gets put in a horrible private menagerie. He keeps trying to talk himself into it, that it's gonna be alright, like, 'This ain't it, this is quarantine mate. It's gonna be brilliant.' He's like a Cockney spiv. He's having a bit of a shocker."

## NEW YORK COP

"He's got a knife wound and two bullet holes that form a gash in his arm that talk to him and is like his partner. He's yellow, the colour of a taxi, and solves crimes. His whole environment's like cardboard little models and stuff."

Noel's Fielding's *Luxury Comedy* starts on E4 on January 26

# STH



# START A RECCO IN A WEEK!



## 1 MONDAY: CHOOSE A BAND

**Jen Long, BBC Radio 1**

Founded cassette-only Kissability label and put out releases by DZ Deathrays and Cut Ribbons

*"The first thing you need to make sure of when you're choosing a band is that you love them, as there's a lot of hassle involved. Approaching bands is kind of like dating, asking someone out for a drink, but instead you're asking them if they want to put a record out. It's so easy to get in touch – it's not like you're emailing Sting – whether it's through Facebook, Twitter, SoundCloud or Tumblr. Just send a message and ask who you need to speak to; 99 times out of 100 someone will email you back. I don't do any research about how popular they are – it's up to you to work hard and get people interested in them."*



**REMEMBER**

- If your band's number of Facebook friends is in the hundreds rather than the thousands, you'll have to work on their profile
- Make sure you know who to deal with. Smaller bands often won't have a manager, but one member may take care of business
- It could help to get involved with the band in smaller ways first, whether it's coordinating flyering or managing their merch sales
- Some bands see releasing music as a hobby rather than a career – if so, prepare to do most of the work yourself
- If you see yourself working with them for more than one release, get an idea about their plans



## 2 TUESDAY: PREPARE FOR RECORDING

**James Allan, Glasvegas**

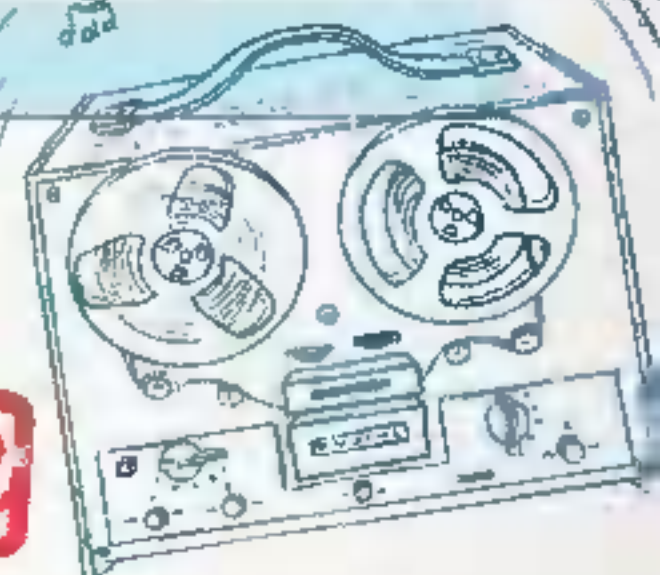
Recorded tracks including breakthrough single 'Daddy's Gone' at home

*"Me and Rab [Allan, guitarist] had no money, we had to do our early recording at home. But being DIY and not having to pay to use a studio, you can spend as much time as you like making mistakes and working out what you want to sound like. Your personality shines through, and sometimes that's what draws people in. We just used an eight-track so we could add backing vocals and stuff. And even though at first I didn't know how to switch the computer on, I was able to pick it all up quickly. There's a programme called Cubase you can use for mastering and editing – if even I was able to do it, then there's absolutely no reason why anyone else shouldn't..."*



**REMEMBER**

- If you do want studio time ask around your band's contacts for deals they've heard of – Resident Studios in London, for example, offer special rates for unsigned bands
- Make sure the band have their musical arrangements sorted out before starting, especially if paying by the hour
- Recording programmes like Audacity and GarageBand are free to download and will do the job at home
- If you have a bit of cash go for Pro Tools – the latest version, Pro Tools 10, will set you back about £230. It's the kit used by most studios
- Sort out who's going to own the copyright of recordings before you start – it could come in handy if the band takes off and you own those early demos...



# ORD LABEL...



*So, everyone's skint and jobless and you can't get into the music biz unless your dad runs a major and you do 90 weeks' unpaid work experience. The answer? Start your own label! Bands and label chiefs show you how to start a music empire in seven days*

3

## WEDNESDAY: PLAN THE MANUFACTURING



### *Paul Riddlesworth, Too Pure Singles Club*

Put out releases by The Lovely Eggs and DZ Deathrays

*"There are some great pressing plants in the UK, but it's usually cheaper to get records made in Europe. We use Optimal in Germany, but lots of people look to the Czech Republic. It doesn't take much time to sort out, it's still just an email or a phone call.*

*For our first release we had 300 records made – that should be enough to cover your costs if you sell out, and give you a little bit of money for promo. Any more at the start and you'll just end up using the leftovers as ashtrays."*

REMEMBER

- Optimal in Germany, MPO in France and GZ in the Czech Republic all offer good rates
- If you do fancy having it done in the UK, Vinyl Factory come highly recommended
- First off, 300 copies is ideal. Increase to 500 once you've begun to make a name for yourself – you'll get a better price per record too
- You may fancy putting out CDs too – and if you burn them yourself, it'll be cheaper than vinyl

4

## THURSDAY: SORT THE ARTWORK MASTERPLAN

### *Stephen Bass, Moshi Moshi Records*

Put out releases by Bloc Party, Hot Chip and Friendly Fires

*"There's lots of ways you can save money. Using art students is always good, they'll help out for their portfolio. One trick is to make oversized flyer designs, fold them and stick them inside plastic bags. If you have a job in an office you can try and wing it for free. We like to work with bands who have their own ideas – we don't like to tell them what to do. I get a bit frustrated when it's over stylised, but luckily we've not had anyone want to put flashing UV lights on the cover yet..."*

REMEMBER

- You'll surely know someone with access to free photocopying at work, just ask around
- Art students will normally help out for free, but make sure they're credited properly
- Let bands have creative freedom, but if you're footing the bill then keep control of the budget
- Think creatively: The Ting Tings got fans to chuck paint at black vinyl sleeves and flogged them as limited seven-inches

5

## FRIDAY: OUTLINE THE RELEASE

### *Frankie Francis and Dave Harper, Frankie & The Heartstrings*

Released a live EP on their Pop Sex Ltd label

**Frankie:** *"Rather than paying a distribution company to get your record in the shops, you're better off doing it yourself: we just walked into shops like Hot Rats in Sunderland and RPM Music in Newcastle. We set up a mail order shop on our website too."*

**Dave:** *"We made a list of all the shops we wanted to put the EP in.*

*Years of prowling record shops around the country equip you for these things."*

REMEMBER

- Contact a digital distributor such as State 51 – they'll help you get on iTunes
- Use PayPal to set up a mail order service online – it's free for new businesses
- Make friends with people in record stores
- Tell record store bosses they can stock your single on sale-or-return, so they only have to pay for every copy they sell
- Make sure the single is available at every gig your band plays ▶

iTunes

**6**

## SATURDAY: SORT OUT THE PROMO PLAN



Label maestro Jack (left) – he even makes the tea

### Jack Lawrence-Brown, *White Lies*

Set up the Chess Club label and released early singles by Mumford & Sons and Jay Jay Pistolet, aka Justin from The Vaccines

*“For every release we’d throw a free launch party, which meant there was a showcase – I’d pay my girlfriend £30 to work on the merch table and flog the vinyl, too. We did a lot of our promo online – Facebook has always been useful and we’d pester forums. We’d email as many listings websites as possible, so if we had a single launch we’d try and get it publicised in places like NME. You just need to mention it to everyone you can. I bumped into [Radio 1’s] Huw Stephens and chatted to him, and he ended up giving Chess Club his Independent Label Of The Year award. You need to talk to anyone you think will help you get the word out there.”*

**REMEMBER**

- Set up a Facebook page for your label as well as your bands
- Throw a launch party for your single and get everyone there to sign up to your emailing list
- Follow links for small, similar bands you like. Find out who manages their UK publicity, then send that person the song – if they like it, they may take the band on for free to start with
- Always carry flyers, and leave them around venues
- Carry copies of your single on CD. Give them to DJs, student journos, drunk singers – anyone who could help promote it

facebook

**7**

## SUNDAY: THE WORLD DOMINATION SCHEME!



### Milo Cordell, *The Big Pink*

Set up Merok Records and put out early releases by Klaxons and Crystal Castles

*“We came out all guns blazing with Klaxons, but that meant the pressure was on. So we didn’t stop looking for new music. We found pretty much every single we’ve released by looking on Myspace. Everyone has their own method, but I’d find bands I liked, look at bands they’d become friends with and give them a listen. We have a blog called Don’t Die*

*Wondering – even if you can’t release all the good music out there, it’s good to put your name behind it and make the label live in another way. We’ve done a few compilations, which is a good way of increasing interest. You’ll learn from your mistakes, and you’ll meet more useful people – there’s always another record shop to find...”*

**REMEMBER**

- Keep looking for new bands to get involved with – if you’ve had a couple of success stories, they’ll be all the more eager to put their faith in you
- It might be time to think about a distribution company to help you get in more stores
- A press officer can help you get coverage, but let them come to you so you know they’re into the label
- Compilations will showcase your roster



## IS IT WORTH IT?

### “YES, PEOPLE WILL TREASURE YOUR RECORD”

Everyone bangs on about the music industry being in the pits, but the fact is that sales of single tracks was up 10 per cent in 2011 compared to 2010 – and vinyl album sales were up 44 per cent. OK, unless you find the next Adele warbling down your local you’re

not going to make serious cash, but that’s not why you’re doing it, right? “Getting an actual record out was a really proud moment,” says Frankie Francis. “And if you’re putting out something that you really love then people will treasure it.”

*So, have you taken the plunge? Head over to [NME.COM/blogs](http://NME.COM/blogs) and let us know how you got on – you’ll also find a new blog about our favourite record labels to help you swot up*

'80s ICONS

JOE  
STRUMMER



**NME**

Photo by Peter Anderson/  
SonicEditions.com

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**'80s ICONS**

**ROBERT  
SMITH**

**NME**

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**'80s ICONS**  
**BEASTIE BOYS & RUN-DMC**



**NME**

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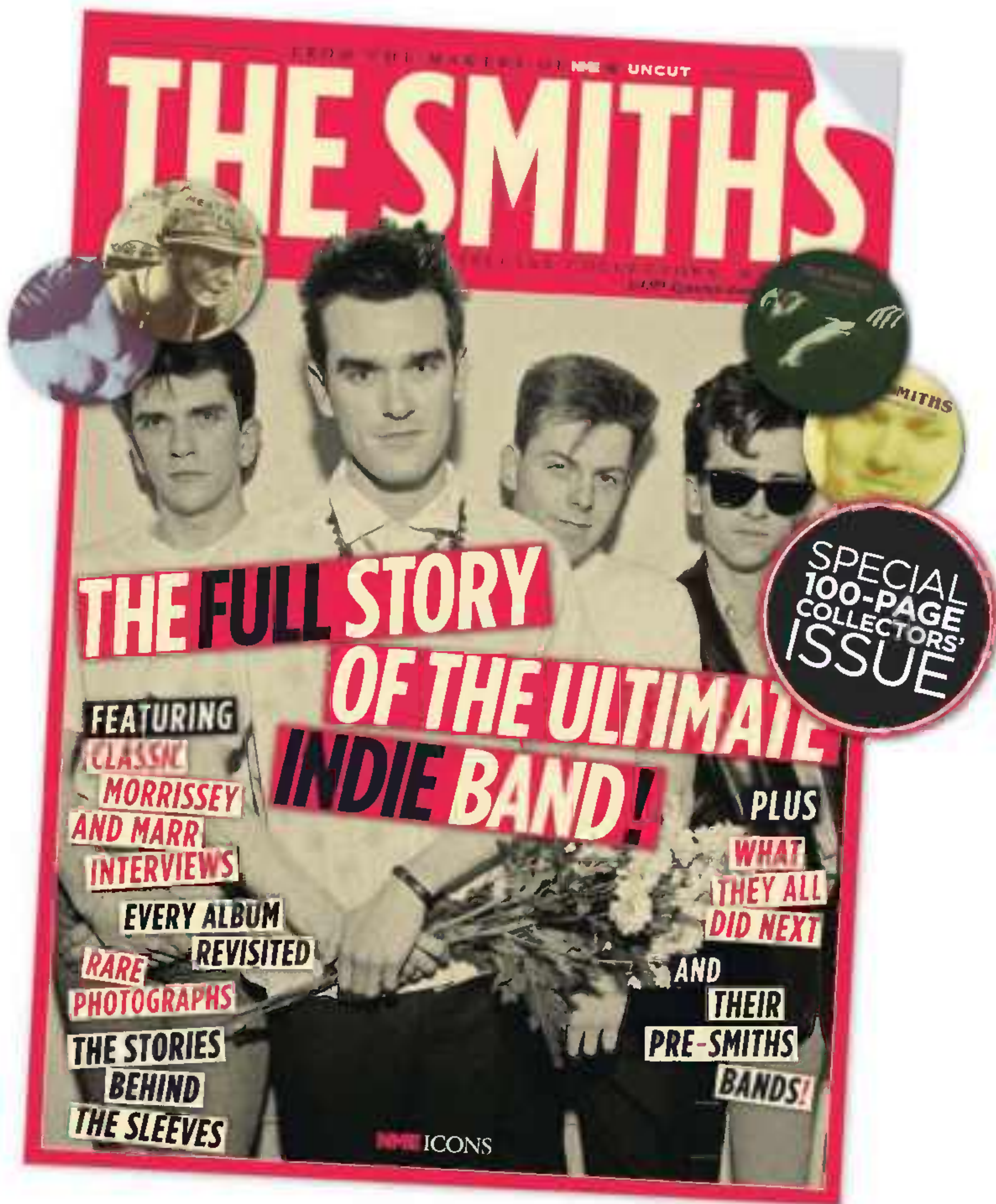


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# MANI OVER BOBBY

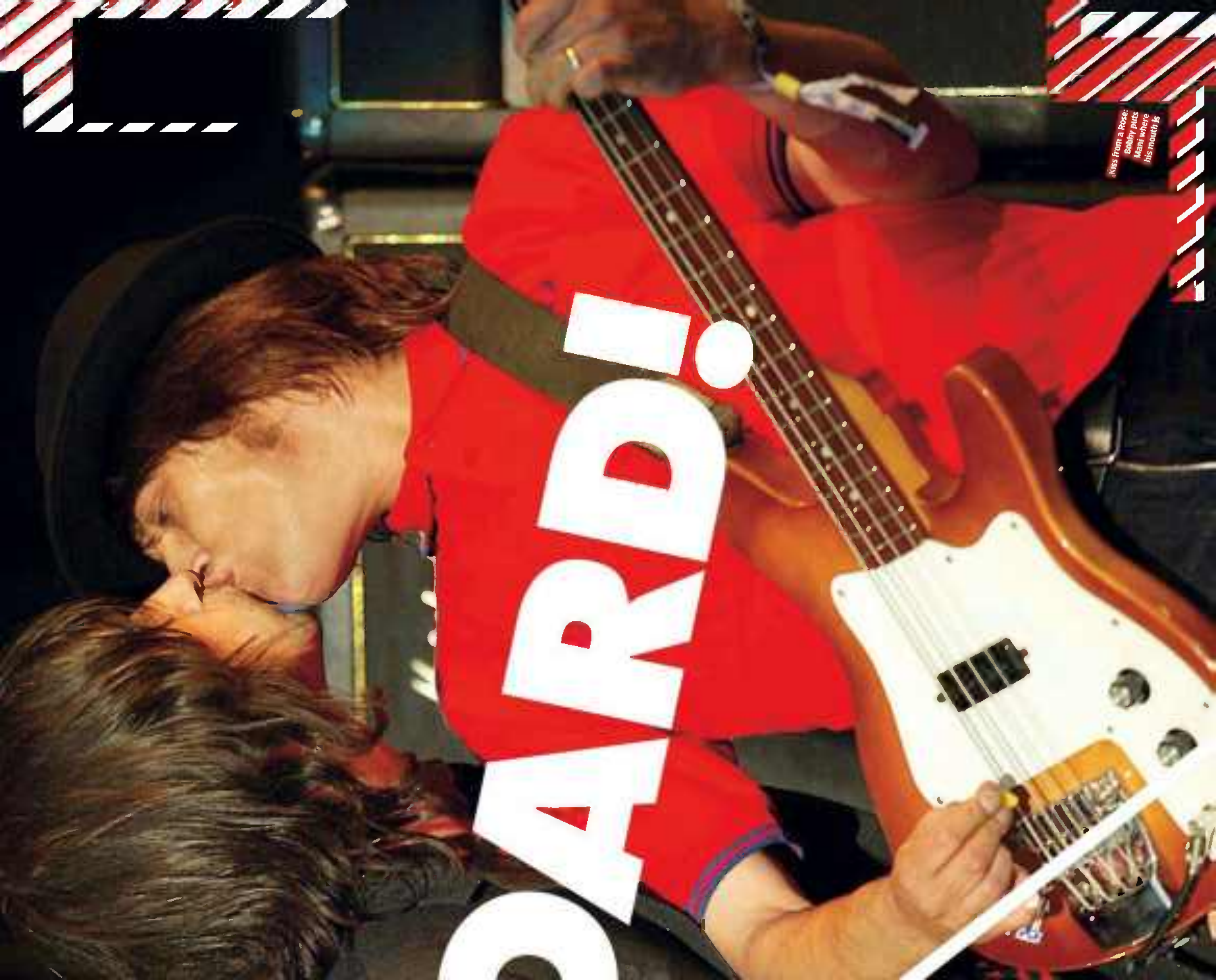
*They've lost their bass player to the world's hottest reunion and they're still without a label, but **Primal Scream** are in no mood to panic. Bobby Gillespie tells **Sam Richards** about a new album, their new sound... and a new bassist.*

**T**he Stone Roses' reunion announcement last year answered one of the most pertinent questions of our times: would John Squire and Ian Brown be able to share the same room without lamping each other? But other questions were also thrown up, somewhat obscured by the sight of four estranged friends making up for the first time in 15 years. Where was "unofficial fifth member" Cressa? Does this mean it's OK to wear 22-inch flared jeans again? And perhaps most importantly, what's going to happen to Primal Scream now that their totemic bassman Mani has defected back to the Roses?

Since joining Primal Scream in 1996, Mani had come to embody the gloriously embattled rock'n'roll spirit of that band as much as anyone. Not only were his driving basslines the bedrock of the latter-day Scream sound, but he also played the crucial role of avuncular realist to Bobby Gillespie's mercurial rock'n'roll dreamer. Mani was there, centre stage, throughout the whole of last year's 'Screamadelica' anniversary celebrations – a two-gig salute that turned into a triumphant 70-date world tour. Anyone who caught one of the shows would probably agree with Bobby: here was a band of wily old vets hirting the form of their lives.

Now a crucial cog in the Scream

machine is gone, and with shaggy guitarist Rob 'Throb' Young still absent without leave, Bobby is back to the bare bones, a real skeleton crew. They don't even have a record deal. But this unsinkable rock battleship has weathered storms in the past – there was the fanbase-decimating, pre-breakthrough, self-titled second album, the near-death experience that was a world tour with a hyper-addled Depeche Mode, and Creation Records collapsing just as they delivered 'XTRMNTR'. And to be fair, bouncing around a room in his publicist's office, the ever-boyish Bobby doesn't look like a man cowed by fate. With a sizeable portion of his new album already in the can, he's got no time for regrets or reminiscences. Primal Scream, as they have always done, are about to reset the co-ordinates and set sail for the future. ▶



Kiss from a Rose:  
Bobby puts  
Mant where  
his mouth is

KISS ARE!

**NME:** Mani's played such an important role in Primal Scream over the past 15 years, so how will heading off with The Stone Roses affect the band?  
**Bobbie Gillespie:** "It's like a football team, y'know? A great player leaves, you get another great player. That's it."

**That's it?**

"Mani's gone to join The Stone Roses; we love him, we love the Roses, and we're happy for him. But we're making a new record and we're happy about that, so it's fine. Everything's cool."

**He's always been hopeful about a Stone Roses reunion, so you must have known this was bubbling?**  
"Yeah, I felt it was. Over the summer, I had a feeling that it could happen. And I knew it was definitely going to happen some time. Which is cool. I love him, he's like a brother to me. We had a lot of great times together and we're gonna miss him, y'know? But maybe he'll come back some day."

**Will you go to the Manchester shows?**

"Yeah, we're gonna go and watch them, it's gonna be great. They're a great band, and we love 'em."

**Who's replacing him?**

"I asked Bez last month! I was at an awards ceremony and Bez said to me, 'What are you gonna do now that Mani's gone?' and I said, 'Can you play the bass, Bez?' How cool would that be? Bass and maracas! He was like, 'I'd love to do it Bob, but I can't fucking play!'"

**OK, so Bez couldn't do it... who's second choice?**

"We haven't thought about it. We're gonna finish the record first and think about it then. We've got a few ideas. We're not short of people who want to join, put it that way. High-calibre players, as well. You've got to be good to be in our band."

**You had the Hogmanay show, but taking 'Screamadelica' around the world must have been a pretty cool send-off for Mani last year, even though he didn't play on the original album...**

"It's been great. The entire band have been playing better than they've ever played. Mexico City was astounding, Santiago was incredible, Glastonbury was great. And, oh God, Benicàssim – we played after Arctic Monkeys at three in the morning with 60 or 70,000 people there. That was special."

**But aren't you worried that playing an old album at such big shows – bigger than those you were playing for your last new album – has marked you out as a nostalgia band now?**

"Nah, because we've been working on new material and slowly building up a cache of songs. *Good* songs, as well."

**Has the buzz of 'Screamadelica' rubbed off on the new material?**

"The confidence and the sense of satisfaction we got from playing those shows, that's helped us and inspired us. But 'Screamadelica' was a different project. There's not any connection. We had to get two different heads on."

**You have a tenth album to make.**

**What's been done, and what's to do?**

"Me and Andrew [Innes, guitarist] went over to Belfast at the end of 2009 and had a week with David Holmes just to see how it would go. Then we went to LA with Holmes last December and again in April. We'd take the bare bones of these tracks away and experiment with them at our studio in



**"I ASKED BEZ TO REPLACE MANI. HE WAS LIKE, 'I'D LOVE TO BOB, BUT I CAN'T FUCKING PLAY!'"**  
*Bobby Gillespie*



Chalk Farm. It's like a collage. We've never been a band who've sat down with acoustic guitars and wrote songs, it's always been about energy and atmosphere."

**Why did you want to work with your old mucker David Holmes?**

"He's got great taste, a great record collection, great ideas, and he's a very inspired guy. He's got a lot of great loops and rhythm tracks. And he's fast. It's always good to be in LA – it's like being in a movie. The studio was run by a guy called Woody and he had a lot of good equipment there, including a great mixing desk

that came out of Wally Heider Studios in San Francisco."

**When you talk about loops and collages, does that suggest this is going to be one of Primal Scream's dancier albums?**

"You can dance to some of it, but it's not like dance as in acid house or fucking grime or whatever the latest thing is. It's Primal Scream music. Modern psychedelic music. The main thing is that I'm excited by what we're doing and it's different from the stuff we've done before."

**Who else is on the new record? The last one had a lot of special guests.**

"It's a weird one, because you've got this list of who's on that record and suddenly it looks like more than it actually is. Robert Plant's only on 'Evil Heat' because I bumped into him in the pub in Primrose Hill. I've got Mark Stewart from The Pop Group singing on one song. Kevin Shields is playing guitar on one song, and hopefully Kev's gonna mix a few too. But I don't think there's going to be loads of guest stars."

It's always hard  
to find a use for turkey  
left after Christmas



**When's it coming out?**

"We don't even have a record label at the moment, so we've got to get that sorted first. Maybe we'll put it out ourselves!"

**A lot of things have happened both inside and outside the band since the recording of your last album. Where's your head at lyrically?**

"It's hard to talk about something that's not been completed. But I'm pretty pleased so far with the words. I think I've got something to say, so I'd better say it."

**What are you hoping to get off your chest?**

"Just things that are personal to me, experiences I've had. Emotional stuff – but no love songs. Some of it's a critique of culture, which is something I think is lacking in a lot of modern music. It seems that nobody's got anything to say anymore."

**Are you fired up by the current political situation?**

"I think protest is good, but it does feel like the government don't give a shit. They're gonna just implement their policies. I believe that people have the democratic right to disagree with government policies, but this government want to bring in measures to make dissenting illegal. They're going to give people fewer rights, and at the same time they're privatising any nationalised industries, dismantling the welfare state, and the poorest people are suffering from the cuts. It's like what happened in Chile in the 1970s. The Conservatives have the same free-market, neo-liberal ideology."

**Are you disappointed by newer bands' failure to engage with these kinds of issues?**

"Well, David Holmes put me into Deerhunter and Panda Bear, and I like their music, but it's kinda vague. And I guess that's the attraction, to be people feel safe being vague. It's like spiritual camouflage or something. We grew up with punk, and it was something but vague –

you know, 'God Save The Queen'. I'm not saying things were better when I was a teenager but it was a different aesthetic. One thing I have noticed over the last couple of years is how a lot of the kids in the bands are a wee bit more privileged. Nothing against privileged kids, but there's no Happy Mondays or Primal Scream. Maybe working-class kids aren't forming bands or something? Maybe Arctic Monkeys are the last ones?"

**Maybe a lot of working-class kids are more likely to be rapping or making beats than playing guitars...**

"I guess a lot of that stuff is more anonymous, and 'cos we come from a rock'n'roll culture, we want stars."

**So maybe that's why we still need the Scream...**

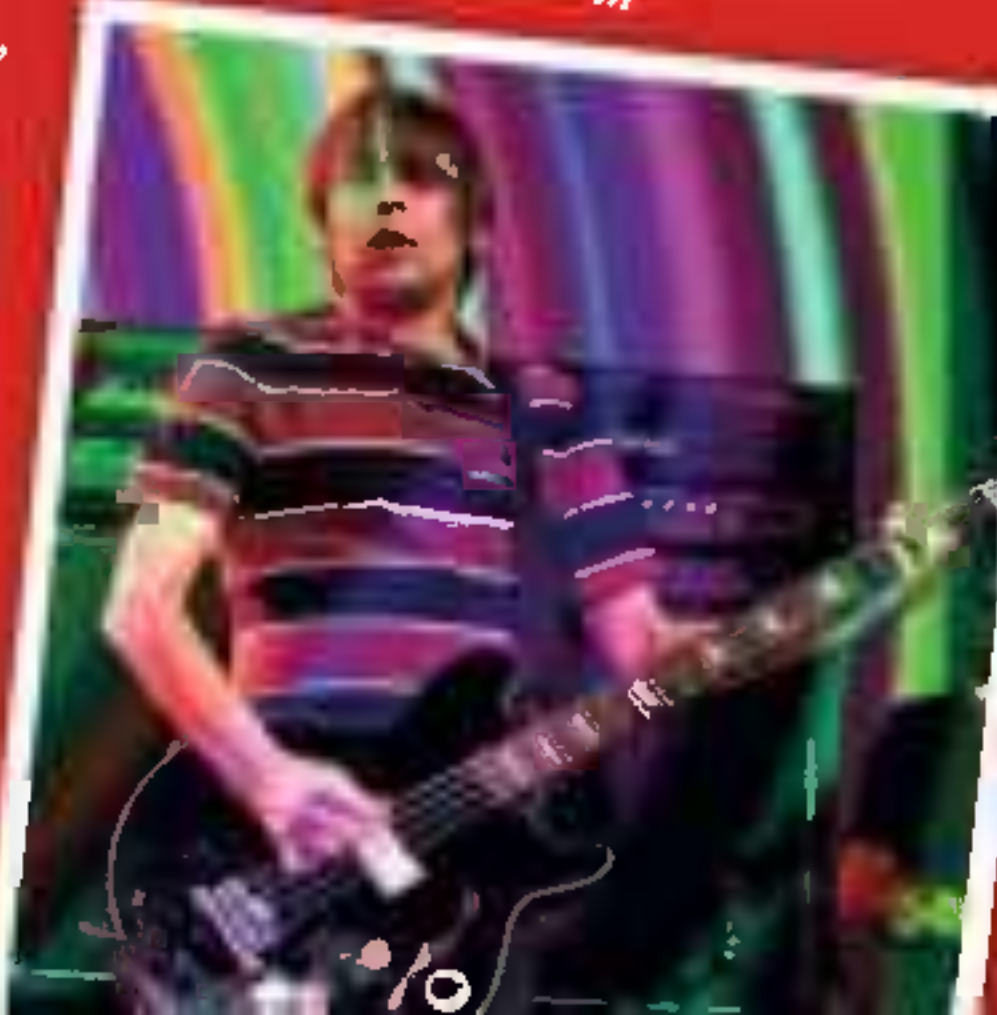
"Hmm, it's harder for bands to develop now, it's harder to keep what you're doing a secret. Primal Scream went for years without having any success and just got good at playing live, so eventually when we did get success we could actually deliver the fucking goods. It's a big difference. We want to be able to hang this image on somebody. Hear what they've got to say."

**B**obby could natter all day – in fact, his publicist is forced to intervene and remind him that he's due back at the studio to continue honing the band's intriguing new sound. So, a brief summary of what we've learned about Primal Scream's forthcoming album: it's built around loops not songs, Kevin Shields is on board and Bobby is angry about politics. The last time these three things coincided, we got 'XTRMNTR', their electro-rock-storm masterpiece. Fingers crossed. So while Mani is off to remind everybody what a life-changing band The Stone Roses were in their pomp, Bobby will be hoping to etch a vital new chapter in Primal Scream's colourful history.

## MANI'S BIG GOODBYE

*MANI reveals his mind-set  
at Edinburgh's Hogmanay*

It begins with Mani mock-wiping tears from his eyes, as Primal Scream bid goodbye to both their bass player and 'Screamadelica'. It's testament to how energising this revisiting of their classic album has been to both the band and their fans: what began as a pair of gigs back in autumn 2010 has stretched into a tour which has now lasted over a year. And the songs, from 'Moving On Up' through to an epic 'Come Together' have lost none of their euphoric power. To keep the energy levels up tonight, the blissed-out middle section of 'Shine Like Stars', 'The Inner Flight' and 'I'm Coming Down' is ditched, replaced with the three most explosive songs from 'XTRMNTR': 'Accelerator', 'Swastika Eyes' and 'Shoot Speed/Kill Light'. The set is besieged by technical problems and a sudden downpour, but it doesn't matter. As 'Rocks' brings proceedings to a close, Mani has his bass above his head, Bobby G is actually primal screaming like his life depends on it, and the last note in this latest chapter is a suitably triumphant one. *Hamish MacBain*



# REVIEWS

TWO NEW BANDS TO DEFINE YOUR 2012

Edited by Louis Pattison



## HOWLER

**AMERICA GIVE UP** ROUGH TRADE

*Infectious riffs, big gobs, great barnets and, now, a stunning debut to match. This is rock'n'roll. And it's exactly what the world needs*



**T**he best thing to have happened to Howler in their short lifespan occurred on December 4, 2011. This was the day on which the BBC Sound Of 2012 poll was announced, and they were not in it. In July, their inclusion in this and other such lists had seemed certain, thanks to 'I Told You Once's' gruff, distinctive vocal and audaciously pilfered Elvis Presley riff – '(Marie's The Name) His Latest Flame' – not to mention its colourful video set in a school gym full of dancing girls, which made full use of Jordan Gatesmith's doe eyes and

very good hair. One of the other tunes on the subsequent (and great) 'This One's Different' EP was entitled 'You Like White Women. I Like Cigarettes'. It was all exciting and fun; a bright future seemed certain.

The latter few months, though, have not quite brought the pandemonium suggested. A couple of 'buzz' gigs in London were busy – and brilliant – but nowt like The Vaccines at the Flowerpot the year previous where all present (plus a lot who weren't) decided this was the band who were gonna own 2011. Most likely, The Vaccines may be why those "180 industry

tastemakers" or whoever it is decided to omit Howler – without question, one of the best new guitar bands on the planet – from the Sound Of 2012 poll in favour of hip-hop and dubstep which makes them all feel more sophisticated and eclectic. Also, clearly, haircuts are not important this year, or else Skrillex and that truly appalling chop would never have made the longlist.

But, like I said, this is great for Howler, and for rock'n'roll. Because it doesn't need to be about hype. Those who get it will get it, and they now can enjoy the band without an endless stream of idiots – spying the Converse and the fact they're on Rough Trade – writing Howler off as being derivative or quite a lot like The Strokes. True or not, the story about how Rough Trade got on a plane to Howler's native Minneapolis the minute they heard the demos is a fantastic one. That's exactly how the rock'n'roll business should be done. As Howler themselves put it on the title track of 'This One's Different': "*When the feeling is there, then it's there*". You should just know. And, given a singer who is so obviously a star, plus a debut album called 'America Give Up' whose artwork rips off a Lucky Strike cig packet and which opens with a song called 'Beach Sluts' that sounds like The Modern Lovers and peaks with such a joyous, sped-up ending, how can you not? Just in case: there's another called 'Wailing (Making Out)' that features the lines "*I wanna get dressed, make a scene*" and then "*I wanna girl and a new car/I need a drink and a guitar*".

In mid-November, Howler promised to make "a dirty rock'n'roll" album, which is exactly what they've done, without any fluff. All 11 songs are full of energy, wit, fun, fuzz, fizz, sugar, spice and all things nice. The two songs from 'This One's Different' (the title track and the still glorious 'I Told You Once') have been re-recorded and made even more high-octane; there's another superlative pop song, complete with "woo-woo-woo-woooo"s, in the shape of 'Back Of Your Neck'. 'Back To The Grave' swaggers rather than skips, propelled by deliciously sludgy guitars. There are 'Too Much Blood' and 'Free Drunk', which demonstrate that Howler can do romantic slowies. 'Black Lagoon' finds Jordan spelling out the title, but doing it as "B-L-A-C-K-L-A-G Oooooooh... Oooooooh... N!" Hell, they've even managed to write a song called 'America' and not make it a load of self-righteous, preachy shit. Which, to my knowledge, is a first.

'America Give Up' is, quite simply, an effortlessly brilliant debut. Maybe it isn't the wider world's time to fall in love with a straight-up guitar band, but I couldn't give a monkey's, and neither should you.

**Hamish MacBain**

**8**

**DOWNLOAD: 'Wailing (Making Out)', 'Too Much Blood', 'Back To The Grave'**

**THIS IS HARDSCORE**  
what our numbers add up to

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

# TRIBES

## BABY ISLAND

*Are they glam? Are they grunge? Frankly, who cares when Johnny and the boys have exploded out of Camden with a debut as good as this*



**G**rime versus glam. Grunge against gloss. A perfect 'Aladdin Sane' flashbolt smeared with grisly Pixies gore. Pulp's shiniest synth hits dipped in diesel. Dissect Tribes' filthy/sweet dichotomy – that delicious clash of bright melody and dank garage noise – whichever way you like, it's as ravishing as a pack of supermodel she-wolves.

And bang on time. The past 18 months have seen a flood of bands finding that the most doe-eyed pop tunes sound even lovelier if you smother them in tarry guitars and scuzzy electronic fuzz and roll them down a muddy hill into a ditch. Sleigh Bells, Foals, Fixers, St Vincent and dozens more have been dressing up their musical Lana Del Reys as Frank Gallaghers and gritpopping their way into our hearts, but more than anyone Tribes are twinned with San Francisco's Girls. They share the same glam-folk core, the same rag-shirted disregard for personal hygiene and the same lust for dense distortion, deeply deployed. And they're both as dizzying as a tightening belt at your throat.

For the best part of a year Tribes have been teasing us with their enigmatic brilliance – a dirty diamond of a demo about an ancient Greek lesbian poet here, a glam blammer about growing up in the '90s there – but while 'Sappho' and 'We Were Children' (for it is they) were doing the festival rounds, most who heard them seemed apathetic or, worse still, suffered a total inability to remember who the fuck Tribes were in the first place. Worry not, though. With 'Baby', their long-awaited debut album, Tribes have roared back fiercer than ever.

It opens with noises culled from Leatherface's workshop, a goth-pop bass throb, a wave of Joey Santiago mutilation and visions of handcuffs, ice-cream on shiny leather and streets licked clean. This is the ear-scorching, cart-wheeling 'Whatever', the song My Chemical Romance *think* they're playing when they're twatting about being post-apocalyptic desert biker-punks. The

shadow of a perky pop Pixies hangs heavy, but Tribes create a brand of sordid, soiled imagery all their own, more rubber love turned tragic than Catholic guilt gone psycho.

If anything Tribes try to out-grunge Pixies, which is why the anthemic 'We Were Children' feels like being sucked into a supermassive black hole at the centre of 'Where Is My Mind?'. But the archaic

Yankisms are offset by Johnny Lloyd's Ziggy Stardust bawl and the scarf-rocking refrain of "We were children in the mid-'90s", an era so synonymous with

*It's as ravishing as a pack of supermodel she-wolves*

Britpop, lad culture, 'Three Lions' and lagery nationalism that the gravelly choir chanting the chorus drenches the song in all the glory and grace of *This Is England* '94. Even though, for Tribes at the time, it was less 'Cigarettes & Alcohol', more Scalextric and Calpol.

Yet just there is the other dichotomy that adds depth and dynamic to 'Baby'. Tribes are not just filth versus flash, they're innocence versus experience. A reflective Killers epic such as 'Corner Of An English Field', with its suggestions of a lonely war vet reminiscing over his carefree youth, rubs up against the fleeting teenage kicks of 'Halfway Home'. A luscious 'Starman' lullaby to a broken drunk driving to oblivion through a godless universe, 'Nightdriving', gives way to the brilliantly vivacious 'When My Day Comes', a gleeful gawp at The Future that is essentially a rampaging street gang made up of Bowie, The Jam, The Boo Radleys, 'River Euphrates', The Undertones and 'When You Were Young'. It's about making the familiar sound fresh, the weary wonderful. Tribes peer out at Britain – its lawless youth and its hopeless adulthoods – and rouse it to former glories.

Not least with its newer, more ponderous tracks. A spectacular pop tune named after an ancient Greek poet about a mum absconding from her family for a new life of labial adventure was always going to be the lynchpin of 'Baby', but even 'Sappho' is over-shadowed by the stratospheric Black Mountain stomp and bluster of 'Himalaya', the Beatledelic ballad 'Bad Apple' or the psych-country wonder 'Alone Or With Friends', a carnival funeral march in which the hearse lifts off like halfway through *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*.

It's this added meat and might that makes 'Baby' not only an early contender for album of 2012 but a formidable salvo in the guitar rock fightback, packing the power punch of prime Oasis, the pop preen of peak Suede and the sweet serrations of 'Surfer Rosa'. Congratulations, Tribes, it's a monster. **Mark Beaumont**

**DOWNLOAD: 'Sappho', 'Himalaya', 'When My Day Comes'**



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# THE BIG PINK

**FUTURE THIS** 4AD

*The east London duo's follow-up album is no failure – just a brief history of why bigger isn't always better*



God knows what possessed them to say it. But since The Big Pink have now disowned their claim that 'Future This' is some kind of hip-hop record, the question of why bands frequently feel the need to announce moves in every direction except the one they're actually taking (hello, Persil-white indie-rock!) can be chewed over some other day. In any case, Robbie Furze and Milo Cordell's second album isn't done for by a lack of ambition, but rather the imagination required to realise it.

First though, what works. 'A Brief History Of Love', The Big Pink's 2009 debut, had a soul, but it was dark and damaged. 'Future This' has a heart, and it is big and ebullient. 'Stay Gold', the album's euphoric air-punch of an opener, finds Furze urging us to "Forgive your lovers but don't forget their names" over a steampunk organ intro that skips into a climax deserving of its very own training montage. That same bounce and buoyancy carries through into 'Hit The Ground (Superman)', whose martinet piano march counts down to an IMAX-sized chorus, charting the course of a night that begins with "Blue plastic bags full of cans" and ends on a living-room floor carpeted with empties.

These two songs underline a not-so-secret agenda: 'Future This' wants very much to

be a grand-scale pop record. Frustratingly, however, much of what follows can't live up to that early promise. Furze and Cordell have eased off on the Sturm und Drang that gave 'A Brief History...' its sense of menace and mystery, but they seem unsure of what to replace it with, with too many songs falling back on interchangeable electro-rock tropes that could be the work of just about anyone. 'Jump Music', for instance, doesn't amount to much more than anaemic Kasabian-aping, and if you altered the pitch of Furze's voice on 'Rubbernecking', you'd almost swear you were listening to The Naked And Famous.

That's not to tar 'Future This' with the brush of outright failure; 'Give It Up' – the one song that really does bear an overt hip-hop influence, with its classy Ann Peebles sample and crisp, expertly constructed beat – is an obvious standout, and '77' closes the album on a note that feels genuinely heartfelt and soul-bearing, an ode to a lost friend without whom Furze is "All fucked up/Sometimes I forget I miss you". On what feels like it was intended to be a Technicolor coming-out-of-the-shadows, however, there's the nagging suspicion that The Big Pink might be better suited to the monochromatic murk of old. **Barry Nicolson**

**DOWNLOAD: 'Give It Up', 'Lose Your Mind', 'Hit The Ground (Superman)'**

6

## FACES TO NAMES...

*What the reviewers are doing this week*



**LAURA SNAPES**

"Sticking to New Year's Resolutions: 1. Be more like *Twin Peaks*' Audrey Horne (minus crack). 2. Find log with mystical powers. Guess what I got for Xmas?"



**SIMON JAY CATLING**

"Is there a better way to celebrate your birthday than sitting in your pants listening to 'Six' by Mansun? If there is then no-one had told me by the time of writing this."



**BEN CARDEW**

"I've been keeping things festive – if by festive you mean repetitive and droney – thanks to 'And Never Ending Nights', the debut album from Loops Of Your Heart, better known as The Field."

## FOE

**BAD DREAM HOTLINE** VERTIGO



So 21-year-old snot punk grungette Hannah Clark has released her debut album at last, and it doesn't disappoint. The thrust and sneer of early singles 'Tyrant Song' and 'Genie in a Coke Can' set the listener up for a tight 12-track record, filled with snide and self-mocking pop culture references, and scuzzy guitar hooks. Surprisingly, there's a cleaner sound than previously, thanks to longtime producer Entrepreneurs. The standout is surely the beguiling 'A Handsome Stranger Called Death'. Wurlitzer organs twine around a mirror-view Lily Allen cut, as Clark intones, "Someone save me, I don't want to be another dead twentysomething or other". **Ailbhe Malone**

7

## MILAGRES

**GLOWING MOUTH** MEMPHIS INDUSTRIES



Milagres frontman Kyle Wilson left Brooklyn after he felt had "grown stale", retreating to mountainous wilds in search of creative succour. Sound familiar? His five-piece band's UK debut retreads more familiar ground than a crime scene reconstruction: opener 'Halfway' would be a lovely, elegant Coldplay song, which jars awkwardly into 'Here To Stay', a half-arsed Arcade Fire-like look at a youth where "I was the cure, I spoke in tongues". The rest hovers lazily between Grizzly Bear's dusty orchestral shadow and Menomena's way with drawing lumps to the throat, yet boasts the emotional potency of neither. A pleasant listen, but it's hardly fresh. **Laura Snapes**

4

## CASIOKIDS

**AABENBARINGEN OVER AASKAMMEN** MOSHI MOSHI



What CasioKids lack in snappy album titles, they certainly make up for in snappy album contents. Chock full of Casio chintz, languid basslines and the general feeling of being at some kind of tropical knees up, it's essentially the interim album Joe Mount might have made between 'Nights Out' and 'The English Riviera', with a little Vampire Weekend thrown in. The brilliantly monikered 'Dr Tarzan Monsoon' floats by on hazy 3am keyboard lulls, while single 'Det Haster!' is all parping synths and cooing, coy vocals. This album is a subtly, sweetly wonderful thing – proof that, sometimes, sonic actions speak louder than words. **Lisa Wright**

8

## BOY & BEAR

**MOONFIRE** COMMUNION



We've enough guitar-toting faux-folk troupes in Britain already without Australia sending us theirs too. As with much of the current middle-class boho milieu foot-stomping its way to prominence with relentlessly chipper vim, Boy & Bear know their way round a melody and a chorus; yet their rootsy rattle'n'roll fails to connect with anything more grabbing than a vague lyrical nostalgia. Songs like 'Feeding Line' and 'My Only One' are delivered with the earnest passion of nothing at all, while 'Golden Jubilee' is a heavily buffed hoe-down for the trust-fund masses. If indie once became landfill, 'Moonfire' is nu-folk of the highest biodegradability. **Simon Jay Catling**

4





# WILEY

**EVOLVE OR BE EXTINCT** BIG DADA

*Innovative production, pop for the masses, off-the-wall strangeness... all hail the many faces of Richard Cowie*



It takes a pretty special type of artist to release 11 zip files of music for free, follow that up with three albums within a year and still pique your interest

when a new release crosses the doorstep. But such is the way of Wiley, a man who somehow seems to combine the roles of godfather and joker in the UK's urban music scene.

Part of the interest in any new album is guessing which Wiley is going to turn up. Will it be the cold-as-ice bleeding-edge producer of chilling early grime anthems like 'Eskimo'? The house-y pop star of 'Wearing My Rolex'? Or the joker who made tracks like 'Pies' – chorus "Who ate all the pies?" – and 'Boom Boom Da Na'? The answer on 'Evolve Or Be Extinct' – his first album since way back in July – is all of them.

For those who favour the cutting edge there are tracks like 'Scar', produced by Africa Hitech man Mark Pritchard, in which Wiley

rides a scampering electro beat that scuttles over the speakers like a mechanical crab. Pop fans will enjoy 'Boom Blast', a '...Rolex' in waiting, complete with hairdresser-friendly house beats and an effortless chorus about, well, dancing. And for adherents of Wiley's less-than-serious moments there is 'Can I Have A Taxi Please?', a series of imagined phone calls to taxi companies with Wiley putting on silly voices. Typically Wiley, he sets it to one of the best beats on the album.

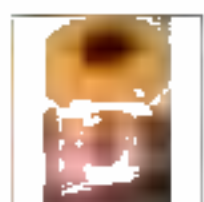
You do wonder, in the end, if anyone other than Wiley actually likes everything he does on one record. But this is all part of his charm: he is predictably unpredictable, an innovator who doesn't take himself too seriously. You may never know what you're going to get, but when his volatile genius periodically throws up songs as brilliant as 'Scar' – or 'Ice Rink' and 'Ground Zero' before it – you'd be a fool to ignore him. **Ben Cardew**

8

**DOWNLOAD: 'Scar', 'Boom Blast', 'Can I Have A Taxi Please?'**

## GUIDED BY VOICES

**LET'S GO EAT THE FACTORY FIRE**



This is unmistakably a Guided By Voices record. Twenty-one hard-bitten, melody-powered scuzz missiles fired at whim with nary a thought given to what it is

exactly they're volleying into the ether. It was recorded by the reconvened class of '93-'96, and the men behind 'Bee Thousand' have done it again: made a glorious, frayed-at-the-edges patchwork of bristling garage pop ('God Loves Us', 'The Unsinkable Fats Domino'), stadium rock racketeering ('Imperial Racehorses'), saloon-bar tenderness ('Doughnut For A Snowman'), and nightmarishly ramshackle dirges constructed from shoddy time-keeping and distortion alone. It's also Guided By Voices' finest work since 2001's 'Isolation Drills'. **Chris Parkin**

**DOWNLOAD: 'Spiderfighter'**

8

## DIAGRAMS

**BLACK LIGHT FULL TIME HOBBY**



Although Sam Genders, the sole fixed member of Diagrams, embarked on this project after bailing out of London-based indie-folk artisans Tunng, unfortunately he didn't do so before they became a very boring band. Nevertheless, this shouldn't wholly turn you against 'Black Light', which abandons any pretence towards the rustic and embraces gleaming, airbrushed pop moves. There are lots of synths and cod-jazzy electronic drums, peppering up songs which are otherwise polite and orthodox. 'Appetite' is dreamy enough to compare to Gruff Rhys' recent efforts, while John Martyn and Scritti Politti seem to inform many of these nine songs' finer moments. **Noel Gardner**

**DOWNLOAD: 'Appetite'**

6

## THE RIDER

*What we're watching and reading this week*



**Film**  
**Shame**

In this grisly Steve McQueen film starring Michael Fassbender and Carey Mulligan, a 30-something New York-dwelling sex obsessive invites his sister to move in, and his world spirals out of control. No prizes for guessing the outcome...



**DVD**

**Doctor Who Christmas Special**  
Just in case you're slightly mad and want to live out the Doctor's festive adventures all year round, 2011's seasonal, war-torn epic *The Doctor, The Widow And The Wardrobe* is now out on DVD.



**Book**

**I&I: The Natural Mystics: Marley, Tosh & Wailer**  
Historian Colin Grant's tale of the original Wailers charts the trio's complex relationship, popularity and ideologies, comfortably painting a wider social portrait at the same time.

## THIS WEEK'S SINGLES

reviewed by NME's  
**LEONIE COOPER**



## PULLED APART BY HORSES

**VENOM TRANSGRESSIVE**



Frothing wildly onto your steel toecaps because you can't wait for the return of Black Sabbath later this year? Well, simmer down, because Leeds' preferred screechers are here to help with the countdown to Download. This song essentially takes Ozzy and co's seminal metal belter 'Iron Man' and feeds it arse-first through the office shredder along with a small child's treasured collection of cuddly toys.

## JAMES BLAKE

**LOVE WHAT HAPPENED HERE R&S**



In a parallel universe, James Blake is actually a 50-something jazz groover with wandering hands and a predisposition to go all damp-eyed at the mention of funky '80s keyboards and bachelor bars. Our version of Blake is a lanky glitch-step pin-up, yet this particular boogie gives you a brief glimpse at what his other-dimensional beret-clad Patrick Bateman counterpart might have come up with.

## AZARI & III

**RECKLESS (WITH YOUR LOVE) ISLAND**



If you haven't been pumping iron daily with the aim of ripping off your string vest, swinging it over your head and showering blissed-out ravers with macho sweat, look away now. Sewing together the sounds of the Hacienda, Studio 54, Horsemeat Disco and the terrace at Space with unadulterated sex, Toronto's Azari & III have stitched up a Zam house classic.

## THE RIFLES

**SWEETEST THING RIGHT HOOK**



Like a fancy dress party where everyone's come as Paul Weller, The Rifles' mod-us operandi is to make like The Jam man at every available opportunity. This is a whirl of paisley cravats with nods to a heavily sanitised, Tesco Value sort of psychedelia, more likely to have you pondering your tax return than hallucinating about running naked through cornfields with Jesus in a spacesuit.

## NZCA/LINES

**OKINAWA CHANNELS LOAF**



We've decided we're going to forgive Michael Lovett's slightly jarring *nom de tunes*, but only because of his wondrous way with a sleaze-free synthgroove. Like Hot Chip after enforced waxing and compulsory enrolment in BRIT School evening class, 'Okinawa Channels' is liquid electronica smoother than Sade sipping piña coladas on Miami Beach.

## THE TING TINGS

**HANG IT UP SONY**



Teetering on a tightrope strung up somewhere between really bloody annoying and 'Licensed To Ill'-era Beastie Boys in Hello Kitty backpacks, The Ting Tings' comeback track is the musical equivalent of herpes: blindingly catchy, hard to shift and likely to be massive in New York. If you're still not sold, the fact that they've brilliantly nicked the corrosive drums from 'Fix Up Look Sharp' should seal the deal.

EXCLUSIVE! BLACK KEYS THE RETURN OF LEONARD COHEN

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# LIVE

THE GIGS THAT SAW OUT 2011

Edited by Louis Pattison



## KASABIAN/ CHASE & STATUS

THE O2, LONDON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31

*Before an ocean of screaming fans, Leicester's finest usher in 2012 in effortlessly brilliant fashion*

**I**ndie interview fact #352: when asked about their career ambitions, nine out of 10 bands will mumble and reply that they "just want to keep on making music". Whether through humble self-deprecation, an all-too-sensible awareness of reality or simple unwillingness, the modern band is often afraid to dream big, content to sell enough records to keep the beer fridge well stocked and see where life takes them. Kasabian, however, have always been resolutely in the other 10 per cent.

Even if Tom and Serge had wound up being plumbers, they'd probably be the kind of plumbers that operated their business from a spaceship and attached water fumes to your pipes to jazz them up a bit. Mediocrity is not in their

vocabulary. So ask *them* what they're aiming for and they'll say "headlining festivals", "scoring Number Ones" and "being the biggest band on the planet". And, heading up the bill at one of the biggest venues, in the country's biggest city, on New Year's Eve, the biggest party night of the year, even their loftier ambitions start to look like the puny earth viewed from their soaring rocket's rear window.

But before The O2's returning heroes arrive (this will be Kasabian's third sold out show at the venue this month, with tickets for tonight being snatched for preposterous three figure amounts), dubstep megatrons Chase & Status turn up to stoke the fire in the evening's lusty loins. Whatever you might think of them, there's no doubting that, like

Kasabian, Saul Milton and Will Kennard don't do things by halves. Tom and Serge might sever those halves with the swoosh of a ruby-encrusted sword where Chase & Status club away with a sledgehammer, but the effect is much

*Twenty thousand people in front of them? It's just a standard day in the office*

the same: both click their collective fingers and everyone jumps.

However, the basic difference of fanbase between the acts means that there's a miniature exodus street-wards between sets. By the time Kasabian take

to the stage the pit is more of a merry, dancing mass than a flailing, amorphous blob. And whether it's because of the slight extra leg room or the general celebratory hubbub, tonight's New Year's Eve victory lap does feel different to your common or garden weekend gig – with the wild spirit of a massive club night, it's delicious, hedonistic fun and a jubilant celebration of just

how easily Kasabian can now command a crowd of this size.

From the opening strains of 'Days Are Forgotten', the quintet are on the kind of casually confident form that shows they don't even really have to try these days –



Tom picks a strange time to start a fight



Chase & Status' ultra-sensible MC Rage points out the fire exits



Sad Chris waits patiently for his midnight kiss



Only Serge can out-pout Lana Del Rey



though, naturally, they more than excel. Twenty thousand people in front of them? Standard day at the office. God and Google Analytics alone know how many thousands more are streaming the gig from home. And, as the glam stomp of 'Shoot The Runner' properly kicks proceedings into gear, you can understand why. With a set that piledrives through hit after hit, the work has already been done. The wickedly ridiculous 'Velociraptor' is greeted with as much fervent adoration as the oldies. 'Underdog' comes in on a built-for-arenas guitar and swells into a swaggering anthem, while 'Where Did All The Love Go?' – one of the weaker singles on record – packs a far heftier live punch and incites some amazingly crap dancing in the breakdown.

The night has bowled on with such gusto that it'd be easy to let time run away with us, missing the stroke of 12 thanks to Kasabian's consummately

engrossing madness. But on the back of an ominous bass rumble, Serge – decked out in leather trenchcoat and feathered collar – begins to mutter. "It's coming... It's coming..." he says, like some kind of sexy gothic Time Lord as the scattered keyboards of 'I Hear Voices' kick in. As he roars "Ten! Nine!", black balloons slowly start to cascade from the roof.

"We're too early!" Tom shrieks wildly, halting proceedings (though not gravity, one might add) mid-way through the ceremony.

"Fuck reality, this is Hollywood!" his feathered ally replies.

And as the countdown begins again and the remaining balloons drift earthwards, nobody knows or cares if it really is midnight this time, because reality is still a good hour away from resuming. For now, however, it's firmly back to Hollywood – or Serge's warped version of it, which currently means welcoming in 2012 with a track named after a

vampire and inescapable recollections of a prancing Noel Fielding. We couldn't wish for more.

Now a full seven years and seven months since its initial release, 'Club Foot' makes for a timely reminder of just how far the band have come since their Gallagher-endorsed beginnings, while 'Re-wired' proves that progression has, thankfully, made them no less adept at penning instantly catchy classics. Then there's a rabble-rousing 'Empire', 'Fast Fuse' (complete with seamless segue into 'Misirlou' from the *Pulp Fiction* soundtrack), and 'I SF' – all embraced with drunken, open arms. Filthy recent smash 'Switchblade Smiles' and 'Stuntman's' heady club rush kick off the encore, but it's really all about the finale.

Drawn out to epic proportions, 'Fire' is about as brilliantly overblown an end to proceedings as you can get; not so much the cherry on the top, as the cherry, whipped cream, glitter and that ruddy

enormous rocket again. There's confetti cannons, an extended, chanting finish, and Tom gets London's notoriously static crowd to sit down and burst up en masse for the chorus not once, but twice. It's Kasabian's glorious ring a ring-a-roses; and given the rapturous, theatrical response, they might as well have thorny blooms between their teeth as these great men of the stage how and draw the curtains on one of the greatest rock'n'roll shows of our time. Heck, Shakespeare and Hollywood could learn a trick or two from these guys. **Lisa Wright**

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O<sub>2</sub>

Manchester glows  
mental for Foals



# FOALS/TOM VEK/ CHAD VALLEY

**THE WAREHOUSE PROJECT, MANCHESTER** FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30

*Yannis and co rock Manchester's fabled tunnel of rave as it opens its doors for the last time*

**T**he flux of music in the 21st century means that for anything within its shaky foundations to reach five years old seems worthy of celebration. Congratulations, then, to Manchester promoters The Warehouse Project, who are upping shop and moving elsewhere after a half-decade in the tunnels below Piccadilly Station. There's isn't a rags to riches story – their debut year in the city's now-demolished Boddington's Brewery buildings in 2006 featured Public Enemy, Hot Chip and Pendulum among others – but the switch in venue a year later and subsequent growth in profile has nevertheless been impressive in a city whose live scene has echoed

the industry's wider picture, with promoters and nights turning over at an ever-increasing rate.

Foals themselves played during The Warehouse Project's initial run in these premises in 2007. Then a preppy-looking five-piece not long free of the Oxfordshire math rock scene, they sat unassumingly near the foot of a bill headlined by New Young Pony Club, the burgeoning hype still not enough to entice more than a couple of hundred in early doors to witness a performance punctuated with more awkward sonic glottal stops than really befitted their bookers' guerrilla rave vision.

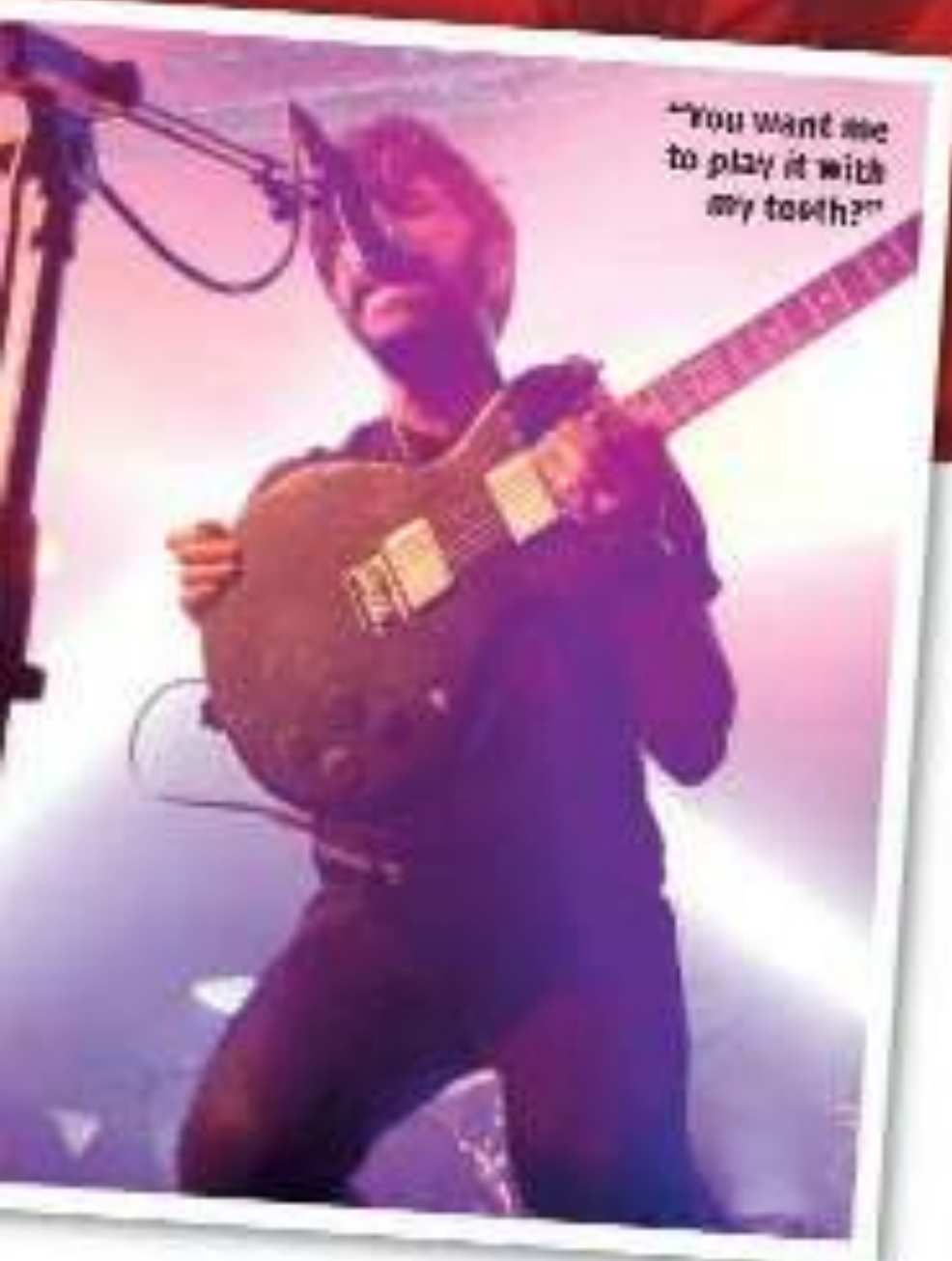
Yet in 2011, two numbers from that innocuous set provide a rousing encore. Four years ago, Foals spent the earlier

part of the year supporting The Noisettes; they play tonight after an autumn that largely consisted of kicking ageing funk-rock behemoths Red Hot Chili Peppers from pillar to post as support on stadium tours of South America and Europe.

As the night unfolds there's a sense of déjà vu as another Oxford musician takes to the stage, a flurry of buzz preceding him. Chad Valley's forays this year and last have always had the intimacy of the bedroom in them despite 'Equatorial Ultravox's' sonic expansion on 2010's self-titled EP, and as such the caverns of this evening's nocturnal surroundings feel a little grand for Hugo Manuel's otherwise perfectly charming chillwave disco.

It isn't a disaster by any stretch, however, and he finds favour in a city that has taken a shine to him ever since he first turned heads at 2010's In The City showcase – though tonight he has to yield to Tom Vek in the duel of the main supports.

The best compliment you can pay Vek is that it feels like he's never been away: comeback album 'Leisure Seizure' felt little more than a re-gathering of tools after six years' absence. His continued focus on rhythm as the driving force behind his curt pop plays out well as the clock passes midnight and the atmosphere charges further. There's no real defining catalyst to the change in the crowd from patient bystanders to revel ready partiers during his set –



Peppers and came back a formidable presence; 12 years later, Foals seem to have found similar enlightenment, a band now comfortably in charge of the increasing numbers they play in front of.

We know tonight's going to be a victory lap from the several throttling crowd surges that greet the opening notes of the introductory 'Blue Blood', and, far from coasting, Foals feed off the frenzy. Hearing 'Balloons' feels like welcoming an old friend, its creators having long since abandoned its spindly intricacy. 'After Glow's

though extra adulation is poured onto debut album 'We Have Sound's singles 'C-C (You Set The Fire In Me)' and 'I Ain't Saying My Goodbyes' – it's more that Vek simply aims directly, strutting as confidently as his songs do onstage and imploring his audience to react accordingly; something they of course do.

Tonight marks Foals bidding farewell to second LP 'Total Life Forever' after touring it for some 18 months. You sometimes wonder whether it's an album they've truly loved, most sets during that time consisting of no more than a 50/50 split of new and old material, with even the massively popular 'Spanish Sahara' rarely heard away from the mid-section. Yet live they're still clearly on an ascent; back in 1999 it was Muse who went on the road with the Red Hot Chili

### VIEW FROM THE CROWD



**Jarlath Downey, 23, Manchester**

"Foals played an absolute stormer this evening; personal highlights on the night for me have to be 'Spanish Sahara' and the irreproachable 'Two Steps, Twice'. I think Tom Vek did a decent job of getting the crowd warmed up and the atmosphere was fitting for the last days of WHP at Store Street."

beat-driven crescendo finds a home in the early hours of the north-western morning, garnering the sort of scenes equal to any of those conjured by the DJ heavyweights that have passed through these arches. Despite Yannis' now customary PA scavange during 'Electric Bloom' and a tumultuous encore of 'The French Open' and 'Two Steps, Twice', it's perhaps this that's the peak of tonight's set.

Though busy in 2011, Foals have largely been out of sight and out of mind in the UK. What a delight it is to discover that, as the year and The Warehouse Project in its current guise draw to a close, they should arrive right at its finale to remind everyone that they remain firmly among the country's elite. *Simon Jay Catling*

# DOG IS DEAD



**KOKO, LONDON** SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31

*Nottingham's harmonious newcomers kickstart 2012 at Club NME's New Year's Eve bash*

**A** tumultuous year that will live long in the memory, 2011 saw world-changing events that included the deaths of Osama Bin Laden and Colonel Gaddafi. Thankfully there are no actual deaths to report tonight – but there is a fine performance from Dog Is Dead and a collective *petite mort* experience at the climax of New Year.

But first up Caan, local Camden boy done good and former Ou Est Le Swimming Pool member (and a man who has leafed through history's fashion faux-pas and exhumed MC Hammer's trousers to pass off as his own). This emotional synth-pop is as in thrall to electro godfathers Depeche Mode as it is to the intravenous

immediacy of *The X Factor*, and these populist influences and Caan's undoubted ability to toss off anthemic chorus after anthemic chorus shall stand him in good stead in 2012.


If it's normal in Britain to grow up desiring to emulate The Beatles, then the classic blueprint in Sweden is more gender inclusive and much more fun. A great deal was made in 2011 of the supposed terminal decline of guitar music, though our Scandinavian cousins couldn't give a flying Findus fish-finger about all that nonsense: despite being two dames, Icona Pop make dazzling party pop following the boy/girl boy/girl lineage that takes in Ace Of Base and leads right back to Abba.

We're bludgeoned into a frenzy by the DJs right up to the stroke of midnight. Balloons rain from the sky and everyone goes bat-shit bananas before the curtain falls for Dog Is Dead. Stood nervously like five Georges from *The King's Speech*, the weight of expectation is firmly on their shoulders. After the cacophonous melee, they must build from the beginning, and build they do, with close harmonies and well-written songs like 'Hands Down'; extra points for its nod to The Ronettes' 'Be My Baby' – never a bad idea. People's inability to compartmentalise this band is perhaps

*This band's resistance to being compartmentalised is perhaps their hardest sell*

their hardest sell. The bass tom booms, though it's not carnival music. The sax parps, and thank the Lord it's not carnal music. It's Americana they bleed, which might explain why the five nice Nottingham lads haven't thrown a suit on for the occasion. Smart, a little too casual – but those shoulders are left free to bear that weight with enviable ease. *Jeremy Allen*





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Butlin's, Minehead

**DATE:** March 9-11

**BANDS CONFIRMED:** Jeff Mangum, The Magnetic Fields, Joanna Newsom (above), Thurston Moore, Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, Boredoms, Sebadoh, Low

**COST:** £170 (including chalet)

**BUY:** [seetickets.com](http://seetickets.com)  
[atpfestival.com](http://atpfestival.com)



### ATP IBYM CURATED BY MOGWAI

Alexandra Palace, London

**DATE:** May 25-27

**BANDS CONFIRMED:** Slayer (playing 'Reign In Blood'), Mogwai, The Afghan Whigs, Dirty Three, Sleep, Codeine, Melvins, Mudhoney, Yuck (above)

**COST:** £130 w/weekend/£39 Fri/£59 Sat/£59 Sun

**BUY FROM:** [seetickets.com](http://seetickets.com)  
[atpfestival.com](http://atpfestival.com)



## FIELD DAY

Victoria Park, London

**DATE:** June 2

**BANDS CONFIRMED:**

Afrocubism, Baxter Dury, Beirut, Death Grips, Errors, Franz Ferdinand, Gold Panda, Grimes, Here We Go Magic, Hudson Mohawke, Jeffrey Lewis & The Junkyard, Mazzy Star, Metronomy, Outfit,

Peaking Lights, Rocketnumbernine, Rustic, SBTRKT, Spector, The Men, The Vaccines (above), Theme Park, To Kill A King, Tortoise, Zomby, Zulu Winter  
**COST:** £39.50  
**BUY:** [seetickets.com](http://seetickets.com)  
[fielddayfestivals.com](http://fielddayfestivals.com)



## DOWNLOAD

Donington Park, Leicestershire

**DATE:** June 8-10

**BANDS CONFIRMED:** The Prodigy (above), Metallica (playing 'The Black Album'), Black Sabbath

**COST:** £180 (weekend, camping); £155 (weekend, arena only)  
**BUY:** [ticketmaster.co.uk](http://ticketmaster.co.uk)  
[downloadfestival.co.uk](http://downloadfestival.co.uk)



## GREAT ESCAPE

Various venues, Brighton

**DATE:** May 10-12

**BANDS CONFIRMED:** TBC

**COST:** £120 weekend (accommodation not included)

**BUY:** [seetickets.com](http://seetickets.com)  
[escapegreat.com](http://escapegreat.com)



## HOP FARM

Paddock Wood, Tonbridge, Kent

**DATE:** June 29-July 1

**BANDS CONFIRMED:** TBC

**COST:** TBC (early bird offer now closed; full prices yet to be announced)

**BUY:** TBC  
[hopfarmfestival.com](http://hopfarmfestival.com)



## HARD ROCK CALLING

Hyde Park, London

**DATE:** July 13-15

**BANDS CONFIRMED:**

Bruce Springsteen (Saturday, July 14)

**COST:** £60/day

**BUY:** [ticketmaster.co.uk](http://ticketmaster.co.uk)  
[hardrockcalling.co.uk](http://hardrockcalling.co.uk)



## SUMMER SUNDAY

De Montfort Hall, Leicester

**DATE:** August 17-19

**BANDS CONFIRMED:** TBC

**COST:** £95/£60 youth (14-17 years) (early bird offer, full prices TBC)

**BUY:** [summersundae.com](http://summersundae.com)



## LIVERPOOL SOUND CITY

Various venues, Liverpool

**DATE:** May 17-19

**BANDS CONFIRMED:** TBC

**COST:** £90 weekend (no accommodation)

**BUY:**  
[liverpoolsoundcity.co.uk](http://liverpoolsoundcity.co.uk)



## SONISPHERE

Knebworth House, Hertfordshire

**DATE:** July 6-8

**BANDS CONFIRMED:** TBC

**COST:** TBC (general sale starts early 2012)

**BUY:**  
[uk.sonispherefestivals.com](http://uk.sonispherefestivals.com)



## LATITUDE

Henham Park, Southwold

**DATE:** July 14-17

**BANDS CONFIRMED:** TBC

**COST:** TBC (early bird tickets now sold out; next sale starts spring 2012)

**BUY:** [seetickets.com](http://seetickets.com)  
[latitude.co.uk](http://latitude.co.uk)



## V FESTIVAL

Hylands Park, Chelmsford/Weston Park, Staffordshire

**DATE:** August 18-19

**BANDS CONFIRMED:** TBC

**COST:** TBC (on sale in March)

**BUY:** [seetickets.com](http://seetickets.com)  
[vfestival.com](http://vfestival.com)



## ROCKNESS

Dores, Inverness, Scotland

**DATE:** June 8-10

**BANDS CONFIRMED:** TBC

**COST:** £125 (early bird price; full ticket price not yet announced)

**BUY:** [seetickets.com](http://seetickets.com)  
[rockness.co.uk](http://rockness.co.uk)



## WAKESTOCK

Cardigan Bay, North Wales

**DATE:** July 6-8

**BANDS CONFIRMED:**

Ed Sheeran, Calvin Harris (above)

**COST:** TBC  
**BUY:** [seetickets.com](http://seetickets.com)  
[wakestock.co.uk](http://wakestock.co.uk)



## BIG CHILL

Eastnor Castle, Ledbury, Herefordshire

**DATE:** August 2-5

**BANDS CONFIRMED:** TBC

**COST:** £165/£85 youth (13-17 years)

**BUY:** [seetickets.com](http://seetickets.com)  
[bigchill.net](http://bigchill.net)



## READING & LEEDS

Richfield Ave, Reading/Bramham Park, Leeds

**DATE:** August 24-26

**BANDS CONFIRMED:** TBC

**COST:** £192.50

**BUY:** [ticketmaster.co.uk](http://ticketmaster.co.uk)  
[readingfestival.com](http://readingfestival.com)  
[leedsfestival.com](http://leedsfestival.com)



## BLISSFIELDS

Vicarage Farm, Winchester, Hampshire

**DATE:** June 29-July 1

**BANDS CONFIRMED:** TBC

**COST:** £74 weekend ticket/£49 youth (6-16 years)

**BUY:** [blissfields.co.uk](http://blissfields.co.uk)



## WIRELESS

Hyde Park, London

**DATE:** July 6-8

**BANDS CONFIRMED:**

Rihanna (above), Jesse J, Labrinth, Calvin Harris

**COST:** £52.50  
**BUY:** [ticketmaster.co.uk](http://ticketmaster.co.uk)  
[wirelessfestival.co.uk](http://wirelessfestival.co.uk)



## GREEN MAN

Glanusk Park, Powys, Mid-Wales

**DATE:** August 17-19

**BANDS CONFIRMED:** TBC

**COST:** TBC (early bird tickets now sold out; general sale starts early 2012)

**BUY:** [greenman.net](http://greenman.net)



## BESTIVAL

Robin Hill Country Park, Isle Of Wight

**DATE:** September 7-9

**BANDS CONFIRMED:** TBC

**COST:** £165/£105 youth (13-17 years)

**BUY:** [ticketline.co.uk](http://ticketline.co.uk)  
[bestival.net](http://bestival.net)

# PICK of the WEEK

What to see this week? Let us help



## EVERYTHING EVERYTHING

STARTS: Cardiff Globe, Jan 17

NME  
PICK

Later this month, Everything Everything will be supporting Snow Patrol on an enormous arena tour. It's a little cruel, perhaps, but we'd love to witness this for the perverse thrill of seeing the Irish borehounds' fans' faces contorting in confusion at EE's mind-melting lyrics and riffs. Of course, doing so would entail shelling out mega nicker to see one of the most impotent bands of this generation, so it's with great glee that we greet EE's announcement of a short run of their own dates – calling in at Cardiff's Globe, then Stoke's Sugarmill on January 18 – where we're promised new material, and the chance to see them play to a crowd of likeminded loons rather than lame-hearted lunks. A few new songs have reared their heads live, most notably an A-ha meets Destiny's Child number at Latitude last year – so to say we're excited is an understatement.



### Everyone's Talking About THE HORRORS

STARTS: Edinburgh Liquid Room, Jan 16  
Poor old Faris got the lurg in October, forcing The Horrors to postpone a handful of dates until the New Year. With 'Skying' having prospered in many end-of-year album lists, now will be a perfect time to see a band who have conquered their third album, the critics and the Radio 1 playlist. At this rate, the common cold will be next.



### Don't Miss A WINGED VICTORY FOR THE SULLEN

STARTS: Manchester Academy 3, Jan 14  
Composer Dustin O'Halloran and Adam Bryanbaum Wiltzie from Stars Of The Lid joined together as AWWFTS last year, and released their self-titled debut to great critical acclaim. It's elegiac, spellbindingly beautiful, and ripe for mass appreciation even if you're unfamiliar with its creators' bounteous back catalogues.



### Radar Stars DEAF CLUB

STARTS: Bristol Thekla Jan 12  
Wrexham's Deaf Club put their debut digital EP, 'Lull', up on Bandcamp last June, but its charms are still holding strong. Fronted by Polly Mackey – formerly of ...& The Pleasure Principle – DC recall Beach House if they'd grown up on Glasgow's Chemikal Underground label. They'll release their cassette on Transgressive's Kissability imprint in February.

# WEDS-THUR

January 11-12

## WEDNESDAY, Jan 11

### BRIGHTON

James Clarke Five Latest Music Bar 01273 687 171

### BRISTOL

Golden Tanks/Up River/Foxxes Croft (Main Room) 0117 987 4144

Kyla La Grange Louisiana 0117 926 5978

The Lunarians/Sly Dirac Fleece 0117 945 0996

Tom Russell Thunderbolt 07791 319 614

### EDINBURGH

Ed Sheeran HMV Picture House 0844 847 1740

### GLASGOW

Lynnie Carson/Matt Scott King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

### LONDON

Alice/One Hundred More Good Ship 020 7372 2544

Ani DiFranco Union Chapel 020 7226 1686

Audio Fire New Cross Inn 020 8692 1866

The Black Dahlia Murder/Skeletonwitch Underworld 020 7482 1932

Carol Jack & Band/Capital Sun Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773

Eliza Carthy/Emily Barker/Left With Pictures The Lexington 020 7837 5387

Foreign Legion Buffalo Bar 020 7359 6191

Jerry Tropicano/Le Pêcheur/Men's Adventures MacBeth 020 7739 5095

Midgar 93 Feet East 020 7247 6095

One Direction HMV Hammersmith Apollo 0870 606 3400

Three Vics Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478

### MANCHESTER

Harm's Way/Dead End Path/Brutality Will Prevail Star & Garter 0161 273 6726

Jonathan Scott Bridgewater Hall 0161 907 9000

StereoEpic/Second Chance/Morphine Ghost Retro Bar 0161 274 4892

### NEWCASTLE

Mallory Knox O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000

### NORWICH

White Collar Crimes/Halogens/Let Us Proceed Brickmakers 01603 441 118

### YORK

Lanterns On The Lake/Sam Airey/David McCaffrey The Duchess 01904 641 413

## THURSDAY, Jan 12

### BELFAST

All Time Low Ulster Hall 028 9032 3900

### BIRMINGHAM

The Arkhamists/Save The Heavens/Stranger In Death O2 Academy 3 0870 477 2000

### BRIGHTON

Gus McGregor Komedica 01273 647 100

The Hazy Janes Green Door Store 07894 267 053

Tubelord/Goodluck Jonathan/Flash Bang Band The Haunt 01273 770 847

### BRISTOL

Dan Brown/Jack Bristow Fleece 0117 945 0996

Deaf Club Thekla 08713 100000

GWAR/Viking Skull Bierkeller 0117 926 8514

Pohl/Broadside Louisiana 0117 926 5978

Red Shark Sound System Mr Wolf's 0117 927 3221

Tom Russell Thunderbolt 07791 319 614

The Vapour Trails/Curse You Damn Klds/The Armchair Committee Croft (Front Bar) 0117 987 4144

### CARDIFF

Rusty Shackie Arts Institute 0871 230 1094

### CHELMSFORD

Satin Belge/Brooking Martin/Phil Twite Hooga 01245 356 811

### DERBY

Death By Orchestra Venue 01332 203545

### GLASGOW

Asking Alexandria/blesthefall/Chelsea Grin O2 ABC 0870 903 3444

Mallory Knox O2 ABC2 0141 204 5151

Tango In The Attic/Fiction Faction King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

### LEEDS

David Thomas Broughton Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866

Matthew Sharp Howard Assembly Room 0113 243 9999

### LONDON

Alexandra Burke/The Saturdays O2 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000

Asher Roth Jazz Cafe 020 7916 6060

Austin TV Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358

The Black Dahlia Murder/Skeletonwitch Underworld 020 7482 1932

Dead & Divine Barfly 0870 907 0999

Howl Griff/Little Shadows/The Harlots Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773

Hymns Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478

Lanterns On The Lake/Maribel Cargo 0207 749 7840

The Laurels/The Brassic New Cross Inn 020 8692 1866

The New Forbidden/Hektor Red/Jakill Arch Angel 020 7938 4137

The Tamborines/The History Of Apple Pie/Younghusband Hoxton Square Bar & Grill 020 7613 0709

That Fucking Tank/Local Girls/Shield Your Eyes Windmill 020 8671 0700

Trailer Trash Tracys The Lexington 020 7837 5387

### MANCHESTER

Charlotte O'Connor Night And Day Cafe 0161 236 1822

Chickenfoot Academy 0161 832 1111

### NORWICH

Kings & Crows/One Last Laugh/Wild Front Tears Brickmakers 01603 441 118

### POOLE

Peter & The Test Tube Babies Mr Kyps 01202 748945

SOUTHAMPTON Harm's Way/Dead End Path/Brutality Will Prevail Joiners 023 8022 5612

### WOLVERHAMPTON

Gunnrunner Robin 2 01902 497860

### YORK

Robb Blake/Liam O'Kane Stereo 01904 612237



RICHARD JOHNSON, ANIKA MOTTSHAW, DANIEL MORTON, DAN KENDALL

# FRI-SAT

January 13-14



All Time Low, Friday  
and Saturday, O2  
Academy Glasgow

## FRIDAY, Jan 13

### ABERDEEN

Steve Crawford/Pete Courtts Lemon  
Tel: 01224 642230

### BATH

Lonely Tourist/Vapor Curfew Inn  
01225 424 210

### BIRMINGHAM

Arthur Rigby & The Baskervilles The  
Ballroom 0121 448 0797

Buffalo Riders/Mesch/Culdesac O2  
Academy 3 0870 477 2000

Klismet Hare & Hounds  
0870 264 3333

Towns/Sharp Darts/Silvershores  
Flapper 0121 236 2421

### BRIGHTON

Laetitia Sadler Green Door Store  
07894 267 053

### BRISTOL

Dahlia/Frisky Mr Wolf's 0117 927 3221

Deadboy Thekla 08713 100000

Fantazio Black Swan 0117 939 9469

Larry Miller The Tunnels  
0117 929 9008

Neotropics/La Nausee/Oui Ja Yes  
Louisiana 0117 926 5978

Peter & The Test Tube Babies Fleece  
0117 945 0996

Real Dead Bodies/Clayton Blizzard/  
Cassette Culture Croft (Main Room)  
0117 987 4144

### CAMBRIDGE

Lanterns On The Lake Junction  
01223 511511

### CARLISLE

Morpheus Rising/Horizons/The  
Reilgion Of Tomorrow Brickyard  
01228 512 220

### DERBY

Mark Morris The Vic Inn  
01332 74 00 91

### DUNDEE

The Risk/Ronny Costello/John Milne  
Liquid 0845 213 2584

### EXETER

MC Riddia Cavern Club 01392 495 370

### GATESHEAD

Diablo Three Tuns 0191 487 0666

### GLASGOW

All Time Low/The Maine/We  
Are In The Crowd O2 Academy  
0870 477 2000

Kobi Onyame/Black Bros/Hector  
Blzerk King Tut's Wah Wah Hut  
0141 221 5279

Wolf People Stereo 0141 576 5018

### LEEDS

The Urban Voodoo Machine/The  
Rocketeers/X Ray Cat Trio Wardrobe  
0113 222 3434

### LIVERPOOL

Mallory Knox O2 Academy 2  
0870 477 2000

### LONDON

Acadian Driftwood Cecil Sharp House  
020 7485 2206

Brother & Bones Half Moon  
020 7274 2733

The Dirty Gentlemen Bedroom Bar  
020 7613 5637

Frontline Fire/Grand Central Dublin  
Castle 020 7485 1773

The Great Last/The Blood Sport/  
The Philadelphia Experimentai  
Barfly 0870 907 0999

GWAR/Viking Skull/Sister Electric  
Brixton 020 7274 2290

Jess Mills/Catfish & The Bottlemen  
Club NME @ Koko 0870 4325527

Moscow Drug Club Green Note  
0871 230 1094

Pearson Sound/Kode9/Ben UFO  
Fabric 020 7336 8898

Revelin Sky/The Blueberries Good  
Ship 020 7372 2544

Space Ritual/Borderline 020 7734 5547

The Waxing Captors/Zorzilla Zigrid  
Von Underbelly 020 7613 1988

Whales In Cubicles/The Louche FC  
Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478



Wob/Richard Warren Milfords  
020 72401441

### MANCHESTER

Red Light District/Mohawk Radio  
Academy 3 0161 832 1111

Shmoo/The Narrows Ruby Lounge  
0161 834 1392

### MILTON KEYNES

Anti Vigilante/Broken Nose/  
The Amendments Craufurd Arms  
01908 313 864

### NEWCASTLE

Asking Alexandria/blesthefall/  
Chelsea Grin O2 Academy  
0870 477 2000

### NORWICH

Lee Vann/Crumbs For Comfort/  
Underline The Sky Arts Centre  
01603 660 352

### SHEFFIELD

Reasons To Be Cheerful New Barrack  
Tavern 0114 234 9148

Sabretooth/Propulsion/Mutated  
Pony Plug 0114 276 7093

### STOKE ON TRENT

The Elastics Sugarmill 01782 214 991

## SATURDAY, Jan 14

### BELFAST

Julio Bashmore Stiff Kitten  
028 9023 8700

### BIRMINGHAM

Weatherbird The Ballroom  
0121 448 0797

### BRIGHTON

My Element Concorde 2  
01273 673 311

### BRISTOL

Anta/Fit For Jupiter/Glits Glis Croft  
(Main Room) 0117 987 4144

Antisect/Anthrax UK Fleece  
0117 945 0996

Firstofthegiants Louisiana  
0117 926 5978

Lade Nade Mr Wolf's 0117 927 3221

### COVENTRY

GWAR Kasbah 024 7655 4473

### DERBY

Peter & The Test Tube Babies Old  
Bell 01332 343701

### MANCHESTER

Asking Alexandria/blesthefall/  
Chelsea Grin HMV Ritz 0161 236 4355

A Winged Victory For The Sullen  
Academy 3 0161 832 1111

Ed Sheeran Academy 0161 832 1111

Trailer Trash Tracys Kraak  
07855 939 129

Vinyl High Academy 4 0161 832 1111

### MILTON KEYNES

Mallory Knox Craufurd Arms  
01908 313 864

### NEWCASTLE

Archie Brown Cluny 2 0191 230 4474

Haar/Cnoc An Tursa Cluny  
0191 230 4474

The Union Choir/Shark Teeth Head  
Of Steam 0191 232 4379

### NORWICH

The Bad Apples Brickmakers  
01603 441 118

The Black Dahlia Murder/  
Skeletonwitch Waterfront  
01603 632 717

### NOTTINGHAM

Deaf Club Stealth 08713 100000

Death Of Thieves/Widows/JD And  
The FDCs Maze 0115 947 5650

### PRESTON

Jane Weaver/Emma Tricca/  
Paper Dollhouse The Continental  
01772 499 425

### READING

The Rare Plug'n'Play 0118 958 1447

### SHEFFIELD

A Season Of Secrets O2 Academy 2  
0870 477 2000

Mark Radcliffe/Chris Lee Greystones  
0114 266 5599

Pocketbooks/Colour Me Wednesday  
The Red House 0114 2727875

### SOUTHAMPTON

The Horse Talking Heads  
023 8055 5899

### YORK

Do The Right Thing Fibbers  
01904 651 750

The Likely Lads The Duchess  
01904 641 413

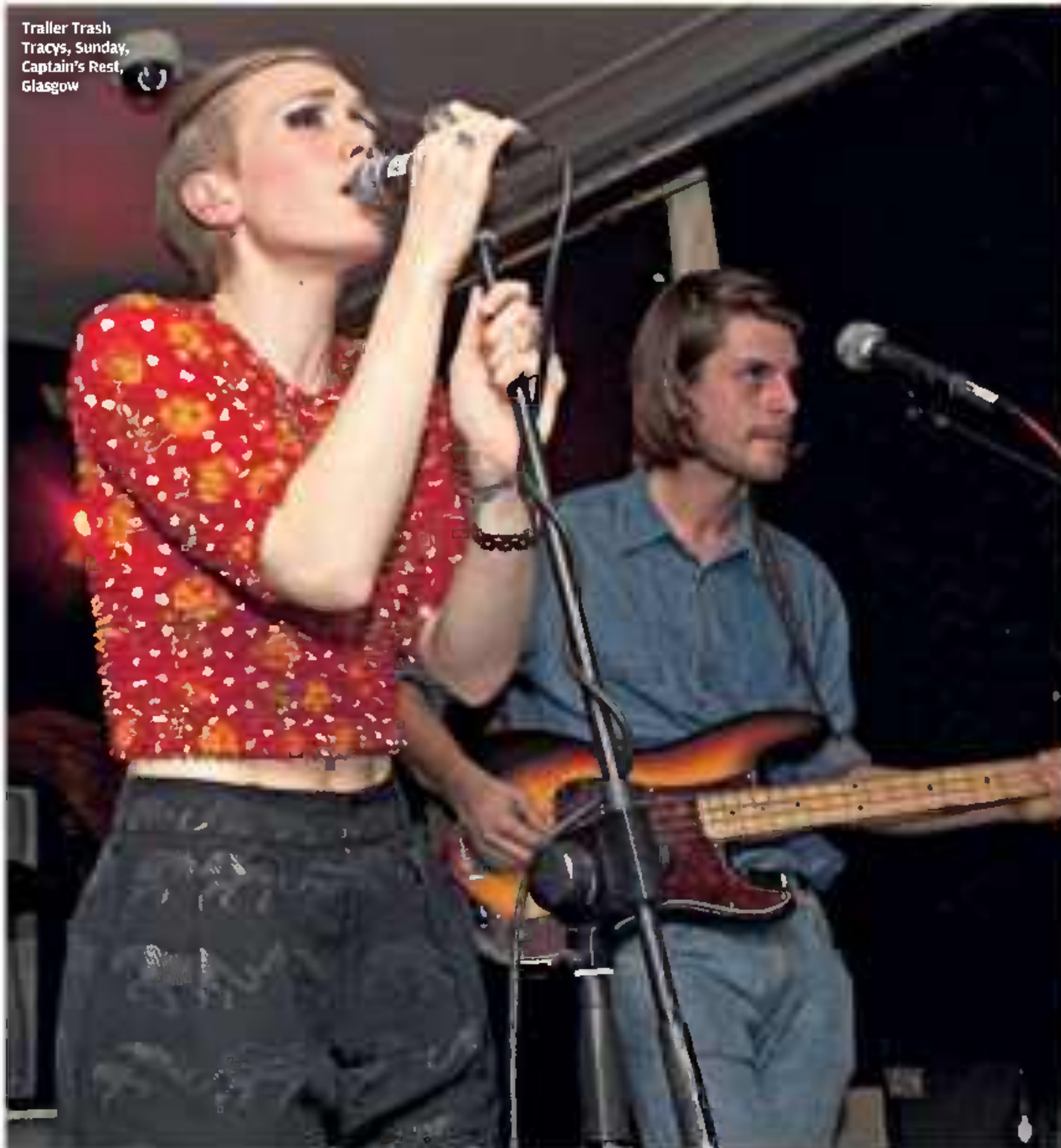


Wiley, Saturday,  
Proud2, London

## SUN-MON

January 15-16

Trailer Trash  
Tracys, Sunday,  
Captain's Rest,  
Glasgow



## SUNDAY, Jan 15

## BRIGHTON

Wolf People The Haunt 01273 770 847

## BRISTOL

Goldfish Don't Bounce Horseshoe  
0117 956 0471

## EDINBURGH

Wecamefromwoolves Sneaky Pete's  
0131 225 1757

## GLASGOW

A Winged Victory For The  
Sullen/SleepingDog Oran Mor  
0141 552 9224

Christina Perri O2 ABC  
0870 903 3444

Esperle/Callum Baird/Bronagh  
Monahan King Tut's Wah Wah Hut  
0141 221 5279

Trailer Trash Tracys Captain's Rest  
0141 1 2722

## LEEDS

Asking Alexandria/blessthefall/  
Chelsea Grin Metropolitan University  
0113 283 2600

## LIVERPOOL

All Time Low/The Maine/We Are The  
In Crowd University 0151 256 5555

One Direction Echo Arena  
0844 8000 400

## LONDON

Shield Your Eyes Old Blue Last  
020 7613 2478

## MANCHESTER

GWAR HMV Ritz 0161 236 4355

## NORTHAMPTON

The Black Dahlia Murder/  
Skeletonwitch/Fleshgod Apocalypse  
Roadmender Centre 01604 604222

## MONDAY, Jan 16

## BELFAST

GWAR Spring & Airbrake  
028 9032 5968

## BIRMINGHAM

The Black Dahlia Murder/  
Skeletonwitch/Fleshgod Apocalypse  
O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000

## BRIGHTON

Lawson The Haunt 01273 770 847

## BRISTOL

Brickwalls And Bruises/Animal  
Circus/Regime Fleece 0117 945 0996

Dan Brown/Marc Inman/  
Emily Fraïck Croft (Main Room)  
0117 987 4144

## COVENTRY

Deaf Club Kasbah 024 7655 4473

## EDINBURGH

The Horrors Liquid Room  
0131 225 7564

## GLASGOW

United Fruit/Lady North/Hunt  
Gather King Tut's Wah Wah Hut  
0141 221 5279

## LONDON

Anja McCloskey/Jessica Grace  
Slaughtered Lamb 020 8682 4080

A Winged Victory For The Sullen/  
SleepingDog Cecil Sharp House  
020 7485 2706

Black Lion Project/We Stole Fire  
Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773

Dear Reader Social 020 7636 4992

Doyle & The Fourfathers/The  
Darlingtons/Jake Gamble The  
Lexington 020 7837 5387

Mallory Knox O2 Academy Islington  
0870 477 2000

Saskilla/Jamie Joseph XOYO  
020 7729 5959

## MANCHESTER

Christina Perri HMV Ritz  
0161 236 4355

Various Cruelties Deaf Institute  
0161 330 4019

## NORWICH

Dave McPherson/Marc Halls  
Waterfront 01603 632 717

Ellen & The Escapades/Jess  
Morgan/Grenouilles Arts Centre  
01603 660 352

## NOTTINGHAM

Asking Alexandria/Chelsea Grin  
Rock City 08713 100000

## PRESTON

All Time Low/The Maine/We Are The  
In Crowd 53 Degrees 01772 893 000

## TUES

January 17

## BIRMINGHAM

The Old Tire Swingers/Jackie Leven  
Kitchen Garden Cafe 0121 443 4725

## BRIGHTON

Skull Fist/Steelwing The Hydrant  
01273 608 313

The Xcerts/Flood Of Red/Echo Rain  
The Haunt 01273 770 847

## BRISTOL

Avenge The Heartache/Koshiro  
Fleece 0117 945 0996

M83/Porcelain Raft Trinity  
01179 351 200

## CARDIFF

Everything Everything The Globe  
01792 603047

## CHELMSFORD

Platform Location/Vixation Hooga  
020 203 556 811

## GLASGOW

Open Swimmer/Reverence King  
Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

## LEICESTER

Mazarine Blue Musician  
0116 251 0080

## LIVERPOOL

The Horrors Kazimier 0871 230 1094

## LONDON

Charlotte O'Connor Enterprise  
020 7485 2659

Dad Of The Long Tooth Buffalo Bar  
020 7359 6191

Gasoline Thrill Borderline  
020 7734 5547

Lianne La Havas Social  
020 76 6 4992

Lips In Sugar/Magic Mountain  
Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773

Pinney Girl/Dennis Hopper Choppers/  
Alphabet Backwards The Lexington  
020 7837 5387

Secret Rivals Old Blue Last  
020 7613 2478

Various Cruelties 100 Club  
020 7636 0933

Wolf People Garage 020 7607 1818

## NEWCASTLE

One Direction City Hall 0191 261 2606

## NORWICH

Asking Alexandria/blessthefall/  
Chelsea Grin Waterfront

01603 632 717

Save Ferris/Evilson Brickmakers  
01603 441 118

## NOTTINGHAM

The Black Dahlia Murder/  
Skeletonwitch/Fleshgod Apocalypse

Rescue Robins 0115 958 8484

## READING

A Winged Victory For The  
Sullen South Street Arts Centre

0118 960 6060

## WOLVERHAMPTON

Ed Sheeran Civic Hall 01902 552121

M83, Tuesday,  
Trinity, Bristol



## GET IN THE GIG GUIDE!

DO YOU WANT TO GET YOUR BASH INCLUDED IN THE NME WEEKLY GIG GUIDE? GO TO [NME.CO.UK/GIGS](http://NME.CO.UK/GIGS) AND SUBMIT YOUR LISTING FOR FREE.  
YOU MUST SUBMIT DETAILS AT LEAST THREE WEEKS BEFORE THE GIG DATE



  
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# THE LEGENDARY NME CROSSWORD

TAXING THE FINEST MINDS IN ROCK'N'ROLL FOR SIX DECADES

Compiled by Trevor Hungerford

Win!

## A BAG OF NME SWAG



### CLUES ACROSS

- 1 A grouse with High Flying Birds to get shot of? That depends (2-1-3-1-3)  
7+9A Someone who's got the beating of Niki & The Dove (3-7)  
11+10A Let's pretend that Weezer have made an album (4-7)  
12 (See 23 across)  
13 (See 22 down)  
15+21D Any scene I arrange for Frank Sinatra shows the way he sang in the '60s (4-1 4)  
16 The state that Sufjan Stevens got himself into recording this album (8)  
18+26D Californians want messy food to be sorted (6-2-1-5)  
19 Natasha Bedingfield had just the one while recording this (6)  
22 It's where Amy Macdonald was at in 2007 (1-1)  
23+12A Wrongly counts twice a dream pop band (7-5)  
25 (See 7 down)  
27 Canadian band The \_\_\_\_\_ Birds, featuring a young Rick James and Neil Young, named after talking creatures from India (5-5)  
28 Brian \_\_\_\_\_, Beatles' manager until his death in 1967 (7)  
29 On leaving The Beatles, John Lennon formed The Plastic \_\_\_\_\_ Band (3)  
30 (See 7 down)  
31 "Puff your chest out like you never lost a \_\_\_\_\_", from Arctic Monkeys' 'Crying Lightning' (3)  
33 A risky enterprise for singer with Morcheeba (4)  
34 (See 17 down)

### CLUES DOWN

- 2 "You with your switchblade posse, I'll get my guns from the south", 2005 (4-5)  
3 No need to go out to hear Edward Sharpe And The Magnetic Zeros (4)  
4 Factory label post-punk band from Manchester fronted by Vini Reilly, The \_\_\_\_\_ (7-6)  
5 Peter \_\_\_\_\_, singer with Genesis before Phil Collins, his latest solo album is 'New Blood' (7)  
6 US singer-songwriter who had hits with 'Everybody's Talkin'' and 'Without You' (7)  
7+30A+25A Brett sings 'Umbrella' strangely like an indie band from London (9-4 5)  
8 Band that supported Oasis on their ill-fated final tour in 2009, The \_\_\_\_\_ (5)

- 9 "As soon as I love her it's been too long/And I really love breaking your heart", 2009 (7)  
14 Head east into Anglesey somehow with Roxy Music number (5-4)  
17+34A "Everything I've ever done, everything I ever do/Every place I've ever been", Pet Shop Boys (3-1-3)  
20 B. Bumble And The Stingers cracked it in 1962 with number one hit '\_\_\_\_\_ Rocker' (3)  
21 (See 15 across)  
22+13A Black Keys' number is performed strangely only by ELO (6-3)  
23 Get on board legendary record label showcasing Muddy Waters, Bo Diddley and Chuck Berry (5)  
24 Monica Seymour includes bass player with The Triffids and Nick Cave (5)  
25 "Hey, I put some new \_\_\_\_\_ on, and suddenly everything's right", Paolo Nutini (5)  
26 (See 18 across)  
32 An old Todd Rundgren's Utopia album found in Bradford Market (2)

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Simply cut out the crossword and send it, along with your name, address and email, marking the envelope with the issue date, before Tuesday, January 17, 2012, to the following address: Crossword, NME, 9th Floor, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU.

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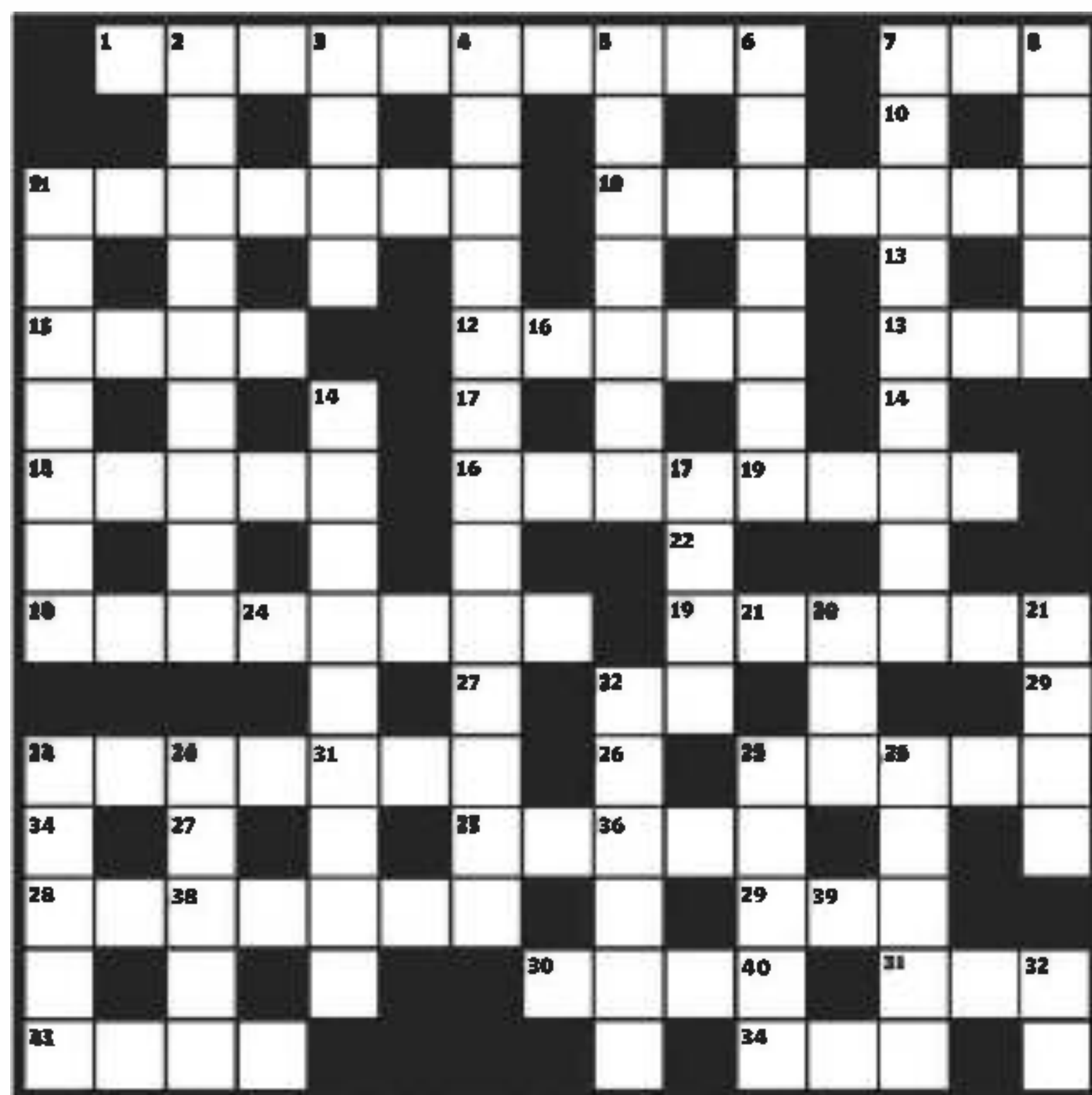
### DECEMBER 10 ANSWERS

#### ANSWERS ACROSS

- 1 Audio, Video, Disco, 9+25D David Bowie, 10 Teardrops, 11+12A His'N'Hers, 14 Is It Me?  
16 Whirring, 20+19A Somebody Told Me, 21 Age, 23 Hup, 25 Bop, 28 Last, 31 Ament, 32 Wham, 33 Auer, 34 Cement, 35 Tin, 36 Eden

#### ANSWERS DOWN

- 1 And She Was, 2 Doves, 3 Ordinary Boys, 4+22D In The Ghetto, 6 Daddy's Gone, 7 Snow, 8 Obsolete, 13+37A Rag Doll, 15 Ta-Dah, 17 In My Place, 18 Nude, 24 Petrol, 26+5D Faith Evans, 27 Stand, 29 Amen, 30 T Rex



## COLLECTORS' CORNER MY BLOODY VALENTINE

Call yourself a superfan? Here are the gems that no My Bloody Valentine fan should be without



### THIS IS YOUR BLOODY VALENTINE (NME)



The debut release by the band - a seven-song mini-album - featuring only guitarist Kevin Shields and drummer Colin O'Riordan from the 'classic' line-up, with Dave Conway on vocals, a position he would hold until 1987. It sounds like a different line-up, its dark, gothic leanings sounding a long way from the shoegazing sound the band would become famous for pioneering.

**Need To Know:** The record was recorded in Berlin.

### YOU MADE ME REALISE (2005)



The five-track EP was the band's first release for Creation, and saw them move away from more conventional indie-pop into the avant-garde areas they explored on subsequent recordings. It became the band's traditional set closer; a 'holocaust' version, where the band would play a single chord loudly for around 20 minutes.

**Need To Know:** Bands who have covered the EP's title track include Midway Still, Amusement Parks On Fire and Silver Sun.

### PEACE TOGETHER (1993)



Released by an organisation devoted to promoting peace in Northern Ireland, this compilation album saw MBV alongside contributions from the likes of Blur and Therapy?. The shoegazers recorded a version of the Bond theme 'We Have All the Time in the World', originally recorded by Louis Armstrong and written by John Barry and Hal David.

**Need To Know:** After the 1991 release of second LP 'Loveless' this was the first official release credited to the band.

### ECSTASY AND WINE (1989)



The band were signed to Creation by the time this compilation was released, featuring tracks from the 'Ecstasy' mini-album and 'Strawberry Wine' EP of 1987, both of which were recorded for Lazy. The latter is significant for being the first release to feature guitarist Bilinda Butcher, who shared vocal duties with Shields following Conway's departure.

**Need To Know:** An alternate version of the 'Strawberry Wine' EP's title track appears on the collection.

# FANMAIL

YOU GET IN TOUCH, WE RESPOND, THINGS GET OUT OF HAND

Edited by Barry Nicolson



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What everyone's talking about this week

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## NEW KIDS ON THE ROCK

From: Pete Ashley

To: NME

I think the best thing about your 100 New Bands issue (January 7) was the fact it made me realise that guitar bands aren't dead and buried. I'd just like to say this to all the current naysayers who continually state that another guitar band can never cross over in the same way Oasis, Blur, The Manics, The Clash, or - yes - The Beatles ever did: FUCK YOU!!! Because guitar music isn't dead right now. Yes, we might be going through a bit of a fallow period since the glory days of Arctic Monkeys, The Libertines, The White Stripes and The Strokes. Sooner or later a great new band has to break through in a massive way - whether it's Howler, DZ Deathrays, Milk Music or Spector it's probably too early to say. But the fact is, as Neil Young said, rock'n'roll will NEVER die. And thank the lord for that.

### NME's response...

Bravo, Pete. But on this whole death of guitar business, we're going to defer to James Endacott, the man who signed The Libs to Rough Trade and who also happened to write a brilliant blog post for NME.COM on the subject this week. To paraphrase: "SHUT UP THE LOT OF YOU. Get it into your heads that

indie music died in the '80s, believe me, there is only good music and bad music. Full stop. That is where the fun starts - deciding who is right and who is wrong. As for the death of the guitar - SHUT UP. I see The Black Keys are headlining three nights at Alexandra Palace at the beginning of the year, they play GUITARS.

Maybe more good records are being made without guitars than there used to be, so what!! Who gives a monkeys if the The 2 Bears play a guitar or not? Their debut album is set to light up this year. Guitars will not go away in the way that voices will not disappear. Let's look for some good music and not

worry if it's indie, cool, guitar-led or not... Oh, and keep your ears ready for the JAZZ, DUBSTEP, POST-AMBIENT BUZZ SAW scene that's ready to take off" - BN

Get in touch at the above addresses. Winners should email letters@NME.COM to claim their voucher

### THE MANICS: NATIONAL TREASURES

From: Kasja Lundquist  
To: NME

Manic Street Preachers stole my heart years ago and they still haven't given it back. For me they're the best band in the world. I got it confirmed when I flew all the way from Stockholm to see them at The O2 in December. The concert was the best one I've ever been to. I stood at the barrier, right in front of Nicky, and I've never been happier. Hearing songs like 'Revol', 'Love's Sweet Exile' and 'La Tristesse Durera' gave me more joy than any drugs, alcohol or pretty much anything could give me. I was already in tears when Nicky smashed up his bass at the end, but more sprung out when I realised how much this band means to me. It has gone beyond their great songs, it is what they stand for: the beauty in politics, books and how it's possible to move on from darkness and create something amazing from it. Also, Manics fans are the loveliest fans in the world. We may be the outcasts, we may be shattered, tattered, torn, but we're brilliant. We are a mess, but damn, we're the most beautiful mess in the world. Stay Beautiful.

From: NME

To: Kasja

I dread the day - and it seems to be drawing nearer - that the Manics finally, finally call it quits. They are the last old-school rock'n'roll band we have: outspoken, intelligent, politically aware, melodically sublime and utterly ridiculous. Even the fallow periods they've muddled through serve

only to make each subsequent renaissance that bit more glorious. There have been peaks and troughs throughout their career, but never plateaux; they've never committed the cardinal sin of becoming boring, and whatever youthful ideals they've betrayed over the last quarter-century, they've stayed true to that one. Where they go from here is still unclear - especially now that Nicky has revealed that the band will be playing gigs outside the UK this year (see page 8). Personally, I want them to keep going, just so they can release a string of sub-par albums before surprising us with another improbable comeback, but alas, I fear the end may really be nigh this time - BN

### LAAAAAAHDS ON TOUR

From: Robyn Strachan  
To: NME

This is an open letter to all the hipsters out there. I've only just recovered enough from Kasabian's New Year's Eve extravaganza at The O2 to send this email to NME. They were fucking amazing, brilliant and every other cliché in the book. 'Switchblade Smiles', 'Empire' and all the other daft but compelling tunes might not change the world, but this is a live band on top of their game, who do what they do faultlessly. So sit there and mock. I'm off to sing about dinosaurs, drink warm cider, act like a total lad and have the best time in the world doing it.

From: NME

To: Robyn

Somewhere dark, damp and cold, The xx are crying into their MPC samplers right now - BN

## COLDPLAY FAN FAILS TO GRASP IRONY

From: Freya Redman  
To: NME

I am writing to inform you that your mainstream and boring reviews/articles on Coldplay are starting to bore me. In the past I have been prepared to ignore your haste to jump on the Coldplay-hating bandwagon. However, enough is enough. If you don't like them, don't write about them. Previously your magazine offered truths and was an enjoyable read but I feel its days are over if you are no longer prepared to admit true talent. At the end of the day, they have more fans than your magazine and cannot be described as 'adequate', although some of your writers evidently are.

From: NME

To: Freya  
Tread warily here, Freya, for "highly mainstream and boring" is not an epithet to be wielded carelessly by Coldplay fans, particularly in light of the kiddie-safe spork of a record that was 'Mylo Xyloto'. As for your inference that we're doomed for refusing to be cowed at the "true talent" of Chris Martin, you'd do well to remember that even Coldplay don't like Coldplay; they're never done referring to themselves as



## STALKER

From: Tamara

To: NME

"Me and my friend Julia met the lovely Serge Pizzorno after Kasabian's Belfast gig!"

"the shit Radiohead" before whimpering like kicked puppies when people like me nod along in agreement - BN

## BUMS N' POSERS

From: Ryan Smith

To: NME

As a die-hard Guns N' Roses fan I should be pleased to hear rumours that they may reunite for their induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, especially as I'm one of the more forgiving fans of the 'New Guns N' Roses' - when I saw them at Reading last year, I admit it wasn't the real thing, but it was haunting nonetheless hearing the opening riff of 'Welcome To The Jungle' with Axl's scream. However, I'm not so pleased since I read that Axl wouldn't accept the return of Steven Adler and

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Izzy Stradlin. All he seems to be doing is forming his own 'supergroup' that's a combination of Guns N' Roses past, in Duff and Slash, and present: Stinson, Reed and Ferrer. To me this seems less like a reunion, but rather a way to get one over on Slash by making him appear the bad guy for not joining Guns N' Roses' 'through the ages' act.

From: NME

To: Ryan

Now look, I've loved Guns N' Roses - the real Guns N' Roses - since I was nine years old, but I've never understood why anyone would want to watch a circus of paycheck-collecting nu-metal shitehawks under the whip of a haunted Cabbage Patch Kid plagued by visions of its former life as W Axl Rose playing their songs. Nor do I have any desire to see the original line-up reform; in this instance, I'd rather the legacy was left as is. Since it looks like being only

# Web Slinging

The highlight of this week's NME.COM blogs

## SCISSOR SISTERS' 'SHADY LOVE' IS A POP STONKER

There was a moment when Scissor Sisters were over-exposed, but hey, let's not hold it against them. I mean, who can blame a bloody brilliant pop band for becoming bloody massive? Which makes it even sweeter that their new single is the first pop stonker of the New Year.

Whatever you were expecting from Scissor Sisters in 2012, this isn't it. For a start, it's got Jake Shears rapping his little ass off about drink, drugs and "this bitch I met out in Boston". Apparently,

"she gon' vote for Obama and she likes to dance to Madonna".

It's produced by Alex 'Boys Noise' Ridha and co-written with Azealia 'Cool List' Banks, who's also kind enough to contribute vocals and crafty enough to nab a 'Vs' credit under the guise of 'Krystal Pepsy'.

'Shady Love' pulls off a pretty nifty trick: it sounds like no other Scissor Sisters track, but still sounds unmistakably like Scissor Sisters. Respect.

Read Nick Levine's full article at [NME.COM/blogs](http://NME.COM/blogs)



### Best of the responses...

Utterly bonkers and wonderful!  
**John Wallace**

Totally Black Eyed Peas. Do not like at all.  
**Anthony Jacobus**

Love Scissor Sisters! Hate this song and video! Sounds like a cheap knock-off of Black Eyed Peas and the video is just as cheap and as boring as the audience looks in it.

Sorry to say, you have completely missed it with this one!  
**John Courter**

Another bland dance-pop song. Exactly what the

world needs!  
**Stuart Conway**

No I don't like it. Love Scissor Sisters but do not like this song or video.  
**Paul Dunford**

## AND FINALLY...

From: Louis Bebb

To: NME

Looking back on 2011, in my opinion it has been another mixed year for the world of music. I felt quite let down by albums such as Beady Eye's, Arctic Monkeys' and definitely Coldplay's. I was mortified when Leona Lewis covered 'Hurt' by Nine Inch Nails. I felt as if she had taken a lot of the meaning out of the song, originally sung by Trent Reznor about his heroin addiction, and then covered by Johnny Cash not long before his death. Nevertheless it has also been quite a positive year. Firstly the news of the reunion of The Stone Roses, which, without a doubt, is what the music world needs. I think the third album is risky, but they are now older and wiser and I cannot wait to hear the sounds of Ian Brown, John Squire, Remi [Remi Nicole's in The Stone Roses now, is she? - Sarky Ed] and Mani. I have also

been very pleased with albums from The Horrors, Frankie & The Heartstrings, Elbow and Baxter Dury. Let's hope we continue to find great music in 2012.  
**Louis Bebb**

From: NME

To: Louis

So, 2011 then: it was shit, except for the bits where it wasn't, which were actually quite good. A fitting tribute to a year that was just sort of alright - BN



## STALKER

From: Chiara

To: NME

"This me and my mate with Freddie from The Vaccines after a gig in Eastbourne. He told us he liked our jackets!"

# DOES ROCK'N'ROLL KILL BRAINCELLS?

TESTING MUSICIANS' MEMORIES AFTER A LIFETIME OF ABUSE

*This Week*

## JOHN POWER CAST

### QUESTION 1

A little-known song called 'There She Goes' by The La's, who you used to be in, was regularly used on which segment of *Match Of The Day* during the 1990s? "On *Match Of The Day*? I know they used it when Margaret Thatcher died. Well, not died, got kicked out of power. No, I don't remember that."

**Wrong.** *Goal Of The Month*

### QUESTION 2

What was the pun on your surname when Cast appeared on the front of NME in April 1999?

"'Power To The People' or something like that?"

**'Power For The People'. Correct**

### QUESTION 3

A new Cast tour has just been announced for March. Where does it start?

"I know this but only because it's just been added. It's the Sheffield Leadmill."

**Correct**



### QUESTION 4

The La's' debut single, 1987's 'Way Out', was praised in *Melody Maker* by which statesman of music?

"Eric Clapton?"

**Wrong.** *Morrissey*

### QUESTION 5

The song 'Willow Weep' features on your second solo album, 'Willow She Weeps'. Which famous band had a 1997 album track called 'Weeping Willow'? "It rings a bell, this. Where was I in 1997? I was in Cast around then. I should know this but I haven't got a clue."

**Wrong.** *It was The*



Dressed to impress: Lee Mavers of The La's

Verve; the album was 'Urban Hymns' "Damn."

### QUESTION 6

How many people have so far "pledged" to help you record new Cast album 'Trouble Times' on Pledgemusic.com?

"I don't know actually. Eight

hundred? Seven hundred?" **Correct-ish.** 727

### QUESTION 7

You're a big Liverpool FC fan. When was the club established?

"Ah, flipping hell. I'll get battered. I reckon... 1897."

**Wrong.** 1892

"I'm going to get shot now."

### QUESTION 8

Which two DJs introduced you when you performed 'Alright' with Cast on *Top Of The Pops* in 1995?

"Was is Mark and Lard?"

**Wrong.** *Steve Lamacq and Jo Whiley*

### QUESTION 9

How many teams of producers did it take to record the debut *The La's LP*? "Six? John Porter was the first. John Leckie. Bob Andrews, Gavin MacKillop and a few others. Steve Lillywhite was the one who finally got it together... well, he didn't get it together. That was the released version."

**Correct.** The full line-up was: 1) John Porter, 2) Gavin MacKillop, 3) John Leckie, 4) Bob Andrews, 5) Jeremy Allom and Mike Hedges, 6) Steve Lillywhite and Mark Wallis

### QUESTION 10

You performed Liverpool fan anthem 'Poor Scouser Tommy' at Anfield in April 2009...



"...I did an impromptu thing on LFC TV because I was also on the Hillsborough tribute song, 'Fields Of Anfield Road'. I don't know if that's anything to do with the question, like."

A great cause, but the question is... who were the only two native Liverpool footballers on 1988's 'The Anfield Rap'?

"With John Barnes and all that. Let me get my head together. '88."

So I reckon it was John Aldridge and another attacker..."

**Half a point.** It was John Aldridge and Steve McMahon

"I should have known that one!"

## Total Score

# 4.5/10

"That's not bad. That's alright that, I'm quite impressed"

Go to [NME.COM/blogs](http://NME.COM/blogs) for the full Braincells hall of fame (and shame)

Coming Next Week

# THE BIGGEST & BEST ALBUMS OF 2012

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NICKI MINAJ, PLAN B AND LOADS MORE



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