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BUTCH VIG SPEAKS**

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# ON REPEAT

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



TRACK  
OF  
THE  
WEEK

## MAXIMO PARK

Hips And Lips

There's something admirable in the way that Newcastle's bounciest sons Maximo Park just get bloody well stuck in there. They don't dance around the point or pause to consider how to set themselves in the coolest light, they just go "Well, we're in a massive global recession, the government's stripping back public services, everything's terrible. Let's write an angry album called 'The National Health'." Brilliant.

Similarly, when it comes to affairs of the heart, frontman Paul Smith has a way of getting right down to the blood and guts of

it. The second track from the Park's fourth album, out June 11, is an intense and uncomfortable post-tiff emotional dissection. It starts off brooding in a chilly synthpop mood, with a tense, fidgety

keyboard line. Then, as Smith seethes "*I punched the fence last night/Another act that you found pathetic*", the song becomes an agonised crescendo of jagged riffs, crashing drums and a howl of "*You're a puzzle to me/And you always will be*".

Sounds like Maximo's time away has definitely given them a renewed energy, living up to Smith's description of the new album being "as vital a music as people would want to hear". Let's just hope not too many fences were harmed in the making of this album.

**Emily Mackay, writer**

*It sounds like time away  
has definitely given  
them renewed energy*



## LITTLE BOOTS

Every Night I Say A Prayer  
(Tensnake Remix)

On which our Vic takes Aretha's formula for love, removes the "little" and instead does it SEVEN DAYS A WEEK, with the assistance of some deliciously retro electronic stylings. Also features the most amazing guest vocal of the week. "*I want yooooou to take me there*" Oh yeah...

**Liam Cash, writer**

## TITUS ANDRONICUS

Oh Bondage Up Yours!  
(X-Ray Spex cover)

Ex-Titus member Amy Klein makes a brilliantly nuts return to the fold on this cover of the punk classic. Wielding a bizarre British accent and yelping and wailing over driving crashes of scuzzed-up guitars, it's as wickedly punk-spirited and cheekily irreverent a tribute to the late, great Poly Styrene as you'd hope.

**Lisa Wright, writer**

## MELLOWHYPE

Timbs

Another newie from the prolific Odd Future camp – this time featuring Hodgy Beats and Domo Genesis. Kicking in with almost Bond theme-esque string samples before dropping the standard "*Golf Wang*" clarion call, 'Timbs' is a short but sweet example of the pair's verbal dexterity – proving OF don't have to offend to succeed.

**Sarah Pope, writer**

## JESSIE WARE

110%

Ware's sizzled out Sade-like dubstep has had a baby with electropop – and it's called '110%'. Drifting and driving over a Little Dragon-like beat, it bops about like sprinkles of heaven against a blessed-out backing. The whole thing feels very Robyn-like in its simple pop beauty. And that can only be a good thing.

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

## THE WALKMEN

Heaven

Of course, when 'The Rat' is your high-water mark, nothing's ever going to sound as exciting again. But the best NY rock'n'roll band of the past decade

who aren't The Strokes are back to their best, channelling moody new wave with aplomb rather than reverting to the mariachi meandering of 2010's 'Lisbon'.

**Rick Martin, News Editor**

## BEACH HOUSE

Lazuli

Everyone who's heard it is going mental for new album 'Bloom', but if you can't wait that long there's always this Record Store Day release to tide you over.

Based round a plinky piano riff, it's a good signifier of the album as a whole – mysterious, woozily immersive, and unutterably pretty.

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

## ARCTIC MONKEYS

Electricity

Alex Turner ain't in the mood for romance in this gnarled ode to night-time nookie. "*My heart was breaking and got left unlocked/Didn't see you sneak in but I'm glad you stopped*" goes his barely-there murmur. Made available for Record Store Day as a B-side to 'R U Mine?', 'Electricity' continues the Monkeys' flirtation with QOTSA riffs and sleaze.

**Chris Mandle, writer**

## MAJOR LAZER FEAT DIRTY PROJECTORS' AMBER

Get Free

Not what you'd expect, this. Way more chilled than anything you'd normally get from Diplo (yup, him again) and Switch's Major Lazer project, 'Get Free's' fuzzy, gloopy, underwater-sounding reggae beat combined with Amber Coffman's piercing Björk-ish vocal is a sensationally relaxing experience. Even the windpipes at the end sound correct.

**Tom Howard, Reviews Editor**



## YUCK

Chew

You could hardly call the crunching dirge of 'Chew' a step forward for Yuck, more a step closer to them becoming the ultimate US slacker-rock tribute act. But the sooner the world acknowledges that this lot 'do' Dinosaur Jr as well as their seniors, the sooner we can get on with revelling in this song's dirty brilliance.

**Jamie Fullerton, Features Editor**



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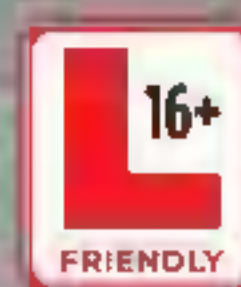
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# The Summer of Mumfords: IS THIS THE FUTURE FOR FESTIVALS?

In a tough year for music's mainstay events, Mumford & Sons are putting on a travelling festival of their own. They tell us why

## MAIN EVENT

Fresh from conquering America, and with the follow up to their multi million selling debut on the way later in

the year, there can't have been a major festival promoter in the country that didn't have Mumford & Sons on their must-book list. And yet the band's absence from the T In The Park, V Festival and Reading and Leeds line-ups is conspicuous. Instead, they have elected to stage their own travelling festival –

The Gentlemen Of The Road Stopover – with two shows in Huddersfield and Galway this June (see below for details). The band will headline and curate every aspect of the 15,000 capacity events, from the line-ups to the afterparties to the food and drink, bypassing the mainstream festival circuit almost entirely (they also play at RockNess in Scotland the following week).

“We know there are shitloads of festivals in Britain and no-one needs a new one,” the band's multi-instrumentalist Winston Marshall tells *NME*. “But what we thought was missing was a high quality, inner-city event where you take over the city itself. We've got two stages, but there aren't going to

be any clashes, so you'll be able to see everyone. Afterwards, we're going into the towns – there'll be jazz, comedy, more gigs and loads of different stuff going on.”

Following the cancellation of Sonisphere, and with *NME*'s festival poll earlier this month highlighting a general disillusionment among punters, the Mumfords' model does raise some key questions. Does their decision to go it alone have wider implications for the health of the UK festival scene? And what do the band think promoters are getting wrong?

“You go to a big festival in Britain,” says Marshall, “and the food is shit, the beer's watered down, and the organisers don't really care if you're having a good time or not. They just put the bands on, and that's their only responsibility.”

Most seasoned festival goers will have come to expect dodgy burgers and weak lager, but given 42 per cent of the fans who told *NME* they weren't going to a festival this year were staying away due to the ticket prices, Marshall's comments on pricing are far more pertinent.

“We've tried to give people value for money, which I don't feel you get at a lot

of UK festivals,” he continues. “We're charging about £45, but I've seen ticket prices as high as £200. The thing is, once most festivals have sorted the line-up, they don't spend much time on anything else. The festivals we enjoy are the ones that realise it's their responsibility to look after every side of the event. And there really aren't many of them in Britain.”

Probably mindful of wanting to be booked for a big festival again, Marshall is quick to stress that

these shows “aren't our way of snubbing festivals, or saying, ‘Fuck you, we'll do our own thing!’” but keyboard player Ben Lovett admits that, if they're successful, they could end up becoming regular events. “We're incorporating elements from festivals that the four of us like,” he says. “But that doesn't mean everyone else will. Some of those festivals, like Telluride [Bluegrass Festival in Colorado] are institutions that have been built up over years, so we might be completely wrong to think we can replicate it here.”

Which leads on to the most important point: should Mumfords pull it off, will it encourage even more bands to start their own festivals? “It's quite ambitious,” admits Marshall, “so I don't know if it would be a preferable option for other bands. Despite the things that annoy us about major festivals, we still enjoy playing them. It's just that, this year, we want to introduce this event, so we're focusing on making it amazing.”

It's hugely premature to suggest the Mumfords' model sounds the death knell for traditional festivals. After all, for every Sonisphere there's another large-scale event reporting a brisk trade on tickets. But it's undeniable that the summer music landscape is evolving – and it's the bands themselves leading the change. The real acid test comes next: will band-run festivals flog any tickets? Or actually be any good? Only you can decide that one: let the battle for summer supremacy commence.

*“At big festivals, the food and beer are shit”*

WINSTON MARSHALL

## Gentlemen Of The Road Stopover ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

### WHERE?

Huddersfield's Greenhead Park (June 2) and Galway Salthill Park (June 9), plus others outside the UK to be announced.

### TICKET PRICE:

TBC but the band say “around £45”.

### CAPACITY:

15,000.

### HOW WILL IT WORK?

Ben Lovett: “There'll be a big outdoor site with a main stage and a second stage, and all of the offshoot events will be using the local venues. It's kind of us taking over a town, while bringing the best out of it.”

### HUDDERSFIELD ONLY

#### MICHAEL KIWANUKA

Soul crooner on Mumfords' Ben Lovett's Communion label.

#### WILLY MASON

Massachusetts' premier folk troubadour.

### GALWAY ONLY

#### THE VACCINES

Contractually obliged to play every festival this year, it seems.

#### ZULU WINTER

Hotly tipped Friendly Fires-flecked festival buzz band of 2012.

### BOTH FESTIVALS

#### THE CORRESPONDENTS

London 'swing hip-hop' outfit sadly prone to covering songs from *The Jungle Book*.

#### NATHANIEL RATELIFF

Singer-songwriter from Colorado – and another of Lovett's Communion label cohorts.

## GOING IT ALONE

Mumfords aren't the first band to stage their own festival

### LOLLAPALOOZA

Originally conceived in 1991 as a massive farewell tour for Jane's Addiction, Lollapalooza has since become an alt-rock behemoth.

### OZZFEST

One of the key factors in Ozzy's (right) resurgence, Ozzfest began in 1996 when Lollapalooza refused to put him on the bill. Cancelled in 2011, there's been no announcement of a return.

### ORION MUSIC + MORE FESTIVAL

Metallica are debuting this two-day outdoor bash in New Jersey in the US in June, with the likes of Arctic Monkeys and Avenged Sevenfold on the bill.

### THE MIGHTY BOOSH FESTIVAL

Noel Fielding (left) and co staged this in Kent back in 2008, offering a mix of music and comedy.

### ARCADE FIRE

There's a fine line between putting on a massive gig in Hyde Park and running your own mini festival, but Arcade Fire definitely stepped over it last summer, sorting out everything from the layout to the line-up – which featured Mumfords.

Arctic Fire chose the wrong gear for the mic-swallowing tournament



# KURT COBAIN'S 'SOLO ALBUM': THE TRUTH

After rumours of more material left in the vaults, 'Nevermind' producer Butch Vig sets the record straight

**S**o did Kurt make a solo album? It's what everyone's been asking since his mate and ex-Hole man Eric Erlandson suggested a long lost collection of songs existed. Speaking to a US TV channel, the guitarist claimed Kurt was heading in a "really cool direction" before he died in 1994 and even touted it as his 'White Album'.

But, according to 'Nevermind' producer Butch Vig, fans may be left disappointed – as the material may not exist in

## Kurt's releases since '94

**'YOU KNOW YOU'RE RIGHT', 2002**  
The last song Nirvana recorded together.

**'WITH THE LIGHTS OUT', 2004**  
Boxset with a disc of rare and previously unreleased material.

**'NEVERMIND' REISSUE, 2011**  
A remastered version for its 20th anniversary with unreleased demos.

physical form at all. "He was working on songs, but they were just in his head," the Garbage drummer tells *NME*. "He might have just played some songs to Eric."

While Nirvana bassist Krist Novoselic also denied the rumours in 2009, according to Erlandson, Cobain's solo material was different from Nirvana. "That's what he was going towards, a solo album but working with different people," he says.

However, counters Vig, as

Cobain withdrew from the world, few in his closest circle actually heard the material. "The last time I hung out with Kurt he'd played that Roseland Ballroom show in New York on the 'In Utero' tour and seemed in good spirits, but after the show he seemed like the weight of the world was on him."

His focus at the time, Vig explains, was on Courtney Love's recording career: "Around that period he only wanted to talk about Courtney's album. I never heard any of his new songs."

So what's next? Months of mud-slinging followed by years of legal wranglings? Maybe. But don't give up hope of hearing more from the Cobain vaults. TBC...



## ...AND COURTNEY'S BACK, TOO

The singer speaks to *NME* about her Hole reunion with Eric Erlandson

Courtney Love joined her former bandmates in Brooklyn last week for a two-song set at a screening of the Patty Schemel documentary, *Hit So Hard*. "It was magical and fun," Courtney tells us. "I did it last minute. It was awesome." Speaking on whether the mid-

'90s line-up could reform she said: "Not without Micko [Larkin, current Hole guitarist]." But, she added, Erlandson can still tear it up. "Eric, hasn't lost his shredding touch." And would she do it again? "As long as I don't have to close with 'Celebrity Skin', I don't care."



Hole again: Eric, Patty, Courtney and Melissa

WORDS: JENNY STEVENS PHOTOS: STEPHEN WEEZ/REX, WIRE IMAGE





# BLUR'S ESSENTIAL RARITIES

If the Britpop band really are bowing out this summer, at least they've emptied the vaults before they go. Here's our guide to the newly unveiled gems and forgotten classics on their new boxset

**A**fter Damon Albarn's comments earlier this month that Blur's Hyde Park Olympics blowout really will be the band's final hurrah comes the retrospective, '21'. But what are the picks of the rarities from this mammoth boxset?

## 'COWBOY SONG'

Released on the soundtrack to teen flick *Dead Man On Campus* in 1998, this lost classic features sparse electronics and churning guitars. The siren synth section later gave 'Tender' B-side 'All We Want' its main hook.

## 'SUPERMAN'

An unreleased song from the band's days as the rowdier Seymour, recorded live in Harlow in December 1989. This is the box's only song on seven-inch.

## 'SATURDAY MORNING'

A 'Great Escape' outtake only played in public once, as an instrumental at the Blur:X exhibition in 1999. If you didn't see it then, find out how it sounds in July!



## 'BEACHED WHALE'/'PAP POP'

Two four-track demos from the 'Modern Life Is Rubbish' era. The titles have long been known to Blur fans, but the tracks have never been heard outside of the band's circle.

## 'WOODPIGEON SONG'

This spooky piece of scratchy balladry was only available in a truncated version

on the 'Beetlebum' single; now we get to hear the climax.

## 'YOUNG AND LOVELY'

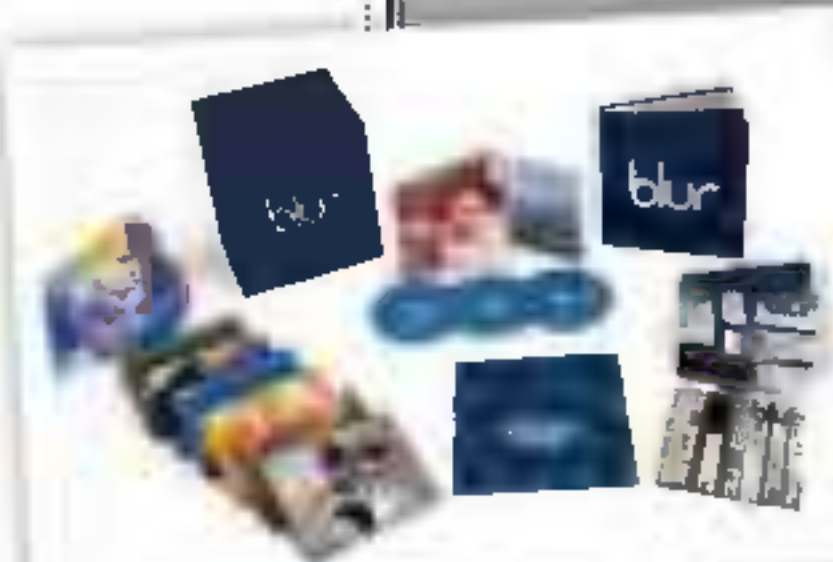
Blur may have only snuck it out on CD2 of the 'Chemical World' single, but this swoonsome slice of Bowie-esque pop is one of the four-piece's greatest songs – a quintessentially English, glam tinged singalong.

## 'COPING'/'SUNDAY SLEEP'/'7 DAYS' (ANDY PARTRIDGE VERSIONS)

Three songs recorded with XTC mainman Partridge for what would become 'MLR', and no doubt Blur's most famous unreleased sessions. This is the real holy grail of the box for Blur fans

## 'SIR ELTON JOHN'S COCK'

The world's greatest title that never was – until now. It appears on the box's 18th and final CD, suggesting it was recorded between 2000 and 2003.



## WHAT YOU GET

*The full contents of Blur's July 30 boxset release*

- All seven newly expanded, two-disc studio albums, with everything from 'Leisure' to 'Blur' digitally remastered
- Four discs of rarities, including more than three hours of previously unreleased material
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previously unreleased Seymour-era track 'Superman' • Hardback book of new interviews and previously unseen photos



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# WHO'S NME'S ULTIMATE ICON?

**BRITTANY HOWARD VOTES FOR... JACK WHITE**

*The Alabama Shakes singer states the case for the ex-White Stripes man as the artist who has lit up our pages more than any other*



"Jack White should be your ultimate icon. He's certainly a guitar icon, anyway. The man built his own empire, didn't he?"

He's got his own label, his own venue, his own store, his own recording studio and he's definitely got his own style of playing the guitar. The secret to his success is pretty obvious – he never stops and he works hard. Third Man Records put out a seven-inch of ours earlier this year – he's now in a position where he can help people out and that's great, it comes from his love of music.

"Most people, when they play the blues, they want to play it how it is supposed to be played, but Jack White will mix it up. He'll put a slide on it. He'll put a wah-wah pedal on it and get this extreme blues sound. He's such a bold guitarist and a bold person. He's

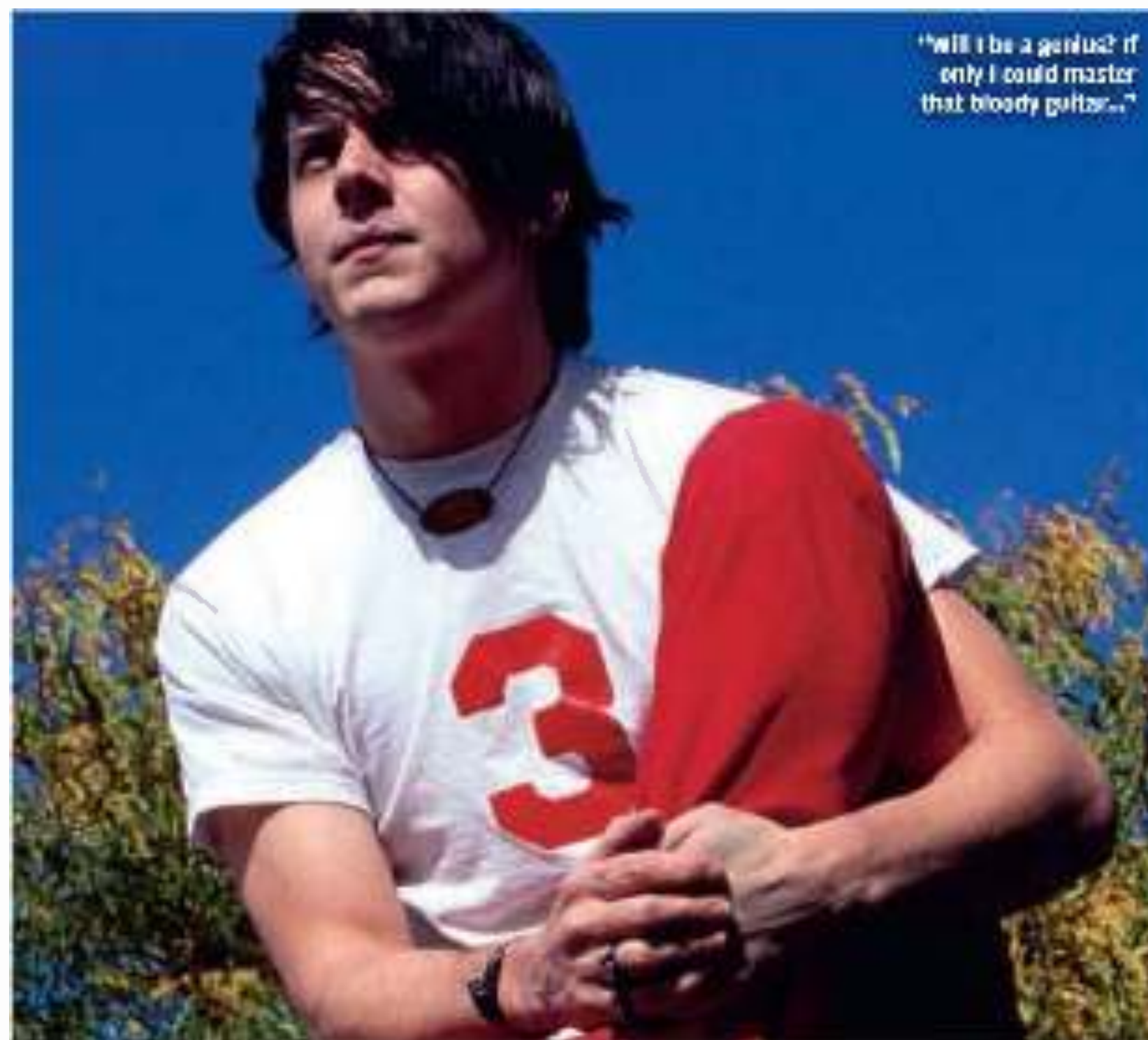
not afraid to mix blues with punk, and even country. I've got a lot of respect for him and his new album 'Blunderbuss' is amazing – I've played it to death ever since I received a copy. The guy's a genius – he knows what's up."

## DID YOU KNOW?

John Anthony Gillis, as Jack was then, made his first appearance in the public eye at the age of 12 – he can be spotted in the 1987 film *The Rosary Murders*.

## WE NEED YOUR VOTES!

You've read Brittany stake a claim for Jack being anointed with the accolade, now it's time to have your say. Head to *NME.COM/ultimate icon*, where you can vote for your favourite from the shortlist of 60, along with being able to watch video interviews with the likes of Miles Kane and Kasabian on who they're backing in the big vote.



"Will I be a genius? if only I could master that bloody guitar..."

Alas, Tim's hair-raising tales did nothing for his own career



# GUNS, JAIL AND 'COCAINUS'

*Charlatans frontman Tim Burgess talks us through his new book and 20 years of excess*

**T**he Charlatans' singer Tim Burgess is getting in early for the traditional Christmas rush for tell-all autobiographies, putting out his memoir *Telling Stories* this week. While his band have been the perennial nearly men of Madchester and Britpop, they've got war stories to compare with any rock'n'roll tale of excess you could find on the shelves. Here Tim talks us through three of the best from his tome's grimy pages...

## BLOWING COKE UP EACH OTHERS' ARSES

The Charlatans' drug intake was legendary in the early '90s, as the second chapter in the book divulges... in gory detail.

Tim: "Obviously there are other famous stars who have done this act, but I don't think anyone else has admitted to it. It was a short-lived phase. One of us suggested it and then other people agreed to do it and we devised this other way of getting it up there. To be honest it's not hugely different except that it doesn't hurt the

front of your nose, but it makes you skip around a little."

## GETTING THE ORIGINAL SINGER THE BOOT

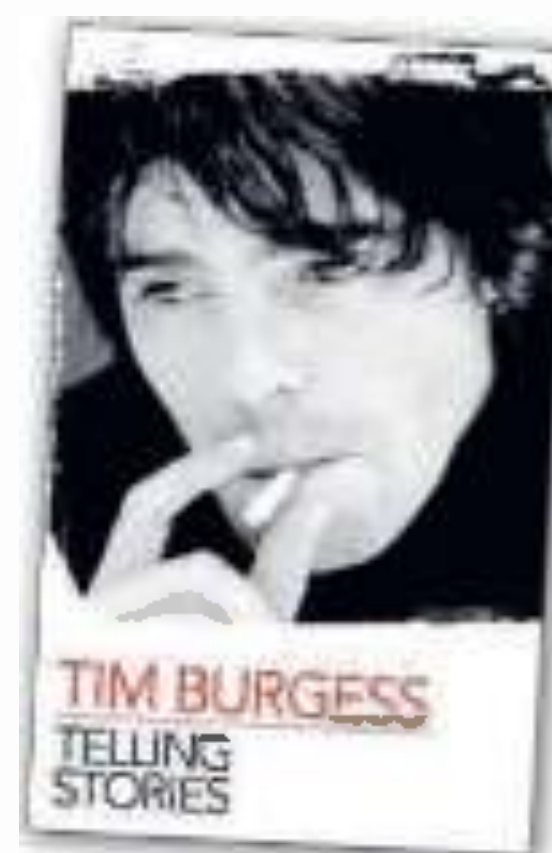
Baz Ketley was the original singer in The Charlatans – at least until Tim showed up to watch them support The Stone Roses in Manchester in 1989.

Tim: "I thought The Charlatans were good, but what they needed was a really great lead singer. I spoke to their manager afterwards and he said, 'It's funny you should say that...'"

## KEYBOARDIST BANGED UP FOR ARMED ROBBERY

In December 1992, keyboardist Rob Collins (who died in a car accident in

1996) was arrested after an incident at an off-licence. He pleaded guilty and was banged up for four months. Tim: "I remember my manager ringing and saying, 'Don't go to rehearsals today, Rob's in prison.' I thought he'd just got himself in a fight or something but it turned out he'd been arrested for armed robbery. There are some things we wish hadn't happened – and that's definitely up there..."





# WHAT'S THE BEST TRACK OF THE '80s?

The countdown of the tracks of each decade continues and **Fred Macpherson** from *Spector* offers his picks

**O**ver at *NME.COM* we're counting down the best tracks of the past six decades to celebrate our 60th – and this week (April 25) sees the unveiling of the 100 top songs of the 1980s. Synths and indie icons are sure to figure highly – so who better to offer his picks than '80s-obsessed *Spector* frontman Fred Macpherson? Here's his top five.

## 1 'VIENNA' – ULTRAVOX

"It's just preposterous. It's one of those songs that you think, 'How could anyone come up with 10 seconds of this track and think they could get away it?' and that's what sums up the '80s."

## 2 'ENJOY THE SILENCE' – DEPECHE MODE

"Lyrically it resonates so much. It sums up that moment in a relationship when anything you say is just going to cause problems. UK '80s music (*Although recorded in 1989, this came out in 1990 – Pedantic Ed*) was the great era of British pop music, because it was outlandish yet getting in the charts on a regular basis."

## 3 'SEALAND' – OMD

"It takes you to this really otherworldly, sad place and Andy McCluskey's vocal is incredible. This is the man who went from writing pop songs about the bombing of Hiroshima to starting Atomic Kitten. OMD are my favourite of that whole wave, thanks to a really clear mindset and vision."

## 4 'PRINCE CHARMING' – ADAM AND THE ANTS

"The whole song basically has one chord, one lyric and a dance move. The idea that a dance move could get a guy with

toothpaste smeared across his face, dressed somewhere between a pirate and a *Crystal Maze* presenter a Number One record is just astounding."

## 5 'ICEHOUSE' – ICEHOUSE

"They're an Australian synth-pop band. I love bands having songs with the same name as the band. It's something I've always wanted the audacity to do. It keeps taking twists and turns."

To see *NME's Top 100 Songs Of The '80s*, visit *NME.COM*



Fred's still got work to do on his Adam And The Ants look



## UNSEEN PUNK PHOTOS

*Clash and Pistols shots on display at NME photographer's gallery*

Iconic photos of the likes of The Clash, Sex Pistols and Blondie have gone on display. Steve Emberton's Punk Era exhibition is being held at NME photographer Andy Willsher's Rock City Art Gallery in Bedford until May 20. A selection of the pics, many of which are previously unseen, are included in NME's poster section this week – turn to page 33 to see them for yourself.

# WIN! TICKETS TO SEE PAUL WELLER AND GRAHAM COXON!

Tickets to Jodrell Bank Live and a hotel stay up for grabs in this week's *NME Extra* competition



Weller will be having a swanky Jodrell this summer

Looking for something a bit different from your summer festival experience? How about watching the likes of Paul Weller and Graham Coxon against the backdrop of a massive telescope? That's what's up for grabs in this week's amazing *NME Extra* giveaway. We've got a pair of VIP tickets to give away to Live From Jodrell Bank, the huge bash taking place at the observatory venue 20 miles outside Manchester on June 24. As well as getting you in gratis, we'll also throw in a seriously swanky overnight stay in the Cottons Hotel & Spa, transfers to and from the event, a limited-edition art print from

the gig and a goodie bag full of merch. To enter the competition, simply follow the instructions below. Best of luck!

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# 2PAC? NAH. IT'S TIME FOR HOLO-HENDRIX

*The rapper's resurrection at Coachella was a seismic event for live music. Rick Martin predicts it won't be long before more dead artists follow suit*



Right about now, 10 days on from its game-changing Coachella debut with Dre, Snoop and chums, the Tupac hologram is due to

finally tear a massive hole in the very fabric of The Internet itself. Millions of fake Twitter accounts, YouTube mash ups and animated GIFs that transform Tupac into Zordon from *Power Rangers*: there's surely only so much of this shit the web can take. Make no mistake: in the world of memes - where lolcats are currency and saturation is king - Tupac's mind-bending comeback is the most bankable five minutes of footage in the world right now.

The same principle could also be applied to the technology that brought him back from the dead in the first place. Got a spare couple of hundred grand? Invest in hologram technology now. Seriously. Because as far as I'm concerned, this is really only the beginning. Buoyed by the response, Snoop and Dre are already talking about bringing Jimi Hendrix and Marvin Gaye next. Of course, it won't end there. And it shouldn't - because the list of possibilities is literally endless. The Olympic gig organisers who requested Keith Moon rejoin The Who for the Games' closing ceremony could blow their budget on actually making it happen. Miles Kane could finally live out his full-time Arctic fantasies and project all four Monkeys around him. Peter Dinklage could play Joy Division tracks with Ian Curtis back by his side. And Axl Rose can hire an entirely new Guns N' Roses line up of holograms - just to fire them one by one for looking at him funny. Which actually



all sounds pretty tame when you consider the hologram makers are already talking about bringing Whitney Houston back before her body's even cold [see below].

It's not all good news though. Before long the technology will take over in a sinister dystopian twist. The holograms will start demanding fees, longer stage times and a

rider. Then they'll sack their bandmates, 'til gigs are nothing more than four beams of flickering light and a backing track.

And you know what? I'll be fine with all this. It'll get boring eventually, but for now, keep 'em coming and make sure each one is more ridiculous than the last. Jacko, Hendrix and Lennon for Glasto 2013, then?

## WHO'S NEXT TO RISE FROM THE DEAD?

*The man behind the Tupac hologram tells us he has Jacko, Hendrix, Kurt, Elvis and Whitney in*

**NME:** So how did you pull it off?  
**Sanj Surati, Head of Music at Musion Systems Ltd:**

"We use a technique that's been around since the 1860s, launched by a guy called John

Pepper. He wanted to create the illusion of ghosts onstage." **How does it work?** "We've developed a new plastic foil that sits in front of the stage at a 45° angle. A projector is above it, shooting content into the bounce bit creating the illusion."

**Who will you be resurrecting next?** "Jimi Hendrix, Kurt Cobain, oh and Michael Jackson would be the ultimate one. Maybe even Whitney Houston. Seeing Elvis onstage with Justin Bieber would be a cool thing too."

Bieber's backing band definitely has potential

THE BEST OF  
**NME**  
VIDEO.COM  
THIS WEEK



**KASABIAN: 'WE LOVE BUGSY MALONE'**

**Interview with Kasabian**  
We caught up with Pete and Sergio at their Coachella party, where they reveal their new gig plans and their obsession with Buggy Malone.



**'MR BRIGHTSIDE': THE KILLERS' CLASSIC SONG**

**Interview with The Killers**  
It was the first song they wrote and it's a classic. We caught up with the band about their new album and their love for Mr. Brightside.



**THE VACCINES: 'WE'VE RECORDED HALF OUR NEW ALBUM'**

**Interview with The Vaccines**  
The band's new album is half-recorded and they're already writing more songs for their second album.



**METROMONY REVEAL THEIR FANTASY FESTIVAL LINE-UP**

**Interview with Metromony**  
The band's new album is half-recorded and they're already writing more songs for their second album.



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XPERIA







2 Notting Hill Arts Club: 2pm



3 The Garage: 4.30pm



4 The Windmill: 7pm



5 Camden Barfly: 9.30pm



6 Old Blue Last: midnight



This is what you get if Satan's your tour manager

# SIX GIGS, 12 HOURS, ONE HEAP OF CRAZINESS

*Cancer Bats crash the capital, leaving a trail of split lips and swollen knees behind them*

**T**wenty-four hours before the London Marathon, Canadian hardcore heroes Cancer Bats are staging their own endurance test: the Pentagram Tour. Conceived to celebrate the release of ferocious fourth album 'Dead Set On Living', today's (April 21) itinerary is seriously ambitious: six gigs spread across five London venues, 12 hours and a 35-mile route which, when plotted on a map, form every Satanist's favourite inverted star shape. The mayhem kicks off at the Old Blue Last (also tonight's finishing line), where 'Scared To Death' sparks the day's first lip-splitting mosh pit – impressive considering it's not even lunchtime yet. The next show at Notting Hill Arts Club is equally chaotic, before the craziest gig of the day unfolds at the Garage. "I got

my ass kicked by all the crowdsurfers," frontman Liam Cormier laughs backstage after watching his fans hang from the lighting rig and stage dive en masse during 'RATS'. Unsurprisingly, by the fourth gig at The Windmill in Brixton, the injuries are starting to stack up among the devotees, many of whom are turning out for every gig. One fan proudly drops his jeans to show *NME* his swollen knee, while the moshpit is a blur of cuts, bruises and spit blood. The finishing line may be in sight by the time the band hit the Barfly in Camden, but the energy levels on both sides of the barrier remain sky high. "This is the craziest thing we've ever done," Cormier barks as he surveys the rabble before him at the final show at the Old Blue Last. "The fact we didn't die is a testament to how hard we rocked." Amen to that.

## BATSTAGE CHAT

*Frontman Liam tells us through the mayhem*

**Q: What's the deal with the band's name?**  
**A: Liam Cormier:** "We were going to do a week's residency but our schedule wouldn't allow it, so we packed it into one day. Our agent used to book three shows in a day for Death From Above 1979 and I was like, 'I wanna do that!'"  
**Q: What's the significance of the pentagram?**  
**A:** "To me, it's just heavy metal imagery. We're not Satanists!"

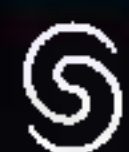
**Q: On Saturday, a crowd of fans was seen drinking from a large bottle of beer.**  
**A:** "It's like I'm leading a cult, right? I knew some people would do all the shows but I'm surprised by just how many there were at every gig today."  
**Q: What's the craziest thing you've seen?**  
**A:** "Positive vibes. Our

support band Witchsorrow made us a loaf of banana bread, so we're snacking on that too. I was impressed by how early everyone was drinking this morning, though."  
**Q: Do something totally different. Someone asked me why we didn't do an inverted cross – but that's taking the easy way out. I'll tell you this: we won't be doing the pentagram again!"**



JOÃO NETO &  
FREDERICO  
"Le Le Le"

MICHEL  
TELÓ  
"Ai Se Eu Te Pego"



## THESE SONGS WILL HEAT UP YOUR SUMMER

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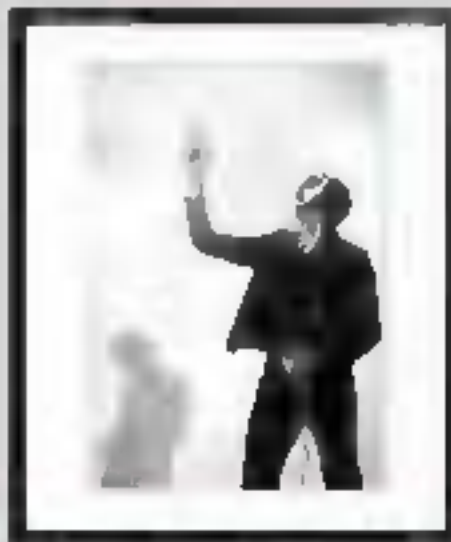
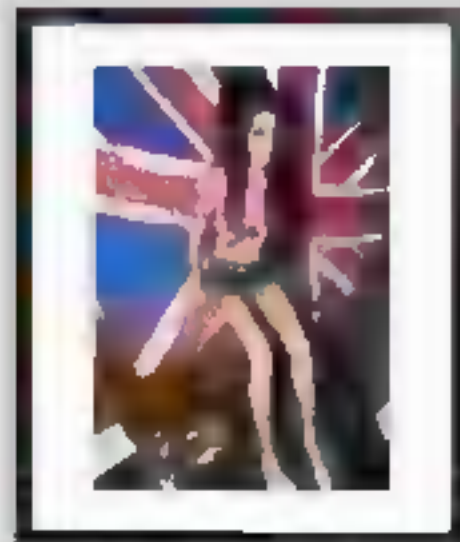
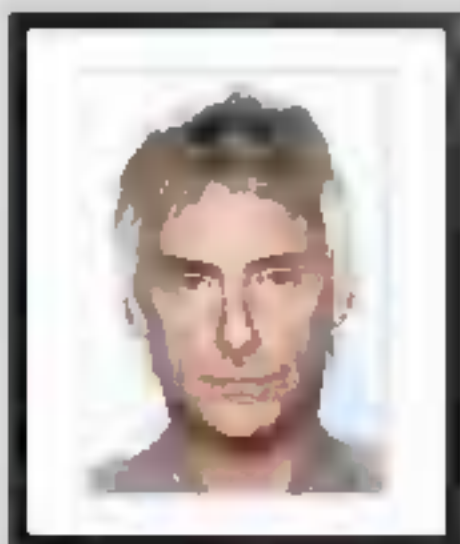
JOÃO LUCAS  
& MARCELO

"Eu Quero Tchu,  
Eu Quero Tcha"



GUSTTAVO  
LIMA

"Balada (Tche Tche Rap)"



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# PIECES OF ME

## MATT HELDERS

# ARCTIC MONKEYS

*The Sheffield sticksman on being a fan of rap, motorbikes, watching stars in the desert, oh, and – whisper it – ‘Be Here Now’*

### *My first album*

#### **OASIS, ‘BE HERE NOW’**

“I always used to say my first album was Michael Jackson’s ‘Bad’, but that’s not true! It was just me trying to be cool. So the first album I bought for myself was actually ‘Be Here Now’. I remember going to buy it after school when it came out, on a Thursday.”

### *My first gig*

#### **THE VINES IN MANCHESTER**

“Me, Alex and Nick went to see them. It was our first gig experience, we were 15 or 16. We got on a train to Manchester, which was a big deal, to go to a gig. We went for the whole day and got drunk and stuff.”

### *The first song I ever fell in love with*

#### **ROOTS MANUVA, ‘DREAMY DAYS’**

“At that time, at school, I listened to a lot of rap music and you get passionate about things quite easily at that age. I listened to it for about a week straight.”

### *The first song I learned to play*

#### **THE WHITE STRIPES, ‘FELL IN LOVE WITH A GIRL’**

“We all started learning to play together, so we’d do whatever we could achieve. It was probably The White Stripes, because that was quite easy on drums. Not so much for them on guitar! But I remember playing ‘Fell In Love With A Girl’.”

### *My favourite lyrics*

#### **LUDACRIS, ‘STAND UP’**

“I gravitate to rap because it’s funny what they can get away with, lyrically. It’s not particularly profound, but there’s a Ludacris song where he says, ‘My diamonds are reckless, feels like a midget is hanging from my necklace’. Can’t argue with that!”

### *Right now I love*

#### **WET NUNS**

“I always support bands from Sheffield. I did a couple of remixes for this lot. I’m best friends with their manager from home.”

### *My favourite possession*

#### **MY MOTORBIKE**

“It’s in England so I don’t get to see it or ride it often, because the weather is shit! I’ve got a Triumph, a British bike. It’s dark red, black and gold. Three of the Arctic Monkeys have bikes and we’ve done a few country rides.”

### *My favourite TV show*

#### **BREAKING BAD**

“For comedy, it’s *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, but overall it has to be *Breaking Bad*.”



It used to be *The Wire* – we all got so mad on that on one tour, but *Breaking Bad* is a bit easier to get into straight away. It’s so detailed I can’t stop watching it. I have to wait until they’re all available to buy. It would be so painful if I had to watch it on TV each week and then I’d have a seven-day wait and it would be on my mind all the time! Then I’d probably miss it as well.”

### *My favourite place*

#### **JOSHUA TREE, CALIFORNIA**

“It’s where we recorded ‘Humbug’. The first time I went there it was like nowhere I’d ever been to before. You can see pretty much every star in the sky. We’d always played it safe up until then. So this time we were like, ‘Let’s go on a bit of an adventure. Let’s go somewhere we’ve never been before, with someone we’ve never worked with before.’ Our senses were heightened to everything.”



Clockwise from main: drummer Monkey Helders; the not-so-ropey White Stripes; Ludacris and his cassette tape of diamonds; better watch where you sit down at Joshua Tree National Park; the sleeve to Oasis’ ‘Be Here Now’ from 1997; Sheffield’s Wet Nuns



# THIS WEEK'S TOP 20

## THE NME CHART

- 1 14 FRANK TURNER  
'I STILL BELIEVE'  
Dun Uke
- 2 7 MILES KANE  
'FIRST OF MY KIND'  
Columbia
- 3 1 DRY THE RIVER  
'NEW CEREMONY'  
RCA
- 4 11 BOMBAY BICYCLE CLUB  
'HOW CAN YOU SWALLOW  
SO MUCH SLEEP'  
Jays
- 5 6 NOEL GALLAGHER'S HIGH  
FLYING BIRDS 'DREAM ON'  
Capitol
- 6 16 TRIBES  
'CORNER OF AN ENGLISH FIELD'  
Globe
- 7 21 THE BLACK KEYS  
'GOLD ON THE CEILING'  
Waxwork
- 8 12 ARCTIC MONKEYS  
'R U MINE?'  
Geffen
- 9 8 LANA DEL REY  
'BLUE JEANS'  
Polygram
- 10 23 HOWLER  
'THIS ONE'S DIFFERENT'  
Nasty Mode
- 11 5 FINERS  
'FROM DEER DREAM'  
Mercury
- 12 20 JACK WHITE  
'LOVE INTERRUPTION'  
Third Man
- 13 17 MYSTERY JETS  
'SOMEONE PURER'  
Nasty Mode
- 14 18 KASABIAN  
'GOODBYE KISS'  
Columbia
- 15 2 ALABAMA SHAKES  
'HOLD ON'  
Rough Trade
- 16 4 AZEALIA BANKS  
'212'  
Roc-A-Fella
- 17 3 SPECTOR  
'CHEVY THUNDER'  
Loudwire
- 18 13 TRIBES  
'WE WERE CHILDREN'  
Globe
- 19 27 MORNING PARADE  
'HEADLIGHTS'  
RCA
- 20 10 JACK WHITE  
'SIXTEEN SALTINES'  
Third Man

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## NEW TO NME RADIO PLAYLIST

- HOT CHIP  
'Night & Day'
- AL3X  
'Breezblocks'
- HEARTBREAKS  
'Delay, Delay'
- BEN HARVEY  
'Open Up Your Arms'

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.

## BEHIND NME LINES

# A STORM IN KEEF'S NOSE

In 2007 **Mark Beaumont** posed a jokey question to **Keith Richards**. He didn't expect the media furore that blew up

**B**ut surely," said the voice in my headphones that sounded uncannily like John Humphrys, "this time Richards has gone too far!"

I'd staggered out of bed one Tuesday in April 2007 to fall into the radio van that BBC 5Live had sent to my flat, put on some headphones to talk to someone who sounded uncannily like Nicky Campbell off *Wheel Of Fortune* about a funny, throwaway story I'd written in that week's *NME*.

"So," said Nicky, "Keith Richards has admitted to snorting his father's ashes, according to a story on the front page of the *Daily Mirror* today..."

Sorry, *what?* The front page of *where?* There is a cold rod of fear that descends through the veins, from ear direct to sphincter, when one is told their work has made *The News* that day. It's a little voice in your car saying, "Have you fucked up your life, ruined your magazine and humiliated yourself in front of the entire nation?"

Before I could decide, another little voice in my ear asked if I could talk to something called *The Today Programme* on Radio 4. Then another voice that sounded remarkably like John Humphrys off the Proper News asking me if Richards had gone too far this time.

"Why?" I snapped. "Keith Richards was put on this planet to snort everything he can! Anyone with an ounce of rock'n'roll in their heart would consider it an honour to be snorted by him. I hope he's still around when I go so he can snort a bit of me!"

It seemed a bizarre storm to be brewing around a funny, throwaway story that had fallen into my lap during a routine Q&A with Richards on the phone a fortnight earlier, with Keef in a hammock in the Bahamas. The

questions were pretty by-the-book – the best gig he'd ever seen, his advice to young bands – apart from one I slipped in after being told by a colleague that he'd got Iggy Pop to tell him he'd once tried snorting a floor.



Me: "What's the most memorable thing you've tried to snort?"

Keef: "My father."

Me: "Your father?"

Keef: "I snorted my father. He was cremated and I couldn't resist grinding him up with a little bit of blow."

Before breakfast, the phone rang off the hook. Every TV and radio news show in the

country wanted me on. Within four hours, 'Snortergate' had gone global.

By mid-morning a muck-crushing statement was issued claiming Keef had been joking: in his autobiography he admits, "Old pro that I am, I said it was taken out of context." The internet fell for it en masse and the global scandal turned back into the throwaway story I'd written in the first place. But once the dust had settled, Keef began quietly admitting to the truth of the snorting in interviews and his own book (minus the drug element): "I finally planted a sturdy English oak to spread [my father] around. And as I took the lid off the box, a fine spray of his ashes blew out onto the table. I couldn't just brush him off, so I wiped my finger over it and snorted the residue. Ashes to ashes, father to son."

Hence Snortergate was embedded in rock'n'roll history alongside the – actually more fictitious – Swiss blood-changing story and the one about the Mars Bar up Marianne Faithfull's whatsit.

*I hope he's around when I go so he can snort a bit of me*



Top: Keith Richards and the infamous proboscis and lower: the tabloid headlines that followed NME's throwaway story





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# RADAR

FUTURE STARS, BREAKING SCENES, NEW SOUNDS...

*Edited by Matt Wilkinson*



ABOUT  
TO  
BREAK

## LIGHT ASYLUM

*Head-on Suicide pop, and there's a message shining through the meat, too*

**G**o! Tell! The man! We are freedom fighters! Fuck 'em! We are taking our freedom back in our hands! No more, man! No more!" What's that about new bands having nothing to say? Meet these two electronic punks from Brooklyn, who – as these lines from 'IPC', their recent free download and the best song on their debut album, attest – have *lots* to say. They're all visceral aggression over filthy-sexy, propulsive, minimal synths and Suicide drums. Importantly, they can also write great pop songs. They're not exuberance over craft. They're both.

"We want people to be able to see themselves in the songs," super-charismatic singer and keyboardist Shannon Funchess says. "And we want the songs to speak to people."

Around 2007, Shannon was putting together music under the Light Asylum name with a variety of people, "but they all wanted to act like 'producers'. And I was like, 'Nah, I want to do my own stuff.'" She got into a splitter van for a month-long DIY tour with Bruno Coviello, a studio musician then

getting his first taste of playing live with his own Bruno And The Dreamies. "And we realised we loved a lot of the same stuff," he says. "The first band that we bonded over was [obscure '80s darkwavers] Clan Of Xymox. I love them, and I was like, 'Wow, I haven't heard anyone else mention them!'"

They talked about doing stuff together, but it was when Shannon returned from touring with !!! (she's a live member) and booked some shows that the current incarnation was born. "I didn't want to sing to a CD-R anymore; I was done with that," she says.

With three days to go to the gig, she and Bruno knuckled down. "We wrote three songs called 'Shallow Tears', 'Dark Allies' and 'A Certain Person'," Bruno recalls. "And that was basically the set." It's testament to the instantaneous quality of the stuff that was being conjured that two of these three are now, a couple of years down the line, on the debut album. Make no mistake: 'Light Asylum' is one of the most exciting-sounding debuts of 2012. And that's before we even get to the live shows. *Liam Cash*

### NEED TO KNOW

**BASED:** Brooklyn

**FOR FANS OF:** Crystal Castles, Suicide

**BUY IT NOW:** 'Light Asylum' is out physically on June 11; the 'In Tension' EP should keep you going until then

**SEE THEM LIVE:** You've just missed a London show, unfortunately; more dates coming soon

**ON NME.COM:** Stream the album

**BELIEVE IT OR NOT:** The first few shows were filled out with a cover of Joy Division's 'Dead Souls'





# UMO & GIRLS: 'WE DIDN'T DIE!'

*After surviving a tour with Girls, Unknown Mortal Orchestra gets working on a new LP*



"Meeting the guys from Girls was cool, but a lot of people were saying to me, 'Man, if you guys make it back alive you'll be doing

well...'" Unknown Mortal Orchestra mainman Ruban Nielson is telling us, from the comfort of his new basement home-studio in Portland, about the pleasures of his last tour. "It made me quite anxious. They were all saying we were gonna die because it wasn't a good idea for our two bands to go on tour together. But it was OK! We're alive!"

Having come to grips with his own, ahem, mortality, the New Zealand native is wasting no time in knocking out the follow-up to 2011's self-titled debut. Tentatively working under the banner of another eponymous release ("I think it'd be nice to have a few self-titled ones, like Led Zeppelin," he tells us), Nielson's second effort is already half-finished - with the singer aiming to have it all

wrapped up by the end of next month.

Though still leaning towards the more psych-tinged end of the spectrum, the record also looks set to strip away a little of the raw fuzz of his debut, instead pursuing a route that has "a bit more space" to it. UMO's staple '60s and '70s influences have also been joined by some more unlikely bedfellows, namely Simon & Garfunkel on 'Swim & Sleep Like A Shark', and Nielson says that a lot of his new songs have been influenced by the endless amount of touring he's done over the past year. "It's a little bit angsty and a bit darker; it's about getting a little unwound. There's one track called 'Faded In The Morning Time', which is about when you're out all night and then you go out into the day and everybody's starting their day and you're just finishing your night. That's a feeling I've had a lot..."

With Girls' Chet 'JR' White potentially lined up to mix the album, Nielson should have no trouble recreating those feelings again. *Lisa Wright*

## BAND CRUSH



*Ryan Jarman on his favourite new act*

"I really like Louise Distras at the moment. It's like acoustic punk rock - it's very politicised and she's got a really good voice, really opinionated. I listened to a couple of tracks and just got it. It really resonated with me. It's all very self-contained and she does everything herself and puts it out through her own website."

# The Buzz

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



## PALMA VIOLETS

South London's Palma Violets are the music business' worst-kept secret. If you believe the hype they: a) live in a squat owned by Network Rail, b) have taken over a nearby tunnel where they plan to play gigs soon, c) told a label scout to piss off because he said they sounded "a bit like Blur", and d) reacted with glee when another traipsed to Scotland to watch a completely different band with the same name. *Radar* was luckier - invited to a rehearsal, after which one industry bigwig boldly declared that they will "blow every speccy, drony, boring British band to smithereens" in the coming months. Watch them start when they play *Radar*'s stage at the Great Escape.



## 2 DIVE'S 'HOW LONG HAVE YOU KNOWN?'

Perhaps not since Sarah Records has a label so effectively established a singular sound as Captured Tracks. With its chiming guitars and Moz-esque title, the Brooklyn dream-pop collective Dive somehow manage to condense the young label's entire history to three and a half minutes - and then transcend it.



## 3 DEAP VALLY

Think a hippie Karen O fronting Black Sabbath and you're somewhere in the same caustic blues-riffing ballpark as these Los Angelinos. Guitarist Lindsey Troy and drummer Julie Edwards are a hollerin', howlin', hell-raising duo, currently adored by everyone from local scenesters to their Hollywood chum Mischa Barton.



## 4 FLETCHER C JOHNSON

This is claw-at-the-walls garage-punk done with the kind of authentic Southern swagger not often heard from the NYC boroughs. Fletcher C Johnson - actually a three-piece band fronted by, yes, one Fletcher C Johnson - display a rare mastery of the bluesy basics, simplicity designed to inflict maximum damage.



## 5 CUT YOUR HAIR

Not actually a troupe of stern barbers but three beach-dwelling Spanish hombres, Barcelona's Cut Your Hair are putting the sparkle into summer. Sprightly, exuberant and a little skew-whiff, their debut single 'Utah In Pictures' comes with sprinklings of sun-kissed mews and bags of brazen, breezy 'tude.



SCENE  
REPORTTHE NEW  
MERSEY  
BEAT

*Blogger Peter Guy picks the acts rising out of the Liverpool scene*



For almost a decade, the stench of cosmic Scouse psychedelia has wafted over Liverpool like one of Gunther von Hagens' exhibits. But in recent months, the city's music scene has undergone something of a sonic revolution – which is what we'll be celebrating with the first ever GIT Award

Show ([getintothisco.uk](http://getintothisco.uk)) on April 27. Held at Leaf on Bold Street, the award is named after my music blog, Get Into This, and is a kind of Merseyside Mercury Prize (but with an emphasis on new music). And what new music we have! Here's my pick of the Liverpool acts reinventing the wheel at present...

Toxteth's **Miss Stylie** mashes machine-gun precision flow with heavy-duty Wu-Tang beats, and alongside the brutal hilarity and incessant thud of Big Dada-signed **Bang On!** she represents a burgeoning underground grime-pop scene. Keep your ears out for 15-year-old **Kasst** too, a vocal prodigy who I think is destined for greatness. A world away from those guys is the twisted folk of **Loved Ones**, who hail from the same stable as Outfit. Imagine Grizzly Bear jamming with Yeasayer and you're halfway there.

Hip-pop sensation **Esco Williams**, meanwhile, was raised on a diet of Marvin Gaye and is all about an intoxicating brew

### PETE'S TOP 5 LIVERPOOL TRACKS

**LOVED ONES**  
'All Your Cry'

**ESCO WILLIAMS**  
'Hi-Score'

**NINETAILS**  
'Rawdon Fever'

**BANG ON!**  
'Fars Yer Whop'

**TEA STREET BAND**  
'Fiesta'

of chocolatey soul and devastating rhymes. New cats **Ninetails** specialise in precision guitar-pop while **Dan Croll**, **Kankouran** and **Jethro Fox** represent a super-cool collective set for big things in 2013. And for one of Liverpool's most whacked out bands, try **Ex-Easter Island Head**. Thwacking mallets on their guitars, they specialise in Eno-like ambient drones, as fascinating to watch as they are immersive to listen to.

I really do think this a special time for Merseyside music, with all the above acts seemingly in it for the same reason – to promote and celebrate the united vitality of a city at the peak of its powers.

**NEXT WEEK'S COLUMNIST:**  
Toddla T

### 5 TO SEE

*This week's  
unmissable new  
music shows*

**KAV**  
Moho Live,  
Manchester  
April 26

**HOLY ESQUE**  
Barfly, London  
April 27

**BROWN BROGUES**  
Common Bar,  
Manchester  
April 29

**FAIREWELL**  
(pictured)  
Social, London  
April 30

**THE CAST  
OF CHEERS**  
Trinity, Bristol  
May 1



"Mustn't look at  
crowd, mustn't look  
at crowd, mustn't..."

## VIRGINIA WING

THE WAITING ROOM, LONDON MONDAY, APRIL 2

### CAUGHT LIVE

We've got to admit that we feel a *little* premature covering Virginia Wing, seeing as – when *Radar* went to press – they had a grand total

of two recorded songs and two gigs under their belt. But, given their rapturous blog reception and the fact that tastemaker label Sexbeat is releasing a tape of theirs (the event which tonight's gig at Stoke Newington's The Waiting Room is in aid of), we also feel it's only right to keep you, dear readers, up to date. Oh, mind you, there is also the fact that

we're already genuinely excited about the potential of this London-based quartet.

Much of the aforementioned interest in them likely has to do with their pedigree – singers/guitarists Sam and Wes play in slacker-rock faves Let's Wrestle, while bassist Merida is a member of Captured Tracks-approved noiseniks La La Vasquez. On the evidence of tonight's show, this isn't something they'll be having to fall back on

too much, because their six-song set is a brilliant schooling in frayed-around-the-edges rock'n'roll.

For its duration, the Virginias strike a deft balance between the '60s-like jangle evidenced on their already released tracks 'Divination' and 'A Worn Path', and an '80s college rock feel that's not too far removed from 'Murmur'-era REM. An unlikely cover of Billy Idol's 'Eyes Without A Face' proves to be a particular highlight, with the warm keyboard pads and clinical Linn drum of the

*The six-song set is a brilliant schooling in frayed-around-the-edges rock'n'roll*

original replaced with scratchy guitars and a coolly detached vocal line that *finally*, after many years, makes this humble hack accept and embrace his unabashed love for the slushy original.

Part-way through the set, Sam mumbles some concerns about the band "sucking". He needn't worry too much – from where we're standing, this lot are doing just fine. **Sam Lavan**



Oh, what Japan  
Ninetails had  
with a tin of Tesco  
cottage cheese







# GOD SAVE THE KING

**Has a 20-year wait for a new PiL album mellowed John Lydon? No way. Ben Hewitt hears his furious state of the nation address**

PHOTOS: ED MILES

**I**m not going to enjoy this at *all*," growls John Lydon. He's just waltzed into the swanky South Kensington pad he's using as a base while in the UK, away from his usual LA home. Before his arrival, you imagine, it was likely a pristine but soulless abode, now, there's the tell-tale signs of being taken over by punk's original enfant terrible: cluttered paperwork, bottles of booze, empty fag packets and tealight candles moonlighting as ashtrays. These parts may have been the Sex Pistols' stomping ground back in the '70s, when punks flocked to Vivienne Westwood's SEX shop on Kings Road, but fuck knows what the *Made In Chelsea* cast would make of him being cannonballed into their caviar-basted midst.

It's the *NME* photoshoot that's fouling John's mood and causing *that* face – still wonderfully, but scarily, expressive – to etch itself into a scowl as he looks on with trepidation. "I haven't done a thing with my hair," he frets, before breaking into a vicious grin. "Who can I offend here?" he asks mischievously, jamming his hands into his baggy black trousers like a naughty overgrown schoolboy trying to blag his way out of doing homework and scanning the room. "There's always *someone*."

As it turns out, he's well-behaved – limiting himself to cackling "URG! Plumber's crack!" at our beleaguered snapper when he bends down and exposes his underwear – but anyone who's had the pleasure of hearing *This Is PiL*, the band's first album in 20 years, knows he's got far more

weighty things on his mind than our photographer's pants. It's a snarling, multi-layered beast that finds him spitting bile about Britain, its hard-done-by youth and an ever-increasingly callous government. Forget the excursions into telly and butter salesmanship – *this* is his real comeback with the band he formed post-Pistols when, frustrated by punk's limitations, he found a new tool for expression that allowed him to explore his love for reggae and krautrock without blunting that razor-sharp tongue.

So, ladies and gentlemen, John Lydon is back to shake things up like only he can. Which is why we've joined him today, as he burns through a pack of Marlboro Reds, necks bottles of Corona and lets out the occasional belch to allow the great man to hold forth and vent his spleen on the state of the nation.

## **"ARSEY-FART" CONSERVATIVES**

"It's two cunts for the price of one," says John – half-seething, half-giggling – when *NME* asks what he makes of our coalition government. "It's complete arsey-fart nonsense. Cameron doesn't understand budgeting... he doesn't understand anything. He looks very much like one of those people who were caught buying under-the-counter goose liver from Selfridges."

While MPs in general ("Ultimately both the Conservatives and Labour are the enemy – they'll never get it, they're ►





too extreme") and Nick Clegg ("I don't know who he is, to be frank") are dismissed with short shrift, it's Cameron who gets it with both barrels. "I don't think he's a complete person," he snorts. "I'd love the opportunity of his education and background, but how can it put out such a halfwit? Such a complete non-entity? He's vague about *everything*, and contradicts himself in the most blatant ways. He's allowed Britain to look ridiculous and become a thing of mockery abroad. And that's very dangerous."

London-born John still has some spare ire for both Boris Johnson and Ken Livingstone, both vying to be the capital's mayor in forthcoming elections. The former is, according to Lydon, "completely indifferent", the latter "a living nightmare of repression. He'll find the way of killing the fun in anything – he's misery personified."

After some debate, he settles on a winner, albeit not for political reasons. "Who would you like to have dinner with? It would be Boris," he decides. "There's some hope for him. The other fella is so deeply entrenched in spite

and malignancy. I look at his face and think, 'You're not doing us any favours, matey.' I'm from the working class: we're not mealy-mouthed and spiteful by nature. We see ourselves as a generous and open-minded lot. That is a misrepresentation in the extreme. But Boris would fit happily in any of my surroundings. He's a character, although he may be immoral. But at least his hair is real – I've been trying to be a natural blonde for years..."

## **"MOZ AND HIS DAFFS? SO DAME EDNA"** **JOHN LYDON**

throne as, 35 years previously, the Pistols provoked national outrage by marking Her Majesty's Silver Jubilee by releasing 'God Save The Queen'. So, has time softened his views on his old bête noirs?

Actually, he says, it's people jumping on the anti-royal bandwagon he helped kickstart so vociferously that really pisses him off. "I watch the television, and these

## **ROYALS AND MEDIA "FUCKS"**

Even the most dim-witted among us should appreciate the star-aligning brilliance of P!nk dropping their first album in aeons in the same year that Queen Liz celebrates 60 years on the

moo-moos on the BBC and ITV and all the other channels – they're *sooooo* anti-royal," he sneers. "They were never any such thing when it counted, way back when. They're living on the laurels they never stood up to earn. They're flapping wings they've got no right to possess. And they're making noises about subjects and topics they ran like the clappers from. So if I'm faced with who the real dog is, it's these fuckers that are now trying to put them down. Not *one* of them had the bottle to say a word when it mattered."

And the royals themselves? "I still don't see a connection to the real people: us," he says. "Come and say hello to us! In my own weird way, I think I've made so many polite statements to the royal family to come and say hello. I'm a bit puzzled why they haven't taken me up on it..."

## **SNUBBING THE OLYMPICS**

"Can you see a British person winning anything at all?" demands John of Britain's other, erm, showpiece event this summer: the Olympic Games. "Someone called Trish from Basingstoke will come in 12th, and that will be the highlight."

"I can't back the Olympics," he continues – then elaborates on the reasons for turning down the officials' approach to get involved himself recently. "They tried to involve us [the Sex Pistols] but without any respect – they just wanted to use my ideas, our artwork, our lifestyle, but take it away from us and reconstitute it in this happy-go-lucky world of Olympic nonsense," he snaps. "You cannot co-opt us into the shitstem. There's a lot of unemployment, and I'm seeing money





# TASTE JOHN'S PIL

With John Lydon's 012 comeback matters

## THE RELEASES

PIL's 'One Drop' EP came out on April 21; 'This Is PIL', the album, is out on May 28. So, what to expect? Sonically, they're raw, given John's keenness for live takes over endless studio noodling. "You know when you hit it in one take," he says. "You know it's not to be duplicated. You know if there's a God up there, he's landed you a gift." Lyrically, meanwhile, it's fiercely outward-looking. "I can't help but notice the disenfranchised and suffering in the world. I don't approach it in a Band Aid or Sting way, because I find that patronising and compromising to the bigger truth."

## THE VISION

John says that this is the best incarnation of the band he's ever worked with. "This is the PIL of my dreams," he states. "There were so many personality clashes and spoilt brattisms going on in certain formats in the past. All of that now has been washed out of the window." And, he reckons, he's upped his own game too. "I like the way my writing has progressed. I'm the writer I've always wanted to be. I've got the right words."

## WHY IT'S BETTER THAN THE PISTOLS

"The Pistols was a great time, but it was dragged down by a management system that was never fully explained," sighs John. "It seemed like an act of selfishness, ignoring us completely. It left a real scar. I feel relieved to be out of it - I still feel a great fondness for the band, but it's almost impossible to write songs for that situation. The Pistols was ghettoised into a two-dimensional postcard of something - it could have been far better..."

around the streets and treated like alien cattle."

Worse still, he says, is the horrible feeling that what happened last year might only be a precursor of things to come. "It's definitely going to lead to something far, far worse. It's brewing. It's palpable. You can feel the tension. It's waiting to go off like an enormous bomb. And it will be blamed on the kids on the street, and it isn't their fault. I'm very deeply ashamed of a government that doesn't have a clue what's going on. And the police force, quite frankly, were headless chickens."

## "BUMHOLE BASTARDS" AND REALITY TV

Everyone remembers John's star turn on *I'm A Celebrity*... a few years back, but there's a new era of reality TV now, what with the likes of *The Only Way Is Essex* and *Made In Chelsea*. But he chooses to focus on the idea that people who land 'starring' roles on the trashier end of the scale - your Kerry Katonas and Jade Goodys and even Jodie Marshes - should have our sympathy.

"It's so easy to point the finger at some bird who just pulls her tits out on TV and blame her for the downfall of society," he explains. "But she's the victim. My heart's with her, in an odd way. God bless them if they want to be famous for being famous. That's alright with me."

He adds: "It's the bumhole bastards who put these things together - the true manipulators who are telling you that this is what you want."

You can't mess about with poor people. Poor people are poor, and some people will go to desperate measures to get money, and you're goading them into this. They don't have the intelligence to know they're being manipulated. They don't know what your games are, Mr TV man."

## TELLING SIMON COWELL TO FUCK OFF

One reality TV show mogul who gets the full force of John's ire is Simon Cowell. "He's really bad news for music," he declares. "He's hilarious to watch, but he's poisonous, really. He's very destructive and bitter and twisted and evil."

He's not been tempted to change his opinion for cash, either. "We had a ridiculous situation with *American Idol*, when they wanted to use 'Pretty Vacant' for this contestant, because he was the 'rock singer': the long hair, and the scraggly beard, and the leather jacket," he reveals. "NO, you cannot use it. Stop it. I don't need someone imitating in that way. You've got the genuine article. What on Earth do you want a fake, phoney version like that for? Is that how it's always going to be, according to Cowell's universe? We have the genuine article, but that's not as good as the fake version 10 years later? It kills the volatility - all the great songs in the world make you shiver, and you're going to cover it in marshmallow. Write your own songs, fella, and then I'll judge you." He probably won't be popping up as a judge anytime soon, then.

## THE "MOCKERY" OF MODERN POP

John refuses to give out plaudits to the guitar bands tickling his fancy nowadays - when he does, he gripes, he gets besieged by calls from their publicists eager to hype the connection - but he's happy to opine on their pop counterparts. Adele, he says, is "heartwarming and lovely. She's a regular person. She may have gone to school to learn singing and dancing - although he obviously skived off the dancing - but her songs are really good." Lady Gaga, meanwhile, is "great fun" and someone who's "done wonderful things for young people who are confused about themselves. She gives them a world to live in and be happy." He's less impressed ▶

wasted on people running and splash-splashing about and throwing things? We cannot afford that. It's going to leave an incredible debt; as soon as it's paid, the prices and the taxes are all going to go up."

Fret ye not, though, because it's not all doom and gloom - the UK may have stumbled upon a Machiavellian plot to ensure future sporting success. "When I was younger, there was quite a lot of polio floating around, and it was always suspected of being in the local swimming pools," he ponders. "I'm sure that's still the case. So maybe that's Britain's great masterplan: give polio to the opposition, and we'll win the next one."

## RIOTS AND THE "HEADLESS CHICKEN" POLICE

John was stricken by the scenes of last summer's riots - and doesn't place the blame on those who were out on the streets. "I was very upset with it," he says quietly. "You go, 'Yippee, a good old riot' but people got killed, so not a yippee there at all. The grim reality of these things can lead to death and people burnt out of their houses for no good reason, that's horrible and a great tragedy. And it's a tragedy created by a government, and police force, that's completely indifferent to what young people have as a future. They're given nothing now, even less than when I was young, and that hurts me deeply. Young people aren't vicious by nature, they don't want to go out and kill people. They just want to explode and say, 'Hello, we do exist, it's our world also', and they're given no opportunities. They're herded



Lydon and pal Andre round the campfire on *'I'm A Celeb...'*; right, that famous sledge



Left: Loving his Country Life butter; right, PIL playing Heaven, April 2, 2012







# LYDON

## VS

# THE WORLD

Which stalker met him in a past life? Is he friends with Peter Andre? And what does 'No future' mean? John answers his fans' questions

with Rihanna and Madonna, though, and is full of glee when *NME* tells him that Elton John recently suggested that the latter mimed her Super Bowl halftime show in February.

"Fantastic!" he laughs. "He's not being bitter. He's telling her that he's learnt her craft, so why on Earth hasn't she? To try and scallywag us makes a mockery of us out there who care about what we do. We sing live, and we want to sing the best we can, and if it all comes down to miming and machinery, where's the future? Hence Rihanna." He pauses, before wistfully adding: "Oh, I'm glad he [Elton] brought it up again – he's a *bugger*, him."

## YOU CAN'T ADVERTISE EVERYTHING

John's decision to lend his mug to Country Life butter may have been open to derision at one point, but he claims he funded the new PiL album with the cash he made from it. "PiL has always been a risky business financially," he confides. "I've been on me titters, missus, since day one." So, if everyone – especially bands – are skint, is advertising the way forward? "I can't tell you what other bands will do. You have to grab funds where you can – but be very careful who you associate yourselves with."

"It has to be the right thing," he continues. "I can't be out there inserting Tampax – where would I be inserting the damned things?"

## BEATING JESUS' COMEBACK

'This Is PiL' is the band's first album since 1992 – and John's not shy of talking up their long-awaited return. "I could be really cynical and say Jesus spent 14 years in the wilderness [*Wasn't it 40 days, John? – Biblical Ed!*], but I've beaten even him on this," he laughs of his 20-year hiatus.

But one thing PiL's comeback *isn't*, he says, is a reunion. Unlike The Stone Roses *et al*, he wasn't being offered filthy piles of lucre to return. And it's not like some of the short-lived Pistols' get-togethers of the past decade, either, which he hoped would give them all a financial boost but knew it "wouldn't be for long". Instead, resurrecting PiL was a "necessity".

"I've been gagging on the bit to get back on with this for a long, long time," he says. "PiL's my thing. It's the ultimate; it's my outlet. It was hard as hell, and it ate me alive, that I was being denied access to the very thing I think I do best."

As for the other litany of bands getting back together, meanwhile, he says Pulp "can be good" and he'd like to see The Stone Roses this summer. How about The Smiths, we venture? That's surely the biggie everyone's waiting for... "I might draw the line there!" he hoots, before opining on Morrissey: "That waving of daffodils... that always struck me as very Dame Edna Everage."

## If you could change any law in the UK, what would it be?

**Eugenia Pepesko, Bournemouth**  
"Smoking, because it's ridiculous you're forcing people out onto the streets. Save the health of non-smokers within? Then have smoking-environment pubs! Give people the choice. It looks ludicrous, so many people stuck out in the rain and snow. And I resent the rigid, right-wing approach that smoking's bad. Well of course it's bad! You'll find everything you eat is bad. Alcohol is bad. I don't like any law that infringes on your civil rights. I've stopped smoking, but that's my choice. (*Laughs*) I say, as I put a cigarette away..."

## What's the best John McGeoch [guitarist] moment from PiL?



**Johnny Marr**  
"I suppose all the stories of him hiding the money. There were rumours when he died that he had

money hidden in the mattress. But for hanging out with, great fun. And a very talented fella. To my mind, he let the alcohol dominate. I mean, you don't need a keg of wine onstage. But John pushed himself into that direction. And it made it harder and harder to deal with the moods. His work in Magazine was stunning. But he didn't seem able to take it further. The older he got, the more he just got into heavy metal riffs. He was riffing through life, because he was in a state of constant drunkenness, really. But you don't let your friends down, and so you put up with that."

## What TV show could you watch for an entire day?

**Jamie Fullerton, NME Features Editor**  
"Me and Nora [John's wife] watched the entire season of

*Nothing To Declare* yesterday. I found it very, very funny. I've been searched, strip-searched, and had my life made awkward by many an airport official over the years, but I still found the humour in it. I found it very interesting from a custom official's point of view. But you know that Chelsea thing [*Made In Chelsea*].

I hunted that down – they must know their parents despise them."

## Our chats in the jungle about wildlife and politics left me almost sane. Why have you never been in touch?



**Jennie Bond, his I'm A Celebrity... jungle pal in 2005**  
"I was never in touch with them before! It

was an enforced environment. It was a somewhat motley collection, but there were some really good gems in there."

## What did you make of Peter Andre and Jordan?

"I like Peter Andre. He was a bit of a codger, he'll change ships in midstream, but that's just the way he is. I think he's quite good natured. But the whole him and Jordan thing struck everyone as, 'My God, who wrote this script?'"

## Were you not a fan of Jordan?

"How could you be a fan of a model? A coathanger? Come on. I think she was a bit of a career wrecker. I don't like people that do tell-all books. I've no room in my life for those kind of folks. But for me, the most appalling thing was the acoustic guitar around the campfire. They all tried it. 'Come on John – singing!' No way. Johnny don't do boy scouts."

## Were you and Joe Strummer ever friends?

**Wesley Dixon, Leeds**

"Yeah, in a strange way. I'd say more acquaintances – Joe was older and he came from a pub rock background, and happily hopped onto the bandwagon that was punk. And I've never liked people who change

horses midstream; I'm always suspicious of their belief systems. And years later, when he joined that class warfare thing – man alive! You're creating a bigger divide. What we need to do is bring each other together. He was over-studious, in kind of the wrong way. He would go out and buy books on Karl Marx, and he'd underline certain phrases and things. He would analyse the news for catchphrases for songs. I miss him, by the way. There was something really good about him. He had a good little innocent spark in there, a real soul."

## What's your fondest memory of Malcolm McLaren?



**Blaine Harrison, Mystery Jets**  
"It's an odd one, but I remember Bob Geldof telling me

about the funeral and he said Bernie Rhodes and Vivienne Westwood were fighting in front of the coffin and arguing. In an odd way, that's a fond memory of Malcolm: the visual of them all squabbling for ownership rights of someone in a casket. There's an appalling irony of Malcolm, the great alleged manipulator, with a Carry On film going on at his funeral. It's hilarious!"



Your love of nature and animals is well documented – do you have any pets?

*Dave Porthouse, via email*

"No, I've never had a pet. It's unnatural for an animal to be in a house. And cats are killers – if you leave them loose in the garden they'll kill everything. And you've got to know that you're having an impact on your environment in a negative way, when you share your love with a bundle of fur called Pussy. Pussy has claws, you have to be aware."

**Do you have a favourite animal?**

"No, just anything with a pulse."

**What's been your oddest encounter with a fan?**

*Liam Cash, NME writer*

"There's been many stalkers over the years. There was one in America called Tequila Mockingbird, and it got a little bit frightening. She was a mixed race girl, but she was going on about how she was a true German and how Nora must die in her letters. They were thinly veiled threats, obviously wrapped in a sarcastic sense of humour, but you have to be wary, because some of these people can actually mean it. I had to tell her [to leave me alone] – she turned up at my house with a gaggle of people singing 'Happy Birthday'."

**And have you heard from her since then?**

"No, she's moved onto other things. But there was one the other night in London at Heaven – they sent us a letter, and it was all about how they'd met me in a previous life. They were calling me Saint Anthony, and they were Mary Magdalene. Here we go – another one..."

**How is your prophetic 'No future' vision holding up at present?**



*Jamie Reynolds, Klaxons*

"As I've explained for 30 years, 'No future' meant 'No future if you don't make

the effort'. If you just accept the status quo and go with the flow, you'll have no future. Sometimes we have to swim against the current. It annoys me when people take things too literal – it sounds cheap for me to explain it this way. I mean, in 'Pretty Vacant' – if you're going to take me literally, I'm not pretty. And I certainly ain't vacant..."

**YOUR  
questions  
answered!**

## "YOU CANNOT CO-OPT US INTO THE SHITSTEM"

JOHN LYDON

**NME**  
COM

To watch an exclusive  
new video interview  
with John Lydon,  
head to [NME.COM/video](http://NME.COM/video)



# TAKE A TRIP WITH THE MACCABEES

While his band fly high, **Orlando Weeks** has been on a magical mystery detour. He talks to **Lisa Wright** about his strange and beautiful illustrated side-project



**W**hen you've recently released an early contender for Album Of The Year and are getting ready to play one of the biggest venues in the country, what do you tackle as your next move? Well, if you're The Maccabees singer Orlando Weeks, you put out an illustrated storybook and EP package influenced by Ray Mears, Peter Pan and "those books where you turn the page with the beep", and keep it so under the radar nobody even finds out until it's released.

"I was holding on to little bits and pieces I'd written that never felt useful anywhere else and it all snowballed," he explains of the project, *Young Colossus*, which features illustrations by artist Robert Hunter and is limited to 1,500 copies.

"It's the survival through the night of this character Young Colossus. [The story] is born out of wanting to project bits of all the things I love watching – survival programmes, bushcraft and all these beautiful wildlife documentaries. It's a pretty basic storyline, but all the wonderful things you get to grow up with like *The NeverEnding Story* and *The Jungle Book* are essentially the same thing; they're all about getting through it and coming out the other side better for it."

Accompanying the book is a six-track EP, featuring Orlando but predominantly sung by Alessi Laurent-Marke of Alessi's Ark and taking in some unexpected sonic tangents. Drawing on the likes of Efterklang, Animal Collective and Fever Ray ("I expect I've totally misunderstood most of these people but you can't help but be inspired by them"), the singer has crafted what he calls a "fantasy soundscape", full of "howling and rain, crackling fire and lots of animal noises".

But before you start thinking The Maccabees' fame has driven Orlando to Mowgli channelling lunacy, fret not – *Young Colossus* is about as spine-tinglingly sweet a thing as you'd expect from a man whose hero is David Attenborough.

## "IT'S A DREAM"

Artist **Robert Hunter** on working with Orlando



"I had a few emails from Orlando saying,

'Here's some music; if you like it let me know.' When I met up with him he had this folder full of sketches and was really excited about it. He'd seen my work from a book I'd done through a little publisher called No Brow, and said if I could help him visualise a story he'd be over the moon."

"In the beginning I wasn't even sure it was ever going to happen because it's a bit of a dream project, someone giving you some music and asking you to illustrate a

soundtrack to a story they have. It was a really easy working process though; he studied illustration before The Maccabees took off so he knows what's involved. We had the same thing in mind, luckily – it can go really badly if not..."

When Rob was first contacted he had to Google Orlando to find out who he was.

It was Rob's first ever book, *The New Ghost*, that brought him to the singer's attention.

Rob's next project is a second book for No Brow centred around grandfather clocks, tentatively titled *Map Of Days*.



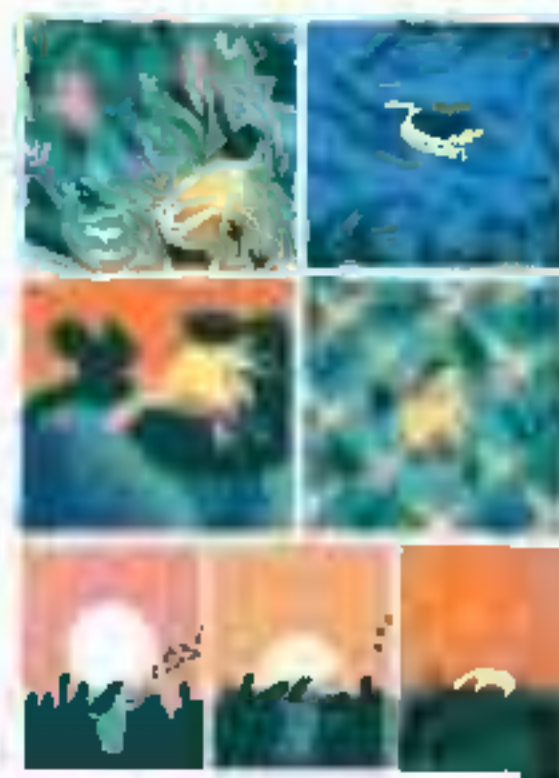
**ORLANDO:** "I HAD a few images of Navajo Indian children, really old sepia pictures that I found, and it started feeling like that might be the way to go – a slightly Amazonian feel but with rocky mountains, mixing North and South America."

"HE'S A GUARDIAN figure. From the start he's meant to be showing Young Colossus around – it was an excuse to have these nice sequences where you get to see a bit of the landscape and the fantasy world that they're in."





"THIS IS THE shadowy monster figure. The voice suggested that it was some kind of big, intimidating creature, but then Peter Pan and the shadow was probably in my unconscious too. The colours progress almost track to track – it was a really conscious thing on Rob's part, of making it flow not just as a storyline but in terms of colour."



"THE VOICE WAS determining the look of Young Colossus; until late in the day the character was gender non-specific and was just about a youth. I was watching all these

programmes with Bruce Parry going and spending a month with the Suri tribe – I wanted that to come through, to get her fishing and find a way for her to do these activities."

**NME  
VERDICT**

## YOUNG COLOSSUS

YOUNG COLOSSUS BLACK RECORDS



Young Colossus, Orlando Weeks' side-venture, is a prime example of how you can stamp your voice all over

something while barely singing a line. Despite Orlando's inimitable timbre only cropping up in small bouts over this six-track EP, the traits of his we've grown to love are present throughout – from the delicately phrased intimacy of the lyrics ("Wonderful news you made us so proud/Never fed us to the animals/Credit where credit's due" – 'Xhocka') to the subtle, comforting warmth that evenly toasts the whole record.

Stylistically, YC is a huge departure from any Maccabees' output – we're hardly talking a Brandon Flowers 'Flamingo' band Xerox here. 'Monsters Dance' takes the singer's pitch-shifted, unintelligible vocal and wraps it

around a strange Wurlitzer waltz, dropping any instrumental backing for glitchy sonic tics and windy swoops. Opener 'Franky', meanwhile, pairs Orlando and co-vocalist Alessi Laurent-Marke in an echoing duo, their vocals providing the youthful chirp and wizened foil to the gently plucked guitar backing before fizzing out in an otherworldly hum of soundscapes, while 'Sleeper' twinkles with fragile string flourishes, electronic touches and Laurent-Marke's wide-eyed, fragile tones.

The beauty of it all is that from the off Young Colossus, like 'Given To The Wild', creates an entire world within itself – and though those two worlds may be far apart, with Orlando's personality shining through both their cores are somehow sweetly united. *Lisa Wright*

**8**

DOWNLOAD 'Franky', 'Xhocka'







# “REAL HIP-HOP IS BACK MOTHERF\*\*CKER”

If mainstream, conventional New York rap is what you're after, **A\$AP Rocky** is not your guy. **Jo Fuertes Knight** finds out how he and his crew are rewriting the conventions of hip-hop

PHOTO: ED MILES

“I love London,” grins A\$AP Rocky. With the rest of the Always Strive And Prosper squad in tow, he's on his maiden voyage to the UK. Today, though, the A\$AP Mob are all a tad quiet, with caps down extra low to cover some bleary eyes

when *NME* arrives, thanks to a boozed-up welcoming party the night before.

Since we last spoke to him after the breakout track ‘Peso’ hit the internet, Rocky has, at breakneck speed, risen from being the hipster rapper du jour and Tumblr blog hot property to a genuine force in hip-hop, thanks to some slick, fashion-minded videos. Certified rap veterans like Wu-Tang, Three 6 Mafia and Mobb Deep, to name a few, have been falling over themselves to give the A\$AP Mob both their approval and to extend the offer of collaborations. In fact, it's a garnering of blessings from the old school that was noticeably absent from the inception of the Odd Future hype of last year.

But having been in the shadows of California's wave of leftfield hip-hop offerings for the past few years, East Coast rap seems to have got its stride back with a revamped take on classic hip-hop. New York is crackling with new talent, and the A\$AP Mob are leading that renaissance. But with his debut album ‘Long Live A\$AP’ on the way and a further studio record showcasing the full A\$AP collective slated for release shortly after in May, it's all go for the Harlem crew.

Pressed on what the five-year plan is for A\$AP, Rocky explains, “The whole thing is, we do what the

fuck we want, that's why people are listening to us. We're rebels to an extent, we don't want to be politically correct to the rules of hip-hop. When a lot of people come into this music game, they have a particular purpose, and that purpose

is to be famous. In their mind they got all the wrong reasons driving them. I make music so I can watch my friends rock the fuck out when it comes on in the club. That's inspiring to me.”

The A\$AP aesthetics, the sound, the attitude are a shot of adrenalin to hip-hop – Rocky is living up to his self-proclaimed role as a rap rebel, bucking the genre's conventions to march to his own beat.

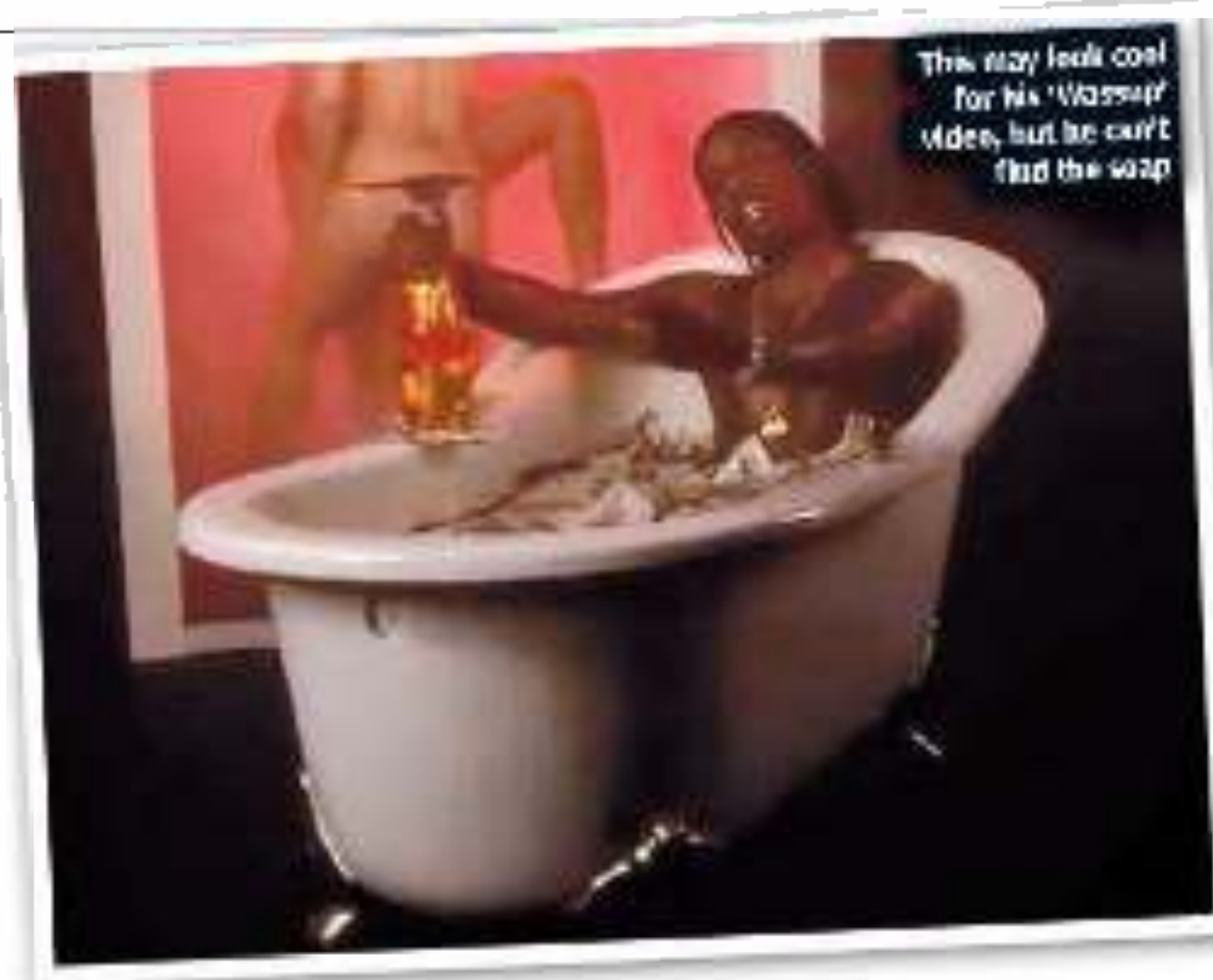
With those great expectations on the A\$AP Mob's shoulders, we quizzed the charismatic frontman on the new rules he's writing.

## PULL UP YOUR TROUSERS

Reclined on a sofa sporting ripped skinny jeans, the antithesis of the buttock-skimming XXL denim uniform, and the now-notorious Comme Des Fuckdown beanie hat, Rocky is making even the likes of Kanye look like a fashion virgin. “I'm a weirdo, but I'm rare though, so I dress to express myself,” he says. “I always go upon how I feel in the morning and just throw on whatever, whether it's grunge or anything. I don't always have to be going around in baggy-ass jeans. Do I have a stylist? Fuck no, I don't want anybody taking credit for this trill shit I put together. Some people get it, some people don't, that's too bad.”

“WE DON'T WANT TO BE POLITICALLY CORRECT TO THE RULES OF HIP-HOP”

A\$AP Rocky



## EMBRACE CLICHÉS – THEN BUCK THEM

The ‘Wassup’ video featured all the usual clichés you'd expect from a rap video, laden with scantily clad women and a bathful of dollar bills, but was it a purposefully paint-by-numbers approach to hip-hop visuals? “Of course I was mocking those traditional videos,” Rocky says. “I could be in a bath of money with bitches and their booties out around me in every video, but it still doesn't mean shit if the music isn't any good. When I was starting out, I'd go to these shows, and see motherfuckers from downtown performing, the ‘it guys’, and I'd just stand there thinking, ‘These people don't have any talent, they look right but they're not doing anything different’. So yeah, it was a mockery. But now, all these other cats that are working out of New York with the same idea, like Action Bronson, Mr Mothafuckin' Exquire, Danny Brown, they're talented as hell. I'm working with them, in fact, ▶



Rocky seemed embarrassed to be seen with his pal Yams



The size of Rocky's crew was getting a bit out of control



I've *already* worked with them. Real hip-hop is back, motherfucker."

## DON'T JUDGE LEST YE BE JUDGED

After the furor around Bay Area MC Lil B titling his album 'I'm Gay', followed by a strung-out DMX ranting on the subject as if it were a rap apocalypse, Rocky's take on hip-hop's not so attractive lineage of homophobia is a little more articulate. "I'm not saying I think there needs to be a gay rapper, I'm saying who gives a fuck if someone's gay?" he says. "I'm not going to discriminate against anybody because of their sexual preference, that's just ignorant and ridiculous." Pointing out the rap community's double standards he continues, "At one point in time, black people were discriminated against because of their colour and there's no difference between the two. If I spent my time patronising people because they were gay, I'd lose out on a lot of friends and incredible people and, actually, a lot of people that listen to my music. Most of these rappers concerning themselves with another man's dick are gay themselves and they don't want to fucking admit it. I respect gay men, I *definitely* respect gay women, but I don't respect these in-the-closet thugs that want to act all hard, then go to jail and be sticking it in peoples' booties"

## DON'T MILK YOUR PAST

A lot of focus has been pulled onto Rocky's bleak upbringing in Harlem; his father was sent to prison for drug dealing and the brother who inspired him to get into music was murdered near his home. But he refuses to milk his back story for material. "It's the same old clichéd story, every person has a struggle so why is mine any different?" he reasons. "Talking about it constantly, that shit is just annoying and it's not healthy. The rappers that do it, it's because they don't have shit else to talk about." Keen to move on from the subject he ponders, "But what is so odd right now, is that the old generation, they fuck with us. We are hip-hop and we are from the hood. I can't really speak on people like Krayshaw and Odd Future, what I do

WE LOVE MALT LIQUOR!

### Four things you may not know about Rocky

- 1 His real name is Rakim Mayers; his mother once had legendary rapper Rakim sign his nappy. The NYC legend is now a fan of A\$AP mob - 23 years on.
- 2 Sticking out like a sore thumb in Harlem as a fashion-savvy teen, Rocky would blow the last of his cash getting skinny-fit jeans sent over from Europe.
- 3 He is NOT a die-hard veggie, as previously reported. NME greeted him munching down on Nando's, before he pointed out that he "loves fur".
- 4 They may be able to get Hennessy on their rider, but the A\$AP Mob's tippie will always be malt liquor. Yams explains, "We drank that before we got money and always will."

wasn't going to happen for us. Yams was the one that was always there, he's my brother, I won't forget that." It's that fierce camaraderie that contributed to a bust-up at the South By Southwest festival in March - where the mob ended up battling crowd members in a huge scrum. "The fight that went down at SXSW?

know is that we are genuine. We're really from the hood, so why should I have to keep reminding people? Why should I constantly talk about where I'm from, when I can rap about where I want to be?"

## BRING YOUR MATES ALONG FOR THE RIDE

With Rocky flanked by best friend and confidante Yams, who jokingly refers to himself as sounding like "Tergie mixed with Jesus", the A\$AP collective have been a permanent fixture from the outset - beyond Odd Future a path not often trodden these days in hip-hop - rather than just being a support act for Rocky. "It was always our plan from the start to show off everyone, we had a vision and a dream. In the beginning, it was just me and Yams, out every day sacrificing all our money. We used to hop the subway to go and spend everything on it. The time A\$AP soon as we got shit poppin', that's when A\$AP started falling into place and getting their shit together... but there were times when it really looked bad, like it

"I'M A YOUNG ASS KID AND I'M LETTING MY NUTS HANG LOW"  
A\$AP Rocky

Everyone in that audience was drunk, people were throwing beer cans, and when it got to like the eighth or ninth one hitting us... I mean, it was ridiculous, what are you supposed to do?" questions Rocky. Then his manager firmly cuts in to end this conversation, stating the official line, that 'they jumped into a moshpit with their fans' Rocky shrugs, "It's done. I'm not here to fight."

Rocky heads off in a cab to explore London, and later to greet fans queuing for a glimpse of the mob's packed-out show in the Cargo venue. But not before he tells us, "I have a lot to learn yet, so I'm not going to sit and philosophise at people. As artists, you do become role models, so I'm conscious of what message I'm sending through. But for the most part, I'm a young ass kid and I'm letting my nuts hang low." That excitement is holding out for the time being, but 2012 holds the real test as to whether this mixtape hero can stomp up the goods with his album and establish himself as a real rap rule breaker. We reckon he can.

Head to [NME.COM/video](http://NME.COM/video) for a new video interview with A\$AP Rocky

He's listening to the Rocky theme tune again, of course...





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**NME**

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**THE BOHEMIANS**

**HERE'S**







**SID Vicious &  
NANCY SPUNGEN**

SID'S FLAT, MAIDA VALE, LONDON, JANUARY 1978

Photo © Steve Emberton



**NME**



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# HAPPY HOUSE?

*Their comeback song almost broke Twitter. They survived the “conflict” poisoning their new album. So why are **Beach House** so miserable? **Gavin Haynes** heads to Baltimore to find out*

PHOTOS: PIETER M VAN HATTEM

**B**altimoreans can't drive. They don't so much steer their cars as tilt them vaguely towards the direction of travel, like ocean-going liners. They don't drive deliberately badly so much as without any sort of

sense of duty or care or general caution, like they've given up, had the will to commute sucked out of them. Downtown, as we whizz past in an outside lane, someone in a truck fender-bends straight into the back of a car at the lights. Another blue van comes within seconds of obliterating a small brown Ford by mystifyingly failing to look when changing lanes.

And, frankly, the guy from Beach House isn't much better. “Man, this is really going to piss off this bus,” Alex Scally says as he chops in front of it to make an orange, then accelerates through another orange with a salutary, “I'm in a hurry.”

“Yeah... it's something you notice most when you come back.” Victoria Legrand, the girl from Beach House, pipes up, head nesting through from the backseat of the pair's big black Chevy van. “You get very used to how Baltimore is when you live here. Then, you come back from touring after a couple of months and suddenly you go, ‘What's wrong with this place?’”

Late last year, Beach House returned to their home in one of North America's most beaten-up, broken-down

big cities, to begin work on their fourth record. Today, we're here to dig into that album, ‘Bloom’. By happy coincidence, the city is in its richest bloom. It may only be March, but the magnolia trees outside Victoria's city centre apartment are weeping white waxy petals. Even up as far as the 24-hour bail bonds store, round row after row of the boarded-up houses that define the city, Baltimore is flowering with indecent haste.

It's that same sense of being tainted that marks out ‘Bloom’ as a record. It takes the same sleepy, slightly seedy dawn of ‘Teen Dream’, and cuts it through with

something that feels like the wrong side of two Rohypnol: both more joyous and more sad, the euphoria of numbness, the sense of everything fading away, sliding, slightly out of control, a deck lurching beneath your feet. Some of the songs sound like kids' TV theme tunes. But the overall effect is more like sitting around in your underpants at 3pm

watching kids' TV because you're too high to get up and change the channel.

In March, they lifted the lid on it to the world by releasing ‘Myth’ as a free download. Despite their prolonged media silence, and a general air of secretiveness that extended as far as refusing to confirm or deny whether they even had an album in the pipeline at all, it seemed that the world had not forgotten about Beach House. It started trending

globally on Twitter. Not bad at all for a group operating so far outside of the mainstream.

“I remember watching it trend,” says Alex – an inveterate non-Twitter user, non-blogger, non-social media lynchpin – “and realising a) that there are so many more people on these sites than there were two years ago and b) that they're on there all of the time.”

Whatever refusenik tendencies they've got – and they've got loads – it was doubtless great for Beach House to be wanted again. ‘Teen Dream’ was so feted, so well-reviewed, so ardently liked by earnest souls everywhere, that it was always going to be difficult to know how to top it. Add to that the fact that the wave of chill alongside which it rode into fashion has since dissipated, and this was never going to be an easy act to follow up. So it proved.

**S**oon we've trekked across town in the magic van to their long-time practice room, in an old textile mill, flanked by the only tie manufacturers in the city not to have fled in the de-industrialisation of the '80s. Their private oasis is a box about 20 by 10 metres, packed floor to ceiling with industrial quantities of fantasy bric-a-brac. Eighteen keyboards by our count. About 10 guitars. Amps stacked on all available surfaces, quilts on the walls, Barbie boomboxes, some David Lynch books and a quantity of kitsch pony tat just the wrong side of the irony/dangerous obsession divide.

“If you say it sounds fuzzy, then it's probably this you're hearing,” says Alex, slapping a reel of two-inch tape he's picked up from a shelf. “In terms of fidelity, this album's actually off the charts. But we recorded it down to analogue tape, which adds that warmth to it.”

Alex begins to expound on the obsessiveness ►

**“PEOPLE WHO FEAR CONFLICT OFTEN FAIL”**

**ALEX SCALLY**





The Beach House they bought didn't have a very good seaview



*Alex and Victoria on what inspired their comeback*

**Alex:** The feeling.

**Victoria:** "It's just part of life... his breed is a slum. You're sharing this world with other people, so people change."

**Alex:** [It's time to go!](#)

found it in a shop in Brighton which is an amazing shop in itself. We found it during the 'Teen Dream' tour, and then used it a lot on the new record."

**Alex:** "It's a good place."

[Sullivan] that does great Mexican food; we've been making a lot of stuff."

**Victoria:** 1 11-11-11

And I love colours. And I just did it. When you see something that catches your eye you just follow it. It's like *follow your nose*.

**Victoria:** There are a

let us be a house,  
and they're really  
beautiful. We just keep  
our eyes open. We just  
love a lot of things."

The process was fraught, with a great deal of arguing. Alex: "Our producer, Chris Coady, was talking to Alan Moulder, who's produced so many great albums. And he reckoned that no great album he's worked on has been made without major conflict."

Victoria: "When we wrote 'Master Of None', there was a huge bout. That's when that melody came out."

Alex: "People who fear conflict or avoid conflict tend to fail."

"I think in order to make something like that, you need to give something of yourself," says Victoria, pulling her leg up onto the seat. "We were talking to Celebration. They're another Baltimore band who play this very tribal, complex, fast music, but they're the most laid-back guys. And we were saying to them, 'Isn't it funny – you're so relaxed, but you make this very un-relaxed music.'" She shrugs. "Whereas we're so stressy as people, but we make this very dreamy music."

Before the tapes went on, Beach House were all sunshine and light. But the shutters have since come down somewhat, as they measure and re-measure their every utterance. This is the first big piece that will come from 'Bloom', and they want to make sure their communications are totally on-message. Hence they won't elaborate on this "conflict". Hence Alex pulls out his iPhone, sets it to Voice Memos, and lays it on the table next to *NMF*'s own recording device.

The only time anyone has ever used this particular parlour trick on us before was when we interviewed the Shadow Immigration Minister.

But anyway. No-one ever exactly mistook Beach House for a singles jukebox, but they say that this is by far their most 'album' album yet.

Alex: "There were a lot of songs we wrote for this album's sessions. And they're really cool songs. But we halted them, or left them off or made them B-sides, because they just didn't fit what we were going for. I dunno: often, when I'm listening to a record by another band, I hear a couple of songs and they're part of this world, they exist together. Then I hear another song, which doesn't seem to be a part of that world. Are they really writing a feeling? Or are they just copying things?"

just copying things?"

Victoria leans in again: "I think thinking is one of our greatest problems. The fine line between thinking and over-thinking."

Alex: "The songs we didn't want didn't have a certain gravity to them. They just seemed playful. They didn't have the depth and honesty we were after."

"It kinda *kills* you when you give life to something."

Victoria adds. "You give your *whole* life force to it, and destroy a bit of yourself forever; the other person must feel the energy you put into it."

The tapes go off – ours and theirs – and the mood of strained, pained artistic concentration visibly lifts. We all do a shot of bourbon, rush out into the soft sunshine of Baltimore's angry, refracted normality. It seems the manufacture of large quantities of dreampop is seldom dreamy at the business end. Be glad there are people out there like them willing to slave in those astral gulags.

Preview 'Bloom' at [NME.COM/artists/beach\\_house](http://NME.COM/artists/beach_house)

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# REVIEWS

THE BIG OPINIONS ON THIS WEEK'S IMPORTANT RELEASES

Edited by Tom Howard



## MYSTERY JETS

**RADLANDS** ROUGH TRADE

*The troubled Jets have made their Great American Album. Thankfully, it's authentically Twickenham, not Texas*



Growing up hasn't been easy for Eel Pie Island's Mystery Jets, you suspect. The south London crew went from the ragged promise of 2006 debut 'Making Dens' to the shiny pop perfectionism of 2008's 'Twenty One'. Since then, however, progress has been frustratingly slow. 2010's high-gloss mope 'Serotonin' sparked in places, but failed to set the charts ablaze and felt too much like a warm slug of flat cola after its predecessor's heady fizz. Then last year we had the debut from bassist Kai Fish, 'Life In Monochrome', which posed the question all side-projects ask – is your heart still in the day job? We got our answer when news of Kai's exit struck like pantomime lightning early this month, and the Jets determined to fly on

with the loss of a treasured engine. Erk! Can you feel the Han Solo-style bad feeling taking root in the pit of your stomach yet?

If so, you might want to look away now: ditching the synth-pop template of the last two records, sessions for 'Radlands' – laid down with Fish still reluctantly on board – took place in Austin, Texas, with frontman Blaine Harrison waxing lyrical about the town's country music heritage and, gulp, pedal steel guitar on some of the tracks.

A star-spangled document of a band in decline, then? Not quite. Musically speaking, opening track 'Radlands' is less heartland rock and more Foals' 'Spanish Sahara' in its slinking, melancholy

guitar line. Harrison wades in with a horribly overcooked couplet in "I've heard that there's a place where you go when you die/It's a terribly overrated, horseshit-shaped hole in the sky", but soon the band's veering off in crunching rock fashion. Touches of pedal steel come in at the end, but it's all in the service of a pretty rollicking tune.

'Had Me At Hello' rocks like a campy Neil Young circa 'Down By The River', while single 'Someone Purer' bolsters the guitar-heavy mood, its refrain of "give me rock'n'roll" a fine rallying cry for the record as a whole. What's impressive here is the fun the boys seem to be having, which sits weirdly with our knowledge about Kai.

### AMERICAN SONGBOOKS

*Three other odes to the US by starry-eyed Brits*

#### BLUR 'BLUR'

Trimming the knobhead excess of 'The Great Escape', Blur's Britpop comedown album embraced US slacker chic and spawned a mega-hit with – ironically enough – the knobhead grunge of 'Song 2'.

**US chart position: 61**

#### NOAH & THE WHALE 'LAST NIGHT ON EARTH'

Inspired by life on the road in America, Charlie Fink comes over all Tom Petty and attempts a wizened troubadour croon, fooling precisely no-one.

**US chart position: 135**

#### U2

'THE JOSHUA TREE' It's not difficult to see why Bono loves the US. Both think they can police the world single-handedly, and both are at a loss to explain why everyone hates them so much. This is where it all began.

**US chart position: 1**

Country and western tune 'The Ballad Of Emmerson Lonestar' hovers awkwardly between Albarnesque and Borrell-esque, though a house-tinged coda is equal parts silly and inspired. And 'Greatest Hits' groove lifts wholesale from 'Stuck In The Middle With You', which is annoying, until a genius lyric about divvying up the record collection with an ex comes to the rescue ("No way you're having 'This Nation's Saving Grace', you only listen to it when you're pissed") and the tune takes off.

'The Hale Bop's' shiny falsettos sound like a hillbilly Of Montreal – no really, it's good – before the pace drops with dreamy ballad 'The Nothing' and 'Take Me Where The Roses Grow', a duet sung with Blaine's other half, Sophie-Rose Harper. 'Sister Everett' is an ode to an evangelist lady guitarist William Rees met on a plane, channelling roots-cra Stones, while slashing power ballad 'Lost In Austin' sounds like it's eaten James Dean Bradfield for breakfast. Tart acoustic closer 'Luminescence' recalls an addled Gram Parsons: "It's not the coke, it's the lump in my throat that's to blame".

While other Brit rockers come over all starry-eyed and reverent when making their would-be Great American Album, 'Radlands' is about as authentically Yankee as Christian Bale's mid-Atlantic

drawl, and just dandy for it. Best pray it isn't their swansong, y'all. *Alex Denney*

8

**DOWNLOAD: 'Someone Purer', 'Greatest Hits', 'Sister Everett'**

Check out our First Listen to 'Radlands' at [NME.COM/blogs](http://NME.COM/blogs)

### THIS IS HARDCORE

what our numbers add up to

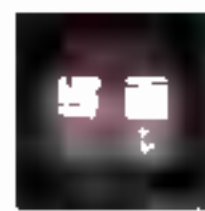
0 Not-even-funny bad	1 Barely one saving grace	2 Actively terrible	3 Woefully bad or lazy	4 Depressingly substandard	5 Dead-on average	6 Better than average	7 Really good	8 Exceptionally good	9 Of-the-year good	10 Of-the-decade good
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## POLIÇA

### GIVE YOU THE GHOST

MEMPHIS INDUSTRIES



With acclaim from Bon Iver's Justin Vernon and Jay-Z, and what can only be described as huge post-SXSW 'buzz', you can pretty much hear the current hype surrounding Minneapolis' Poliça. Their debut LP, though, is a shyly introspective listen that, much like The xx's first album, sits awkwardly with the industry furore surrounding it. Over its welling synths, slick R&B rhythms and mechanical Auto-Tune displaced to a spatial expanse, 'Give You The Ghost' concerns the fall-out from vocalist Channy Leaneagh's split from her husband and long-term musical collaborator. The result is a confused mess of emotions separate from the solid strut of her aural surroundings. Her delivery ranges from defiance on 'Dark Star' to loneliness on 'The Maker,' but burns constantly with a bright hurt that attempts to burst forth from the record's withdrawn nature. It's a fascinating struggle that provides the pivot on which this beautifully poignant record turns. **Simon Jay Catling**

8

## FATHER JOHN MISTY

### FEAR FUN BELLA UNION



Having officially taken leave of his drumming duties in Fleet Foxes at the start of 2012, and with a host of solo albums as J Tillman packing out his suede knapsack, Josh Tillman has decided to start afresh. Casting himself as Father John Misty, a Laurel Canyon transplant equally repelled and fascinated by the self-centred sprawl of LA, his 'Fear Fun' is a country-leaning, wise-cracking masterwork. A droll riposte to those who think post-millennial folk music is po-faced, check out the urban hillbilly hustle of 'Writing A Novel' for lyrics loaded with offhand wit. 'Only Son Of The Ladiesman' sees undulating melodies circle around beautiful, balls-out harmonies and in 'Hollywood Forever Cemetery Sings' – a track far darker and more brusquely electric than anything else here – he's also got a serious contender for song of the year. A striking funereal stomp, considering its bleak subject matter, it really shouldn't be quite as sensationally sexy as it is. **Leonie Cooper**

8

## CATE LE BON

### CYRK OVNI/TURNSTILE



If you thought that Cate Le Bon might pay much heed to the notion of a career arc, then you might think she erred in 2008, introducing herself to the wider world by appearing on Gruff Rhys' chrome-shiny and faithfully '80s-ish Neon Neon album 'Stainless Style'. After all, the bucolic whirring folk and rusty psychedelic garage the Cardiff resident makes under her own name could scarcely be more different. Yet a common thread can be found in 'CYRK', Cate's second album: the application of a sincere pop-song sensibility, and a yen for the surreal that sidesteps the zany. Maybe that's why Gruff has released it on his label. No doubt the vocalist's elegantly reverbed West Walian trill helped too; likewise a production that makes it sound like an unearthed psych classic from 1971; likewise the Broadcast-y spookout 'The Man I Wanted', country stroller 'Puts Me To Work' or the raucous clatter of 'Ploughing Out'. **Noel Gardner**

8

## FACES TO NAMES...

What the reviewers are doing this week



PRIYA ELAN

"I've been listening to the dreamy Poliça album on repeat, pondering how Jai Paul makes all those weird sounds and enjoying the Stevie Nicks episode of 'Up All Night'."



ALEX DENNEY

"I've been raising a hollowed-out mammoth's tusk to the mighty – and mightily brutish – Game Of Thrones. Sean Bean, how we've missed thee!"



LISA WRIGHT

"Spent a hungover Easter morning on the phone to Ricky Kaiser Chiefs talking about Rizzle Kicks, then did a pub quiz under the team name Quizzle Kicks."



# MARINA AND THE DIAMONDS

ELECTRA HEART 679/ATLANTIC

*The songwriting jewel that was Marina has been killed off and... the fame-lusting replacement is all a bit gaga*



Ever since she began, Marina Diamandis has battled with the idea of what it means to be a female pop star. In 2009, she famously blogged about Shakira's 'She Wolf' video,

chastising the Colombian singer's skimpy outfits and cage-dancing. A line in that post seems prescient now: "The reason why I loved Shakira originally was for her strength, self respect and intellect. She obtained worldwide success just by being her very original self."

But at some point last year, Marina broke with this logic and her very own "original self". Her 2010 debut 'The Family Jewels' may have established her as a songwriter of some dynamism (from the simple but devastating 'I Am Not A Robot' to 'Hollywood's pithy articulation of her love/hate relationship with celeb culture), but it wasn't enough for her. Last year she was quoted as saying she was "pissed off" that she wasn't bigger and, in a possibly subconscious (yet explicit) reference to that call-to-arms blog post, said: "The likes of Shakira and Lady Gaga could be my peers." But to get to the place of pop supremacy she wanted to be at, she had to kill Marina off.

This has paved the way for her polar opposite alter ego, Electra Heart. And if Marina was dolefully self-analytical, EC is all about gaudy, shiny surfaces and instant gratification. Promo photos have seen Diamandis dolled up with bottle blonde hair, sporting babydoll dresses and giving off a 'gee, shucks' sense of Americana. "I want to be a real fake", she sings on 'Teen Idle', a song that sees

her offing the Bible-clutching, suicidal girl she once was in favour of a chocolate-cake-eating "21st-century whore" – an understandable sentiment in a world where introspection is on a par with "likes drowning kittens" as an admirable personality trait.

To make her post-modern wheeze chart-friendly, she's brought in the big Top 40 guns of Stargate (Rihanna) and Dr Luke (Katy Perry), who pair up her operatic vocals with thumping house beats and tinny electronics. It's a strange marriage of an existential personality crisis spliced over the sound of two-for-one bottles of WKD being bought and dry ice spreading on the dancefloor. Every chart-friendly sound is thrown up against the wall here – pop-punk, dubstep, drive-time rock, Italo disco – but the sense that she's tragically simplified everything which made her special to begin with is unshakeable, and nothing really resounds until the second half. It's here that 'The State Of Dreaming', the aforementioned 'Teen Idle' and the 'Sweet Dreams'-esque 'Living Dead' pair her flighty pop with deeper lyrical themes, and all suggest a depressive coma that would lead anyone – not just Electra Heart – to dress like Shirley Temple lost in a trailer park.

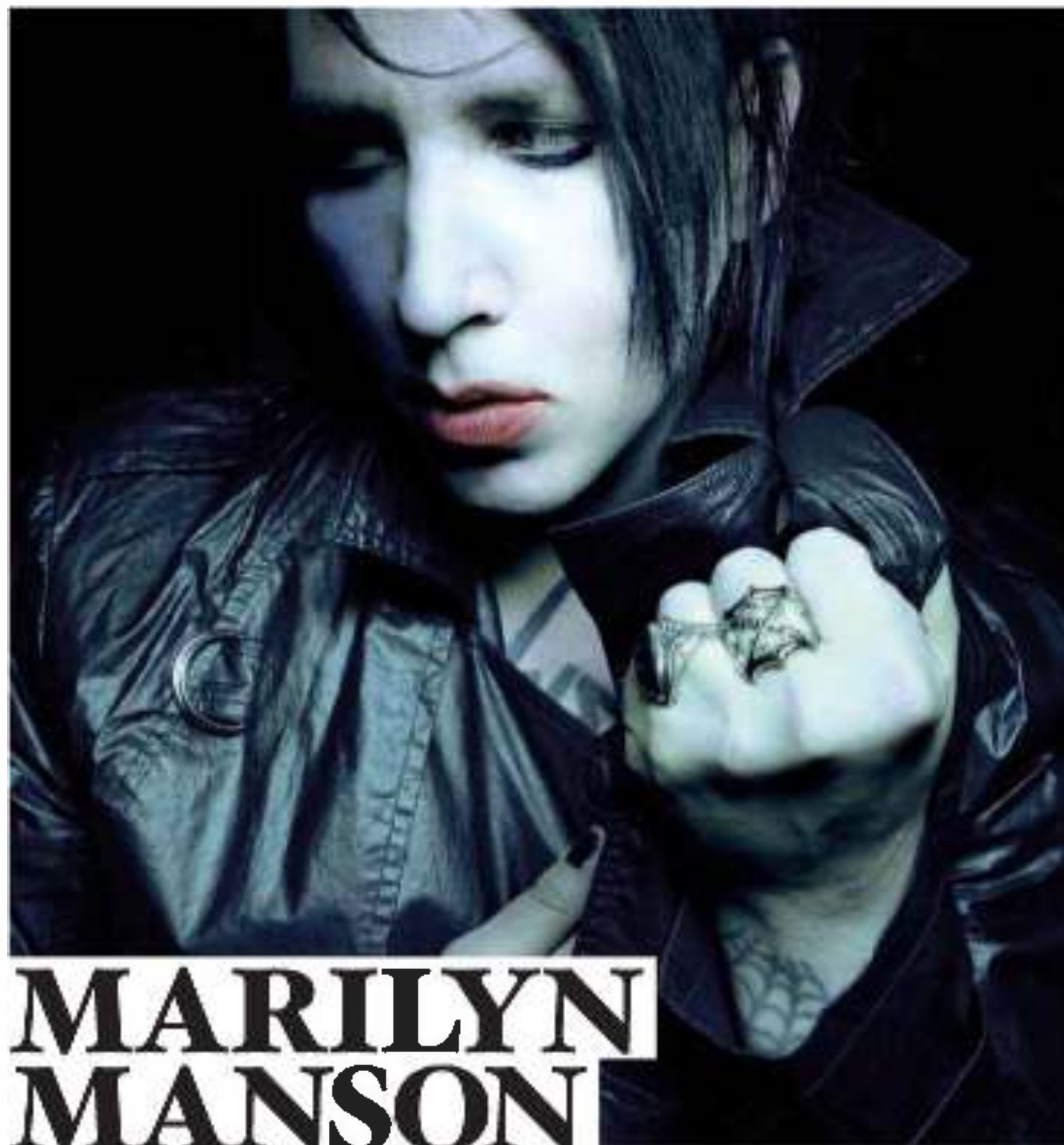
These songs aside, the album as a whole is an expensive-sounding failure. Not sure-footed enough in its subversion, its artificiality feels fake rather than carefully plotted. **Priya Elan**

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**DOWNLOAD: 'Teen Idle', 'Living Dead', 'The State Of Dreaming'**

Watch the video for Marina's 'Radioactive' at [NME.COM/video](http://NME.COM/video)





# MARILYN MANSON

**BORN VILLAIN** HELL, ETC/COOKING VINYL

*The king of out-there, polarising, love-it-or-hate-it shock-rock comes up with an album that's, y'know, fine*



Some things to know about the eighth Marilyn Manson album: it is the first on his own label, 'Hell, etc'; trailing it is a short film, directed by Shia LaBeouf, which

features weird-looking people getting their hair shorn off, topless acrobats, midgets with no legs being stroked by busty hookers, an old man having a gun put in his mouth by Manson, and Manson reciting lines from *Macbeth* ("Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player, that struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more. It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing"); to make the album, he ditched the grandeur of the Hollywood Hills and went back to the squalor of the apartment where he made 'Antichrist Superstar', aiming for back-to-basics grit. So far, so return-to-form.

But Marilyn Manson's problem has never been preamble. He's an awesome shock-rock star on paper. In one recent interview, he said loads of things like, "I use girls as AIDS tests – if they start dying 18 months later, I think, 'Oh shit, I've gotta worry!'" Mix quotes like this with a tracklist which features titles like 'Murderers Are Getting Prettier Every Day' and a lyric sheet that features lines such as "Don't wanna hit you but the only thing between our love is a bloody nose, busted lip and a blackened eye" (from 'Pistol Whipped'), and you're at

worst offended, at best hooked in, wanting to know more. Either way it's a success for Marilyn Manson – in fact, it's the POINT of Marilyn Manson.

But then comes the music. And as is often the case, it's just... alright. Yeah, he definitely sounds more energised, and like he's got his mojo back and revisited the records – in his words "Killing Joke, Joy Division, Revolting Cocks, Bauhaus, Birthday Party" – that inspired him in the first place. Yeah, opener 'Hey, Cruel World...' sets a tone of requisitely sleazy guitars and processed industrial beats, and yeah, "teenage rape" gets a seemingly obligatory mention (during 'Slo-Mo-Tion'). And yeah, at the end of the record, he lobs in another semi-comedy cover – this time of Carly Simon's 'You're So Vain' – with Johnny Depp on guitar.

Again, this all sounds good, right? Right. The truth is, though, there's just a lack of magic, a lack of something special going on. It's not bad. It's not good. It's just... Well, look, the thing is, for a guy whose whole raison d'être is 'American Psycho'-esque dark comedy/shock horror, getting shrugs and six out of 10 – defined at the start of this section as "better than average" – is not really what it's all about. It should be zeroes and tens. But musically, it just ain't. **Hamish MacBain**

**DOWNLOAD:** 'Lay Down Your Goddamn Arms', 'The Flowers Of Evil', 'You're So Vain' (ft Johnny Depp)

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## KEY NOTES



**Best Sleeve Of The Week**  
**Cate Le Bon, 'CYRK'**  
Who doesn't love a mildly disturbing group of Pleasantville-style children with their heads blurred into oblivion?



**Worst Sleeve Of The Week**  
**Marina & The Diamonds, 'Electra Heart'**  
The cover itself is fine, we're just pre-emptively wincing over the pseudo-subversive Warhol spiel she'll spout when she's asked about it.

## BOB

**STRANGE CLOUDS** ATLANTIC



The three-day, nine-email saga *NME* went through to hear an official sampler of Bob's second album and follow-up to 'The Adventures Of Bobby Ray' was put in perspective when the album's centrepiece 'Both Of Us', a collaboration with Taylor Swift, leaked this week. The song is a mulch of Bob's bright, boring ad-rap and Swift's talent for heartland torch songs, and that same mashing of styles serves for the street-sounding bits ('Strange Clouds') and the arena-sounding bits ('Never Let You Go' featuring OneRepublic's Ryan Tedder). The restrictions, the leak, the conservatism of the music... it's a numbers game. Like the album, it's focus-grouped, paranoid and please-all. **Henry Barnes**

**DOWNLOAD:** 'So Good'

3

## MOTHLITE

**DARK AGE** KSCOPE



Daniel O'Sullivan's second album as Mothlite is a constant battle with melancholia, played out in high definition and high drama. Listening to 'Dark Age' can feel like sensory immersion; the bass shakes the headphones on 'Wounded Lions', the opening track, and the all-consuming sensation is liable to cause motion sickness. The album transcends genre, yet takes in elements from the dark shadows of industrial rock, the glitch of electronica. At times, it seems as though the music was created as a comfort blanket for the vocals, which jar occasionally, shoe-horned in. Though the album has a tendency to drift, given enough attention, it's a beguiling affair. **Hayley Avron**

**DOWNLOAD:** 'The Blood'

7

## STAY+

**AREM EP** RAMP



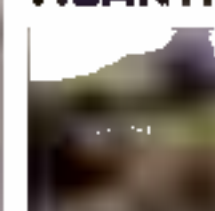
It's easy to hate Stay+. Originally operating under the name Christian Aids, carping bollocks about their shows having a "manipulative element" based on phone hacking and describing themselves as a collective, they're basically a bunch of Johnny Borrells with samplers. But J-Bo at least had a 'Golden Touch' in him, whereas the really annoying thing here is the lack of substance under all the style. Centrepiece 'Guardian' – somewhere along the lines of Hurts doing '90s rave – is a satisfying stand-out, while 'Dandelion Seed' has a SBTRKT-lite charm, but the whole thing reeks of forced experimentalism when simplicity would have earned them a lot more praise. **Lisa Wright**

**DOWNLOAD:** 'Guardian'

5

## KWES

**MEANTIME EP** WARP

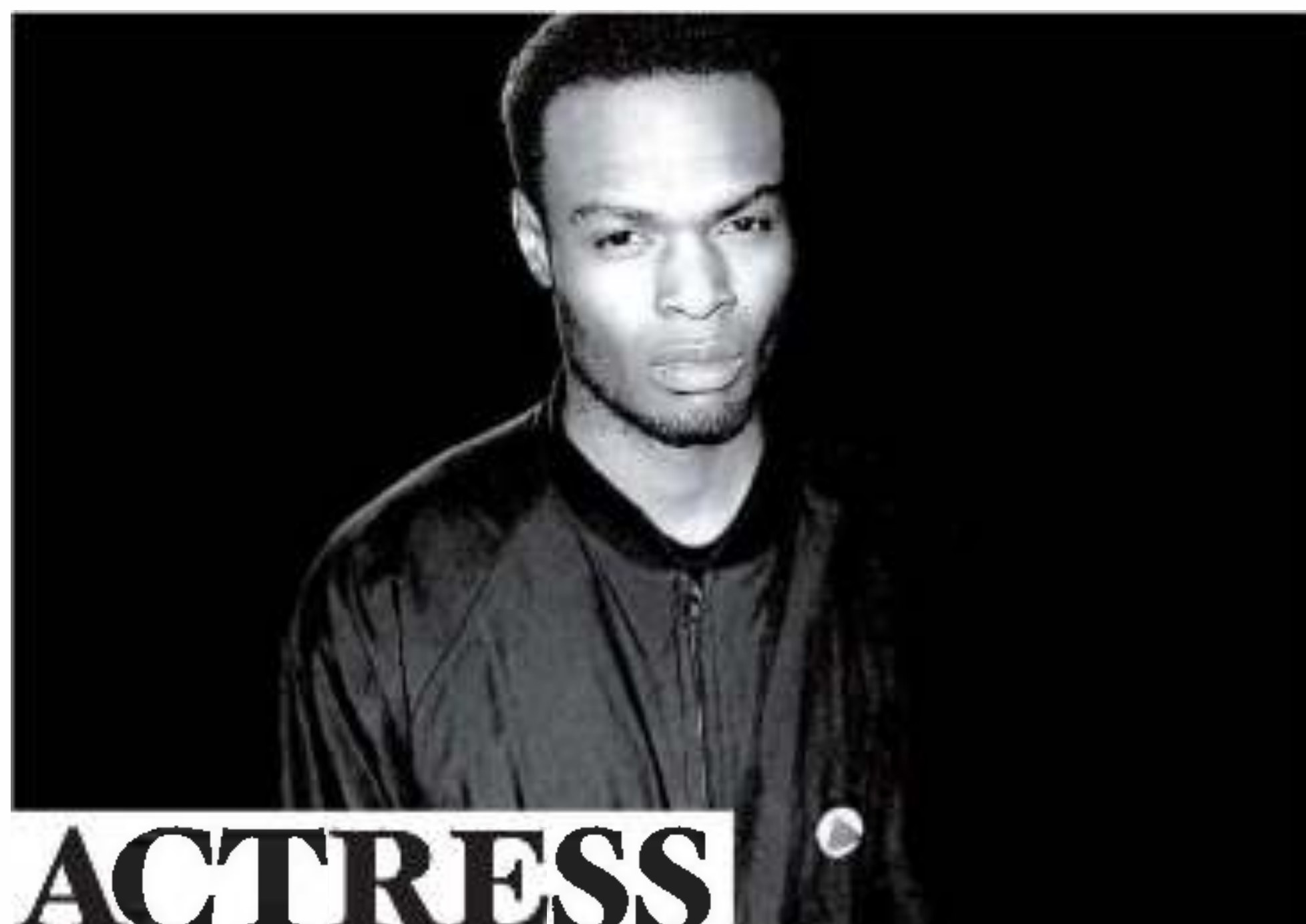


From SBTRKT to Jai Paul, the UK boasts a remarkable array of producers making twisted robotic soul which combines a love of US R&B with a very British affection for warped electronics. Kwes, a London producer who's worked with everyone from The xx to Damon Albarn, is the latest in this starry line. 'Meantime' is his debut for Warp, and is more of a bookmark than a landmark release. It shows off production skills – the bubbling rhythm that runs through 'Bashful', for example – and songwriting nous. But Kwes' voice underwhelms throughout, as if he's embarrassed by his own singing, and he ends up underselling the songs into which he's put so much effort. **Ben Cardew**

**DOWNLOAD:** 'Bashful'

6





# ACTRESS

RIP HONEST JON'S

*Woozy, wonderful, hard to pin down... it's easy to see why Damon Albarn and Thom Yorke are confirmed fans*



The democratisation of the music-making process has been a curse as well as a blessing. Dance music today can sometimes resemble a field of thousands upon thousands

of identikit laptop jockeys, each one running the same computer programs, fiddling with the same pre-sets, strip-mining the same exposed seams of clubland history. There is no new thing. Electronica is eating itself.

If anything, this effect is heightened by the rare producer that carves his own path – and one such is Darren Cunningham. Wolverhampton-born but south London based, he debuted on his own Werk Discs before signing up to Damon Albarn's Honest Jon's imprint, releasing 2010's excellent album 'Splazsh', visiting the Congo as part of Albarn's DRC project and appearing (in his 'Thriller' guise) on Radiohead's 'TKOL RMX 1234567'.

There are echoes of dance genres past and present on Actress' third full-length, 'RIP' – hard, technoid 4/4 thud ('Marble Plexus', 'Shadow From Tartarus'), the cries of disco

divas filtering up from some distant purgatory ('TWAAD') and skippy two-step drums that would seem to locate Cunningham's starting point in early '00s UK garage (the faintly Burial-esque 'The Lord's Graffiti'). Yet the charm of Actress' music is the way it eludes any direct reference. Synthesisers float everywhere, pitch-bent or glowing, translucent. On 'Uriel's Black Harp', plucked notes filter woozily through a strange, cicada-like chatter. Cunningham is as likely to soundtrack an installation at the Tate Modern as he is to DJ in a club, and it is this refusal to submit to the rigours of genre that allows Actress' music to float free.

The finished result is something of a trade-off. Despite titles rooted in mythology and religion these tracks do not evoke anything in particular; not euphoria on the dancefloor, or melancholic journeys through nocturnal cityscapes. Something about them is essentially alien – yet, very probably, that is the source of their strange, uncanny power. *Louis Pattison*

8

DOWNLOAD: 'Jardin', 'Raven', 'NEW'

## GRAVENHURST

THE GHOST IN DAYLIGHT WARP

Nick Talbot, aka Gravenhurst, is not a guy for parties. Buzzkill subjects abound on his fourth record: the emptiness of the past; photos of murdered girls; the catastrophically high price of Big Macs. OK, perhaps not the last one, but Talbot could ruminate on that and still make it sound like a bittersweet trip to your ruined hometown with his signature spook. Much of this record plays like a tribute to '90s miserabilists Red House Painters, all phantom-like reverb over misleadingly comforting folk tropes. Meandering drum machine excursion 'Islands' changes things up, but the soaring orchestral climax of 'The Prize' is the clear highlight. *Thom Gibbs*

DOWNLOAD: 'The Prize'

6

## FLATS

BETTER LIVING

SWEATSHOP/ONE LITTLE INDIAN

For all the vomitus aggression filling Flats' bleak debut, what really disturbs is its harrowing, somewhat tragic air of hopelessness that's not so much 'Kick out the jams' as 'Cave my head in with that shovel'. Part self-righteous, part self-loathing, the young Londoners take optimum wretchedness from doom rock, no wave and metalcore; the Sabbath-heavy 'Foxtrot' is sluggish with a boredom-induced fatigue, and 'Macabre Unit' writhes in tortured fretwork. Capped with Dan Devine's vocals – a scream as angry as it is distraught – this is despair with a backbeat, and punk as it should be: courageously self-destructive. *John Calvert*

DOWNLOAD: 'Macabre Unit'

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*THE RIDER*  
What we're watching, playing and wearing this week



Film  
*Ecstasy*

Irvine Welsh is keeping busy with a new book [Skagboys] hitting the shelves and this big-screen adaptation landing in cinemas.



Game  
*Back To The Future (Wii)*

Grab your (Wii) skateboard and channel your inner Marty McFly from the comfort of your own home. Mad scientist sidekick not included.



T-shirt  
*Torn Skull Shirt (The Kooples)*  
Summer needn't mean garish neons – maintain some rock chic with this offering from Doherty-endorsed brand The Kooples.

## THIS WEEK'S SINGLES

reviewed by NME's  
**TOM HOWARD**



## SKEPTA

MAKE PEACE NOT WAR

ALL AROUND THE WORLD



Skept's the kind of modern guy who uses his clout as a musician to make a porno to promote last year's 'All Over The House'. This tune isn't so lucky, making do with a sample of C+C Music Factory's ultra-banger 'Gonna Make You Sweat (Everybody Dance Now)' and a cowbell, and Radio 1's Matt Edmondson in the vid. Dude just wants to party.

## FEEDER

CHILDREN OF THE SUN BIG TEETH



A song so harmless it would in theory be possible not to even notice it was playing. It's unfair to have a pop though, 'cos Feeder are Feeder and they know they're Feeder, and they're not doing anything else other than just being Feeder. A Feeder song for Feeder fans that sounds like Feeder. It's a download and 7-inch only, because if there's one thing Grant Nicholas hates, it's CDs.

## TELLISON

FREUD LINKS THE TEETH AND THE HEART

NAIM EDGE



Initially this sounds like music for couples who spend weekends on bike rides, but then Peter Philips sings "My dentist's a girl from France/I fancy off her pants/She says to me, 'Please take care of your teeth'/And I say, 'Please take care of my heart'" and you realise it's about dentist lust. Real-life shit.

## THE HEARTBREAKS

DELAY, DELAY MUSIC SOUNDS



"Delay, delay, delay, delay, delay, delay, delay", goes the chorus. "If there's something burning in your heart, it's foolish to delay". No, The Heartbreaks, incorrect. No-one needs a brand new jingly-jangly indie pop band who sing about nothing. It's 2012, and this isn't what you wanna listen to when you're watching a video of a fluorescent cat firing lasers out of its eyes.

## FAR EAST MOVEMENT

FT JUSTIN BIEBER

LIVE MY LIFE INTERSCOPE



When the JBieb tells us he's gonna "live my life knowing that we're going to be alright", I for one am fucking glad. I'm worried about the kid. All that money.

All those bright white teeth. It's not easy. Also, for being the first song to reference Gmail's truly excellent chat function, Gchat, maximum kudos.

## SUB FOCUS FT ALICE GOLD

OUT THE BLUE RAM/MERCURY



Person one: drum'n'bass dude Sub Focus (aka Nick Douwma) who flicked knobs on Example's 'Kickstarts' and gives 'Out The Blue' its Hudson Mohawke-esque squawk. Person two: singer-songwriter Alice Gold, who's about to tour with The Dears and lends a slightly clubby vocal. Together: four minutes that wash over you like the wake of a boat, when it should feel like a fucking tsunami.



# LIVE

FROM PUBS TO ARENAS,  
THE WEEK'S TOP GIGS

Edited by Tom Howard

Azealia likes  
the look of  
Alex Turner



## COACHELLA VALLEY MUSIC AND ARTS FESTIVAL

INDIO, CALIFORNIA FRIDAY, APRIL 13 – SUNDAY, APRIL 15

*The lack of sunshine helps the Brit contingent feel at home, but Noel, Alex, Jarvis and co don't let it dampen the music treats for the US. Even an appearance from a dead rapper brightens the day*

### FRIDAY

Coachella is supposed to be all sunshine, hippie chicks and palm trees swaying in the breeze. A world away from UK festivals, right? Well, on opening day – Friday the 13th of course – wrong. It's like a British festival: the weather is grim, shouty men ramble around in ill-fitting dresses and public urination is common. But much like its UK counterparts, Coachella won't let drizzle stop play.

"Clap your hands, Coachella. Don't be a dick about it," implores Alex Turner, slicking back his T-bird bouffant, opening up a Steel City double header under portentous skies. 'Don't Sit Down 'Cause I've Moved Your Chair' is impeccably heavy, bringing a hint of those headliners that could have been, Black Sabbath, to proceedings. The rest

of Arctic Monkeys' set is a rare greatest hits outing, leading into much the same from Pulp, who finally give America a taste of what Europe was treated to last summer: a reunion worth the hype.

Frank Ocean's only concession to

*Punters rhapsodise the joys of cunnilingus as Azealia whips her mermaid locks*

showbiz flamboyance is a backing band in welding masks, but even so, his turn is a superstar-making show, astounding a crowd that go nuts for that Coachella shout out in 'Novacane'. Ocean's shy banter about setlists indicates this is no

Kanye-sized ego, but rather a self-effacing talent who doesn't even let Tyler, The Creator's embarrassing uncle shirt upstage him when his Odd Future cohort bounds on for 'Analog 2'.

Mazzy Star's 'Fade Into You' sees gooey-eyed couples embracing to Hope Sandoval's sleepy desire, making for a mushy warm up for The Black Keys, who more than justify their somewhat unexpected headline slot.

Their tight, prog-free performance rolls out the beefier full band sounds of 'Howlin' For You' and 'Lonely Boy', and sees them wilfully whack their way through a clutch of older tracks including 'Thickfreakness' and 'Your Touch'.

### SATURDAY

The sun – and the dreary likes of Paris Hilton – deign to come out today, which begins with Azealia Banks leading a ferociously filthy singalong, with a few thousand punters rhapsodising the joys of cunnilingus as she whips her mermaid locks before belting out The Prodigy's 'Firestarter' in a questionable English accent. Childish Gambino must have heard the lewdness because straight after, he mumbles something about doing that very deed "on the Coachella bus" at the end of a strapping 'Heartbeat'.

Tune-Yards' ragga-jazz yodelling is dampened by sludgy sound, which is a shame, as the tribal-print shoulder-padded Merrill Garbus looks magnificent against the turquoise skies and pink mountaintops. Noel Gallagher's High





Alex discovers  
Brylcreem in the eyes  
ain't so pl

At The Drive-In  
attempt the famed  
cymbal balance



A\$AP Rocky  
subtly tries  
to stem that  
runny nose



Noel walls, \*. If I had  
an umbrella..."



"Come on everybody!  
It's the pointy finger  
dance now"



Jarvis prepares  
to reveal his  
jacket lined with  
fake Rolex



Thom Yorke  
insists he's  
not Axl Rose

## VIEW FROM THE CROWD

ATD-I – the fans' verdict



**Toni Machete,**  
Pennsylvania

"For them having not played in what seems like 500 years, it was fantastic. I've seen Sparta, but it's nice to see everybody back together. The vibe seems good. Hopefully they'll play more shows."



**Amy Fell,**  
south California

"I thought it was amazing. It's been so long and they're all so awesome, so it was gonna be amazing to see them and be this close too! I just love 'One Armed Scissor', so I was very excited to hear that."



**James Hall,**  
London

"It was incredible. Cedric was going for it, which I wasn't sure he would. They were the only band I wanted to see. 'Napoleon Solo' was epic. Just seeing Cedric and Omar together again... I loved it."

Flying Birds then swoop into action with a bells and whistles-free set, amping things up with an Oasis four-way, dedicating 'Half The World Away' to the countless English folk in the crowd.

Sporting a fluffy blonde mohawk, Justin Vernon and Bon Iver's mellow moods should have most of the punters blubbing into their beer – if you were allowed to drink and watch a band at the same time here, that is. The pomp of 'Holocene' thrills but it's 'Skinny Love' that dazzles, cutting through any pretension with its simplicity.

Radiohead dutifully dish out 'Karma Police' and 'Lucky' along with their post-millennial beats and glitches, but Thom Yorke seems to be strangely morphing into Axl Rose. For something a little less contrived, it's over to A\$AP

Rocky. Under a veil of weed smoke, he leaves his multitudinous crew and rolls delightedly with fans down the front, which makes a nice alternative to his notorious SXSW booze-flinging barney.

## SUNDAY

The final day sees Wild Flag whip out their discordant post-punk pop hits before The Hives' Howlin' Pelle flips their modesty 180 degrees, airing his gargantuan ego and new single 'Go Right Ahead'. In top hat and tails, he's Coachella's Fred Astaire, an unhinged hype man who knows the likes of 'Main Offender' and 'Hate To Say I Told You So' will never fail to be lapped up. "People say I'm an annoying asshole," he hollers. "Do you agree, Coachella?"

Things take a turn for the slushy with The Weeknd's slightly naïf soul grooves causing a sea of mooning teenage girls to flutter eyelashes at Abel Tesfaye. Swoons are swapped for glowsticks for Justice, who prove Coachella is as much about

mixers as guitars. Handily the guitars here are some of the finest. At The Drive-In may not be happy about reuniting at such a celeb and fashion-fest, with Cedric Bixler slugging off the event's more ludicrous style choices, but even so, they put on a compelling performance. A riot of phlegm and micstand flinging, their post-hardcore riffs are as imposing as the hills around us. 'One Armed Scissor' has lost none of its vitality and 'Lopsided' and 'Napoleon Solo' provide a solid grounding for the outrageous hip-hop all-stars show which follows.

The Tupac hologram accompanying Dr Dre and Snoop Dogg's show is stranger in the, erm, flesh, than any YouTube clip.

The crowd reaction to the shirtless second coming of a man who died 16 years ago is a mixture of disbelief, awe and downright WTF-ism. In a set packed with anthems, from 'Gin And Juice' 'Nuthin' But A 'G' I hang', a 50 Cent-aided 'In Da Club' and an Eminem-abetted 'Forgot About Dre', it makes for a poignant moment of darkness in a festival oft-derided for style over substance. Which is a good thing. *Leonie Cooper*



Tom looks so stoned he hasn't realised Roger Daltrey has snuck in to play drums



# KASABIAN/ THE VACCINES/ WILD BELLE

**MULBERRY FIREPIT AND POOL PARTIES, THE PARKER HOTEL, PALM SPRINGS** FRIDAY, APRIL 13 - SATURDAY, APRIL 14

*Hastily erected marquees and huddling around bonfires: not words you'd normally associate with fashion parties at Coachella*

**C**alifornia knows how to party," the great hologram Tupac Shakur once said. And so even though Coachella's festival site is 150 miles from LA, the fun times find a way of rolling long after the festival has been packed away.

It's not a new phenomenon, either. The small desert towns surrounding Coachella are steeped in glitz and

rock 'n' roll behaviour, with every hotel wall having a story. The Vaccines tell us that Nancy Sinatra learnt how to swim in

the pool of the hotel they're staying in *NME*, meanwhile, is holed up in the Parker, a country-club retreat once favoured by Frank Sinatra and members of the Russian mafia, and now the location for Mulberry's Coachella parties and gigs.

Friday night's Firepit party sees Kasabian play a semi acoustic set in a hastily built marquee (this is the first rain in Coachella's 13-year history), while Azealia Banks and Metronomy huddle for warmth around the bonfire. 'Man Of Simple Pleasures' is dedicated to Freddie Vaccine, who's stopped DJing indoors to throw himself around among the supermodels and flying bottles of Bud Light. The highlight is a cover of

'We Could Have Been Anything' from the soundtrack

to Tom's favourite film, *Bugy Malone*. Delivered in questionable cockney accents, it's a vaudevillian, Libs-style knees-up, made even more ludicrous by a line of burly roadies hobbling around playing tambourines by Serge.

But Saturday's Pool Party is the show stopper. Emma Watson and Radiohead's Colin Greenwood turn out in the midday sun to see brother-sister Chicago duo Wild Belle – currently the hottest unsigned band in the world thanks to their self-released debut single and certifiable summer anthem, 'Keep You'. It's

**WHAT'S  
COACHELLA  
REALLY  
LIKE?**



**METRONOMY'S  
JOE MOUNT**  
"You'd be amazed at the similarity between Coachella and Totnes. You look around and think: 'Are they trying to rip off Torquay?'"



The Vaccines work the cloakroom...



...then Wild Belle take over looking after the gold bags

a rocky, dizzy, lovers' headrush of scorned woman lyrics set to synth pop and parping sax.

Today, with a full band in tow, Natalie and Elliot Bergman cover The Troggs' 'Our Love Will Still Be There', but it's their self-styled 'island soul party music' that wins out. Raised on a muso diet of Coltrane, Pharoah Sanders and a 'Studio One Women' rocksteady compilation, Wild Belle's music may be breezy but Natalie's voice is like molten lava – closer to Amy Winehouse's liquid jazz baritone than the Lily Allen comparisons she's previously caught. "Jump in the pool!" she commands as their set winds up, and the party people are happy to oblige.

*Catch up with Kasabian, Metronomy and The Vaccines at Coachella at [NME.COM/video](http://NME.COM/video) now*



...and Tomlin the underground



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John Lydon talks PiL and Sex Pistols  
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## GRAHAM COXON

**O2 ACADEMY OXFORD** FRIDAY, APRIL 13

*The guitarist warms up for Blur's Olympic event in more comfortable, smaller surroundings*

Fast-forward four months to Blur's Olympics gig in Hyde Park. Imagine the hordes of Stella'd-up lads "woo-hoo"-ing, the burger vans cooking up cheap meat and the people hollering for 'Parklife' outnumbering the quiet souls hoping for 'Trimm Trabb'. Don't get me wrong, Blur's victory lap (and likely final outing if Damon's *Observer* interview is to be believed) is going to be glorious. But you get the feeling guitarist Graham Coxon would rather be here with his middle-aged fans and a gobby group of teens who pepper the between-song silences with yells for him to take his top off. "You wouldn't like it," he retorts.

The first date of his 'A+E' tour is a world away from the enorma-gigs Blur have become accustomed to, or "those big pompous things" as Coxon will later describe his recent award-studded outings. He seems more at ease in places like this. "We're all ill but we don't give a shit," he says about him and his band, before launching into itchy new album opener 'Advice', its grungy hooks making it one of the catchiest songs in his arsenal. From there we go on a trio of classics – 'Don't Let Your Man Know' powers by on sexual frustration and charging fretwork, 'Standing On My Own Again' kicks the crowd up a notch and 'I Don't Wanna Go Out' rings with as much nihilistic energy as ever.

But it's the new material which is most exciting. It takes balls to throw out five tracks in a row from an LP that's been out for five days, but that's what he does. In 'City Hall's' hardened pulses and the robot staccato of 'Meet+Drink+Pollinate' emerge the more experimental angles of 'A+E', while 'Running For Your Life' harks back to the giddy abandon and

indie kicks of 'Freakin' Out', which is busted out later for the gobby teens. When he returns to familiar ground to play 'Crow Sit On Blood Tree's' 'You Never Will Be' and tonight's closing gambit, 'Spinning Top', you feel like it's because they're the best songs, not because he likes churning out the hits. Graham's got a big summer of Blur love ahead, but left to his own devices he's as wonderfully, wilfully obtuse as ever. He never did get his top off. *Lisa Wright*

### COXON Q+A

Are you looking forward to Blur's Hyde Park show? **Graham:** "I'm not thinking more than a couple of days ahead, really. I think when it comes into the summer a bit more I will. But for the moment I'm on this tour." What if you make of Damon saying Hyde Park will be the end of Blur? "I haven't really got any thoughts about it. I've been asked about it so much. It's whatever people wanna make of it."

Did any other new material come from the 'Under The Westway' sessions? "It was just a bit of recording, there weren't any proper sessions. We didn't book a studio 'cos Damon has one." Is there still a possibility Blur could do new stuff then? "I'm sure feelings change by the day." Are you a fan of 'life on the road'? "It's nice, but it's hard work. Halfway through I just want a cuppa."

## LANA DEL REY

**JAZZ CAFE, LONDON** TUESDAY, APRIL 10

*In town for a stripped-down treat for her fans, the enigmatic starlet just gets more mysterious*

Outside the Jazz Café in Camden, there's little to suggest we'll soon be in the presence of a superstar, as a small huddle of paps and three fans wait by a velvet rope for a glimpse of 2012's biggest singer. Inside, 150 people squeeze into a venue usually associated with world music, cerebral hip-hop and noodly jazz; Lana Del Rey wants to say "cheers!" to her fans for buying 'Born To Die' by giving them stripped-back versions of songs from the album, with just a four-piece ensemble, a pianist and a guitarist.

The New York City girl appears with two bodyguards, and descends a staircase as the strings of 'Blue Jeans' strike up. Del Rey, who's recently been romantically linked with Marilyn Manson and Axl Rose, stokes the fire of speculation by wearing a Guns N' Roses vest. It says more about her sense of humour than it does about any 'is she, isn't she?' questions, and demonstrates one of the ingredients of her massive appeal: mystery. In an age when stars are more accessible than ever, the 25-year-old's popularity has a lot to do with her enigma. She's from the Jack White college of myth-making and, in that sense, her celebrity is old school.

Few modern artists have divided opinion or evoked such outlandish

conspiracy theories. Are her lips real? Is she made entirely of rubber? Can she sing? Or is she, as her infamous *Saturday Night Live* performance suggested, a tad rough around the edges? The last of these questions we can answer now, and offer conclusively that we're not sure. Sometimes she snarls like Elvis, other times her words get lost in the lower register as she trips on her lyrics. Yet when she sings "I heard that you like the bad girls" in 'Video Games', her voice is heartbreaking, beautiful and sad, and her

*Sometimes she snarls like Elvis, other times she rasps like Judy Garland*

"we were dancing all night" in the crescendo of 'Blue Jeans' is angelic.

The artist formerly known as Lizzy Grant looks young, but has the voice of a Deep South, fortysomething, trailerpark divorcee who smokes and guzzles scotch all day. 'Without You' is like vintage Tori Amos, and on 'Carmen', played live for the first time, she rasps like a modern-day Judy Garland. It's a reminder that for all the success, she carries a little tragedy with her. Whether she can sing is a red herring. Her mystery and contradictions make her beguiling. *Jeremy Allen*





## LAURYN HILL

INDIGO2, LONDON SATURDAY, APRIL 14

**T**he scare story of Lauryn Hill – the first woman to win five Grammys who then became an erratic, religious semi-recluse – is one of rap's great cautionary tales. Less often heard is the more complicated account of her rambling, fascinating sermons on 'MTV Unplugged 2.0', her follow-up to 1998's hugely successful 'The Miseducation Of Lauryn Hill', where she lets listeners in on a secret: "When they think you crazy, they don't mess with you..."

Tonight isn't top form, but it is Lauryn ready to speak up and out for herself again. Reports in recent years of shambolic gigs have been disheartening, but for her first UK show in five years she's a mere 20 minutes tardy and, if anything, the show is a little too slick. On reggae rocked-up versions of 'Killing Me Softly' and 'Everything Is Everything', her backing musos are smooth to the point of chat-show house band, and everything is done at double-speed, detracting from the songs' power. Throughout, though, her manic energy and *that* voice keep you on board. "You're coming with us, right?" she asks during an up-paced, pop-rocky 'To Zion' – and well, who could say no? "We have more music coming," she promises. "There was a lot of resistance... we cut through, we get back to doing what needs to be done." Next up, we hope, is more new material like 'Fearless Vampire Killer', a fierce, fake idol-skewering tune unveiled in January. Rap could do with Lauryn telling new truths more than ever. **Emily Mackay**

## SWITCH

XOYO, LONDON SATURDAY, APRIL 7

**S**aturday night in London's capital of cool and it's business as usual. Thumping dubstep, innocuous DJ bloke who's 'big on the scene', lavatory soap muggers rattling their tip dishes, titfaced droneheads jerking about trying to eat the laser beams. Dance culture in stasis: same deal, different drugs.

Then the smoke-shrouded switchover, and something like a miracle. The beats sink to a thin, minimalist clink, a sub-rave with subtle, suppressed drama, and out of it emerge new noises. Rattlesnakes in the machine. Bhangra strings and dancehall drums. The distant sound of encroaching Dalek armies. Actual songs. The dazed droners zombie-shuffle towards the desks as if instinctively drawn towards the new. This is Switch, and he's turning up techno's life-support. He's also, alongside Diplo, one half of Major Lazer, and the producer of hefty chunks of MIA's albums and Beyoncé's 'Run The World'. He's the man putting the Amazonian sex princess beats into electronica, and it's these that lift his set into the realms of the inspirational.

The sped-up trumpet fanfare of 'Bucky Done Gun' hee-hawing by as if blared from a passing drag racer; the afro-clatter akin to Kelis' 'Milkshake' stirred to a froth; the hints of samba, reggae and jungle made sinister with cries of "snake, snake, snake". An innocuous DJ bloke in a laser-chewing east London nightclub, yes, but somehow Switch feels like an entirely new breed. **Mark Beaumont**

## TOY

KING TUT'S WAH WAH HUT, GLASGOW

MONDAY, APRIL 9

**W**ho gives a fuck if a band are derivative? Lead singer Tom Dougall's ultra-cool persona and Toy's motorik sound have seen this lot lumped with SCUM *et al*, but this isn't The Horrors in absentia, this is Toy: a fucking quality, sexy rock band on the opening night of their first UK headline tour. There's a sense of excitement, and reasons to believe this ramshackle lot could grow their expansive, effects-pedalled psychedelia into something special. Firstly, they look the part, from Dougall's hollowed cheeks to the awesome long locks of guitarist Dominic O'Dair and bassist Maxim Barron. Secondly, three of the five have been here before with Joe Lean & The Jing Jang Jong – who, famously, split before releasing their debut album.

Maybe that's why some of the tracks they play tonight are nameless, or come across unfinished – they may feel there's no need to rush their otherwise fantastic krautrock jams. But of course, each song comes on like a car chase along a six-lane motorway and new single 'Motoring' navigates the innermost part of the human psyche in a ridiculous, arbitrary way. But by far the finest moment comes at the epic conclusion to their short yet hugely satisfying set. The huge wail-out of 'Left Myself Behind' is proof in itself that Toy really are a fucking great band. **Jamie Crossan**

ARCHITECTS/  
ROLO TOMASSI

LIQUID ROOMS, EDINBURGH FRIDAY, APRIL 13

*Shape-shifting metalcore, a whirling vortex, and a fan out on his ear for getting carried away. A good night all round, then*

It's almost become a cliché, when talking about Rolo Tomassi, to remark on the improbability of such an inhuman sound emanating from such a petite, seemingly innocuous vessel as Eva Spence. Her splenetic howlings might make for a natural focal point, but in truth, the blonde-bobbed hurricane in a little black dress isn't the most remarkable thing about these Sheffield mentalists.

Since the release of debut album 'Hysterics' in 2008, Rolo Tomassi have consistently proven themselves to be one of the most inventive and adventurous metalcore bands around. New single 'Old Mystics' sees Spence and her brother/synth player James engage in a call-and-response duet that sounds like Sonny & Cher being impaled on the same spike, while the proggy excesses of 'Tongue In Chic' recall a leaner, less extraneous Mars Volta. And while tonight may not be the ideal environment in which to gauge the new songs that are previewed, we hear enough of their as-yet-untitled third album, due later this year, to know that it won't shirk from sonic slipperiness.

Headliners Architects, meanwhile, are closer to the meat and potatoes end of

the metalcore spectrum, though guitarist Tom Scarle's recent assertion that "we've got our balls back" (following a lurch towards more radio-friendly territory over the last couple of albums) is backed up by 'Devil's Island' and 'These Colours Don't Run' from new LP 'Daybreaker'. They're also very much what the crowd is here to see: within a chorus or two of their arrival, Architects turn the first few rows into a whirling vortex of limbs only the very brave or stupid would go near.

In fact, following a riotous 'We're All Alone', frontman Sam Carter actually stops the show to ask for one excessively violent fan to be ejected ("This kid got lost on his way to nightschool and he's been acting like a dickhead all night," he tells the security guard). That incident aside, however, tonight is mostly triumphant. Carter's energy carries the band through their more plodding moments, and though the setlist gives 'Daybreaker' short shrift (only two songs, puzzlingly), their rumination on the London riots, 'Devil's Island' – if you can call something so brutal a 'rumination' – finds them back at their visceral, volatile best. **Barry Nicolson**

VIEW  
FROM THE  
CROWD

**Sam, 21, from Kirkcaldy**  
"I'm here to see Architects, although I thought Rolo Tomassi were really good as well. This is my mate's first time at a gig like this and we were trying to convince him to go into the pit. He wouldn't do it."





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SUMMER BY THE SEATOUR

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0872 100 1301

18+ Helpdesk 0844 844 0644 Live calls recorded 0872 10p per min. Network Extras Apply. SP: 4D

**GAY CHAT**  
Gay, Bi or just Curious you'll find plenty of GUYS to chat to here  
**10p**  
0871 550 9578

18+ Helpdesk 0844 844 0644 Live calls recorded 0871 10p per min. Network extras apply. SP: 4D

**DATE CHAT**  
**MEN: 0871 908 9919**  
**GAY: 0871 908 9944**  
18+ Helpdesk 0844 844 0644  
0871 10p per min. Network extras apply. Live calls recorded. SP: 4D.

**WOMEN CALL FREE**  
**0800 075 9128**  
\*0800 = Free from BT Landline

**CHAT OR DATE**  
**10p**  
0872 100 1002  
18+ Helpdesk 0844 844 0644 Live calls recorded 0872 10p per min. Network extras apply. SP: 4D

**GAY CHAT**  
Call now and start chatting!  
18+ Helpdesk 0844 844 0644 Live calls recorded 0871 10p per min. Network extras apply. SP: 4D  
**TEXTCHAT**  
anime  
mame  
game  
18+ only. Helpdesk 0844 844 0002. Standard network charges apply. Women: Network charges only. Send STOP to 08000 to Stop. IP: X-On

## MUSICAL SERVICES

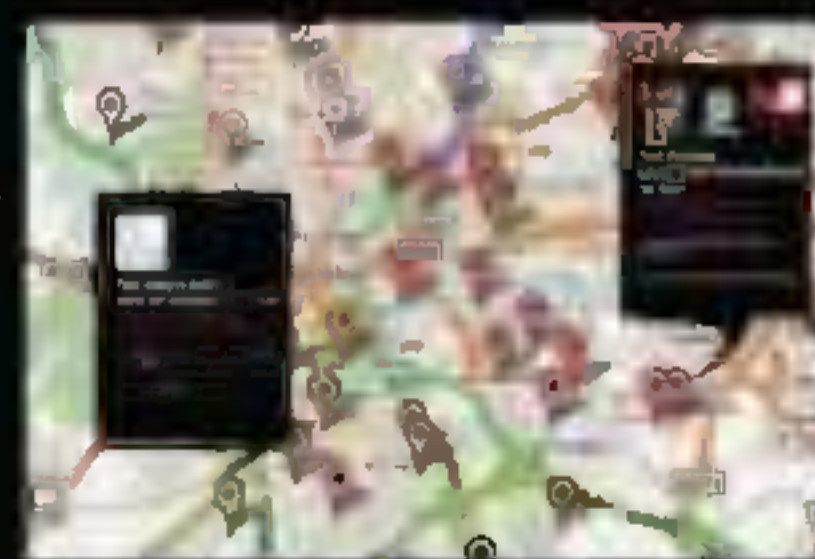


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# GIG GUIDE

THE UK'S BIGGEST GUIDE TO THE WEEK AHEAD

*Edited by Lisa Wright*

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# BOOKING NOW



## EDEN SESSIONS

**STARTS:** Cornwall Eden Project, June 23

DON'T  
MISS

Held in Cornwall's eco-friendly outdoor venue, the Eden Sessions are surely the greenest summer events around. The annual series of boutique events has drawn in a host of big names in the past (last year saw acts including Primal Scream, The Horrors and The Flaming Lips all take the stage) and this year is no exception. Noah & The Whale and The Vaccines (pictured) have just been confirmed to close the season (July 11), while Frank Turner & The Sleeping Souls (July 1) and Example (Jun 30) will also appear. Comedian Tim Minchin will open proceedings on June 23 with returning heroes Blink-182 lining up on July 8, but with 'Ill Manors' putting him firmly back on top of his game, all eyes are sure to be on Plan B (July 6). More announcements and full support billings are due to be confirmed soon.



### LITTLE BOOTS

**STARTS:** London XOYO, May 4

Victoria Hesketh makes a live return following new single 'Every Night I Say A Prayer', which was released on vinyl for Record Store Day last week.



### FRIENDS

**STARTS:** Live At Leeds Festival, May 5

Samantha Urbani leads Brooklyn's newest talents on their visit to the UK for a handful of dates, including Brighton's The Great Escape (May 10 and 11).



### PLAY FEST

**STARTS:** Norfolk New Eccles Hall, Jun 1

Ash, Feeder and The Big Pink (pictured) all line up for this three-day bash in East Anglia, which also features an all-ages arts programme.



### GENTLEMEN OF THE ROAD STOPOVER

**STARTS:** Huddersfield Greenhead Park, Jun 2  
Mumford & Sons (pictured) curate a two-part festival, (Galway, Jun 9), starring The Vaccines and Willy Mason.



### THE WALKMEN

**STARTS:** London Village Underground, Jun 12

American indie-rock stalwarts hit London's Shoreditch for a headline show in support of seventh full-length LP 'Heaven'.



### MARILYN MANSON

**STARTS:** London O2 Academy Brixton, Jul 5

Cuts from current LP 'Born Villain' (reviewed on p44) are sure to make an appearance at the goth supremo's London date.



### LOUNGE ON THE FARM

**STARTS:** Canterbury Merton Farm, Jul 6

Dexys, Slow Club, Summer Camp and more join up alongside Mystery Jets and The Wombats (pictured) for the Canterbury festival.



### INCUBUS

**STARTS:** London O2 Academy Brixton, Jul 9

Following the cancellation of their supporting slot at this year's Sonisphere, California's Incubus head out for a special show in the English capital.



### STRAWBERRY FIELDS FESTIVAL

**STARTS:** Leicestershire Cattows Farm, Aug 10

Heading up the second instalment of SF Fest are The Charlatans (pictured), while Hadouken! and Young Knives will also appear.



### NOEL GALLAGHER'S HIGH FLYING BIRDS

**STARTS:** Bournemouth BIC, Sep 4

Noel starts his arena tour, with Graham Coxon and The Kooks lined up as support.



### BRING ME THE HORIZON

**STARTS:** London Alexandra Palace, Nov 10

The metalcore favourites top the bill for 2012's legendary Warped Tour, with a full supporting bill to be announced shortly.



### RUFUS WAINWRIGHT

**STARTS:** Oxford New Theatre, Nov 16

Rufus hasn't toured with a full band since 2008, so this 10-date run starting out in the city of dreaming spires is sure to be a special one.



# PICK of the WEEK

What to see this week? Let us help



## FOSTER THE PEOPLE

STARTS: Manchester Academy, April 25

NME  
PICK

You might not have noticed, but Foster The People are massive now. Proving that you don't always have to be a loudmouth to win the race (just look at Viva Brother), Marcus Foster, Mark Pontius and Cubbie Fink have quietly slipped into the indie A-list. The proof? How's three nights at O2 Academy Brixton for you (April 27-29)? Yes, good. As well as their run in London town, the trio will also be stopping off in Manchester on April 25 before lining up beneath The Maccabees at NME/BBC Radio 1's Stage at Reading and Leeds this summer. The indie-pop hooks of 'Pumped Up Kicks' may have drilled their way into the nation's consciousness, but there are more treasures to be found – and with time being set aside to work on the follow-up to debut album 'Torches', there may even be some new treats on offer...



**Everyone's Talking About ICEAGE**  
STARTS: Liverpool Shipping Forecast, May 1  
Following last year's critically acclaimed LP 'New Brigade', the Danish punks return to UK shores for a headline show in Liverpool and a slot at the Camden Crawl (May 4). With comparisons being drawn to the likes of Crass and Wire and a blistering live show based on feedback-ridden, shambolic spurts of anarchy, their stay might be short but it definitely won't be sweet.



**Don't Miss CATE LE BON**  
STARTS: Edinburgh Sneaky Pete's, April 25  
Le Bon (no relation to Simon) takes in a mini UK tour in support of her second album 'CYRK', finishing up with a hometown show at The Printheus in Cardiff on April 28. She's not a star quite yet, but she has a champion in the form of Gruff Rhys and she has already worked with Neon Neon and members of Gorky's Zygotiic Myndi. The secret's definitely out, so go see what the fuss is about.



**Radar Stars WEIRD DREAMS**  
STARTS: Bristol Start The Bus, May 1  
These Londoners' line in '50s-tinged, saccharine-sweet guitar pop comes with a bite. Riddled with unsettling lyricisms on masochism, the devil and, unsurprisingly, some pretty weird dreams, their David Lynch-inspired debut 'Choreography' is more than just a merry waltz. Catch it live on this mini three-date tour at the beginning of May, and at Brighton's Great Escape festival shortly after.

# WEDNESDAY

April 25

### BIRMINGHAM

Lonsdale Boys Club O2 Academy 3  
0870 477 2000

We Are The In Crowd/Every Avenue O2 Academy 2  
0870 477 2000

### BRIGHTON

The Dillinger Escape Plan Concorde 2  
01273 673 311

### BRISTOL

Lydia Loveless Start The Bus  
0117 930 4370  
Tracer The Tunnels 0117 929 9008  
Tribes/Sharks Thekla  
08713 100000

### CARDIFF

Fjords/Purple Spiral Project  
Undertone 029 2022 8883

### EDINBURGH

Cate Le Bon/Three Blind Wolves  
Sneaky Pete's 0131 225 1757  
Placebo/Zulu Winter HMV Picture House 0844 847 1740  
Trembling Bells/Bonnie Prince Billy Queens Hall 0131 668 2019

### GLASGOW

Gomez O2 ABC 0870 903 3444  
Lostprophets/Modestep O2 Academy 0870 477 2000  
Of Mice And Men/Bury Tomorrow Cathouse 0141 248 6606  
Ren Harvieu King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279  
Russian Circles Stereo 0141 576 5018

### GLOUCESTER

Ladyhawke Guildhall Arts Centre  
01452 503050

### LEEDS

Miles Kane O2 Academy 0870 477 2000  
Simon Fowler Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866

### LEICESTER

Bombay Bicycle Club/Lianne La Havas/Rae Morris De Montfort Hall  
0116 233 3111  
Sick Of Sarah Lock 42

### LIVERPOOL

Pinkunolzu/I Ching Leaf On Bold St  
0151 707 7747

### LONDON

Au Shacklewell Arms 020 7249 0810  
Bleeding Heart Narrative/Sea Stacks/Light Falls Forward CAMP Basement 0871 230 1094  
Broken Tea Set/Terrible Eyes New Cross Inn 020 8692 1866  
Chairlift Scala 020 7833 2022  
Charlene Soraia Union Chapel 020 7226 1686

Graham Coxon HMV Forum 020 7344 0044

Gravenhurst/Neil Halstead/Fairwell St Pancras Old Church

The Mercy House Barfly 0870 907 0999

The Modern Ovens/Arrows Of Love The Waiting Room 020 7241 5511

Naives/My Elastic Eyes/Youth Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478

Nedry The Lexington 020 7837 5387  
Of Montreal KOKO 020 7388 3222

One Night Only Garage 020 7607 1818  
Red Kite Club Surya 020 7713 6262

Scritti Politti Bush Hall 020 8222 6955  
Sissy & The Blisters/Arrows Of Love Strongroom Bar

The Sunshine Underground XOYO 020 7729 5959

The Unthanks/Jonny Kearney & Lucy Farrell Tabernacle 020 7243 4343

Wolves Like Us Borderline 020 7734 5547

The Magnetic Fields Royal Festival Hall 020 7960 4242

The 1930s Slaughtered Lamb 020 8682 4080

### MANCHESTER

Big Sir/Juan Alderete Sound Control 0161 236 0340

Dot Rotten HMV Ritz 0161 236 4355  
Foster The People Manchester Academy 0161 832 1111

The Used HMV Ritz 0161 236 4355  
Various Cruelties Ruby Lounge 0161 834 1392

### NEWCASTLE

Conor Maynard O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000

### NORWICH

Deaf Havana Waterfront 01603 632 717

### NOTTINGHAM

Drake Capital FM Arena 0115 948 4526

Kyle Eastwood Band Glee Club 0871 472 0400

Ryan Adams Royal Centre 0115 948 2525

### OXFORD

Bastille Jericho Tavern 01865 311 775

### PLYMOUTH

Professor Green Pavilions 01752 229922

### SHEFFIELD

Simone Felice/Siml Stone Lantern Theatre 0114 255 1776

Straight Lines Corporation 0114 276 0262

### ST ALBANS

Wideboy Generation Horn 01727 853 143

### SWANSEA

Sylosis Sin City 01792654226

### WOLVERHAMPTON

Paradise Lost Slade Room 0870 320 7000



DAM DENNISON, TOM MARTIN, ANDY BRAMMALL, GUY EPPLE, ANDY WILLISHER, JAMES QUINTON, BEN CANNON



## THURSDAY

April 26



## ABERDEEN

**Chris T-T/She Makes War** Cellar 35  
01224 640 483

## BATH

**Foxes Moles** 01225 404445

## BELFAST

**Russian Circles** Queens University  
028 9097 3106

## BIRMINGHAM

**Bastille** Rainbow 0121 772 8174

**Karlina Francis** Glee Club

0870 241 5093

**The Used** O2 Academy 2

0870 477 2000

## BOLTON

**Ex-More/Ten by Ten** Railway Venue

01204 306 450

## BOURNEMOUTH

**Newton Faulkner** Old Fire Station

01202 503888

## BRIGHTON

**Au Sticky Mike's** Frog Bar

01273 749 465

**Ezlo** Komedia 01273 647 100

**Of Montreal** Concorde 2 01273 673 311

**The Sunshine Underground** The

Haunt 01273 770 847

## BRISTOL

**Medry** Croft (Main Room)

0117 987 4144

**Ozric Tentacles** Fleece

0117 945 0996

**Palma Violets** Thekla 08713 100000

**Tricky** O2 Academy 0870 477 2000

**Various Cruelties** Thekla

08713 100000

## CARDIFF

**Kysheira/Henry's Funeral Shoe** Clwb

Ifor Bach 029 2023 2199

**Seann Walsh** Glee Club 0870 241 5093

## EXETER

**MXPX/The Cut Ups/Cancer** Cavern

Club 01392 495 370

## GLASGOW

**Ryan Adams** Royal Concert Hall

0141 353 8000

## LEEDS

**Alexandra Burke/Stooshe/Lonsdale**

**Boys Club** University 0113 244 4600

**Kwes** Brudenell Social Club

0113 243 5866

**The Mexanines** Empire 01132 420868

## LIVERPOOL

**Catfish & The Bottlemen** O2

Academy 2 0870 477 2000

**Placebo** Olympia Theatre

0151 263 6633

**Tellison** Shipping Forecast

0151 709 6901

## LONDON

**All We Are** The Waiting Room

020 7241 5511

**The Antlers** O2 Shepherds Bush

Empire 0870 771 2000

**Cosmo Jarvis** Purple Turtle

020 7383 4976

**Deaf Havana** Electric Ballroom

020 7485 9006

**The Dillinger** Escape Plan Garage

020 7607 1818

**Greg Holden** St Pancras Old Church

**The Heathers** Barfly 0870 907 0999

**The History Of Apple Pie/Pale Seas**

CAMP Basement 0871 230 1094

**Julia Stone** Old Shoreditch Station

020 7729 5188

**Kites/Look Stranger!** Garage

(Upstairs) 0871 230 1094

**Little Comets** Scala 020 7833 2022

**Reachback/Mind** Club Surya

020 7713 6262

**Rive/The Dirty Lows** New Cross Inn

020 8692 1866

**Santigold** Heaven 020 7930 2020

**We Are The In Crowd/Every Avenue**

O2 Academy Islington 0870 477 2000

## MANCHESTER

**Kay Moho** Live 0161 834 8180

**Miles Kane** Manchester Academy

0161 832 1111

**The Musgraves** Roadhouse

0161 228 1789

**New Order** O2 Apollo 0870 401 8000

**Strangers/Mad Colours** Trof

Fallowfield 0161 224 0467

**SPTFYR** Venue 0161 236 0026

**Tracer** Academy 3 0161 832 1111

## MILTON KEYNES

**Laish** Stables 01908 280800

## NEWCASTLE

**Calais** Thrillians 0191 232 1619

**Of Mice And Men/Bury Tomorrow**

O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000

## NORWICH

**Feeder** Waterfront 01603 632 717

**Lazy Habits** Arts Centre

01603 660 352

**Lewis Floyd** Henry Bicycle Shop

01603 625 777

## NOTTINGHAM

**Example/Wretch 32** Capital FM

Arena 0115 948 4526

**Paradise Lost** Rescue Rooms

0115 958 8484

## OXFORD

**Adam Riches/Sheeps** Glee Club

0871 472 0400

## PLYMOUTH

**Sylosis** White Rabbit 01752 227522

## PORTSMOUTH

**One Night Only** Wedgewood Rooms

023 9286 3911

## SHEFFIELD

**Cate Le Bon** Harley 0114 275 2288

## SOUTHAMPTON

**Straight Lines** Unit 02380 225612

## WOLVERHAMPTON

**My Great Affliction** Slade Room

0870 320 7000

## FRIDAY

April 27

## BATH

**The Shutes Moles** 01225 404445

## BELFAST

**The Subways/Royal Republic/Turbowolf** Lumelight 028 9032 5942

## BIRMINGHAM

**The Chakras** Rainbow 0121 772 8174

## BOLTON

**Sinnergod/Gravestars** Railway Venue

01204 306 450

## BOURNEMOUTH

**Fiction** 60 Million Postcards

01202 292 697

## BRIGHTON

**Blood Red Shoes/The Cast Of Cheers**

Concorde 2 01273 673 311

**Dan Mangan** The Hope 01273 723 568

**Factory Star** Green Door Store

07894 267 053

## BRISTOL

**Chris Murray** Croft (Main Room)

0117 987 4144

**Gravenhurst** Grain Barge

0117 929 9347

**Miles Kane** O2 Academy

0870 477 2000

## CARDIFF

**The Brute Chorus** Buffalo Bar

02920 310312

**Deaf Havana** Solus 0871 230 1094

**Feeder** Coal Exchange 029 2049 4917

**Rizzle Kicks** Cardiff University SU

## CHELMSFORD

**The Drawbacks** Hooga

01245 356 811

## COVENTRY

**One Night Only** Kasbah

024 7655 4473

## DERBY

**Modern Faces** Victoria Inn

01332 204 873

## DISS

**Electric Youth** Revolt/Jilted

**Generation** Park Hotel 01379 642244

## DUNDEE

**Little Kicks** Doghouse 01382 227080

## DUNOON

**Ivan Dreyer** Band The Braes

01369701213

## EDINBURGH

**Chris T-T** Banshee Labyrinth

0131 558 8209

**Finding Albert/Miasma** The Caves

0131 557 8989

**Numbers** Sneaky Pete's 0131 225 1757

## GLASGOW

**Close Lobsters** Stereo 0141 576 5018

**Kay Pivo** Pivo 0141 564 8100

## GLOUCESTER

**Graham Coxon** Guildhall Arts Centre

01452 503050

## LEEDS

**Boxes** Cockpit 0113 244 3446

**Catfish & The Bottlemen** Milo

0113 245 7101

**Dry The River** Brudenell Social Club

0113 243 5866

**Professor Green** O2 Academy

0870 477 2000

**Trembling Bells/Bonnie Prince Billy**

Hyde Park Club 0113 293 0109

## LIVERPOOL

**All Ingle** Shipping Forecast

0151 709 6901

**Charlene Sorela** University

0151 256 5555

**Lonsdale Boys Club** O2 Academy 2

0870 477 2000

## LONDON

**Chicane** KOKO 020 7388 3222



**Example/Wretch 32** O2

0870 701 4444

**Foster** The People O2 Academy

Brixton 0870 477 2000

**Holy Esque** Barfly 0870 907 0999

**Kissy Sell Out** XOYO 020 7729 5959

**Losers/Mr Fogg** Club NME @ Koko

0870 4325527

**Mean Bikini/Half Light** Famous

Three Kings 0207 603 6071

**RNC** Club Surya 020 7713 6262

**The See See/The Tambourines** The

Lexington 020 7837 5387

**Simone Felice/Siml** Stone Bush Hall

020 8222 6955

**The Smoking Hearts** Electrowerkz

020 7837 6419

**Tribes** O2 Shepherds Bush Empire

0870 771 2000

**Trim** The Barber Silver Bullet

020 7619 3639

**Visions Of Trees/Paper Cranes/**

**The Voyeurist** The Waiting Room

020 7241 5511

## MANCHESTER

**Electricity In Our Homes** Band On

The Wall 0161 832 6625

**New Order** O2 Apollo 0870 401 8000

**Paradise Lost** Club Academy

0161 832 1111

**The Slow Readers Club/The**

**Hidden Revolution** Ruby Lounge

0161 834 1392

**The Magnetic Fields/Tender Trap**

Royal Northern College Of Music

0161 273 6283

**2ManyDJs** Sankey's 0161 661 9668

## NEWCASTLE

**Lostprophets/Modestep** O2

Academy 0870 477 2000

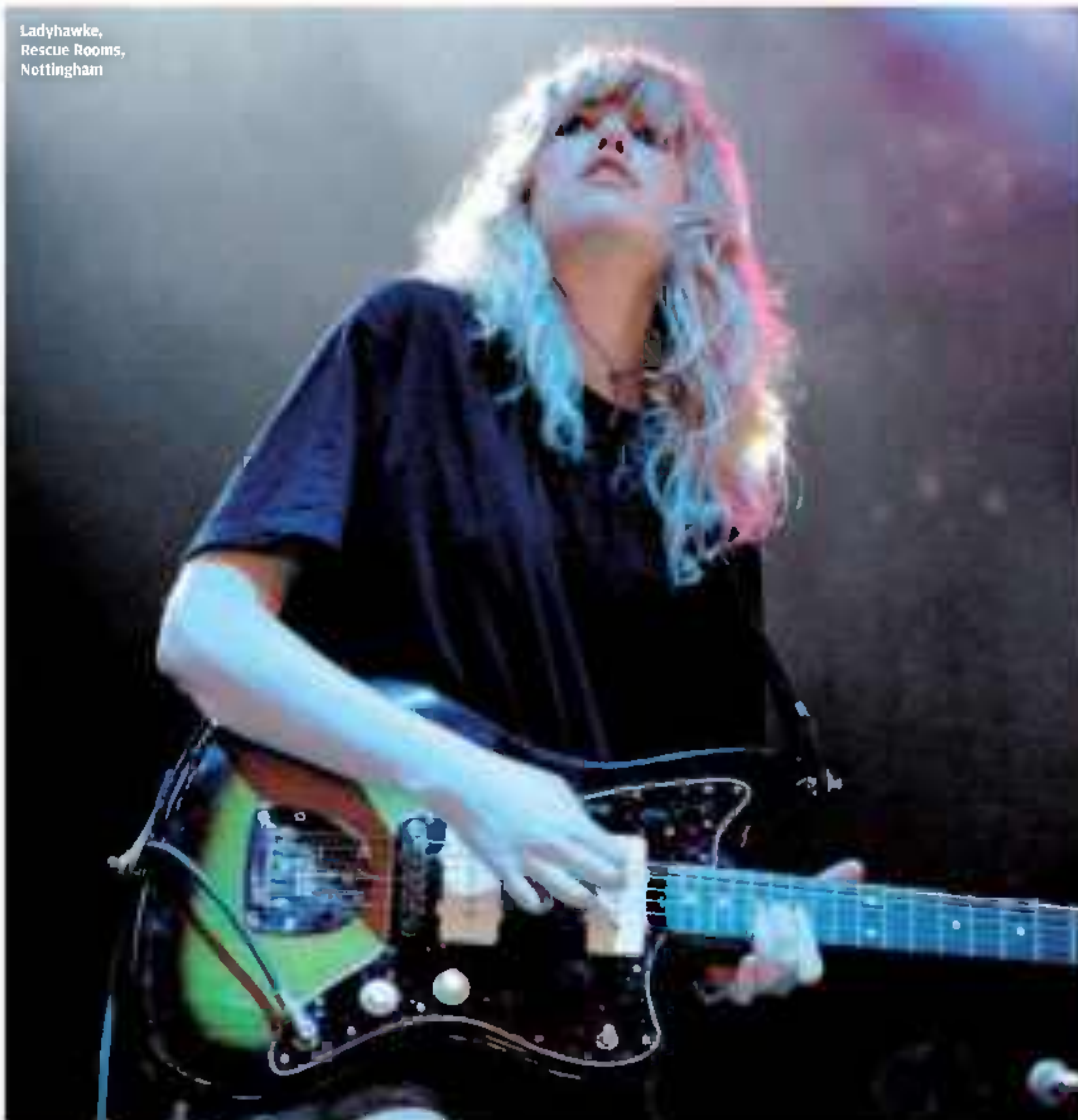
## NORWICH



## SATURDAY

April 28

Ladyhawke,  
Rescue Rooms,  
Nottingham



## ABERDEEN

Annie Mac/Toddla T Forum  
01224 633336

## BATH

Bastille Moles 01225 404445

## BIRMINGHAM

Mindless Behaviour HMV Institute  
(Library) 0844 248 5037

## BOURNEMOUTH

Fire Island Pines/Saturday Sunday  
60 Million Postcards 01202 292 697

## BRIGHTON

Laura Gibson Komedia 01273 647 100  
Little Comets The Haunt  
01273 770 847

## BRISTOL

Graham Coxon Trinity 01179 351 200  
Simone Felice/Simi Stone Colston  
Hall 0117 922 3683  
Imperial Leisure Thekla  
08713 100000

## CAMBRIDGE

The Staves Portland Arms  
01223 357268

## CARDIFF

Cate Le Bon The Prinhaus

Lostprophets/Modestep Motorpoint  
Arena 029 2022 4488

## CARLISLE

The Sun Explodes/Our Famous  
Dead Brickyard 01228 512 220

## GLASGOW

Hip Parade/Versus Versus King Tut's  
Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

## HULL

Imelda May/The Caezars City Hall  
01482 226655

## LEEDS

The Sunshine Underground  
Metropolitan University  
0113 283 2600

## LIVERPOOL

Rizzle Kicks O2 Academy  
0870 477 2000  
Vasca Da Gama/New Hips Shipping  
Forecast 0151 709 6901

## LONDON

Ane Brun/Gemma Ray O2 Shepherd's  
Bush Empire 0870 771 2000  
Animal Circus Barfly 0870 907 0999  
Big Sir/Holy Esque Old Blue Last  
020 7613 2478

Bombay Bicycle Club/Lianne La  
Havas Alexandra Palace 020 8365 2121

The Butterfly Culture Garage  
(Upstairs) 0871 230 1094

Foster The People O2 Academy  
Brixton 0870 477 2000

Machine Rex/Concrete Lung  
Electrowerkz 020 7837 6419

Miles Kane HMV Forum  
020 7344 0044

The Moonjets Club Surya  
020 7713 6262

## MANCHESTER

The Colours Dry Bar 0161 236 9920  
Dan Mangan/Zeus The Castle  
0161 237 9485

Example/Wretch 32 MEN Arena  
Nedry Deaf Institute 0161 330 4019

## NEWCASTLE

Dry The River Cluny 0191 230 4474

## NORWICH

Meltdown/Wraith Waterfront  
01603 632 717

## NOTTINGHAM

Dollar Bill Spanky Van Dykes  
0115 924 3730

Ladyhawke Rescue Rooms

0115 958 8484

Palma Violets Stealth 08713 100000

## OXFORD

Caravan Of Whores Wheatstear

01865 721 156

Clock Opera Cellar 01865 244 761

Skeleton O2 Academy

0870 477 2000

## PORTSMOUTH

Blood Red Shoes/The Cast Of Cheers

Wedgewood Rooms 023 9286 39

Ezio Cellars 0871 230 1094

## PRESTON

The Paris Riots Mad Ferret

07919 896 636

## SHEFFIELD

Calals/The Vertigos O2 Academy 2

0870 477 2000

Tracer Plug 0114 276 7093

## SOUTHAMPTON

Hoodlums Lennons 023 8057 0460

Rufus Stone Joiners 023 8022 5612

## SWANSEA

Karlina Francis Sin City  
01792654226

## SUNDAY

April 29

## BATH

Trembling Bells/Bonnie

Prince Billy Chapel Arts Centre

0122 5404445

## BIRMINGHAM

The Staves Glee Club 0870 241 5093

## BRIGHTON

Clock Opera/Fiction Green Door

Store 07894 267 053

The Dead Lay Waiting The Hydrant

01273 608 313

Juan Zelada Komedia

01273 647 100

Rizzle Kicks Dome 01273 709709

## BRISTOL

Hello Lazarus/Gunslinger Fleece

0117 945 0996

Malicious Intent Croft (Front Bar)

0117 987 4144

## CARDIFF

The Subways/Royal Republic/

Turbowolf Cardiff University SU

## EDINBURGH

Matthew Dear Sneaky Pete's

0131 225 1757

## EXETER

Graham Coxon Phoenix

01392 667080

## GLASGOW

Dan Mangan Stereo 0141 576 5018

Kob! Onyame King Tut's Wah Wah

Hut 0141 221 5279

## LEEDS

Tribes Cockpit 0113 244 3446

## LONDON

Alex The Great/I Am A Pilot/Will

And The People Hoxton Square Bar

and Kitchen 020 7613 0709

Foster The People O2 Academy

Brixton 0870 477 2000

Lewis Floyd Henry Club Surya

020 7713 6262

The Monochrome Set Dingwalls

020 7267 1577

Painted As Saints Powers Bar

0207 624 6026

Paradise Lost Scala 020 7833 2022

Rufus Wainwright/Martha

Wainwright Indigo The O2 Arena

0870 701 4444

Stash/Zombie Met Girl New Cross

Inn 020 8692 1866

The Used O2 Academy Islington

0870 477 2000

## MANCHESTER

Brown Brogues/Sex Hands

Common Bar 0161 832 9245

## NEWCASTLE

Little Comets Northumbria

University

Lonsdale Boys Club University

0191 261 2606

Sylosis O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000

## NOTTINGHAM

Chuck Prophet & The Mission

Express Maze 0115 947 5650

New Order Ballroom

## OXFORD

Blood Red Shoes/The Cast Of Cheers

O2 Academy 0870 477 2000

Karlina Francis Jericho Tavern

01865 311 775

## PORTSMOUTH

Slow Club Wedgewood Rooms

023 9286 3911

## SOUTHAMPTON

The Lost Souls Club The Cellar

023 8071 0648

## STOKE-ON-TRENT

Of Mice And Men Sugarmill

01782 214 991

## WOLVERHAMPTON

Professor Green Civic Hall

01902 552121



Slow Club,  
Wedgewood  
Rooms,  
Portsmouth

## GET IN THE GIG GUIDE!

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



## MONDAY

April 30

Lostprophets,  
Rock City,  
Nottingham



## BOURNEMOUTH

Example/Wretch 32 BIC  
01202 456400

## BRISTOL

Dry The River Fleece  
0117 945 0996

## EDINBURGH

Ladyhawke The Liquidroom  
0131 225 2564

## EXETER

Trembling Bells/Bonnie Prince Billy  
Phoenix 01392 667080

## GATESHEAD

Imelda May Sage Arena  
0870 703 4555

## GLASGOW

Boxes Arches 0141 221 4001  
Lonsdale Boys Club King Tut's Wah  
Wah Hut 0141 221 5279  
Tribes Oran Mor 0141 552 9224

## LEEDS

Simone Felice/Simi Stone Brudenell  
Social Club 0113 243 5866

## LONDON

Blitches/The Doctrines Old Blue Last  
020 7613 2478  
Club Smith Barfly 0870 907 0999  
Fairwell/Youngusband/Echo Lake  
Social 020 7636 4992  
Hanne Hukkelberg The Lexington  
020 7837 5387  
Matthew Dear Hoxton Square Bar  
and Kitchen 020 7613 0709  
Patrick Watson St Stephen's Church  
Rufus Wainwright Lyceum  
0870 606 3448  
Russian Circles Scala 020 7833 2022  
Thriller HMV Forum 020 7344 0044  
Trudi Moslamo New Cross Inn  
020 8692 1866

## NORWICH

Paradise Lost Waterfront  
01603 632 717

## NOTTINGHAM

Lostprophets/Modestep Rock City  
08713 100000

## OXFORD

Joy Orbison Bullingdon Arms  
01865 244516

## PORTSMOUTH

Clock Opera Registry  
023 9288 2981  
The Staves Wedgewood Rooms  
023 9286 3911

## SHEFFIELD

Chuck Prophet & The Mission  
Express Greystones 0114 266 5599

## SOUTHAMPTON

Slow Club Joiners 023 8022 5612  
The Swellers Unit 02380 225612

## TUESDAY

May 1

## BELFAST

Bombay Bicycle Club Queens  
University 028 9097 3106

Charlene Sorala Stiff Kitten  
028 9023 8700

Howler Oh Yeah Music Centre  
028 90 110 845

## BIRMINGHAM

Example/Wretch 32 NIA  
0121 780 4133

Team Me Rainbow 0121 772 8174

## BOURNEMOUTH

The Subways/Royal Republic Old  
Fire Station 01202 503888

## BRIGHTON

Hold Your Horse Is Green Door Store  
07894 267 053

Patrick Watson Komedia  
01273 647 100

## BRISTOL

Blood Red Shoes/The Cast Of  
Cheers Trinity 01179 351 200

Of Mice And Men/Bury Tomorrow  
Fleece 0117 945 0996

Weird Dreams Start The Bus  
0117 930 4370

## CAMBRIDGE

Lostprophets/Modestep Corn  
Exchange 01223 357851

## CARDIFF

Lonsdale Boys Club Chwylfor Bach  
029 2023 2199

## EXETER

Slow Club Cavern Club 01392 495 370

## GATESHEAD

Ladyhawke Sage Arena  
0870 703 4555

## GLASGOW

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

Oneohtrix Point Never  
Berkeley Suite

## LEEDS

Chuck Prophet & The Mission  
Express Brudenell Social Club

0113 243 5866

## LIVERPOOL

Iceage Shipping Forecast  
0151 709 6901

Sylosis O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000

## LONDON

Flats 100 Club 020 7636 0933

Newton Faulkner Scala 020 7833 2022

Nought/Listing Ships 93 Feet East  
020 7247 6095

Of Monsters And Men

Hoxton Square Bar and Kitchen  
020 7613 0709

Proxies Garage (Upstairs)  
0871 230 1094

Simple Plan/We The Kings HMV  
Forum 020 7344 0044

The Staves Tabernacle

020 7243 4343

Such Gold Barfly 0870 907 0999

White Rabbits XOYO

020 7729 5959

## MANCHESTER

Boxes/My First Tooth/Tiny Planets

Ruby Lounge 0161 834 1392

Little Night Terrors Night & Day Cafe  
0161 236 1822

Tribes Academy 2 0161 832 1111

## NEWCASTLE

Chris Murray Trillians 0191 232 1619

Dan Mangan Cluny 0191 230 4474

## NOTTINGHAM

Imelda May/The Caezars Royal  
Centre 0115 948 2525

## OXFORD

The Rapture O2 Academy  
0870 477 2000

## PORTSMOUTH

Alkaline Trio Pyramids

023 9235 8608

## SHEFFIELD

Skream University 0114 222 8777

Howler, Oh Yeah Music  
Centre, Belfast









# 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+9A** Set-piece kick at Wembley Stadium for those football Tribes (6-2-2-7-5)  
**8** Australian citizen who was born Wouter De Backer in Belgium, 1980 (5)  
**9** (See 1 across)  
**10** Former member of The Smashing Pumpkins taken in by Gen Halliwell (3)  
**11** Put some clothes on, PJ Harvey is making her debut (5)  
**12** "We all live in the space age, coming down with \_\_\_\_\_, racing through the best days", 1998 (4-4)  
**14** (See 13 down)  
**17+22A** Looking once more to take in SCUM (5-4 4)  
**19** (See 7 down)  
**21** A pure pleasure to include a Röyksopp number (4)  
**22** (See 17 across)  
**23+31D** A hit single of excessive proportions for Suzi Quatro in 1974 (3-3)  
**24** "Yellow matter custard, dripping from a dead dog's \_\_\_\_\_", from The Beatles' 'I Am The Walrus' (3)  
**25** 'Let's Make Love And Listen To Death From Above' with Brazilians (3)  
**27** (See 30 down)  
**29** Albums 'Houses Of The \_\_\_\_\_' by Led Zeppelin or 'The \_\_\_\_\_ Pictures' by David Holmes (4)  
**31** 'Reggatta De \_\_\_\_\_' was a Number One album for The Police (5)  
**32** Some milk or ovaltine at Echo And The Bunnymen's first record label (6)  
**33** White Lies' member going underground (4)  
**34** Pink Floyd's 'The Piper At The \_\_\_\_\_ Of Dawn' (5)

### CLUES DOWN

- 1** Grammy award-winning rock band in 2001 for their number 'With Arms Wide Open' (5)  
**2+8D** Gregory glad about this Neil Young album (6-5)  
**3** Did this Swell Maps' member perform film music in a huge way? (4-11)  
**4** New Order spin-off group not comprising Bernard Sumner or Peter Hook (5-3)  
**5** Their '60s hits included 'We Gotta Get Out Of This Place' (7)  
**6** "I'm not scared, light my candles in a daze, 'cos I've found \_\_\_\_\_", from Nirvana's 'Lithium' (3)

- 7+19A** Incidentally, this was a hit for The Red Hot Chili Peppers (2-3-3)  
**8** (See 2 down)  
**10** Andrew WK album very much puts a dampener on me (1-3-3)  
**13+14A** Turns out a nasty week for this rapper (5-4)  
**15** Siouxsie And The Banshees' debut album was a work of art, but not as valuable as a similarly titled artwork (3-6)  
**16** Young The Giants' personal physique (2-4)  
**18+28D** Band whose first two studio albums were titled 'Greatest Hits' and 'Anthology' (5-3-4)  
**20** The only language to include an Oasis song (4)  
**26** Liverpoolians last heard of playing at 'The Corner Of Miles And Gil' (5)  
**28** (See 18 down)  
**30+27A** A special relationship with group that had '60s number one 'Everlasting Love' (4 6)  
**31** (See 23 across)

Normal NME terms and conditions apply, available at [NME.COM/terms](http://NME.COM/terms). Simply cut out the crossword and send it, along with your name, address and email, marking the envelope with the issue date, before Tuesday, May 1, 2012, to: Crossword, NME, 9th Floor, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU.

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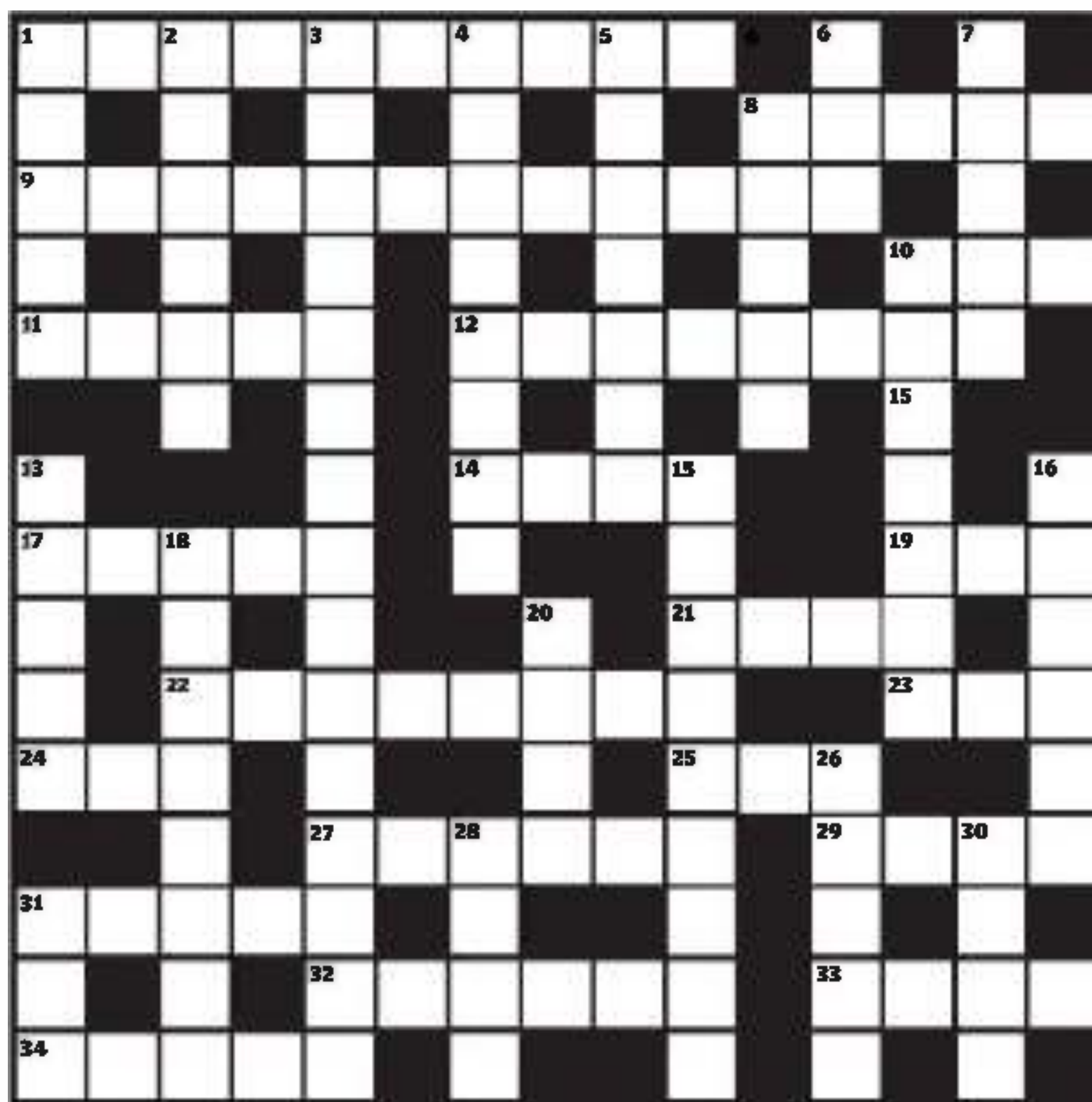
### MARCH 31 ANSWERS

#### ANSWERS ACROSS

- 1** Nothing To Do, **7** Mr M, **9+10A** We Were Children, **12** Eurodisco, **14** Maher, **15** Eric Clapton, **18** Violator, **21** Jet, **23** Linkin Park, **25** Boon, **26+27A** Brian Eno, **28** Town, **29** Ying, **31** LSF, **32+33A** The Great Test

#### ANSWERS DOWN

- 1** Nowheresville, **2+19D** Tower Of Power, **3** I Predict A Riot, **4+17A** Go! Team, **5+31D** Ooh La, **6** Only Man, **7** Morphine, **8** Manfred Mann, **11** Asia, **13** Otto, **16** I Found Out, **17** The Bay, **20** Orb, **22** Tonite, **24** Krust, **30** Git



## COLLECTORS' CORNER THE FUTUREHEADS

Call yourself a superfan? Here are the gems that no Futureheads obsessive should be without



### FIRST DAY (2013)



The band's first single proper came after the release of two limited-edition EPs. It became their first chart entry, reaching 58, and made the tracklisting for their eponymous 2004 debut album. As well as a CD release, two seven-inch singles were released on red vinyl, limited to just 500 copies each.

**Need To Know:** One of the B-sides is a cover of Neil Young's 1994 track 'Piece Of Crap', which the band performed regularly in their early live sets.

### DECENT DAYS AND NIGHTS (SHY CHILD REMIX) (2005)



The Futureheads' first UK Top 40 hit was reworked by the US duo for a special reason - it was initially released as a single in conjunction with a publication called T Mag in order to raise funds for Oxfam. The 10-inch vinyl was split with Bloc Party, whose Black Strobe remix of 'Like Eating Glass' appeared on the other side.

**Need To Know:** The Futureheads also went busking on the London Underground for Oxfam in 2006.

### AREA EP (2005)



Bridging the gap between albums one and two, the band put this EP out in late 2005. The title track and big fan favourite is about "how crap it is to be burgled", guitarist Ross Millard told NME at the time. He also added that the band were speaking from personal experience, having all been victims of robbery at some point in their lives.

**Need To Know:** 'Area' was premiered by the band while performing on the 2005 Shockwaves NME Awards Tour.

### CHRISTMAS WAS BETTER IN THE 80'S



(2010) Nostalgic Christmas single that was released to coincide with the band's tenth anniversary celebrations. The retro-themed video featured family snapshots and home videos from the '80s, as well as popular toys, including a Rubik's Cube.

**Need To Know:** A Facebook campaign was launched to get the track to Number One over the festive period. However, The X Factor winner Matt Cardle's 'When We Collide' was not troubled by it in the end.



# FANMAIL

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

Edited by Priya Elan



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NME.COM/BLOGS

## The Big Issue

What everyone's talking about this week



### LETTER OF THE WEEK

## BLURRING INTO THE SUNSET

From: Damien

To: NME

I just wanted to write to you and voice my annoyance. Damon Albarn has said that the Hyde Park shows will be Blur's last and I'm bloody pissed off. Why? Well because since 2009 they've dangled the impossibly massive musical carrot in front of our noses in the shape of a new album and have not delivered. Sure 'Fool's Day' (surely a joke on Blur fans?) and 'Under The Westway' have been nice and all but we want a proper follow-up to '13' (I'm not counting the pretty much Coxon-free 'Think Tank') don't we? Fans have waited so long for the quartet to get together again and I can't bear the thought that they're just going to be playing 'the hits' instead of being shipped off into a studio to record a new album. Having been to nearly all of their comeback shows, I can testify that they still have the kind of amazing chemistry most younger bands would kill for. How dare Damon say that he finds it easy to record with Graham but harder to play with Alex and Dave because they're not "daily musicians"? He's clearly lying. I say to him: 'Why don't you try a little bit harder, Damon?' Fans have invested too much in this Blur reunion to see it just flutter away into nothingness.

#### NME's response...

Throughout his career Damon has always known his own mind. That he wants to stop short of a new Blur album tells us that he's decided to end the second act of their career on a high note,

instead of choosing to tarnish their memory.

Let's get real: Damon could rattle off material like 'Fool's Day' and 'Under The Westway' in his sleep. Clearly these four people weren't going

to create another 'Girls & Boys' (or even 'Music Is My Radar'), so while we're sad that our recurring dream about Blur's new dubstep direction will never come true (we had it again last night – must quit the

midnight pizzas...), we're happy we didn't get a rubbish Blur album – PE

Winners should email [letters@nme.com](mailto:letters@nme.com) to claim their limited-edition Sonic Editions print

### OUT OF TIME

From: Allister Findlay

To: NME

To be honest, I've never given much of a shit about Blur (they seemed to be the type of band posh twats who play lots of tennis like). But I'm heartbroken by the news that Damon Albarn isn't going to make more Gorillaz music. For over a decade they've been the most musically progressive band out there, mixing indie and urban music with a skill few others have managed. Their last single with LCD Soundsystem and him out of OutKast was an astonishing triple-header. Damon says he's at "cross purposes" with co-founder Jamie Hewlett, but surely that's not a real problem? He's only the one who does the drawings, isn't he? Surely he can get someone else in to do those?!

From: Humphrey Broster

To: NME

Oh Damon, what have you done? No more Blur? Are you joking? Why do you think we've spent years suffering through boring operas, attention-stretching Mali Music and dumb old collaborations? BECAUSE WE LIKE THE SOUND OF BEL BLOODY CANTO? No, Damon, it is not. We indulged these side-projects, Damo, because we were under the assumption that you'd just get these out of your system in time for a new Blur album. And now you're saying no? Well, frankly, you can shove it. I'm not shelling out more cash on your indulgences.

From: Caroline Parsons

To: NME

I'd just like to say how glad I am that Blur will be no more. After witnessing their Brit Awards performance, I think

that it's a good time to close the door on their comeback. For a long-term fan like myself, there was nothing more depressing than watching these four fortysomethings tottering uncomfortably onstage like they'd rather be penning a column in *The Daily Telegraph* about the congestion charge than playing together. Thank goodness Damon's nipped it in the bud in time to keep the last vestiges of dignity.

From: Ellie Hawkings

To: NME

Does the monolithic power of Adele have no end in sight? After Blur's Brits speech ran over and she couldn't finish hers, has she somehow used her sad song omnipresence to cut Blur's comeback short? Has the all-reigning cockney put the final nail in the Blur coffin by just being bloody everywhere?

From: NME

To: Alister; Humphrey; Caroline; Ellie

Looks like everyone has a different take on this one. I'll just add that Humphrey, do yourself a favour and skip the 18-track long 'Dr Dee' album and Ellie, yes, good idea: let's blame Adele for everything. The economic downtown, Syria, the fiver I lost on the tube... her cruelty knows no bounds – PE

### RAPPERGRAMS: THE FUTURE

From: Simon Ashby

To: NME

For me, the use of Tupac as a hologram at Snoop's set at Coachella is out of order – just more moneymaking from a dead man.

From: Mark

To: NME

Tupac's return at Coachella was completely nuts. I've



watched it several hundred times on YouTube now, and still can't believe how good it is! Who next?! I wanna see Richey Manic back onstage, for sure. Amy Winehouse, Keith Moon and - oh yes - The Beatles. Oh, and maybe Nirvana too, if that isn't a little too cheeky... Holograms are the future.

**From: NME**  
**To: Simon; Mark**  
 Doesn't it seem a little weird that, just a few weeks after Sonisphere bit the bullet and avoided hosting Adam Lambert's most misjudged festival headliner spot ever, Coachella's talking point was the reappearance of Tupac? Perhaps if the hologram dudes had worked their magic on Freddie...? - PE

## MORE 'SMILES'

**From: Daniel**  
**To: NME**  
 "Lily Allen comes out of retirement?" Say it ain't so! Surely she's had the most fake, rubbish retirement since Cher, when she did a farewell tour and then reappeared approximately two minutes later with a *another* farewell tour? For anyone who's not been under a rock for the last couple of years, Allen's "leaving the music industry to move to the country and have babies" has consisted of: doing a reality show, opening a shop, writing music, being on Twitter practically the whole



## STALKER

**From: Patrick Farrell**  
**To: NME**  
 "I met Ryan behind the Relentless Garage before a Cribz gig. They were doing an interview in a field"

time and somehow managing to be in the gossip pages of the tabloids every other day. So when people say (which they tend to do in these situations) "don't call it a comeback" really don't, because it's not. Seriously.

**From: Mia**  
**To: NME**  
 Hurrah! I'm so, so bloody happy that Lily Allen's going to start making music again. I was listening to 'Alright, Still' and 'It's Not Me, It's You' again and they are two of the most catchy, clever pop albums of the last decade. Seriously, there's been no solo act to match her (with the exception of Plan B) who has come up and managed to mix hummable tracks with lyrics that make you think. The likes of Adele and Marina may have tried, but they've done nothing as magical as

# Web Slings

The highlight of this week's NME.COM blogs

## PEOPLE WHO TALK AT GIGS! THE UNIVERSE HATES YOU

I have a huge, huge problem with people talking at gigs, which is about to become abundantly clear. Sometimes I think it's my issue to deal with - I know I can't tell people how to behave or how to enjoy themselves - but it's so difficult for me to understand why someone would pay good money to see a band and then jabber all the way through their set. I know not everyone stands motionless like me, wearing the same facial expression whether they're having the time of my life or slowly dying on the inside, but if you're not enjoying a set, why ruin it for everyone within shouting distance? Read Andy Welch's article in full at [NME.COM/blogs/nw](http://NME.COM/blogs/nw)



### Best of the responses...

Couldn't agree with you more! I paid £50 to see RHCP in November and some guy felt the need to talk through the first two songs! Thankfully the Peppers played loud so it didn't ruin it.  
**Helen Henderson**

What annoys me is when you've got a decent place for a band, sometimes by getting there an hour early, and someone pushes ahead and just stands in front of you. When you're S1t 7, it's no fun and no fair.  
**Mark White**

What about people who film the whole thing, showing their phone/camera right in your line of vision. Grrrr.  
**Amanda Roberts**

I honestly don't know why some people go, you can

see they are not interested in the artist. Throwing piss/beer and mobile phones are annoying too... In fact if I think it may be a concert where throwing piss takes place I vote with my feet :-(  
**Chris Morris**

'The Fear' or 'The Littlest Things', have they?

**From: NME**  
**To: Daniel; Mia**  
 You're both right. Lily's been pretty rubbish about keeping out of the public eye. For someone who bangs on about hating the glare of the spotlight, it feels like everything she's done over the last two years has been, um, in the spotlight. Still, that doesn't make us any less excited about her comeback and that's for one reason really: she's basically the best pop star we've got - PE

## KURT HURT

**From: Jennie McD**  
**To: NME**  
 I've just read that Eric Erlandson from Hole is writing a book about Kurt Cobain, and I have to say that it has left a really horrible taste in my mouth. Everyone is entitled to have their say but the concept of the book - a rag-bag "free association" of "poetry" and "prose" -

sounds like the most self-indulgent circle jerk of writing ever committed to paper. It doesn't take a genius to realise that this book got published because it used the name "Kurt Cobain" as its selling point. It's a damn shame that on what would have been his 45th birthday, his name is getting dragged through the mud like this.

### From: Justine Right

**To: NME**  
 Ugh, so just about the same time as Hole get back together, Eric Erlandson lets slip that Kurt Cobain had a secret solo album? Marketing *much*? I honestly doubt such an album exists - we already know about the planned collaboration with Michael Stipe (that never really got off the ground) don't we? After years of relative silence, I can't believe Eric has finally cashed in. No Courtney, it's not The Muppets who are "raping" Kurt's memory, it's your sometime bandmate.

**From: NME**  
**To: Jennie, Justin**  
 Points taken. But really, hasn't all this reminiscing led to one very positive outcome? Not only is Dave Grohl back in the studio with Krist Novoselic and Butch Vig, but what's more, the classic Hole line-up reunited after a screening of *Hit So Hard*, the documentary about drummer Patty Schemel. A screeching, clamorous and rather brilliant version of 'Miss World' that really puts those three back in a room together just makes everything else pale into insignificance - PE

## ODD FUTURE TAKE OVER NEWSNIGHT

**From: Henry K**  
**To: NME**  
 Possibly the most entertaining thing I've ever watched (and I'm including the last episode of *Man V Food* here) was Odd Future's appearance on *Newsnight*.



## STALKER

**From: Damon Locke**  
**To: NME**  
 "Me, Emma, Oliva and Jazmin met The Maccabees' Orlando and Felix at their afterparty at the Brixton gig!"

It contained more awkward comedy genius than everything Ricky Gervais has done in his whole career.

**From: NME**  
**To: Henry K**  
 We couldn't agree more. Our favourite moment was when the presenter questioned whether Odd Future paid taxes or not. That's YouTube gold, right there - PE

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# DOES ROCK'N'ROLL KILL BRAINCELLS?

TESTING MUSICIANS' MEMORIES AFTER A LIFETIME OF ABUSE

*This Week*

## GAZ COOMBES

### QUESTION 1

What two pieces of advice did Ali G give you when you performed 'Sun Hits The Sky' on Da Ali G Show in 2000?

"He said something about my sideburns. And he said I should try to dress a bit better; I looked like a tramp."

Correct. "Shave those burns, no-one ever got into the Top 10 looking like a monkey," and "just because your band is called Supertramp doesn't mean you need to dress like a homeless"



### QUESTION 2

How many of the 14 cover versions on your Hot Rats album 'Turn Ons' (below) are by British artists?

"I'm going to guess... 11?"

Correct. All but 'I Can't Stand It' by The Velvet Underground, 'The Crystal Ship' by The Doors and '(You Gotta Fight) For Your Right (To Party)' by the Beastie Boys

### QUESTION 3

What flavour ice-lolly is the lady licking on the front cover of your old band The Jennifers' 'Just Got Back Today' (right)?

"Strawberry."

Wrong. Orange. Or possibly some sort of peachy flavour

### QUESTION 4

Who changed the lyrics of Supergrass' 'Alright' to "We are old/We are cheap/ Take our teeth out when we sleep/Got no friends/Bad eyesight/ Feel like shite"?

"That was those two cheeky chaps Mark and Lard."

Correct. BBC Radio 1's Mark Radcliffe and Marc



Riley in their covers band, The Shirehorses

### QUESTION 5

What happens to Supergrass

drummer Danny Goffey's head at the end of the video (left) to 'Pumping On Your Stereo'?

"It's knocked off by a guitar and hits something."

Correct. It flies through the air and bangs the massive gong

### QUESTION 6

Why did Danny originally suggest that by calling your band Theodore Supergrass, you would never have to do any interviews with the press?

"Cos we'd have this freaky little cartoon character doing all our interviews in animated form. This was 10 years before Gorillaz."

Correct. Are you glad you didn't go down that road?

"Simply, yes."

### QUESTION 7

Steven Spielberg offered to make a Monkees-style TV show of Supergrass but you turned him down because you were busy making 1997's 'In It For The

Money'. What was Spielberg's biggest film of that year?

"Schindler's List?"

Wrong. Jurassic Park: The Lost World.

Schindler's List came out in 1993

"We went to the Amblin offices in Universal Studios to meet him. He's just an amazing chap but it just didn't feel right; we still had so much music to make. We all stand by that."

### QUESTION 8

How did Richard Hammond, James May and Jeremy Clarkson sabotage your performance of 'Richard III' on Comic Relief's Top Gear Of The Pops in 2007?

"Someone was throwing chickens. Someone started a wind machine. I can't remember what Clarkson was doing; I can't remember much of what Clarkson does."

Close enough. Correct. May threw live birds at you. Hammond started a giant fan. And Clarkson was in charge of the dry ice machine

### QUESTION 9

Why does the girl deliberately take a photo of your feet when her boyfriend spots you in the Toyota Yaris advert?

"He gets toast all over her car."

Correct



### QUESTION 10

What did train robber Ronnie Biggs say to you when you met him in Hollywood in 1996?

"Jeez. It's getting a bit too long ago now."

Wrong. He said, "I was frightened for my life when I heard there was a supergrass in the area"

"Good line!"

## Total Score

## 7/10

"I'm quite shocked, actually. I didn't know quite how many braincells I had left"





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the

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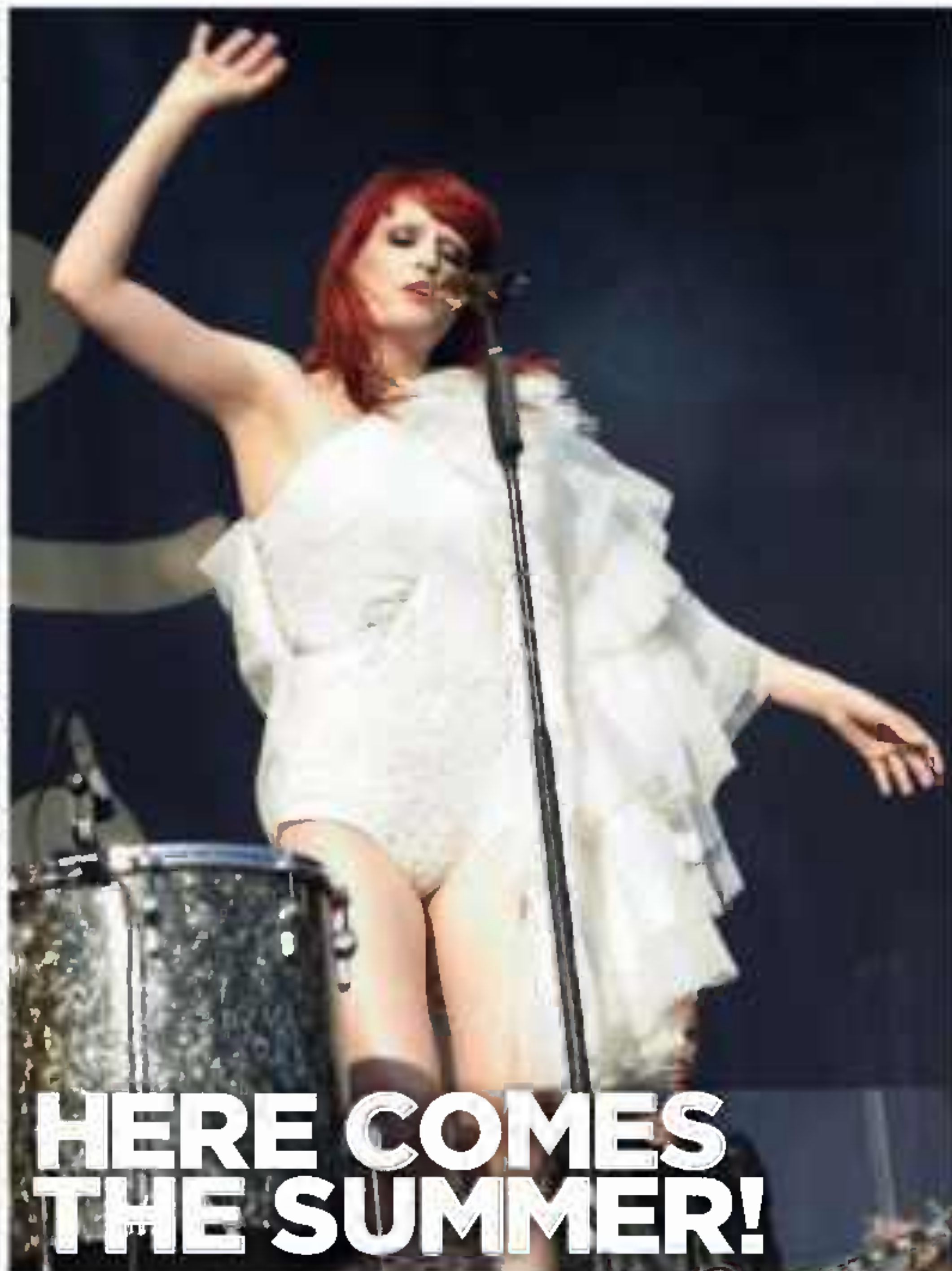


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**H**AVE YOU WORKED OUT WHERE YOU'RE SPENDING YOUR 2012 festival allowance yet? If not, hold that thought, pause that browser, and check this guide out. We've done some extensive research and racked up enough airmiles to give Greenpeace a heart attack, and sought out the 12 best European festivals this summer has to offer. From beachside raves to sprawling stages set in historic cities - and one on its own island - we've unearthed a bunch of ideas you might want to consider. They can all be reached within a couple of hours and for a comparable price to the UK alternatives, so take a peek and book some tickets pronto. We'll see you there...

**TIM CHESTER**

Head to [NME.COM/festivals](http://NME.COM/festivals) for a comprehensive guide to the summer's action, including details of coverage on NME Radio



# BURN SELECTOR FESTIVAL

June 1 – 2



Main pic: Magnetic Man bring the rave to Poland  
Above: Hands up if you're having a good time!

**H**OLD UP, SEND THIS PAGE back – someone's made a mistake. It says this festival's only £40. Wow. That's a pretty good price for 48 hours of top notch dance and world class electronica.

Burn Selector is back for 2012 with a better line-up than ever, from insane rave kids Chase & Status to eccentric knob-twiddler and wearer of excellent headwear Totally Enormous Extinct Dinosaurs, original firestarters Hadouken! and dubstep behemoths Magnetic Man. That's not all, though, there's a range of noises on offer for your delectation, from Niki & The Dove's charms to Miike Snow's alluring indie.

The three stages, including Cyan and Magenta, will host over 20 Polish artists too, giving you the chance to check out a whole new scene and expand that Spotify selection to much more sophisticated dimensions. Add to this multimedia arts across the site and you've got yourself one hell of a weekend.

It all takes place in the middle of Krakow, a charming and historic Polish city. The place is compact and pedestrianised, so you'll be able to fully explore one of Europe's hidden gems too, taking in the listed architecture and sampling some of the fine traditional local cuisine.

## LINE-UP

• Totally Enormous Extinct Dinosaurs • Stay+  
• Magnetic Man • Miike Snow • Hadouken!  
• Chase & Status • Buraka Som Sistema  
• Neon Indian • Niki & The Dove



## WHERE

Krakow, Poland.

## DIRECTIONS

Try Ryanair, who fly to Krakow from Leeds/Bradford, Liverpool, London Stansted and Edinburgh.

## WEATHER

It should be pretty warm and dry but not heatwave hellish.

## FOOD & DRINK

A smorgasbord of international delights awaits you and your belly.

## ACCOMMODATION

There's a whole range of hotels and B&Bs listed on the festival website.

## WEBSITE

[www.selectorfestival.pl](http://www.selectorfestival.pl)

## COST

£40 for a two-day ticket. Yes, really.

## WIN!

If you want to grab a pair of tickets to the festival, head to [www.selectorfestival.pl](http://www.selectorfestival.pl) and enter this:

Which of these is not a Magnetic Man?

- a) Skream
- b) Benga
- c) Wonga



# ROCK WERCHTER

June 28 – July 1



Main pic: The Cure are sure to be hugely popular  
Above: Another lovely day at Werchter

**R**OCK WERCHTER HAS COME a long way since local heroes Banzai and Kandahar played to a few thousand people in 1975. The weekend has grown at an astonishing rate since then and now attracts some 80,000 people a day, music fans from across the globe who regularly make the pilgrimage for the event's award-winning programme of bands as well as its legendary, intoxicatingly exciting atmosphere.

The festival's not resting on its laurels either. Since winning the European Festival Awards for Best Line-Up last year they've added yet another stage and 2012 looks set to be better than ever. While The Cure, Pearl Jam and Jack White represent the international megastar end of the spectrum there's all manner of new and exciting bands booked and a strong dance presence from the likes of Skrillex, Deadmau5, Justice and Skream.

Leuven is really easy to get to, too. Just hop on a train from London and you'll be in Belgium before you can say

"that was quick". Take an EasyFlight and you'll be there even quicker. And of course this one comes with all the benefits of Belgian delicacies and beers. So if you're finding a Glasto-shaped hole in your festival calendar this June, you know what to do.

## LINE-UP

• The Cure • Elbow • Pearl Jam • Editors • The xx  
• Jack White • Justice • Skrillex • Skream • The  
Maccabees • Deadmau5 • Gossip • Katy B • Red Hot  
Chili Peppers • Snow Patrol • Noel Gallagher's High  
Flying Birds • The Vaccines • Ed Sheeran

## ROCK WERCHTER 2012

### WHERE

Festivalpark Werchter, Belgium.

### DIRECTIONS

Either take the Eurostar from London or Kent, or jump on board a budget airplane to Brussels. A quick train to Leuven and buses will be waiting to take you to the site.

### WEATHER

Mild and dry if previous years are anything to go by.

### FOOD & DRINK

Pizzas, oysters, burgers, spring rolls and all sorts of vegetarian food.

### ACCOMMODATION

There's several campsites right by the site.

### WEBSITE

[www.rockwerchter.be](http://www.rockwerchter.be)

### COST

A four-day pass will set you back £162, including your public transport. It's £15 more for a camping ticket.

## WIN!

For the chance of winning six four-day passes to Rock Werchter, head to [www.rockwerchter.be](http://www.rockwerchter.be) and answer 10qs.

Which of these people is a member of Red Hot Chili Peppers?

- A) Moth
- B) Flea
- C) Cricket



# HEINEKEN OPEN'ER FESTIVAL

July 4 - 7



**S**URE, THE HEINEKEN Open'er Festival has the bands. Lots of them, both big and small, across seven stages and three days.

This year, however, the two-time Best Major Festival winner is adding a whole extra arts programme to the bill, including a full schedule of theatre performances and umpteen documentaries in conjunction with the country's acclaimed Planet+Doc Film Festival. In addition to that, one of the festival's bunkers will be adapted to host the Museum Of Contemporary Art in Warsaw, which means it'll be packed full of art and installations. There will also be theatrical performances in conjunction with Krzysztof Warlikowski's Nowy Teatr, and a 50-piece orchestra performing the works of Krzysztof Penderecki and Radiohead's Jonny Greenwood.

The venue is a disused airfield on Poland's Baltic coast. It also packs in a silent disco, NGO zone, the Fashion Stage and a signing tent.



Main pic: Looking for Justice? You'll find them here!  
Above: One of the most stunning Euro festival sites

Perhaps Open'er's biggest draw, though, is the price (see sidebar). Not sure about you, but we haven't seen festival tickets for that price in years. So if you want to party like it's 2012 with prices from 1999, it might just be time to try Gdynia this summer.

## LINE-UP

• Björk • Franz Ferdinand • Justice • Bloc Party  
• The Kills • The xx • Bat For Lashes • Bon Iver  
• Public Enemy • Friendly Fires • Gogol Bordello  
• Janelle Monáe • M83 • Dry the River • Orbital  
• The Maccabees • New Order • Mumford & Sons



**Heineken**

Open'er Festival

## WHERE

Gdynia-Kosakowo Airfield, Gdynia, Poland.

## DIRECTIONS

Wizz Air and Ryanair run flights from around the UK.

## WEATHER

Poland is pretty mild in July, but bring wet weather gear just in case.

## FOOD & DRINK

All kinds of European snackage will be readily on hand to soak up those festival beers.

## ACCOMMODATION

The campsite is a stone's throw from the Main Stage, although we don't advocate tossing rocks, and features a 24-hour shop for those 4am Rizla/biscuit runs.

## WEBSITE

[www.opener.pl/en](http://www.opener.pl/en)

## COST

£82 for a four-day pass including camping or just £75 without.

# WIN!

Want to experience the Heineken Open'er Festival? Then log on over to [NME.COM/win](http://NME.COM/win) and answer 15 tough questions.

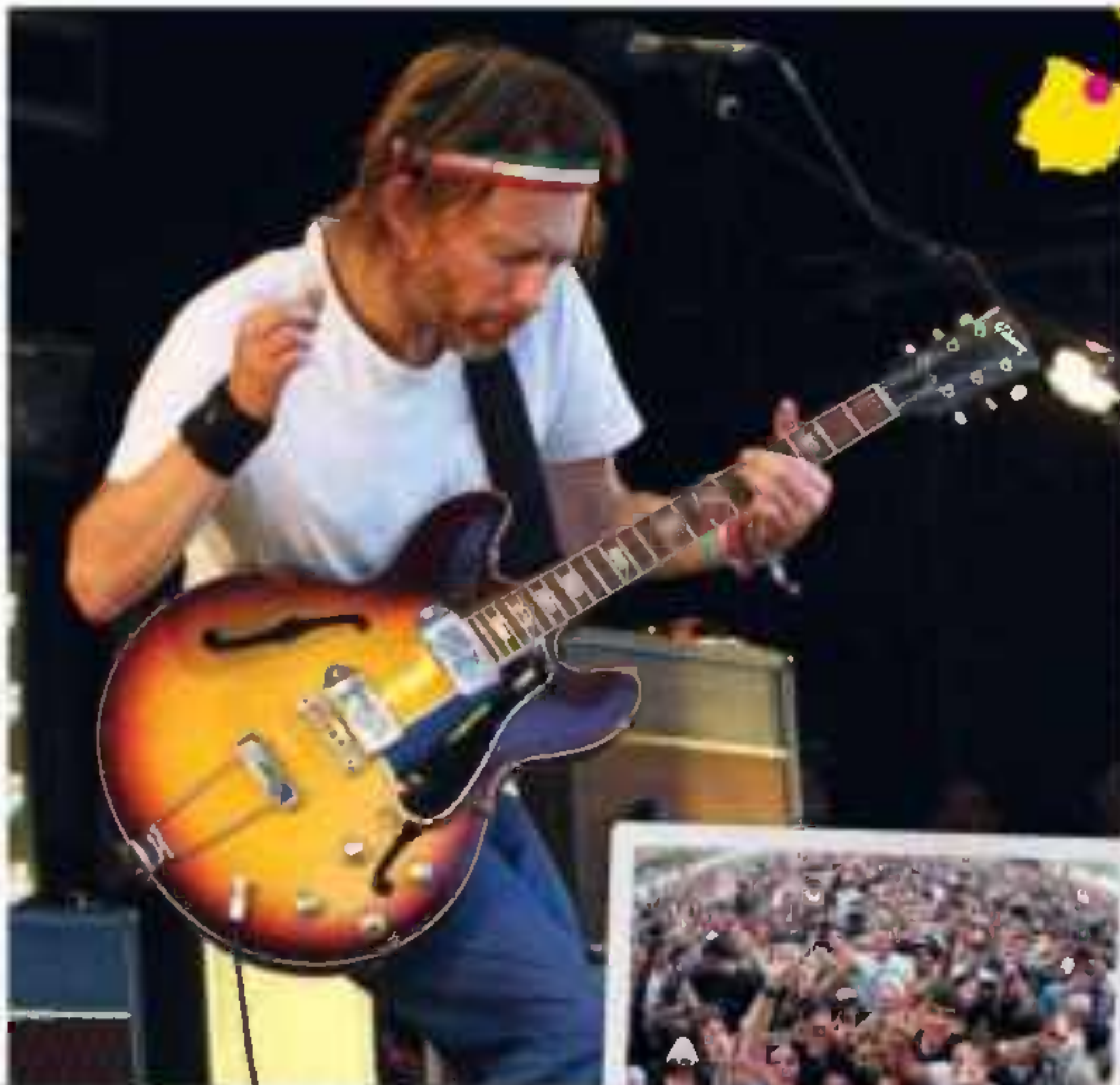
This year's event is the

- a) 10th
- b) 11th
- c) 12th



# BILBAO BBK LIVE

July 12 – 14



**B**ILBAO BBK LIVE HAS A FEW unfair advantages over most other festivals. For starters, it's in northern Spain, which means the sun rises and shines like clockwork and the temperature stubbornly sits in the mid-20s or above. Second, it's perched atop a massive hill overlooking the city, so the views are breathtaking and the first peek of the world from your tent flaps in the morning makes the hangover magically disappear. Third, it's a short trip to both Bilbao itself and the beach.

If you're more used to sitting around under damp canvas waiting for the arena gates to open, this will come as a refreshing change. Mornings can be whiled away on the sand or in the sea while lunchtime sees half of the city come out to bar crawl and taste Bilbao's famous pintxos. These dishes are Basque country's answer to tapas, little bite-sized delicacies lined up on every bar counter and perfect for a quick nibble as you move from one joint to another.

ANDY WILLISHER



Main pic: Thom Yorke will need that headband  
Above: No wonder the Bilbao crowds are happy

After that you might just have time to check out the streets full of historic buildings or the famous Guggenheim (one of the world's most interesting museums) before another packed evening of music begins – especially as a third, new stage is being added this year, with 20 extra acts from around the world.

## LINE-UP

• Radiohead • The Cure • Garbage • The Kooks  
• Mumford & Sons • Bloc Party • Glasvegas  
• The Maccabees • Warpaint • Noah & The Whale  
• Four Tet • Tribes • Enter Shikari



**Bilbao  
BBK Live**

## WHERE

Kobetamendi, a stunning natural park 10 minutes from Bilbao city centre.

## DIRECTIONS

Easyjet and Vueling all fly to Bilbao, and the site's a shuttle bus away from the town. Ryanair flies to Santander, a one-hour bus ride away.

## WEATHER

The sun will have his hat on.

## FOOD & DRINK

Basque country pintxos (which are like tapas) are very popular, but all manner of food is available.

## ACCOMMODATION

The campsite surrounds the site and clings to some spectacular hills.

## WEBSITE

[bilbaobbklive.com](http://bilbaobbklive.com)

## COST

£88 for a three-day ticket, including camping. £46 for a day pass.

## WIN!

Want to go to Bilbao? Then head to [WIN.COM](http://WIN.COM) and answer this

**Who is the lead singer of The Cure?**

- a) Robert Harvey
- b) Robert Smith
- c) Robert Mugabe



# FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DE BENICÀSSIM

July 12 – 15



Main pic: Noel Gallagher won't be needing that jacket  
Above: Benicàssim attracts some lively crowds

**B**ENICÀSSIM IS A HIGHLY sought and fought after gig in the *NME* office for good reason. Everyone wants to go there because it's more a holiday than a festival. Forget your homegrown damp squib of a weekender, this is a place where the sun never stops shining, the music never stops playing, and the good times never end.

Ok, well they eventually grind to a halt around 6am every night, but by that point you've been spanked with too much fun and really do need to grab four and a half winks before it all begins again.

Now in its 18th year, the shindig has grown to encompass 100+ artists on three stages over four days and also boasts a short film festival to boot. As well as the big ticket acts, there's all manner of top quality new bands to check out, from Spector to Howler and Kurt Vile. Throw in the local likes of Juanita y los Feos (who probably sound awesome after a fistful of Cerveza), art exhibitions and dance shows and you

have more stimulus than should be legal.

The site's set near the coast so sun and sea are just a short trip away, and the cultural delights of both Madrid and Barcelona are close at hand. Forget deciding between a holiday or a festival this summer, because Benicàssim has both.

## LINE-UP

- Bob Dylan • The Stone Roses • New Order
- Florence + The Machine • At The Drive-In
- Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds
- Dizzee Rascal • Bat For Lashes



## WHERE

Valencia, Spain.

## DIRECTIONS

The site is a mere hop from Valencia airport or you can reach it from Barcelona or Madrid in a couple of hours.

## WEATHER

You may want to pack sunscreen. Factor 25.

## FOOD & DRINK

Burgers, paella and tapas provide the mainstay, while large beers come bigger than a pint. All can be bought for vouchers onsite.

## ACCOMMODATION

Your four-day festival ticket includes eight days of camping. There's also a hotel opposite the site and several on the nearby beach.

## WEBSITE

[www.fiberfib.com](http://www.fiberfib.com)

## COST

A four-day ticket will cost you £155.

## WIN!

Want to get your grubby mitts on a pair of the best in the world? Then you need to solve this fiendish puzzle:

Who did NOT play Benicàssim in 2011?

- a) The Streets
- b) The Strokes
- c) The Hoobs



# OPTIMUS ALIVE

July 13 – 15



Main pic: The Stone Roses reunion will reach Portugal  
Above: Days in the sun, nights like this... amazing!

**O**PTIMUS ALIVE MIGHT only be six years old but its legacy is already world-class. Punters of previous years have seen some stunning performances at the beautiful Lisbon site, from Metallica to Pearl Jam, The Prodigy, Bob Dylan, Neil Young and Rage Against The Machine. Last year Coldplay, My Chemical Romance and Foo Fighters raised the bar yet again.

This year The Stone Roses, The Cure and Radiohead would be reason enough to try out Optimus Alive, but there's many other reasons why you should go. For starters, did you notice the price? A three-day shindig including camping for £100 is pretty bargainous in our book, and getting here is cheaper than trekking across the UK anyway.

Then there's the location. Situated right by the Tagus River as well as some beautiful beaches, Optimus Alive offers loads of opportunities for swimming and chilling in the sun, including Europe's only World Surfing Reserve at Ericeira

beach for hanging ten or eating shit, depending on your ability. It's also a quick cab ride to the centre of Lisbon.

So if you want to make the festival into a summer holiday, spending your nights watching music and your days in the sun, and coming home with a tan to turn your mates green, Optimus Alive is the one.

## LINE-UP

- Radiohead • The Cure • The Stone Roses
- The Kills • The Maccabees • Snow Patrol
- Justice • Florence + The Machine

optimus  
alive

Oeiras '12

### WHERE

Passeio Marítimo de Alges, Lisbon.

### DIRECTIONS

You can fly to Lisbon cheaply. The site is a 15-minute car journey from the airport.

### WEATHER

Glorious sunshine.

### FOOD & DRINK

The food court seats 2,500 people and serves up the likes of pizza, sushi, hamburgers, veggie snacks and Portuguese classics. A pint will set you back £2.50.

### ACCOMMODATION

The extensive campsite is 10 minutes from the site and free shuttle buses run between the two.

### WEBSITE

[www.optimusalive.com/en](http://www.optimusalive.com/en)

### COST

A three-day ticket with camping will cost you £103.

## WIN!

Want to try out Optimus Alive? Then head over to [MAG.COM](http://MAG.COM) and have a go at solving the Healthiest Comedy Quiz.

Who is the lead singer of 30 Seconds To Mars?

- a) Jared Leto
- b) Jared Followill
- c) Jasper Carrott



# COSTA DE FUEGO

July 20 – 21



**I**F YOU'VE GOT SOME MONEY TO spend now Sonisphere's been axed, or if you just fancy some metal music in the sunshine, allow us to introduce Costa de Fuego. Translated literally as 'coast of fire', this new two-dayer sees a who's who of heavy descend on the Spanish coast for 48 hours of dia's at 11 – and looks set to burn July down to the ground.

Brought to us by the promoters behind one of the greatest festivals on Earth, Benicàssim (and in fact taking place at the same location), Costa de Fuego sees all manner of noisenik heavyweights playing live, from Marilyn Manson to Guns N' Roses, as well as the smaller but no less potent likes of Rolo Tomassi and Paradise Lost.

Organisers promise "the most energetic rock, hardcore and metal" so expect even more names to be announced in the coming months. And you don't have to sit in a dank Camden basement or wet Midlands park to enjoy them – this part of the world is sunny



Main pic: Guns N' Roses are set to rock Spain  
Above: Marilyn Manson, one of the bill's highlights

and hot so you can cool off your cochleas after a hard night's headbanging with a daily dip in the Mediterranean. Or, much like at Benicàssim, follow it up with a few days in the Spanish capital.

Priced at a staggeringly cheap £70 for two days, it's the noisiest fun you can have in the sun, and could become a regular fixture in the festival season.

## LINE-UP

• Guns N' Roses • Marilyn Manson • Cancer Bats  
• Opeth • Rolo Tomassi • We Are The Ocean  
• Amorphis • Berru Txarrak • Paradise Lost

costa defuego

## WHERE

Benicàssim, Costa del Azahar, Valencia, Spain.

## DIRECTIONS

You'd want to fly to Madrid or Barcelona and transfer from there, or jet direct to Valencia. Easyjet, Ryanair or Iberia can offer the planes.

## WEATHER

We predict clear skies, sunny days and scattered happy punters.

## FOOD & DRINK

Includes burgers, paella, pasta, Thai food and salads, as well as sweet stuff. Tapas too.

## ACCOMMODATION

Camping is included and the site is walking distance to the festival, the town and the beach.

## WEBSITE

[www.costadefuego.com](http://www.costadefuego.com)

## COST

£70 for the two-day festival, including four days of camping.

# WIN!

Wanna try Costa de Fuego? Top MME.com, add into your browser and answer this slightly tricky question!

Which of these used to play in Guns N' Roses?

- a) Panelface
- b) Buckethead
- c) Shovelfoot



# SZIGET

August 6-13



**WE ASKED MICHAEL** Eavis where the distraught Glastonbury hardcore should go instead this year, and he chose Sziget. Why? Well, how long have you got? The mammoth event, now in its 20th year, is fast gaining legendary status for good reasons. It boasts over a thousand acts playing across the best part of a week to a crowd of 400,000 from over 60 countries and is frequently cited as one of the world's greatest festivals.

Did we mention that it all takes place on an 266-acre island, in the middle of a city? And that it won the Best European Major Festival Award? Yep, Hungary's best summer event is something else indeed.

Commandeering the aforementioned island in the middle of the Danube, it's more like a community or small city than a festival, and boasts all manner of extra-curricular stuff, from theatre to circus acts, exhibitions and poetry. There's a cashless payment system too, which is great news for anyone who's ever lost a



Main pic: Placebo are one of the main attractions  
Above: Life's a beach at Sziget!

£20 note or two in the mud. And with the Sziget-Budapest Citypass you can combine the festival with a few mornings exploring the beautiful, historic city and its famous Turkish spas and special "ruin pubs". As alternatives to our own summer bashes go, this one comes close. And you won't find anyone going on about leylines.

## LINE-UP

- The Stone Roses • Korn • Placebo
- Noah & The Whale • LMFAO • The Horrors
- The Ting Tings • The Vaccines • The Subways
- The xx • Two Door Cinema Club



20 **SZIGET**

6-13 AUGUST BUDAPEST

## WHERE

Obudai Island, Budapest, Hungary.

## DIRECTIONS

Loads of airlines fly to Budapest, and the island is pretty central. Take a boat down the Danube for a scenic route. Eurolines runs a bus or there's always the "party train" from The Netherlands.

## WEATHER

Usually pretty hot.

## FOOD & DRINK

Is 75 food stalls and 72 bars enough? There's something for everyone, including Italian, French and Michelin-starred restaurants.

## ACCOMMODATION

Ticket includes camping.

## WEBSITE

[www.szigetfestival.com](http://www.szigetfestival.com)  
or [www.szigetfest.co.uk](http://www.szigetfest.co.uk)

## COST

£165 for a weekly pass if you book before the end of April.

# WIN!

Hand in who wants a pair of tickets to Sziget? Well, get those hands clicking on www.sziget.co.uk and whoever hits

Which of these bands is playing Sziget this year?

- A) Korn
- B) Korn
- C) Cornrows



# OYAFESTIVALEN

August 7 – 11



7-11 AUGUST  
2012  
OYA  
OSLO

## WHERE

Middelalderparken,  
Bispegata 16, Oslo,  
Norway.

## DIRECTIONS

SAS, Norwegian and several European airlines fly to Oslo's Gardermoen. The festival site is conveniently located a 10-minute walk from the city centre.

## WEATHER

Bring wet weather gear, although you'll probably not need it.

## FOOD & DRINK

Almost all of Oya's varied cuisine is organic and locally sourced.

## ACCOMMODATION

Check yourself into one of the reasonably priced hotels in the city centre – there's no campsite here.

## WEBSITE

<http://oyafestivalen.com>

## COST

Day tickets are £85. Week passes have sold out.

# WIN!

Want to go to Oya? Then get three to [www.oxa.com](http://www.oxa.com), win and answer three

Which of these artists played Oya last year?

- A) Wiz Khalifa
- B) Wiz MC
- C) Wizzard

**O**YA IS ONE OF THE MOST picturesque festivals you'll ever go to. Set in a medieval park wedged between a lake and

verdant rolling hills, it's a place where stages are sprinkled among crumbling ruins and sandy beaches, where deckchairs and blankets replace the mud we've become used to.

Unbelievably, this gig eden is a mere 10 minutes from the heart of Oslo, so when you're done seeing bands in the beautiful park a quick stroll takes you smack bang in the middle of town to hang out in the capital's endless bars and clubs. Forests and fjords surround the city too, offering endless ways to clear your head after a night of great music.

It's hard to believe that when it started just over a decade ago, Oya saw a mere thousand people watching the likes of Cato Salsa Experience and Gluecifer (us neither). It has since grown to a four-day, massively popular beast boasting some truly world class acts.



Main pic: Björk is heading for Norway  
Above: The stunningly picturesque site

They're still to reveal their full arsenal of bands, but going by previous years it'll be jam-packed with talent. As well as the line-up below there's already a strong hip-hop presence confirmed, including A\$AP Rocky, Odd Future, Frank Ocean, and SBTRKT. Tickets for this one go fast, so get in there quick.

## LINE-UP

- Björk • The Stone Roses • The Black Keys
- Florence + The Machine • Bon Iver • Refused
- First Aid Kit • The War On Drugs • St Vincent
- Feist • Mazzy Star



# COKE LIVE MUSIC FESTIVAL

August 11 – 12



Main pic: The Killers are back to headline Coke Live  
Above: The up-for-it as always crowd

**N**AME A BIG BAND OR artist, and chances are they've played Coke Live, often for the first time in Poland. Jay-Z, The Big Pink, 30 Seconds To Mars and Kaiser Chiefs all made their Polish debuts at the festival, and numerous other big names – from Kanye West to Muse – have graced Coke Live's mammoth Main Stage. This year The Killers and Placebo are among the the first acts confirmed to be performing at the event.

Coke Live is growing at a phenomenal rate – about 35,000 people per year – as more and more punters discover its charms, and its ridiculously cheap price point. You could pretty much fly there, stay there, and watch bands play there, for about £100.

Other than the music, there's loads of other stuff to do at Coke Live. The Coke Clinic is a unique festival spa with make up artists and massages. Organisers are committed to nurturing new talent, and the Coke Live Fresh Noise is a multi-level

programme supporting new bands and artists. Essentially it's the place to hear new European talent first, so you can return namedropping acts your mates have never heard of.

And of course nearby Krakow offers all the history and architectural charm and significance of a seventh-century dwelling. All in all, Coke Live is a perfect young festival to experience.

## LINE-UP

• The Killers • Placebo • The Roots (more acts to be confirmed soon)



### WHERE

The Polish Aviation Museum, Krakow, Poland.

### DIRECTIONS

A quick up-and-down on a budget carrier and you're in Krakow, then it's a short shuttle to festival central.

### WEATHER

Sunny with a chance of good times.

### FOOD & DRINK

Hearty meat stews, burgers, and other warming comfort foods should do the trick.

### ACCOMMODATION

There's a campsite for 4,000 people right next to the festival site.

### WEBSITE

[www.livfestival.pl](http://www.livfestival.pl)

### COST

£40 for a two-day ticket or £45 with camping.

## WIN!

We've got a pair of tickets including a feast in our pockets next time. To take them off us, head to [www.ckl.org](http://www.ckl.org) and answer this:

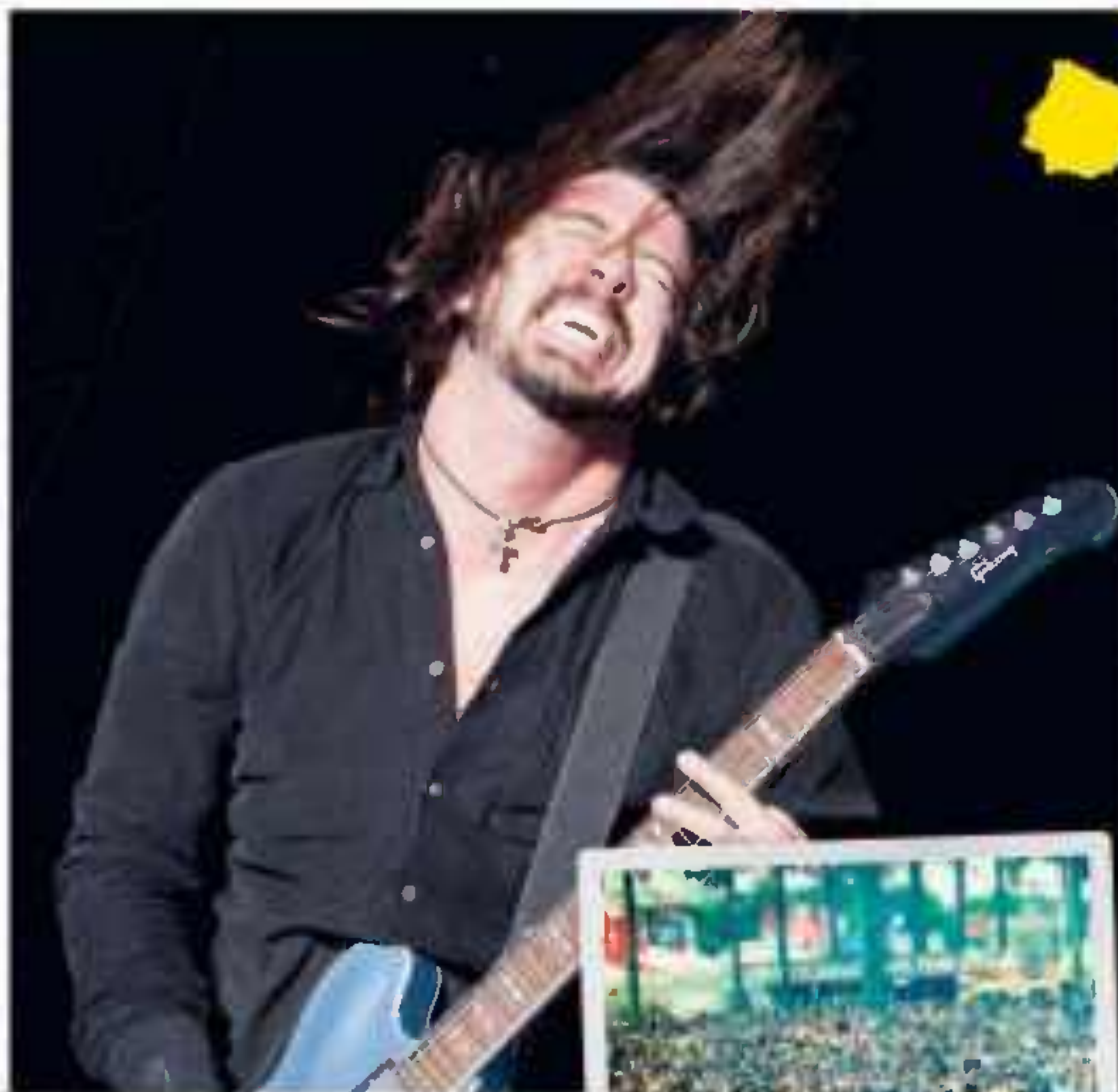
What is the capital city of Poland?

- a) Warsaw
- b) Krakow
- c) Inverness



# PUKKELPOP

August 16 – 18



Main pic: Foo Fighters are always a festival favourite  
Above: Thousands descend on Pukkelpop every year

**S**URE, PUKKELPOP HAS THE bands – 200+ a year, including all the names opposite as well as Odd Future, Mark Ronson and numerous top-notch electronic artists, like Magnetic Man to Tiga, and Jacques Lu Cont. And yes, its eight stages have played host to some performances which have passed into legend (Nirvana, Guns N' Roses, Neil Young). And this year the likes of Foo Fighters and Björk are set to provide yet more amazing moments to remember.

But this summer weekend offers a lot, lot more than that. Where else can you wander through a Moroccan village, supping on authentic teas and smoking water pipes in low-slung hammocks? Or lose a few hours in a cultural village, participating in all manner of events? At what other festival can you see world-class theatre, bust a gut in a comedy tent and catch a movie without leaving the field? Or receive a special Pukkelpop gadget for playing it green out in the campsites?

Last year's storm focussed the world's eyes on Pukkelpop for tragic reasons, but the organisers have worked harder than ever to make 2012 the greatest year yet. And the thousands of loyal punters that descend on the site every year won't be deterred. In fact, the last two editions have sold out in record time.

## LINE-UP

- Björk • Bloc Party • Feist • Mark Lanegan Band
- The Gaslight Anthem • The Stone Roses • Eagles Of Death Metal • Foo Fighters • The Black Keys
- Wilco • Magnetic Man + many more

## WHERE

Kempische Steenweg, which is in the Kiewit area of Hasselt. In Belgium, basically.

## DIRECTIONS

After flying or getting on the Eurostar, you can jump on any train in Belgium free of charge with your ticket.

## WEATHER

Think England in August but a degree or two nicer.

## FOOD & DRINK

As well as a mix of international fare, Pukkelpop offers some extraordinary Belgian beers.

## ACCOMMODATION

Camping is included. You just need to remember your tent.

## WEBSITE

[www.pukkelpop.be](http://www.pukkelpop.be)

## COST

TBC, but last year a three-day ticket was £138 and daytime passes £70 including camping.

## WIN!

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