

NME

MASSIVE
CHRISTMAS
DOUBLE ISSUE



GOLD.
FRANKINCENSE
AND
MARR

***Will Godlike
Johnny get
what he wants?***

SLEIGHTER
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classic revisited

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SPECIAL

PARTY HARD!

Andrew WK's festive tips

PARTY BARD!

***John Cooper Clarke
gets a
round in***

PARTY
BARRED!

Carnage
on the
NME pub
crawl

***Features
broken
bones***

Walkies in the air

Grrrrr

DING DOG
MERRILY ON
HIGH

CHRISTMAS
TWERKY!

CLASSIC
FEATURE
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Xmas dinner

Miley's open letter to Santa

NOT
MADE
OF STONE
Meet The Gnome Roses

***The only solo
interview of 2013***

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XMAS MESSAGES

from Arctic Monkeys Phoenix
Pixies Palma Violets Foals

The National

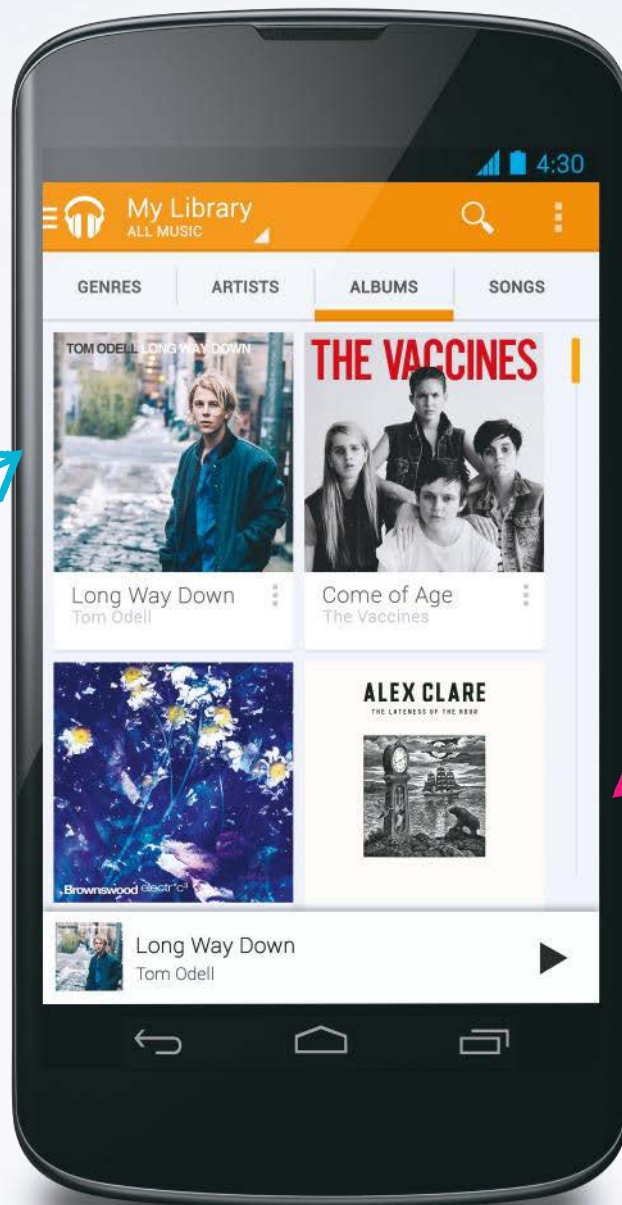
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John Cooper Clarke

Jenny Stevens picks the brains of the punk poet and Arctic Monkeys idol

Sky Ferreira

Talking to Amy Rose Spiegel, the US popstar kicks back at her critics

From The Vaults: Vic Reeves & Bob Mortimer, 1990

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CHRISTMAS CONTRIBUTORS

Miley Cyrus
Letter Of The Week
"I figured Santa's one of those babes who receives a lot of letters this time of year so why shouldn't I send one too via my blog? I wanted to share with him and by extension all y'all."

Rocky, the dog
Cover star
"Woof, woof woof woof-woof, arooooooo. Grrr. GRRR. GRRRRRR. Aieeee. Who, whooo, whooo. Sniff. Sniff. Harummmph. Woof. Woof. Sniff. Zzzzzzzzzzzzz."

Shane MacGowan
Illustrated legend
"What? What's that? Ah, bollocks. Pencils, ink, drawing, illustration, art, culture, civilisation crap, it's all fucking shit. Happy Christmas your arse."

THIS XMAS WE ASK...



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THINK IS AN ARSEHOLE?

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SANTA'S BULGING SACK

CHRISTMAS
MOANING
EDITION

LETTER OF THE WEEK

AN OPEN LETTER TO SANTA CLAUS

At this time of spiritual reflection and familial warmth, I thought it fitting that I extend the benefit of what little wisdom I've gathered in my decade in this psychic kaleidoscope we call showbusiness in the spirit of sisterly love. Santa, I'm worried about you. You craft these toys with love and care, in the trust that they will mean something to someone. But trust me, these kids don't give a fuck about you. They are tiny, cruel egos on legs, who use your rotund belly and rosy cheeks to get their flashing, beeping piles of plastic shit. The youngest ones, worse than animals, just want to climb inside the box. And while I'm on the subject of boxes, have you even considered the loaded sexual significations implied in shimmying your belly down dank, close-quartered chimneys? Your sack is for you and Mrs Claus. Don't let capitalist Christmas make a jolly whore of you. Nicholas Claus (not Santa – reject the semantic trap that binds you complicitly in your own objectification), you must seize ownership of your own image. With the blunt instruments of a sledgehammer and a strategically placed beer can, I have smashed the sugary chains



of tween pop and emerged a butterfly of sexual liberation. Shed the red and white prison garb issued by the ethically barren multinational Coca-Cola and run free, bare and empowered, Nicholas. You run things. Things don't run Yule.

Miley Cyrus

Santa: You think that's bad? There weren't even any mince pies left with this bullshit.

Answering you
this week:
Santa Claus

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London SE1 0SU

chinned by Stringer Bell, got paternity tested and caught lying and Noel's having none of an Oasis reunion. A man can't live on swagger and soundbites forever.

Liam Gallagher

Santa: Well, I need a new elf. You'd be pretty in green.

SHAKIN' OFF STEVENS

Hey Santa! Just whiling away the long, fruitful and relevant hours in this cosy eyrie from which I view all pop culture like a whimsical eagle. And I started brewing me a blog, to all whom it may concern...
Sufjan Stevens

Santa: Thanks Sufjan. I'll just unplug the internet to save electricity while we track down people whom it might concern. Could be a while. Merry Christmas to all in the meantime!

THAT BOOK ISN'T SELLING ANY MORE

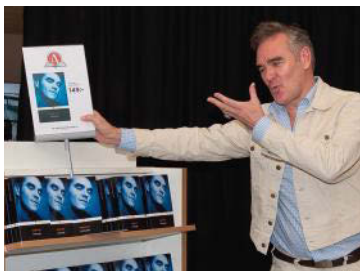
Dear Santa, or should I say Old Saint Thick, I can only guess that either you did not receive my previous epistle or that you were too crashingly dim to understand it. So I will keep it simple. I have looked at the Amazon bestsellers list, and I am not pleased. My life's story, my heart's blood spilled out on undeserving wood pulp, is at Number 21. I specifically asked last month that you should ensure enough Christmas wishes to keep it inside the Top 10; that you should push it in the grottoes, in the tawdry department stores. It's a Penguin Classic! Does that Caledonian thug Alex Ferguson (Number One) have a Penguin Classic? Does that Cockney ham David Jason (6)? Or Simple Pieman Paul Hollywood (7)? No. They don't. Frankly, Mr Santa, I am disgusted.
Morrissey

Santa: Look, I told you, people want light and

heartwarming at Christmas. They want *Elf*, not *Citizen Kane*, *Woesbud*. Do another edition and take a tip from the *One Direction* boys: full colour, no moping.

THE MOST WONDERFUL THOM OF THE YEAR

SANTA SANTA SANTA FOR CHRISTMAS I WANT A FURBY BOOM IT IS BETTER THAN A NORMAL FURBY IT DANCES TO YOUR MUSIC I AM GOING TO PUT A BOWLER HAT ON HIM AND CALL HIM MONBIOT. HE HAS AN APP SO HE CAN CREATE MORE FURBIES WITHOUT WAITING FOR THE DINOSAUR TOY 'INDUSTRY' AND IT CAN LEARN 20 LANGUAGES BECAUSE IT IS A GLOBAL NETIZEN I AM SO EXCITED I CAN'T SLEEP CAN'T SLEEPPPP CAN'T SLEE333EEP oh the darkness has c0me again.
Thom Yorke



Santa: Those have been sold out everywhere since August, kid. Get real.

YEEZUS STROPS

"Noel? No way in hell, bitch/ Your big red ass obscures my heavenly light/Let Yeezus and his radiant behind into sight/The true meaning of Christmas: conspicuous consumption/I'll be ingesting with the best at my festive functions/ While Kim be decking my hall with Louis Vuitton/You be looking queasy – have some Gaviscon". AND HURRY UP WITH MY DAMN MINCE PIES.
Kanye

Santa: Oh aye? Kim called, actually. She said she's into sex on sleighs now.

O LITTLE JEHN OF BETH-LEHEM

Santa, Your mirth oppresses my birth. Jesus, the sanctified son of God, was born December 25, a day of joy and goodwill. I am born, a raw, screaming, real human baby, on December 24, and what is my lot? Christmas Eve. Eve, a mere Eve, a spare part, a spare rib as Eve was to Adam. Fuck you, and your red and gold, the colour of the false jollity of patriarchal bullshit. My tree will be black and white like the truth, and I will strip its needles.
Jehnnny Beth

Santa: Christmas is for everyone, Jehn. Even angry goths. Let's hug it out. OW.

BEADY WHY ME

Alright, yer fat bastard. Look, I've never asked for much from you, apart from that Meccano our kid used to build a cage for us, but I need your help. Me missus left me, me bassist cracked his skull, me singles charted lower than my spirits. I nearly got



LOOK WHO'S STALKING

"I met NME's Matt Wilkinson backstage at Coachella. He told me he was with 'the enemy' so I smiled nervously and recited my mantra to myself until my security detail came to lead me to safety."
Lindsay Lohan

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Shot taken with the Nokia Lumia 1020.



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ON REPEAT

 **NME** 20

NME TRACK OF THE WEEK

1. Peace Last Christmas

If there's one thing Peace have made clear in the last two years, it's that they love to fool around. But while the video for the band's take on Wham!'s festive classic has LOLs aplenty (frontman Harry Koisser making notes about how they need "more maids-a-milking" is one of the highlights), their version of the song itself is the perfect example of what Peace do best: fun pop with loads of heart.

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

2. Goldblade feat. Poly Styrene City Of Christmas Ghosts

Poly Styrene is a genuine punk legend who ripped up music's rulebook with her band X-Ray Spex. A couple of years before she died from cancer in 2011, she recorded this duet with Goldblade's John Robb about the melancholic side of the season – but rather than being morose, it's a righteous and life-affirming call to arms. Proceeds will go to support her hospice as well as other charities. It's a Christmas single with credibility.

Kevin EG Perry, writer

3. Mark McGuire Opening Presents

Both solo and with his former band, Ohio's space-rock power trio Emeralds, Mark McGuire specialises in ultra-limited releases. None more so than 'The Sounds Of Xmas', an album written for pals and relatives in 2006 and now uploaded to Mark's Bandcamp. This track weaves together cloudy drones, porcelain-pretty acoustic guitar and samples of a McGuire family home video. Spoiler: the young 'uns were stoked with their gifts.

Noel Gardner, writer

4. Shy Nature It's Christmas (Close Your Eyes)

Though that title may be faintly creepy (what are you going to place in our outstretched palms, Shy Nature?!), you've nothing to fear from these London lads. A shimmer of cymbal, a tinkle of glockenspiel and a cosily snuggling bassline add festive cheer to their already sugarplum-sweet combo of Smith Westerns/Drums-style doe-eyed indie and the plaintive, youthful vocal delivery of early Maccabees. Don't forget to make a wish.

Emily Mackay, writer

5. Kate Nash I Hate You This Christmas

Kate Nash adds a blunt entry to the canon of anti-Christmas songs with a pop-punk tale of Yuletide betrayal. She gets drunk at the office party, pops in to see her boyfriend, then: "It's Christmas once again, but you're fucking one of my friends". Oh dear. It's not all doom, though: 'I Hate You This Christmas' comes from Kate's optimistically titled 'Have Faith With Kate Nash This Christmas' EP.

Phil Hebblethwaite, writer



6. September Girls I Want You Back (For Christmas) (feat. The #1s)

This pairing of two of Dublin's newest treasures – September Girls and The #1s – breeds charmingly grouchy results. "I lie awake at night thinking you should be here", coo the girls. "Can't be with you this Christmas/You cause me nothing but pain", moan the boys. It's like a festive version of *Grease*, with added xylophone.

Lisa Wright, writer

7. Diplo Frosty Bounce (feat. Angger Dimas and Nicky Da B)

Diplo's Mad Decent Christmas mix is so surreal you'll think someone slipped something into your eggnog. 'God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen', 'Jingle Bells' and 'Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer' are all transformed into wubbing trap bangers, but it's 'Frosty Bounce' that truly wows: one minute and 44 seconds of military beats and Father Christmas "ho-ho-ho"-ing. Santa never sounded so sleazy.

Al Horner, writer

8. Andy Burrows Light The Night

It takes a warped sort of festive pop saboteur to write the theme tune to the sequel to children's Christmas classic *The Snowman* and open it with a melody that's a tribute to the theme from *The Exorcist*. Thankfully Andy Burrows soon polishes up his falsetto and piles on the seasonal bells and references to choirs and flying over churches for his bombastic indie theme to *The Snowman And The Snowdog*. The power of Keane compels him.

Mark Beaumont, writer

9. Pins Kiss Me Quick (It's Christmas)

People who can't handle a goblet of Baileys and an entire Christmas cake to themselves wrongly think that it's horrid being single on December 25. This is Pins' own tear-stained, wall-of-noise tale about being without the one you love. As singer Faith Holgate sighs "Won't you come home and kiss me quickly... it's Christmas", you'll be last-minute hunting for a hot babe to put in her Christmas stocking.

Eve Barlow, Deputy Editor

10. Shiniies Boxing Day

Manchester band Shiniies capture the ennui of the Christmas aftermath as they gaze at their new shoes on this bruised and battered tune. Lurching into life like your dad after one too many sherries, frontman Adam Davison gets amorous and sings, "Meet me by the mistletoe, this time of year there's definitely something in the air", before urging someone to "decorate me like a Christmas tree". It's not quite "Merry Christmas everyone!" but it works.

David Renshaw, News Reporter

CHRISTMAS CRACKERS

► LISTEN TO THEM ALL AT NME.COM/ONREPEAT NOW

11. The Killers Christmas In LA

Brandon and the boys team up with crafters of lazy Californian canyon rock, Dawes, and the ghost of Warren Zevon for a depressing spin on a festive anthem. Lyrically it's all about lost loves, dead-end acting careers and whiling away the afternoons with nothing but booze for company. The twinkling Spanish guitars and lilting harmonies salvage something uplifting from the emotional wreckage.

Leonie Cooper, writer

12. Cloud Control It's Christmas Time

The Aussie psych dreamers deliver an immaculate slice of syrupy festive pop with their first Christmas track. There are saccharine lyrics (*"Let's bring a cheer to all our friends and neighbours, both far away and near"*), jingle bells and even an 'Away In A Manger'-style choral interlude that coos, *"The whole wide world should all give thanks to all their gods"*. We'd only tolerate such nauseating optimism at this time of year.

Jenny Stevens, Deputy News Editor

13. Sharon Jones & The Dap-Kings Ain't No Chimneys In The Projects

When Sharon Jones was a child she questioned the existence of Santa because of the lack of chimneys in the New York projects. Her mum's reply? "As soon as you're asleep a chimney will appear and in the morning you'll see what he brings." Nice try, mum. For a Crimbo tune, the theme's a bit of a downer, but it's got that Dap-Kings funk juice and the return of Jones' fudgy voice after her recovery from cancer.

Lucy Jones, Deputy Editor, NME.COM

14. Menage A Trois Lonely This Christmas

The Mancunian funk enthusiasts tone it down for this rendition of Mud's mid-'70s smoochfest. Pan pipes and soft keys abound, giving it an air of Hurts if Theo Hutchcraft was being drip-fed some very good sedatives. Which is, of course, exactly what you want from a festive favourite re-imagined by a bunch of bored twenty-somethings with a keen eye for dicking about on a £20 budget.

Matt Wilkinson, New Music Editor

15. Swim Deep Brussels

Pleasingly, Swim Deep eschew the usual Christmas-single clichés on 'Brussels', an understated piano ballad with nary a Santa reference or children's choir in sight. In fact, its only concession to the season appears to be sharing a name with everyone's favourite festive veg. Austin Williams even goes so far as to admit that *"the summer's in my brain"*. Perhaps he should consider Christmas in Australia.

Barry Nicolson, writer



16. Yo La Tengo Toymageddon

Every year from 2001 until 2012, Yo La Tengo played a goofy Hanukkah show at Maxwell's in Hoboken, New Jersey, where they first played in 1984. The venue closed its doors this July, but YLT carry on the tradition with 'Toymageddon', an apocalyptic vision with Ira, Georgia and James describing how toys decided enough was enough, declared war on Christmas and *"roasted our nuts on the fire"*.

Laura Snapes, Features Editor

17. Younghusband I Don't Intend To Spend Christmas Without You

London's answer to Tame Impala sprinkle psychedelic fairy dust on a little-known 1967 Christmas corker by US singer-songwriter Margo Guryan. Reinvented as echo-chamber pop of the Jesus And Mary Chain variety with phased vocals and – mercy! – not a single sleigh bell, the track is available as a free download. But be warned: Younghusband is for life, not just for Christmas.

Dan Stubbs, News Editor

18. Trust Fund Finishing Your Dinner

This does have sleigh bells, but 'Finishing Your Dinner' is actually about love rather than Christmas. *"I want nothing more than to hear about the last year of your life/But I have been on a train for four hours and if I don't eat I might die"* sings Ellis Jones over sad guitars. Then members of Lone Omi, The Jelas and Two White Crane chip in with brass and drums, and it ends with a racket that sounds like A Hawk And A Hacksaw.

Tom Howard, Reviews Editor

19. Summer Camp Last Christmas

After 30 years of 'Last Christmas' covers, the world probably doesn't need another – especially with this being 2013's second indie attempt at it. But this is the season of goodwill and no band deserves some of that as much as Summer Camp. It's impossible to fault the duo's version, with Elizabeth Sankey's voice full of the necessary heartbreak to evoke the song's yearning over her husband Jeremy Warmesley's twinkling guitars.

Andy Welch, writer

20. !!! And Anyway It's Christmas

This festive seven-inch from the Californian punk-funkers has the same bouncy synths and sexy whispers of "Merry Christmas" as Macca's 'Wonderful Christmastime' and Wham!'s 'Last Christmas'. *"I've been around the world/Seen all kinds of girls/And I've seen nothing better than you in that sweater"*, sings Nic Offer in a slinky four-to-the-floor paean to fleeting love and decorative jumpers. With cowbells thrown in, naturally.

Matthew Horton, writer

TheWeek

► EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS IN MUSIC ■ EDITED BY DAN STUBBS



8

Back for a slice of the action

Foo Fighters play their first gig in
14 months at a Californian pizza joint

TOURBUSLIVE.COM



This is it!" Dave Grohl told fans at New York's Central Park in September 2012, announcing an indefinite hiatus. He lied. Last week, Foo Fighters returned with a surprise gig at a pizza restaurant in Moorpark, California, where drummer Taylor Hawkins' band Chevy Metal appear regularly. The crowd, largely made up of friends and family, witnessed a 24-song, two-and-a-half hour set comprising plenty of hits and a Tom Petty cover – but no new tracks. The secret show was so oversubscribed that some fans were reportedly allowed to pay \$10

to peer in through the windows. Throughout the performance, Grohl repeatedly referred to it as "a rehearsal". The next day the band left for Mexico City and two massive 55,000-capacity shows at Foro Sol stadium.

This flurry of activity promises a busy 20th anniversary year in 2014 – including the release of album number eight. As Grohl said recently: "Next year is going to be really big for Foo Fighters, without question. We've written an album. And we are going to make this album in a way that no-one's ever done before, and we're pretty excited about it." ■ JENNY STEVENS

Foo Fighters perform at the 200-capacity Rock & Roll Pizza venue in Moorpark, California, on December 9

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What are you going to next?

Get tickets to music, sport and comedy events, even when they are sold out at the box office.

The 'Party Hard' rocker's guide to surviving the festive season intact

Andrew WK's Christmas party tips



1 Don't get snooty

"You know how they say 'live and let live'? Thou shalt party and let party. Never tell anyone how to party. When it comes to partying there are no wrong answers. Let everyone find their own path to party enlightenment, whether that's via 13 beers and some illegal fireworks or a classy soda sipped overlooking a quiet canyon."

2 Don't forget snacks

"Food is really awesome. If you don't eat food you'll die. That's science. You've got to make sure you have a nutritious diet to max out your party powers. Otherwise you'll be that guy passed out in a cloakroom with something crude drawn on your face in permanent marker."

3 Don't be afraid to go solo

"Some of my greatest partying has been done on my own. I don't buy into this 'Oh, my friends are busy, guess I'll just pour myself a mug of cocoa and go to bed' business. Put a record on! Rock out in your room!"

4 Have a party philosophy

"Partying is a state of mind more than an activity. It's about realising that it's good to be alive. People will tell you the most challenging thing you can do is drink an entire bottle of Tabasco sauce or whatever, but the greatest challenge of all is never taking life for granted. Partying is a celebration of life."

5 Leave animals and small children out of it

"No animal should be injured in the making of any party. You should be nice to most animals. I say most animals, because there are some who are kinda bitey – rats, bats, gnats, great white sharks – and if they're coming at you, you gotta defend yourself. Same goes for little children."

6 Wear what you want

"Dress codes crush the individual spirit. People should be able to dress however they want so long as it doesn't tread on anyone else's ability to express themselves. Even if someone is dressed stupid or silly – let them. It's all about comfort and getting along. Although personally, I'd recommend something with minimal chafing."

7 Be nice to your parents

"One for younger partiers out there: chances are your parents are kinda cool people, who themselves once partied hard like you. They put you on this planet so cut them some slack. Work your partying around their wishes, 'cos they're looking out for you."

8 Choose tunes wisely

"There's no right or wrong party music selections – just keep it loud and upbeat. You're not in a library, you're at a party! Unless it's a party in a library. In which case, maybe rethink your party location to better accommodate loud guitars."

9 Stay hydrated

"You gotta stay hydrated, gang. There's a whole variety of fluids out there. Water's kinda the key one. I can personally confirm water is awesome. If you want to enjoy your partying, you oughta drink some."

10 Know when the party is over

"Leave when the sun comes up. If you leave before the party is truly over, in some ways, the party never ends. Philosophical, huh! Know your limits and you can recover and prepare yourself to party another day."

MY CHRISTMAS STOCKING

FIVE WISHES FOR SANTA

Harry Koisser



Peace

BOOK The Chronicles Of Narnia



"I want all of CS Lewis' *The Chronicles Of Narnia* books. I need to revisit them to understand them properly, because there's so much you miss out when you read them as a child."

BOXSET The Sopranos: Complete



"You can't beat a good bit of gangster drama for killing some time on the tourbus. This would save us on next year's European tour."

FILM This Is The End

"It's the one with all the Hollywood guys trapped at a house party during the apocalypse. I like to imagine when I watch a comedy that I'm not going to find it funny because I'm grumpy, but this gets me laughing out loud."



GAME Backgammon



"You know what, I've not played Monopoly or

Scrabble for a very long time, but I've never played backgammon – so maybe it's time I started."

HOME COMFORT Heelys trainers

"Those shoes with hidden wheels. You know when you see a child floating along a road? It took me so long to realise what was going on."



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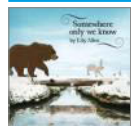
THE DECADE THAT INSPIRED A GENERATION.

Who will be top of the tree at Christmas?

Meet the runners and riders in the race for this year's festive Number One

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Lily Allen - 'Somewhere Only We Know'



►WHAT'S THE STORY?

Somehow, the annual marketing campaign for the retailer of Breville toasters and Pringle sweaters has become synonymous with Christmas itself. This year, it's Lily Allen in the shop window. After losing the Number One spot briefly, Lily's Keane cover rebounded to the top last week, which bodes well.

►CRACKER OR TURKEY? Objectively, it's shit, but who would pass up a glass of water in the desert?

►ODDS 12/1

THE 'HI, REMEMBER ME?' ONE

Lil' Chris & Lloyd Wilkinson - 'Christmas Number One (#FeedEmYellowSnow)'



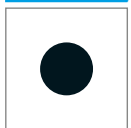
►WHAT'S THE STORY? The cute kid from Channel 4's *Rock School*, now a marginally less cute young man, has teamed up with pal Lloyd Wilkinson to release a lazily self-aware cash-in, ignoring the fact that Art Brut's Eddie Argos did this gag much better six years ago, even down to the 'Christmas Number One' title.

►CRACKER OR TURKEY? It's an abomination of lazy festive chord progressions and bum-willy lyrical sniggering.

►ODDS 66/1

THE X FACTOR WINNER ONE

Luke Friend/Nicholas MacDonald/Sam Bailey - Title TBC



►WHAT'S THE STORY? Simon Cowell and co retreated from the Christmas Number One race in recent years following the success of Facebook

campaigns raging against the machine. The at-the-time-of-going-to-press unknown song will be released following the final on December 15, with proceeds going to Together For Short Lives (instead of Artists With Short Careers).

►CRACKER OR TURKEY? It's the *X Factor* Christmas single.

►ODDS 4/9

THE ANTI-X FACTOR CAMPAIGN: ROCK VERSION AC/DC - 'Highway To Hell'



►WHAT'S THE STORY?

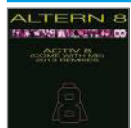
Future generations will probably have a pithy expression to describe things that are festive. Something along the lines of: 'This feels as Christmassy as a Facebook campaign to overturn *The X Factor*'. This lark felt much more like gleefully socking Simon in the eye back when Rage Against The Machine won it in 2009. Now? It's the province of schmucks who haven't got much else going on.

►CRACKER OR TURKEY? It's pretty well established as a cracker.

►ODDS 11/2

THE ANTI-X FACTOR CAMPAIGN: DANCE VERSION

Altern 8 - 'Activ 8 (Come With Me)'



►WHAT'S THE STORY? Should you prefer your spoiler really spoiled, opt for this masked rave duo's druggy, psychedelic Hoover music, cruelly kept off

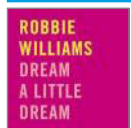
the top spot by Michael Jackson and Vic Reeves & The Wonder Stuff back in 1991.

►CRACKER OR TURKEY? If the point of spoiling your ballot is to freak out kids tuning in to hear Leon Jackson's latest successor wibble a Bryan Adams cover, this is like a candy endoscope in the brains of a schizophrenic in a wind tunnel.

►ODDS 30/1

THE CHRISTMAS NUMBER ONE VETERAN

Robbie Williams - 'Dream A Little Dream Of Me'



►WHAT'S THE STORY?

Mr Williams has already racked up three Christmas Number Ones: 'Somethin' Stupid' with Nicole Kidman, Band Aid 20, and last year's Hillsborough tribute.

►CRACKER OR TURKEY? Bizarrely, Robbie's dropped Lily Allen from the single version, making him sound like a loon talking to himself in an empty room. That's about as interesting as this bland blob of pap gets.

►ODDS 40/1



Christmas crackpot Robbie Williams



Merry Christmas to U2

THE MANDELA MEMORIAL U2 - 'Ordinary Love'



► **WHAT'S THE STORY?** The "tax-efficient" Irish rock band are back. 'Ordinary Love' was originally on the soundtrack of the newly released film of Mandela's life, *Long Walk To Freedom*. With creepy timing, it now stands on the brink of becoming the official unofficial tribute to the late statesman.

► **CRACKER OR TURKEY?** Perhaps we've gone a bit soft thinking of Tata Madiba shining down on us from heaven, but on first inspection this might be U2's most delicately shaded music since the 'Pop' album.

► **ODDS** 12/1

THE RIVAL MANDELA MEMORIAL The Special AKA - 'Nelson Mandela'



► **WHAT'S THE STORY?** Various well-meaning Twitter types have dusted off Jerry Dammers' '80s pop hit, which never quite tells you where you can claim your free Nelson Mandela. Momentum is with them: John Prescott has thrown his considerable weight behind the campaign.

► **CRACKER OR TURKEY?** Now that U2 have softened us up a bit, this relentlessly cheerful township jive is even more appropriate than it seemed last week.

► **ODDS** 9/2

THE CHARIDEE CHOIR The Fishwives Choir - 'When The Boat Comes In'/'Eternal Father'

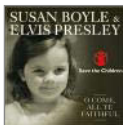


► **WHAT'S THE STORY?** You can't underestimate the power of a charity single at Christmas. Two years ago it was Gareth Malone's Military Wives, last year The Justice Collective, and this year's uplifting tearjerker is a woman who lost her fisherman husband to the seas, repping for all such fish-WAGS via the now-traditional choir format.

► **CRACKER OR TURKEY?** A definite prawn cocktail starter.

► **ODDS** 9/1

THE ONE YOUR GRANNY WANTS Susan Boyle & Elvis Presley - 'O Come All Ye Faithful'



► **WHAT'S THE STORY?** Sadly, Elvis couldn't make it to the recording sessions for his latest single on account of his ongoing death issues. But happily he has been Tupac-ed in by a team of music biz lawyers and marketers in order to lend a little bit of cross-branding potential to SuBo's Christmas record.

► **CRACKER OR TURKEY?** Not quite as good as 'Pac's Life' (feat. TI and Ashanti).

► **ODDS** 8/1



Santa's little ravers
Orbital

THE CHRISTMAS RAVE-UP Orbital - 'Christmas Chime'



► **WHAT'S THE STORY?** Do not adjust your printed publication. What you see is exactly what this is - Orbital doing a Christmas re-dub on their M25-era rave classic 'Chime'. That's right. 'Chime'. With Christmas bells on it. We can't put it more plainly than that.

► **CRACKER OR TURKEY?** It's not quite as good as 'Chime' without Christmas bells.

► **ODDS** 50/1

THE POUNDLAND SUPERGROUP The Big Reunion - 'I Wish It Could Be Christmas Every Day'



► **WHAT'S THE STORY?** Born of ITV's *The Big Reunion* show, Sive, The Honeyz, 911, B*Witched, Blue and Atomic Kitten unite in aid of ITV's charity appeal: Text Santa.

► **CRACKER OR TURKEY?** Indistinguishable tinsel muzak with upwards of a dozen people who can just about carry a tune bellowing flatly over the top of it. If someone told you it was the staff of your local B&Q singing, you'd believe that just as easily.

► **ODDS** 25/1

THE MINI INTERVIEW



Phoebe Kreutz

Singer, The Pizza Underground

Your band The Pizza Underground made headlines last week with news that Macaulay Culkin had joined. How did that happen?

"He's in an art collective with some friends of ours called 3MB - Three Men And A Baby. We lost our original kazoo player and Mac joined the band a few months ago."

What does The Pizza Underground do?

"We cover Lou Reed songs with a pizza twist - 'Take A Bite Of The Wild Slice', 'I'm Waiting For The Delivery Man', 'All The Pizza Parties'..."

What do you think Lou Reed would make of it?

"He wasn't famed for his love of foolishness. But parody is the sincerest form of flattery. If Lou Reed hadn't written such rich and interesting songs, we wouldn't be able to make them about pizza."

Have bookings increased since Culkin joined?

"We've definitely gotten more over the last couple of days. We all love to tour and try slices of pizza in different places. But we don't eat pizza while we play - the cheese would gum up the vocals."

What's your favourite pizza topping?

"A good pepperoni pizza is fantastic, but sometimes you want to get fancy and have the fresh mozzarella and basil." ■ LEONIE COOPER

Music for the kilted generation

Edinburgh's Hogmanay is already world famous, but with Chvrches and Django Django on the bill, this year's event has a killer line-up too



Last year's Hogmanay gig in Edinburgh's Princes Street Gardens

Chvrches

Have you been to Hogmanay before?

Martin Doherty: "No, so we've fixed it so all our friends can come as well. We'll have one big party in Edinburgh and do it properly. And we might even have a wee Portakabin we can escape to and drink whisky."

Why is Edinburgh the place to spend New Year's Eve?

Lauren Mayberry: "Well, you get to see bits of it on the telly which is exciting when you're growing up."

How are you going to knock the crowds out?

Lauren Mayberry: "We've got a couple of killer covers – a non-festive one and a festive one – but we can't tell you what they are yet."



Are you going to try and meet the headliners, Pet Shop Boys?

Iain Cook: "I'd love to, but I don't know if realistically if it'll will happen. We toured with Depeche Mode earlier this summer and didn't even get to fucking meet them. I was crushed!"

Dave Maclean, Django Django

Have you been to Hogmanay before?

"I lived in Edinburgh for 10 years when I was at art college, so a lot of New Years were spent at the street party. New Year's Eve is the biggest night of the year in Scotland."

What happens there?

"Snogging random people in the street, boozing, general good cheer, trying not to lose all your mates, ending up at some random house party."

What's your plan?

"We're going to play our festival set. We worked up all the songs this year, made them more dancey. We've decided it's not the place for new material – we'll do that at some secret shows in January and February."

What will you do at midnight?

"We're playing right up to the bongs, so we'll play 'Silver Rays', kiss each other on stage, do a Scottish country jig and then drink a bottle of whisky as we watch the fireworks. And then drink more whisky. And then more. That's how to survive the cold and keep spirits high."

What's your New Year's resolution?

"To drink less, but I say that every year. To make a great second album!" ■

► For more New Year's Eve ideas, turn to page 82



What your garden is waiting for

Meet The Gnome
Roses – just like the
real thing but smaller
and better looking

Stuck for a last minute Christmas present for the Stone Roses fan in your life? Admirers of the Manchester band can now place polycarbonate replicas of Ian Brown, Mani, Reni and John Squire next to their pond thanks to former music manager Andrew McDermid, who tells *NME* that the idea came to

him before the band reunited in 2012 for their iconic Manchester Heaton Park gigs.

"I was in my garden and one of my friends was drawing caricatures of the band. He just said, 'Why don't we make them?'" recalls the Glaswegian. So he and his friend, designer Charlie Boyle, set about rendering their subjects in gargoyles-like 3D. Come the Heaton Park dates, McDermid began promoting his product right at the top, personally delivering a set of the gnomes to bassist Mani's house. He left them, unannounced, in the garden. "We were in Manchester for the second show and I just thought, might as



well while we're here..."

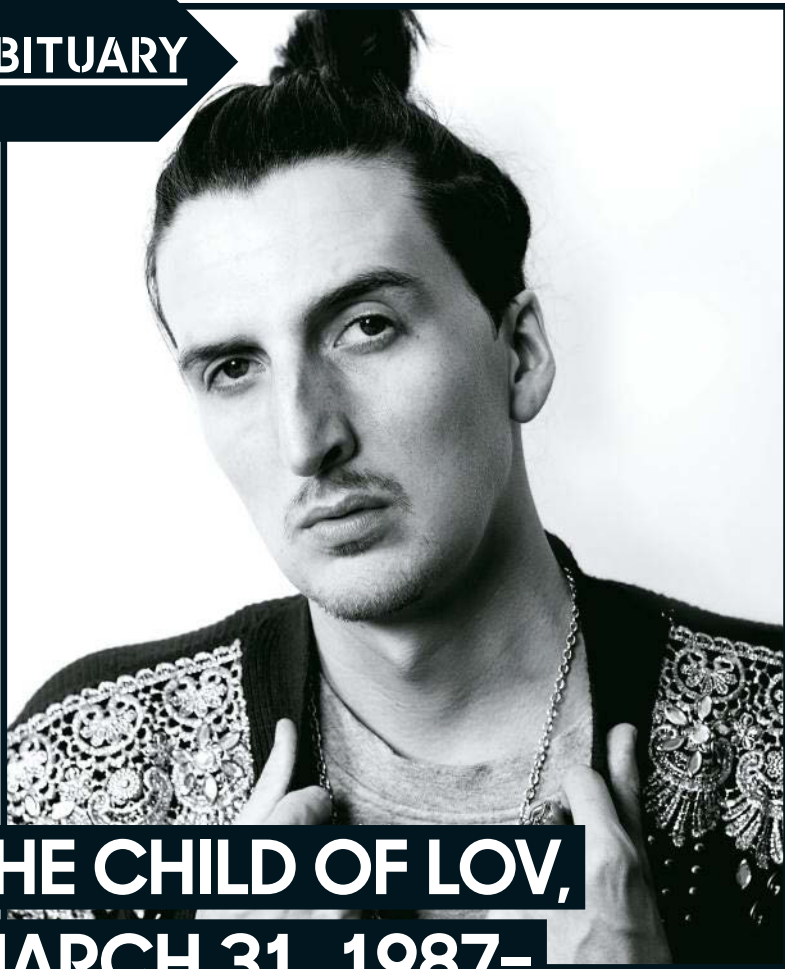
McDermid recently sent a set of the finished gnomes to each band member. So far he's only received one response, from Mani's wife. "She said it was quite an amusing moment coming home at six in the morning and finding them in the garden that night," he says.

McDermid hopes to branch out

in future, with designs for 'The Rolling Gnomes' and 'Queens Of The Gnome Age' being considered, as well as the not-so-punning but equally iconic Kurt Cobain. Next up, though, will be the Ra-Gnomes – and an irresistible promo campaign. "The poster says 'Hi-ho, let's go!'" says McDermid.

■ DAVID RENSHAW

OBITUARY



THE CHILD OF LOV, MARCH 31, 1987– DECEMBER 10, 2013

BY **MATT WILKINSON**

**NME's New Music
Editor remembers
a rare talent**



It was with heavy heart that I took a call from Trey Reames, manager of The Child Of Lov, informing me that Cole Williams, as I was introduced to him, or Martijn William Zimri Teerlinck, to use his real name, had passed away in Amsterdam last Tuesday (December 10), aged just 26. I was introduced to Martijn's music by a friend who, after freaking out about his great demos back in early 2012, had said simply: "He's completely amazing, but apparently he's not very well."

The private rumours about Martijn's health never became public because they never needed to, even when he cancelled all his live dates for an unspecified reason in May 2013. That came just weeks after the release of his much-praised and fantastically diverse self-titled debut album (on Domino sister label Double Six), accurately described by Martijn himself as "pop for thugs". The record reminded me of Prince, OutKast, Gorillaz and Beck – all gigantic outsider figures in pop's warped spectrum, and all renowned for reinventing the wheel. It seemed like they'd all have to budge up and make room for this Belgian-born, Netherlands-based enigma to stand alongside them – a feeling that grew stronger when the calibre of the people who Martijn had convinced to work alongside him became clear: Damon Albarn, Doom, Focus Creeps and more.

The only time I met Martijn in person was at the NME Awards last February, where we honoured him with the Philip Hall Radar Award. He turned up at the ceremony wearing the most garish red suit imaginable, and I loved it because even among all these super-famous A-list celebrities, he stuck out massively. Martijn had been set to finally make his live debut – alongside Doom – at State-X in The Hague on December 14. As well as being a musician, Martijn was known as a poet in the Netherlands.

A statement issued by Trey Reames read as follows: "I must announce that Martijn Teerlinck aka Cole Williams aka The Child Of Lov aka Sun Patzer is no longer with us. He lived a life of struggle and can now rest peacefully. In his own words: 'When I was younger, I had a tough time physically. I have seen too many hospital beds. It made me stronger. Makes you realise death is always near, for anyone. And what a wonderful thing life is and how grateful we should be.'"

Domino Records also paid tribute to Martijn on their website: "His talent and friendship are a heavy loss to us, but we will always carry the pride of having been involved in his short but particularly bright recording career."

Martijn's death, owing to complications following surgery, has left me feeling sad because of the incredible music the world has undoubtedly been deprived of, and because of the grief Martijn's friends, family and fans must be going through. Mostly though, it's because of his youth – 26 is no age to die. Play his music loud. ■

LOST ALBUMS

#11

The Sonics, The Wailers, The Galaxies **Merry Christmas** (1965)

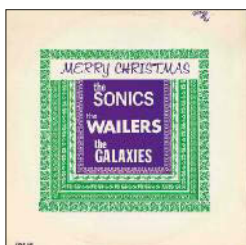
Chosen by MB, Hookworms

"It's by three bands from the Pacific Northwest garage-rock scene: The Sonics, The Wailers and The Galaxies. It's a mix of covers – The Galaxies do 'Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer' – and originals. One of them, 'She's Comin' Home' by The Wailers, is my favourite Christmas song ever. It's got a jangly sound, a bit like The Byrds, and a better subject matter than most: a lovesick young pup who's over the moon because his girlfriend is coming home from college for the holidays. It's like a flip reverse of the long-distance relationship in 'The Gift' by The Velvet Underground."



► THE DETAILS

- **RELEASE DATE** Autumn 1965
- **LABEL** Etiquette
- **BEST TRACKS** Santa Claus – The Sonics, She's Comin' Home – The Wailers, Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer – The Galaxies
- **WHERE TO FIND IT** Download from Amazon and iTunes. Original vinyls go for very high prices.
- **LISTEN ONLINE** On Spotify. The majority of the album is also at deathandtaxesmag.com



Beck

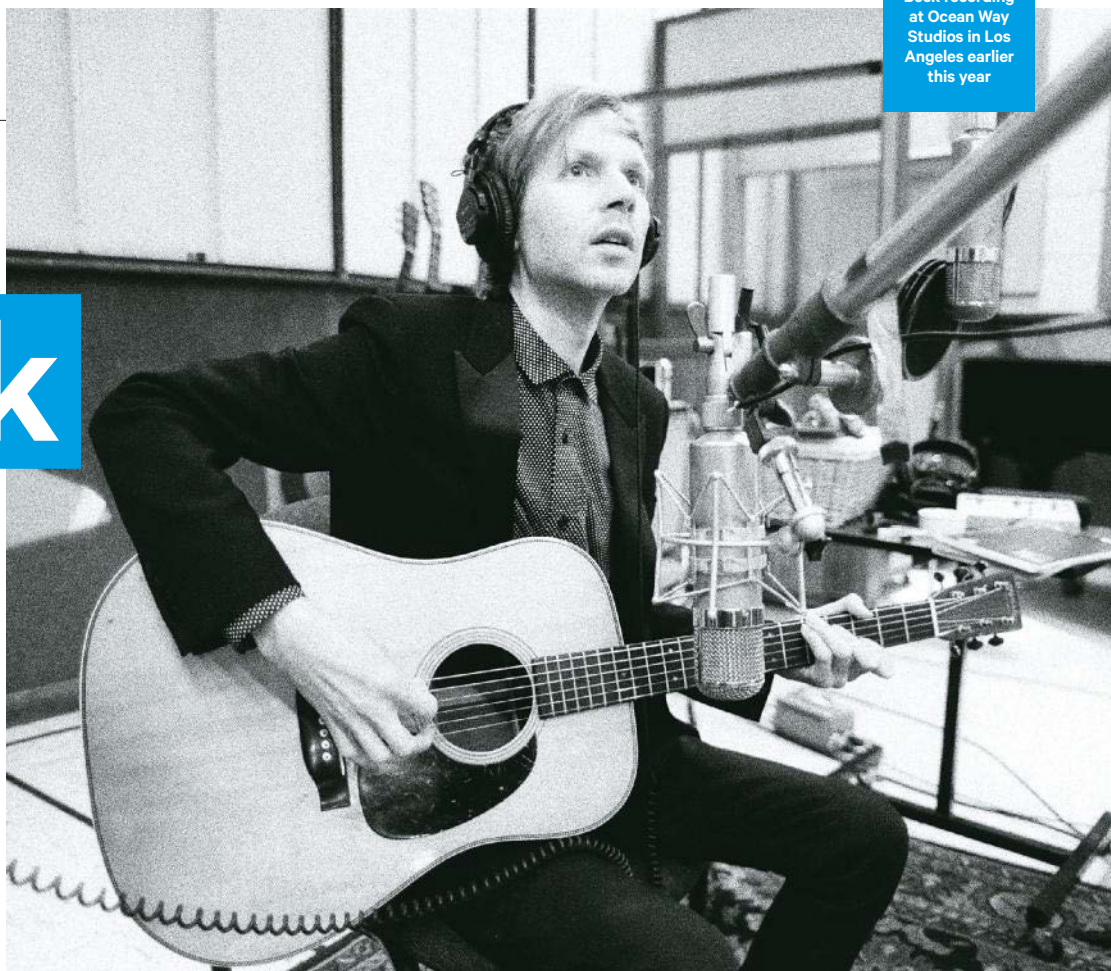
After a serious spinal injury left him unable to play guitar for five years, Beck is making up for lost time with two albums in 2014

It's almost six years since Beck released a proper album. That's a long time for any artist, but for one as prolific as Beck, it's downright worrisome. He's been active, of course – there was last year's ambitious 'Song Reader' project, released only as sheet-music, as well as a clutch of one-off singles and collaborations – but for a while, it seemed as though he'd given up on the idea of ever making a conventional album again.

"I had a few years where I thought that was probably it for me," he says down the phone from L.A. "I mean, I'd always make music, but you have to be out there, waving a flag, saying 'Hey! Over here!' Some of my favourite artists never even had an audience in their lifetime and there's something to be said for working in that kind of self-contained vacuum."

The record that's got Beck waving his flag again is 'Morning Phase', a stunning collection of songs steeped in the Californian folk-rock of the '70s. "I live in California and this record sounds like it," he says. "I could've brought the drum machines out, but I really wanted to avoid that." 'Morning Phase' was recorded with the same group of musicians who worked on 2002's 'Sea Change',

"I LIVE IN CALIFORNIA AND THIS RECORD SOUNDS LIKE IT"
Beck



Beck recording at Ocean Way Studios in Los Angeles earlier this year

and the mellow, melancholic vibe of that record is prevalent on this one.

Like 'Sea Change', which followed his split from his long-term girlfriend, 'Morning Phase' also comes from a place of turmoil, though of the physical rather than emotional sort. For the last five years, Beck has suffered from a serious spinal injury that meant he couldn't even pick up a guitar. "It happened when I was shooting a promotional clip which required me to be in a harness for two days," he explains. "There was no training or preparation, it wasn't done properly, and I was left in it for much too long, which resulted in a lot of complications."

When he was finally able to play the instrument again, he says, "there was a lot of joy. It was a relief for me. I'd been looking at that guitar for years, wishing that I could pick it up, wanting to be able to play it again. So there was a lot of emotion when I finally did."

Now that he's recovered, he seems determined to make up for lost time: Beck will release a second, as yet unnamed album in 2014 (which he remains evasive about, save to say that it's "not of a piece" with 'Morning

Phase') and there are plans to release more of those one-off singles (which all originate from another record he shelved back in 2008). He also promises there will "definitely" be live shows next year, although "because

I have another record coming, I'm not sure how much touring I'll be doing for this one." He is, however, confident that the injury won't affect any future gigs. "The live shows this year have been going great, really. I'm moving around and I feel like I have freedom over my body again."

In the meantime, one question remains: why, out of his "hundreds" of unreleased songs and unrealised projects, has Beck decided to return with this one?

"Some things are meant to be and some aren't," he says. "Some things have momentum and others don't. You can't force the

hand. It's a lot of work, but you always know when it's something you need to follow through." ■ BARRY NICOLSON

▶ THE DETAILS

- ▶ **TITLE** Morning Phase
- ▶ **RELEASE DATE** February
- ▶ **PRODUCER** Beck
- ▶ **RECORDED** Various studios
- ▶ **TRACKS INCLUDE** Morning, Heart Is A Drum, Say Goodbye, Waking Light, Unforgiven, Wave, Don't Let It Go, Blackbird Chain, Evil Things, Blue Moon, Turn Away, Country Down
- ▶ **BECK SAYS** "There's a chemistry between the musicians and myself, and for us to revisit it again, we were all smiling. It's that feeling where the right combination of people are playing together, and there's another presence in the room."



ANATOMY OF A CHRISTMAS ALBUM



"CHRISTMAS MEANT A LOT TO PHIL"

Darlene Love



STORY BEHIND THE SLEEVE

Though no photographer is credited on the original artwork – a group shot of the performers – Spector himself contributes sleeve notes for the record's back cover. "Can 12 great Christmas songs be treated with the same excitement as the original pop material of today?" it asks. "Until now, perhaps not!"

FIVE FACTS

1 Beach Boys frontman Brian Wilson plays piano on several tracks and wrote a lost song for The Ronettes that failed to make the cut.

2 Sonny Bono of Sonny & Cher was working as a studio assistant for Spector during the sessions.

3 [Spector] used to yell at him all the time, but Sonny was so sweet," recalls The Crystals' LaLa Brooks.

4 Darlene Love has performed 'Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)' annually on chat show host David Letterman's festive episode since 1986. "Dave says it's not Christmas until he hears me sing," says Love.

5 Despite Spector's formidable reputation, engineer Larry Levine recalls that the producer would regularly "do stand-up comedy for 20 minutes at a time" when things were going well, while Darlene Love remembers them all receiving gifts from him.

6 The original album was released on the same day President John F Kennedy was assassinated, which is widely blamed for its poor chart performance in the US. It found a bigger audience thanks to an Apple Records reissue in 1972.

LYRIC ANALYSIS

"It is so difficult at this time to say words that would express my feelings about the album to which you have just listened" – 'Silent Night'

Spector's spoken-word monologue on 'Silent Night' could have been very different. "The first time he did it, he used foul language," recalls engineer Levine. "Something like, 'I made this record for you, cocksuckers.'"

"If there was a way/I'd hold back this tear/But it's Christmas Day" – 'Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)'

The sole original song on the record, this track was intended for Spector's future wife Ronnie Bennett of The Ronettes, but was later given to Darlene Love after Bennett's vocal was deemed not emotional enough.

"When suddenly the clock strikes 12/The fun's begun" – 'Parade Of The Wooden Soldiers'

Contrary to the song's chipper message, The Crystals' LaLa Brooks recalls the sessions differently. "I would be there from 1pm to 1am as a teenager. It was like child abuse," she said.

THE DETAILS

► **RECORDED** Summer 1963 ► **RELEASED** November 22, 1963
 ► **LENGTH** 34:12 ► **PRODUCER** Phil Spector ► **STUDIO** Gold Star Studios, Los Angeles ► **HIGHEST UK CHART POSITION** 6
 ► **SINGLES** None ► **TRACKLISTING** ►1. White Christmas – Darlene Love ►2. Frosty The Snowman – The Ronettes ►3. The Bells Of St Mary's – Bob B Soxx & The Blue Jeans ►4. Santa Claus Is Coming To Town – The Crystals ►5. Sleigh Ride – The Ronettes ►6. Marshmallow World – Darlene Love ►7. I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus – The Ronettes ►8. Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer – The Crystals ►9. Winter Wonderland – Darlene Love ►10. Parade Of The Wooden Soldiers – The Crystals ►11. Christmas (Baby Please Come Home) – Darlene Love ►12. Here Comes Santa Claus – Bob B Soxx & The Blue Jeans ►13. Silent Night – Phil Spector

WHAT WE SAID THEN*

"There are Christmas albums and Christmas albums... But when the chips (and the snowflakes) are down, there's only ONE Christmas album you really need – Phil Spector's 'A Christmas Gift For You'"

Fred Dellar, NME, December 11, 1993

WHAT WE SAY NOW

It's impossible to imagine the festive musical canon without it. Despite largely consisting of covers, the joy that exudes from Spector's production ensures his take on the songs is the only one worth bothering with.

FAMOUS FAN

Las Vegas frontman **James Allan** says: "I used to listen to it every day, even in summer. I think my neighbours thought I was mental."

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"Christmas meant a lot to Phil. It was one of the biggest projects he ever took on, because it was something that had never been done before." **Darlene Love, 2013**

THE AFTERMATH

Though 2009's murder trial would mar his public image, the quality and influence of Spector's work is still recognised to this day.

THIS WEEK...

Various Artists: A Christmas Gift For You

Half a century ago, super producer Phil Spector applied his Wall Of Sound to 12 festive tunes, with brilliant results



NEWS DESK



THE NUMBERS

640,000

2013 sales of Emeli Sandé's 'Our Version Of Events', making it the UK's best-selling album for the second year running

\$197,000

Amount that Bruce Springsteen's handwritten 'Born To Run' lyrics sold for at auction

17

Number of videos included with the iTunes release of Beyoncé's surprise new album

10

Paving stones engraved with Lostprophets lyrics set to be removed from Pontypridd streets

BIG MOUTH

"It's the alternative Ascot, let's face it. Not that I've ever been to the proper Ascot"

MICK JAGGER puts a nail in the coffin of Glastonbury's hippy spirit



WHO THE FUCK IS...



Zlatan Gibboni?

The Swedish footballer?

No, a different Zlatan. Gibboni is a Croatian musician who has pressed his latest album '20th Century Man' onto chocolate. Sounds delicious.

Yes. It plays perfectly on a record player or, if you get hungry, you can eat it all. Label included.

Why has he done this?

It's all about sex, apparently. As Gibboni explains: "I read that chocolate contains a hormone of happiness and boosts your libido, so I thought it was a perfect combination for rock based on music we loved in 1980s."



Killer Whales

Artists including Willie Nelson and Joan Jett have cancelled gigs at SeaWorld parks following the documentary *Blackfish*, which highlighted the conditions in which the animals are kept.

GOOD WEEK ↔ BAD WEEK



The Hives

Frontman Pelle Almqvist apologised after introducing 'Tick, Tick, Boom' with: "This song's for everyone in Boston. It's about stuff blowing up," just months after the marathon bombing.

AND FINALLY

Weekend warbler

Three years after 'Friday', YouTube pop star Rebecca Black has returned with the chronologically titled 'Saturday'. Let's hope she follows Craig David's lead and chills on Sunday.

Espresso yourself

Coffee chain Costa has banned Cliff Richard's 'Mistletoe & Wine' from its 1,600 stores after it topped a customer poll of their most hated Christmas tunes. Just filtering out the bad stuff.

Babble on

Politicians aren't renowned for answering questions properly, but David Cameron pushed it telling *The Spectator* that Mumford & Sons' album 'Babel' is his "favourite Christmas song". Nice one, Dave.

► Find these stories and more on NME.COM



THE BIG QUESTION

WHAT SHOULD BE XMAS NUMBER ONE?



Jamie Reynolds
Klaxons

"I am behind the campaign to get Altern 8 to the top with 'Activ-8'. They're rave heroes and I fully support them in their race."



Greg Cochran
Editor, NME.COM

"I loved that awkward moment when Scott Mills had to introduce Rage Against The Machine on *Top Of The Pops* in 2009. For that reason I'm backing the AC/DC campaign. We need Angus Young in his shorts to save Christmas."



Helen Thomas
NME reader

"I'm backing X Factor winner Sam Bailey as a pity vote. They haven't even bothered to enter the race since being scared off by Rage Against The Machine."

Official RECORD STORE Chart

TOP 40 ALBUMS DECEMBER 15, 2013



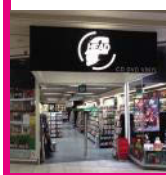
Robbie Williams Swings Both Ways ISLAND

Robbie Williams overtakes his former bandmate Gary Barlow to reach the top spot with 'Swings Both Ways' – his 10th studio album and second attempt at swing-pop, following 2001's 'Sing When You're Winning'.

- ▼ 2 Since I Saw You Last **Gary Barlow** POLYDOR
- 3 Midnight Memories **One Direction** SYCO
- ▲ 4 AM **Arctic Monkeys** DOMINO
- NEW 5 Join The Dots **Tony HEAVENLY**
- ▼ 6 If You Wait **London Grammar** METAL & DUST
- ▲ 7 Right Place Right Time **Ollie Murs** EPIC
- 8 Time **Rod Stewart** CAPITOL/DECCA
- ▲ 9 Babel **Mumford & Sons** GENTLEMEN OF THE ROAD/ISLAND
- ▼ 10 Shangri La **Jake Bugg** EMI
- ▲ 11 Halcyon **Ellie Goulding** POLYDOR
- ▲ 12 James Arthur **James Arthur** SYCO
- NEW 13 Live At The Cellar Door **Neil Young** WARNER BROS
- ▲ 14 The Nation's Favourite Elvis Songs **Elvis Presley** RCA
- ▼ 15 Live From KCRW **Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds** BAD SEED
- ▲ 16 Pale Green Ghosts **John Grant** BELLA UNION
- 17 Music Of The Night **Andre Rieu & His Johann Strauss Orchestra** DECCA
- NEW 18 Salute **Little Mix** SYCO
- ▼ 19 The Marshall Mathers LP 2 **Eminem** INTERSCOPE
- 20 Home For Christmas **Susan Boyle** SYCO
- ▲ 21 Prism **Katy Perry** VIRGIN
- ▼ 22 Loved Me Back To Life **Celine Dion** COLUMBIA
- ▼ 23 Bad Blood **Bastille** VIRGIN
- ▲ 24 Moon Landing **James Blunt** ATLANTIC/CUSTARD
- ▼ 25 Trust **Alfie Boe** DECCA
- NEW 26 To Be Loved **Michael Bublé** REPRISE
- ▼ 27 A Musical Affair **Il Divo** SYCO
- ▼ 28 Freedom **Rebecca Ferguson** RCA
- ▼ 29 Our Version Of Events **Emeli Sandé** VIRGIN
- ▼ 30 Reflektor **Arcade Fire** SONOVOX
- NEW 31 The Remainder **The Fall** CHERRY RED
- NEW 32 Christmas With Love **Leona Lewis** SYCO
- ▼ 33 The Fabulous Rock 'N' Roll Songbook **Cliff Richard** RHINO
- NEW 34 Christmas **Michael Bublé** REPRISE
- ▲ 35 Born To Die **Lana Del Rey** POLYDOR
- ▼ 36 The Best Of **Keane** ISLAND
- NEW 37 Unorthodox Jukebox **Bruno Mars** ATLANTIC
- ▼ 38 Jake Bugg **Jake Bugg** MERCURY
- ▼ 39 Direct Hits **The Killers** VERTIGO
- NEW 40 The Next Day **David Bowie** RCA

The Official Charts Company compiles the Official Record Store Chart from sales through 100 of the UK's best independent record shops, from Sunday to Saturday.

TOP OF THE SHOPS



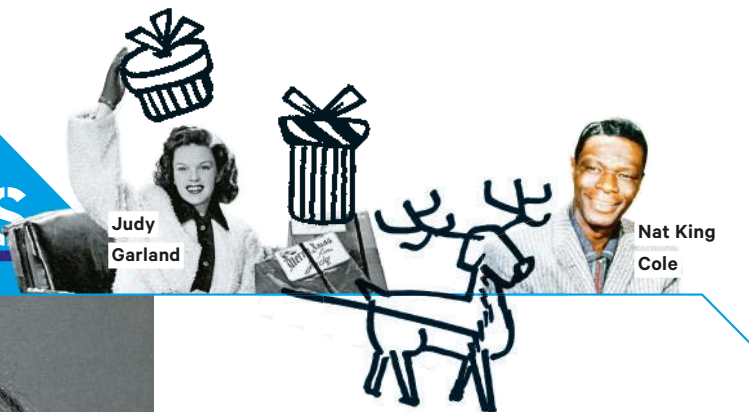
THIS WEEK HEAD LEAMINGTON SPA FOUNDED 2007

WHY IT'S GREAT They enthusiastically recommend stuff they're enjoying via their Twitter (@Head_Leamington) and Facebook (facebook.com/HeadLeamingtonSpa).

TOP SELLER THIS WEEK Jake Bugg – 'Jake Bugg'

THEY SAY "We cater for hardcore enthusiasts, crate-diggers and the casual chart purchaser."

SOUNDTRACK OF MY CHRISTMAS



Judy
Garland

Nat King
Cole



Zoey Deschanel

Elf actress
and singer,
She & Him



THE SONG I PLAY TO GET IN THE FESTIVE SPIRIT 'Little Saint Nick' - The Beach Boys

"This is a '60s Christmas miracle. It has the warmth of a holiday classic plus the charm of early Beach Boys. We included it on 'A Very She & Him Christmas' because I love it so much."

THE FIRST SONG I PLAY ON CHRISTMAS MORNING 'White Christmas' - Darlene Love

"This is on the greatest Christmas album ever: Phil Spector's 'A Christmas Gift For You' [we agree - see page 19]. Love and Spector truly reinvented this classic."

THE CHRISTMAS SONG I MOST ENJOY PERFORMING 'Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas' - Judy Garland

"I can't help but think of Judy Garland, with tears

in her eyes, singing this to her little sister in the great Vincente Minnelli musical *Meet Me In St Louis*. It's such a beautiful sentimental song and it's a joy to sing."

THE SONG I PLAY TO GET A CHRISTMAS PARTY STARTED 'Last Christmas' - Wham!

"This is a really melancholic song about heartbreak disguised as a Christmas classic. It's fun to dance to and the vocal is pretty great too. Guaranteed to get the partygoers moving."

"WHAM! IS GUARANTEED TO GET A PARTY GOING"

THE SONG I PLAY UNDER THE MISTLETOE 'The Christmas Song (Chestnuts Roasting On An Open Fire)' - Nat King Cole

"One thing I love about

Christmas music is that it has a tradition of warmth, and this is a beautiful ballad perfect for cozying up on a Christmas night. Nat King Cole's vocals are so natural and intimate, it almost feels like he's whispering in your ear. It's the most romantic Christmas tune."

THE CHRISTMAS SONG I DO AT KARAOKE 'All I Want For Christmas Is You' - Mariah Carey

"Matt [M Ward, She & Him] and I tried to do it at a She & Him show once but it just didn't quite come together, so I'd have to do it at karaoke instead. When we're playing shows we'll sometimes throw in covers that we literally just decided on an hour before the show. There's something pretty scary - but fun - about that."

THE SONG THAT REMINDS ME OF CHILDHOOD CHRISTMASES 'Frosty The Snowman' - The Ronettes

"This is another great track from Phil Spector's Christmas masterpiece. I loved this song growing up because it's got a great little story wrapped up in it, and The Ronettes' version is flawless."

beautiful melody to it and it's one the few festive numbers that sounds better done a capella. I really loved singing it in choir when I was young."

MY FAVOURITE SONG FROM A CHRISTMAS FILM 'Christmas Time Is Here' - Vince Guaraldi Trio

"It's from *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, which is shown on TV every year in the States. It's a melancholy, but beautiful song."

MY FAVOURITE SONG FROM THE *ELF* SOUNDTRACK 'The Christmas Waltz' - Frank Sinatra

"I loved performing 'The Christmas Waltz' in *Elf*. I had seen an old movie [*Neptune's Daughter*] that had switched the genders and I thought it could be a fun way to make it different. It feels less creepy when it's the girl trying to keep the guy there. It takes on a whole new complexity."

THE CHRISTMAS SONG I CAN LISTEN TO ALL YEAR ROUND 'I've Got My Love To Keep Me Warm' - Ella Fitzgerald

"This is a great version of an Irving Berlin tune. It's such a clever song and this version is so brilliantly arranged it doesn't even have to be December to enjoy it."

THE CHRISTMAS SONG I CAN NO LONGER LISTEN TO

"I honestly can't think of an answer to this. I like them all!" ■

► She & Him's 'The Capitol Studios Sessions' EP is out now



Wham!



Dog rest ye
merry gentleman:
Ozzy at home in
Buckinghamshire,
December 8, 2013



Bark!

The herald

angel sings

**It's been a nightmare before
Christmas for Ozzy Osbourne,
who's battled his addiction demons
to save his marriage, career and
life while leading Black Sabbath to
a triumphant reunion. Barry Nicolson
kneels before the resurgent master
of festivities**

PHOTO BY ED MILES



When I get back from interviewing Ozzy Osbourne at his country estate in Buckinghamshire, the question everybody asks is not 'What's he like?' but rather, 'How's he doing?' There are two reasons for this. The first is that everybody already knows – or thinks they know – what Ozzy Osbourne is like. They've seen him on TV, shambling around his mansion, channel-surfing on the couch, falling off chairs and braying out "Shaaaaaaron!" at every minor inconvenience. He exists in the popular imagination as a sort of real-life Fred Flintstone: everyone knows his voice, his mannerisms, his family, his foibles. This feeds into the second reason: people genuinely love Ozzy. To millions of strangers, he's less like some distant, cloistered rock icon, and more like a calamitous, cantankerous uncle. They care about him. They worry about him, too.

And why wouldn't they? After all, 2013 has been a funny old year for Ozzy, one marked by unprecedented professional highs and all-too-precedented personal lows. Yet when he finally shuffles into view, smaller and leaner than you'd expect, doused in aftershave, deaf as a post and clutching a Pomeranian named Rocky – an amiable little thing that keeps trying to fuck the carpet, much to his master's exasperation – he's remarkably on the ball. During his 30-minute shoot with our photographer, he requires almost no direction whatsoever, pulling poses and facial expressions without any prompting, his eyes – those eyes – going from glassy and half-lidded to fiendishly, maniacally alert in the click of a shutter. At one point, he picks up the dog and places it on his head. Rocky simply sits there, unperturbed, having long ago become blasé about this sort of thing.

While that's going on, I quietly study my surroundings. Family photos are all around the house – Ozzy and Sharon with Prince Charles; Kelly with Jack and his daughter, Pearl Clementine; a black-and-white snapshot of an infant Sharon posing with her mother – and the bookshelves heave under the weight of assorted biographies (multiple volumes on Thatcher, JFK, Lennon and Hendrix), popular fiction (Stephen King, Robert Ludlum, Jackie Collins) and coffee-table tomes on Marilyn Monroe. On the top shelf, I notice a copy of Martindale's *The Complete Drug Reference*, 1983 edition – an heirloom from the bad old days, no doubt. The exterior of the Osbourne homestead, meanwhile, resembles Santa's grotto: every last shrub lining the driveway – and it's a long one – is webbed in fairy lights, with two life-size nutcracker soldiers standing guard at the vestibule and wreaths hung on every entrance. It doesn't look like the home of a man who hates Christmas, but as Ozzy will later explain when we retire to his (conspicuously un-festive) den, this time of year is fraught with dangers and temptations for people like him.



"One time, years ago," he remembers, "I was in a hotel on Christmas day with Sharon and the family, and I said, 'Would it be OK if I had one glass of champagne?' Sharon said, 'You can do whatever you want, but remember what the fuck you are.' So I went, 'Ah, I'll be alright.' Then the next day I was in another fucking pickle..."

Ozzy has spent much of the past year trying to undo the damage wrought by the last 'pickle' he found himself in. Sometime in late 2011, he had what he describes as "a bit of a flutter," relapsing into booze and drugs after seven years of sobriety. Sharon was aware of his drinking again, but not the true extent of it, and it wasn't until July 2012, when she went through the texts in his phone, that she found out he was also taking speed, valium, ritalin and sleeping pills. By April of this year, the tabloids had started sniffing around, and they soon learned that the couple had effectively separated, with Sharon living in the Beverly Hills Hotel and Ozzy holed up in a rented LA mansion. Two days after the story broke, Ozzy took the unusual – not to mention brave – step of coming clean via a post on his official Facebook page, confirming that he had indeed

**"When I'm at
AA I'm no better
than anyone"**

been using for the past 18 months, but stating that he was 44 days sober. He also denied rumours that Sharon was divorcing him. (Though in her new autobiography, published this October, she revealed that she had demanded a divorce).

"It's like, the water drips from the tap and you go 'Fuck it,'" he says when asked what triggered the relapse. "For no reason at all, you'll suddenly think 'I fancy a drink' and your head will say 'Let yourself have one'. Next thing you know, you're scraping yourself off the garage floor three days later. It's like having a haunted fucking head. You've got these voices saying, 'Don't worry about it, Ozzy. *Anyone* would have a drink if their album went to Number One in all those countries.' But you're doing deals with the Devil. It's a disease of the mind and body, and you can't control it. That's why I go to these AA meetings."

As one of the most recognisable men in the country, you must feel awfully exposed at an AA meeting.

"I went to one somewhere around here and this guy came up and said, 'I've always wanted to be at a meeting with Ozzy Osbourne.' So I said to him, 'Hey, when I'm in this room I'm no better than you, because if we go out and have a drink, we're fucking both dead, so let's leave it at that.' I'll just go to a meeting. If someone asks for a photograph I'll say no, because I'm not there to do photographs – I'm there to save my fucking life. I feel like an asshole, but if you do one, you've gotta do fucking 15. It's not my ego, it's my life."

When Sharon found out about the drugs, he says, she was pissed off. "She was very pissed

Christ-master
of reality: Ozzy
in front of his
country pile



off. I thought I was gonna lose my family at one point. Because when I go out, you wanna be careful when I come home, because I'll come through anywhere in the house bar the front fucking door. I'm fucking crazy. If you're in a relationship, if you keep coming home and your wife's terrified of you, if she doesn't know if you'll come back with five chicks and a box of booze... I mean, you name it, I've done it. So she just said, 'Look, I've got my own thing going on, and I can't deal with you any more. Get the fuck out, sort yourself out, then we'll talk.' I don't blame her in the slightest."

If you know anything at all about their history, Ozzy without Sharon just doesn't seem like a workable proposition. Even today, with everything else she has going on, Sharon still manages him; she signs off on his business deals, his tour schedule, his promo obligations. She makes his life run on time. Yet, at one point during his relapse, Ozzy got it into his head that he wanted to be a bachelor again. Sharon, furious, promptly sold off his \$800,000 collection of cars, including the Ferrari he bought when he passed his driving test (at the 19th attempt) in 2009.

"What the fuck am I?" he says, shaking his head in disbelief. "I'm 65 years old in a fucking Ferrari – who am I gonna pull? 'Hey babe, wanna come in my Ferrari?' 'You're too old, you cunt! Fuck off!' First I bought a Range Rover, then a Bentley, then a Ferrari... what the fuck was I thinking? Now I've just got a Bentley that my wife's bought me for Christmas."

The day Ozzy decided to seek help, he'd woken up in a hotel room with a broken sternum and no memory of how it happened. That was nine months ago. Now, he says, "If I want to drink, I'll drink. If I want to get stoned, I'll get stoned. But I don't want to, because I can't stop. I turn into a fucking ogre, and I don't like the feeling of waking up and going, 'I've got to start from fucking day one again.' I've been through too many day ones, and I don't want to do another one."

Black Christmas

Are you looking forward to Christmas, Ozzy?

"I fucking hate Christmas. It's a waste of money. Me, I hate to think, 'Oh, I've got to buy all these people gifts just because it's Christmas.' I like to buy people gifts on unspecific days of the year: 'Oh, Peter would like that, Mary would like that...' But I hate people expecting gifts, you know. So no, I'm not big on Christmas. I'm a grumpy fucker. Yo-ho-ho! Merry Christmas: now don't fucking tell me what to buy you!"

Do the Osbournes have any festive traditions? War pigs in blankets?

"Yeah – don't get Ozzy pissed! It's the time of the year when all the fucking novice drinkers get fucked up, isn't it? The police must think, 'Right, here we go! That must be a hard job, having to stop people for drunk driving. But if I could, I'd work through Christmas. I've never been big on it. When I was a kid, it'd be Christmas Eve and you'd be all excited, wondering what you're gonna get this year. Then Boxing Day would come and you'd be fucking pissed off because you already broke the fucking toy that your old man bought you.'"

Today is day 279,

and Ozzy looks good for it. Better than good, in fact, when you consider that he turned 65 a few days ago – no longer the Prince of Darkness, but Satan's own pensioner.

Understandably, he's unsure of how to feel about joining the ranks of the senior citizenry; frankly, he seems flabbergasted that he's made it this far.

"Back in the old days, I always thought it would be a bad batch of heroin [that would kill me]," he smiles ruefully. "I mean, I've overdosed more times than I haven't! I'm living on borrowed time anyway. The only thing that pisses me off is wondering how I'm gonna go. Knowing me, I'll probably trip up and break my fucking hip..."

When he turned 60, he says, "the word 'retirement' started coming into the interviews, but as long as I have an audience, as long as I can physically do it and enjoy doing it and they want to see me, what's the point in quitting?" It raises the question of Black Sabbath's future. Three months after their frontman hit bottom, '13', Sabbath's first album in 18 years, topped the charts in 13 countries, giving the band their first-ever US Number One and selling 1.3 million copies worldwide in the process. The day before our interview, Sabbath are nominated for three Grammy awards, which Ozzy seems particularly amazed by. The only disappointment is that Bill Ward hasn't been a part of it due to contractual negotiations. Ozzy says it's his "dream" to get the band's original drummer on another Sabbath album, but he hasn't spoken to him, "because it wouldn't be fair. 'Hi, how are you, Ozzy?' 'I'm alright Bill, I'm just about to go onstage to 75,000 people in Sao Paolo. Wish you were here!' When it's all over, I'll probably give him a call. I love and respect the guy very much, but we just couldn't hang around any more. [His absence] is obviously something to do with dollars, but my wife does the deals, so I don't know."

It's common knowledge that each member of the band has their own separate management team, but it's genuinely surprising how little Black Sabbath call the shots in their own career. The '13' tour winds up in Belgium on June 29, 2014, but neither Ozzy nor the rest of the band have any idea of what comes next.

"Well, I've said to Sharon, 'Is this it?' Because I've gotta know, I've gotta start making plans for my future. And Sharon'll go, 'Well, it's only the one album.' 'So that's it then?' 'Well, not really...' I need to know if it's gonna go ➔



Ozzy and Geezer
Butler hug it out
in Rio, Brazil, 2013



any further, because I've got another band to get together. All I can tell you is that I'm not opposed to doing another album, but it's down to the powers that be. Tony [Iommi, guitarist] has got fucking thousands of great riffs. He's like a machine."

Sabbath's touring schedule is arranged so that Iommi can go back to the UK once every six weeks to undergo treatment for the lymphoma he was diagnosed with in January 2012. The treatment has been successful so far, but his condition adds a potential extra layer of finality to Sabbath's resurgence. "When we were writing this album and he was going through his treatment, I thought to myself, 'He ain't gonna fucking make it. How can he?' He'd come down some days and he'd look tired, you know? But so do I, I suppose. He's doing well. If he has a headache or anything, we'll be like (*adopts grave expression*) 'Are you OK? Are you sure?' But he's a good guy, Tony. And he's a fucking great guitar player. I just keep my fingers crossed it don't return."

By the time you read this, Sabbath will be finishing up the British leg of a world tour that's taken them around North and South America, Australia, Europe and Japan. The picture Ozzy paints of life on the road now is very different to the old war stories he tells about back in the day,

"when we'd go into the dressing room and it'd be, 'Right, who's got the coke? Who's got the booze?'" Now, Ozzy will only venture out of his hotel room to travel to the gig, lest he "end up in a bad place"; and he, Iommi and bassist Geezer Butler have their own separate dressing rooms.

Nevertheless, he says, it works: wherever they've gone, the response has been overwhelming. There's only been one bad gig, in California. Three minutes before Sabbath went onstage, Jack called Ozzy to tell him that his wife Lisa had miscarried their second child. "I have this routine to warm my voice up, warm my body up, get psyched into the gig," Ozzy recalls. "But when something like that comes and tips the scales, you're like, 'Oh, fuck.' I couldn't say to Jack, 'Look, will you fuck off with this bad news?' His wife had just lost their baby, you know? So I wasn't focused on the gig, I was just thinking to myself, 'Is she alright? Is he alright? How did it happen?' I was like three left legs."

Black Sabbath formed in 1968 to escape the soul-breaking factory work that was on offer to them in Birmingham, forging heavy metal out of their dissatisfaction. This year the city has seen a similar cultural resurgence. Is Ozzy aware of B-Town?



"The what? Me-Town?"

Never mind. What about Lady Gaga and Miley Cyrus? Does he see a little of himself in their desire to shock and provoke people?

"The thing about Lady Gaga is, if I walked

down the road wearing an orange on my head, a beefburger on my face and a fucking dead cat hanging out my arse, people would just go, 'Oh, so that's what Ozzy's wearing onstage tonight.' Go and make a sensation, but don't wear it on the fucking street – wear it at the show. At least there's

an element of surprise then. But if you take all the gimmicks and shock-value bullshit away, she's still a very, very talented woman."

What did he make of it all the 'Ding-Dong! The Witch is Dead' business surrounding Thatcher's death this year?

"I don't touch politics, I leave that to Bono. He won't be very happy, now that his best mate Mandela has just gone. But I'm not politically motivated. I've sang songs about political situations, wars and that, but they're all fucking liars if you ask me."

Even Mandela?

"It's sad that he's gone because he was such a good-hope guy for so many people. But it became the clique thing to be photographed with Mandela, you know? He seemed like a good guy, but he was fucking 95, at the end of the day. I bet he was tired! But I think entertainers should stay entertainers and politicians should stay liars. If a politician says 'I'm gonna do this, I'm gonna do that', before he gets into office and then doesn't do fuck all, we should fire him. If you say you'll do something and you can't do it, you should get fired, because you got your job under false pretences. I think so, anyway..."

Sharon's just walked into the room, smiling as if to say, 'See what happens once you get him started?' She's come to say goodbye before leaving for her US television commitments: currently, her life is spent shuttling back and forth between London, where she films *The X Factor*, and LA, where she films *The Talk*, a *Loose Women*-style



Black Sabbath
in 1971: (l-r) Tony
Iommi, Bill Ward,
Ozzy Osbourne,
Geezer Butler

Heaven and hell... and back

The ups and downs
of Ozzy's 2013

January

The fire brigade are called to Ozzy's Beverly Hills mansion after he and Sharon fall asleep with candles burning and the house almost goes up in flames. No-one is injured, but Ozzy burns his hair.

February

Christina Aguilera sells Ozzy's old house – where much of *The Osbournes* series was filmed – for a whopping \$13.5m, \$2m more than she paid for it five years earlier.

March

After an 18-month relapse into drugs and booze, Ozzy finally decides to clean up and get sober again.

April

Ozzy takes to Facebook to address the stories about his relapse and his separation from Sharon. Black Sabbath play their first show of the year in Auckland, New Zealand.

May

Sharon's long-rumoured return to the judging panel of *The X Factor* is confirmed – she is rumoured to be earning £1.8m a year from the show.

June

Sabbath release '13', Ozzy's first album with them since 1978's 'Never Say Die!' A critical and commercial hit, it gives them their first ever US Number One. Sharon and Ozzy move back in together.





Ozzy laughs at
Gaga's latest
get-up

panel show. "I'd be insane after a week of it," Ozzy says of his wife's schedule. "22 hours a week in the air? With the time changes and the different person you've gotta be on each show? I'd rather be a recovering alcoholic in a band."

Sharon sits down on the couch next to Ozzy, pulls him close, kisses him and whispers, "One more week. One more week."

"Then where are you off to?" he says. "Fucking Mars?"

"No, then I'm back."

As they embrace, I wonder if this show of intimacy and togetherness is being performed for my benefit. It's possible: Sharon certainly knew in advance that we'd be talking about his relapse and their separation. The forlorn expressions on their faces look real

enough, however, and Ozzy's general good cheer seems to dissipate ever so slightly after she's gone. Ultimately, it seems that they simply don't *care* who sees them like this: the moment itself is more important to them than attempting to guard it from visiting journalists. As our chat nears its end, I ask Ozzy what sort of advice he wishes he could give to his younger self.

"I believe in destiny," he says. "I think your life's mapped out to be what it is. Look at me: I did all these crazy, alcoholic, drug-fuelled things, yet I got on a quad bike 10 years ago and broke my neck, smashed my clavicle, broke my ribs, punctured my lungs and they had to get my heart going twice on the way to the hospital. I've fallen down stairs, I've fallen out of windows, I've been run over, I've been hit with various fucking bottles and bricks. I've got away with a lot of things in my life, but I'm not really the kind of guy to give advice. Heroin ain't a good idea. Driving drunk is another one, but I've done that thousands of fucking times. When you hear about people getting killed and

"I'm living on borrowed time anyway"

what have you... well, there but for the grace of God go I."

If the path of your life is predetermined, does that leave room for regrets?

"What's the point of life if you don't have regrets?" he replies, incredulous. "I used to have regrets about what happened yesterday, then I'd repeat the same behaviour by the end of the day. Regret was my middle name for a long fucking time. I have regrets about beating my wives. I've been a bad guy, man. But you can only strive to better yourself. I was saying this to someone the other day: out of 100 guys I used to drink with over the years, 75 or 80 of them are dead. The rest are probably insane and divorced and have fucking lost everything. But here

I am: I managed to crawl out the neck of a bottle nine months ago, and I feel pretty good about it."

Our time up, Ozzy shakes my hand, then ambles back towards the kitchen, Rocky the Pomeranian trotting dutifully alongside him. How's he doing? Well, he's alive. That's a fairytale ending even Dickens couldn't write. ■

July
Black Sabbath kick off their 20-date tour of North America in Houston, Texas, the state where Ozzy was arrested three decades earlier for urinating on the Alamo.

August
Talking to the *New York Daily News*, Ozzy speculates that Bill Ward's condition would have stopped him taking part in the reunion anyway: "He's already had two heart attacks. I don't want to be responsible for his life."

September
Jack Osbourne's wife Lisa has a late-term miscarriage, and loses the couple's second child, a boy. Sharon releases her third autobiography, *Unbreakable*, which contains details of Ozzy's relapse.

October
Louis Osborne, Ozzy's eldest son from his first marriage to Thelma Riley, files for bankruptcy after his record label, All Night Records, fails.

November
In an interview with the *Daily Express*, Ozzy says he's only alive because of Sharon: "I remember when I was 21, saying I'd be dead by 40. That was alright until I was 39 and a half."

December
Black Sabbath return to the UK for their first British gigs since last year's Download festival. '13' is nominated for three Grammy awards.

The Queen's speech is dead



Starting the year by being crowned our Godlike Genius, Johnny Marr gets to sign it off with his alternative Queen's speech. But if you're Spotify, David Cameron and Haim... well, best stick to Her Majesty's effort

The year 2013 has been great, but it's also been a bit of a blur: shows, shows and more shows, on the move all the time, bus, city, bus, city. But releasing 'The Messenger' and winning NME's Godlike Genius

Award was a good kick-off to it. The reaction to the album was amazing, and the NME Awards was a fun night: it's good not to take accolades like that too seriously, but it was very humbling.

It's been a strange time for music in general, though, especially with the debate about Spotify. I'm not a supporter: I think it entirely hampers new bands, and the situation that Thom Yorke and Beck have been criticising makes the old record companies of the '70s look like cottage industries. I can't think of anything more opposite to punk-rock than Spotify. I have no answer to the economic side of the modern music industry, but I do think we certainly shouldn't stop valuing what bands do. I don't like great things being throwaway. Pop culture isn't just about 'the music, man'. It's a way of life, and an aesthetic, and it's not just about pressing a button and getting something entirely for convenience. Put it this way: we're soon going to start seeing the difficulties of innovative music trying to swim in that huge tide.



But I'm an idealist, so I always think *vive la resistance!* And without a doubt one of the most heartening things has been the great new bands coming out. One of the things I've enjoyed about playing festivals this year is seeing bands like Childhood and Palma Violets who are actually on the same page as their audience. A few years ago I didn't get that feeling, but it really bodes well. There's obviously a lineage there that goes right the way from The Libertines to The Smiths and The Clash of singing for, and *from*, your audience. That was the feeling I got, and you feel like there's a lot of good records still to come.

Politically, the problem is that we just don't have anyone that seems authentic. The politicians are stuck in the cult of celebrity and they're years behind the times with how they relate to the public. It seems like they've completely forgotten to do that. I'm almost resigned to the fact that policies are out of the control of the voter, which plainly happened with tuition fees. I'm still sore about that. Not only was it a trick, you're just creating cynicism in people who are going to have to live the next 10 years of their lives paying off that debt. That's still unresolved and they should reverse that.

The politicians think they're able to fool everyone through their mass media platform; I may be naive, but I think they're mistaken because more and more people are turning away

from it. What's 2013 going to be remembered for? The bedroom tax? What a disgrace. Shame, shame, shame. Greedy and mean. And that's my problem with the government for the last few years: where's the kindness?

But I'm always completely in admiration of the way young people are dealing with these times. Sure, there's an argument that a lack of decent career opportunities enables alternative culture, and having something to rail against and free leisure time allows you to create art. Great. Hip-hip hooray. People need careers. Young people need to do jobs that they like. It seems as if people are just being stranded: thrown in at the deep end, and left to swim on their own.

As for Haim having their photograph taken with David Cameron, it's really simple: they made themselves look like idiots. It's ridiculous. No-one put a gun to their head. The Conservatives tried to do the same thing to The Smiths, to re-appropriate us in a false way, to be cool by association. And let's put it this way in the case of Haim: it's *uncool* by association.

In comparison, the likes of Grimes and Chrches' Lauren Mayberry speaking out in opposition to misogyny: it's about time. Speaking personally, I come from a culture in the early '80s where if a girl was up onstage in a band and anyone shouted anything suspect

and yobby at them, they would have been ostracised by everybody. It would have been unthinkable. I wonder why we're going backwards in that regard. I don't want to get too highfalutin about it, but the '90s has a lot to answer for, and when you start getting into "ironic laddism" then you're getting into dodgy territory. That's what all the old racist comics used to trade off: "It's just a joke."

I think alternative culture can be seen as tribal, and that's a good thing. Pussy Riot can remind all of us of what music can do. I don't think a song can close Guantánamo Bay, but it doesn't half remind you of what side you're on. And who'd want to go through life without your comrades, eh? So for 2014, we all need to realise how important live music is and not take it for granted. We need to not take the fun out of being in a band, and liking bands, for granted. We need to start ignoring the crass mass media by not engaging with and not believing in it.

And we need to celebrate what pop culture is. Bands can be about more than liking music if you want them to be. To be criticised for bringing other aspects into it, like politics, is a bullshit argument. I don't argue with people who want to just hear a few tunes in their car on a Sunday morning. That's fine. But people shouldn't point the finger when anyone attaches ideals to pop culture. And if people who like the same music and dislike the same attitudes can stick two fingers up to the loudmouths and the bigots, regardless of how powerful they may think they are, then we have a responsibility to do that. It can be a good, nice, big 'fuck you' to the stiffos. ■

on Plan





► **Lee Rinaldo**

► **DAY JOB** Ex-Sonic Youth, now fronts Lee Rinaldo & The Dust
► **TODAY** Utterly baffled by all the synthetic music on the list

► **Katie Harkin**

► **DAY JOB** Singer/songwriter with Sky Larkin, honorary Wild Beast
► **TODAY** So articulate that Krishnan takes her email address for future use

► **Stuart Braithwaite**

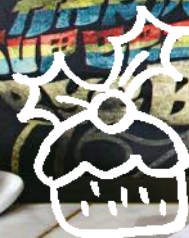
► **DAY JOB** Mogwai guitarist
► **TODAY** Never recovers from being made to listen to the Lily Allen single

► **Lizzo**

► **DAY JOB** Minneapolis rapper
► **TODAY** Energetic, opinionated, and fast friends with Charlotte Church

► **The Host
Krishnan
Guru-Murthy**

► **DAY JOB** Channel 4 Evening News reader
► **TODAY** Our chairman and self-appointed "old git"



Singles



Charlotte Church

DAY JOB

Opera singer-turned-burgeoning indie star
▶ **TODAY** Overjoyed to be sat next to Sonic Youth's Lee Ranaldo

Richard Osman

DAY JOB

Co-presenter of BBC quiz show *Pointless*
▶ **TODAY** Krishnan's partner in sanity, claims to be a rapper

Honor Titus

DAY JOB

Cerebral Balzy singer
▶ **TODAY** Surprisingly prompt and thoughtful given his snotty stage demeanour

SINGLES PANEL

2013 has been a brilliant year for singles of every stripe, so we assembled a hardline celebrity panel to pick the best from the rest

PHOTOS BY ED MILES

Arctic Monkeys

Why'd You Only Call Me When You're High? (Domino)

▶ **RELEASED** August 11

▶ **PEAK UK CHART POSITION** 8

Lizzo "They have lots of hard rock songs, but this one is kind of fly and funky."

Charlotte "There's lots of weird Dre stuff going on. I really like it."

Stuart "I like it when he says 'shite'."

Katie "It's a good rhyming word."

Stuart "It's been losing the battle with 'shit' for so many years. It's nice to see it making a small comeback."

Honor "No-one likes getting called when they're high."

Katie "It reminds me of driving through bleak Yorkshire moors, so I can see why Sheffield lads would go to the desert."

Richard "It's nice they're back. Once you get past a certain age, it takes an awful lot to listen to a band's fifth album."

Lily Allen

Hard Out Here (Parlophone)

▶ **RELEASED** November 17

▶ **PEAK UK CHART POSITION** 9

Honor "It brings riot grrrl to pop but it's not progressive for women's rights." ➔

all the way

Katie "The visibility for feminism in the true mainstream is so dire that at this point, I think I'll take it."

Stuart "It's kind of snide. The music's bad."

Charlotte "The first few bars sound interesting, then it changes and you're like, 'Oh, fuck.'"

Lizzo "She wants to let people know what's on her mind. I'm for it, but why is there so much Auto-Tuning on her voice? Is she being ironic?"

Krishnan "The irony has kind of backfired."

Richard "She's got money, she's not fussed about her career, she can do what she wants."

Krishnan "Isn't the problem that now she's doing John Lewis adverts, we don't know who she is?"

Stuart "She's unwilling to make challenging stuff so this is a way to assert status. It's not clever."

Lee "She uses the word 'bitch' gratuitously."

Krishnan "There's going to be loads of teenage girls in the back of parents' cars singing along."

Lizzo "I wonder how it would be if Rihanna did it?"

Honor "Cooler!"

David Bowie

Love Is Lost (Hello Steve Reich Mix by James Murphy for the DFA) (ISO/Columbia)

▶RELEASED December 16

▶PEAK UK CHART POSITION n/a

Honor "Bowie just has such a knack for cool. It's



Stuart, Lizzo and Richard start brainstorming

referential, it has a dark '80s vibe. He's still got it."

Lee "I like Bowie in general so I'm willing to give him the benefit of the doubt."

Krishnan "Rich? Do you have an encyclopaedic knowledge of David Bowie?"

Richard "I have some knowledge of David Bowie. It's too long, but that's OK. Every time he does something, you think, 'That's interesting.' I love James Murphy, but this mix does nothing for me."

Charlotte "I love LCD Soundsystem. I love David Bowie. I'd be happy to listen to anything those two did for 10 minutes. If they were reading the phone book, I'd be in there having a listen."

Stuart "It must have been a dream come true for James Murphy, he's a big Bowie fan."

Katie "Imagine having to hand in your homework to David Bowie if you're James Murphy, who must feel so indebted to him. It's a really considered and reverential remix."

Krishnan "That's a really nice way of putting it."

Lizzo "The lyrics are poetry compared to Lily."

Katie "It's like a love letter from Murphy to Bowie."

Lorde

Royals (Lava/Republic)

▶RELEASED October 20

▶PEAK UK CHART POSITION 1

Krishnan "I only heard this yesterday and I love it. I can't get it out of my head. I don't know if it's going to drive me nuts."

Honor "The punk in me doesn't wanna like it, but I get caught up."

Richard "It's beautifully polished. It's everything Lily Allen tries to be."

Lizzo "She's not saying, 'It's hard out here for a bitch'. She's saying, 'We'll never be royals'. That's a whole different battle. It's not men vs women, it's class. She's addressed it eloquently and in a prettier way. And she's 17! I say, go, girl!"

Honor "Is she hot?"

Lizzo "She is."

Kate "I like how minimalist it is for someone growing up with the internet and all the production in the world available in your phone. She's made something so poised and considered."

Lee "It's a comment on popular culture. She's tearing down the things you hold as important."

Charlotte "I love the fact she's from New Zealand, completely off the beaten path. It's far more interesting than the general mainstream shit."

Richard "That's bad news for Honor, that she lives in New Zealand. That's a long way to go."

Lee "That might be good for her to be isolated at 17 and on everybody's front page right now."

Honor "It's so catatonic, smart and dissociated."

Kanye West

I Am A God (featuring God) (Def Jam/Virgin)

▶RELEASED June 18 (on 'Yeezus')

▶PEAK UK CHART POSITION n/a

Krishnan "Let's move on to Barack Obama's favourite artist."

Katie "Has he said that?"

Krishnan "He said the opposite."

Lizzo "He called him a jackass."

Charlotte "No way!"

Lee "Singing about the croissants..."

Stuart "...is one of the funniest things I've heard all year."

Krishnan "What's it even about?"

Lizzo "He freestyles so a lot is just how he's feeling. I can't be mad at him because Kanye West has always kept it real, from when he was upset about college life to being upset about his love life. He's not going to make up a struggle for you, he's just too fucking rich."

Stuart "Maybe when you're that rich, nothing interesting happens?"

Krishnan "There's pressure for rappers to say something more profound than pop songs."

Richard "He tells us all the time how intelligent he is, but is he?"

The singles panel
sweat over
the results

Charlotte "I don't think he is. 'I am a god' is one hell of a statement. Half of you thinks, what an asshole. The other half thinks he's fucking genius."

Richard "It's a bit of a sixth-form way of dealing with the fact that you're being treated like a god to do a song about being a god. It sounds like a song you'd get on *Grand Theft Auto*."

Katie "Self-belief is a powerful thing."

Lizzo "If you listen to his whole catalogue, it's no surprise how he ended up here. If you listen to it off the rip, you'd be, 'What is he on?'"

Honor "He's not cool. He's just a black dude talking about croissants."

Arcade Fire

Reflektor (Merge)

▶RELEASED September 9

▶PEAK UK CHART POSITION 44

Krishnan "It's very derivative."

Honor "I agree."

Stuart "This is produced by James Murphy and it sounds very LCD Soundsystem."

Charlotte "There's nothing earth-shatteringly innovative but there are lots of things I love done really well. I love it when she comes in with the French. It makes me want to dance my socks off."

Lee "She knows how to say 'croissant'."

Lizzo "There's that funky vibe again. What's going on, y'all? The 1990s are coming back!"

Katie "For a band known for their reverence and seriousness to go disco is interesting."

Richard "I got in trouble on *Pointless* for calling them *The Arcade Fire*, right?"

Honor "It's surprising this record did so well with a chick singing French."

Factory Floor

Fall Back (DFA)

▶RELEASED January 14

▶PEAK UK CHART POSITION n/a

Lee "Where are the guitars?"

Katie "It's the recession."

Lee "I guess. Guitars are more expensive than computers."

Stuart "They use a lot of old equipment. It's taken them a long time to make a record. I saw them play with Sonic Youth years ago."

Lee "They didn't sound anything like this. So they're





"They're playing 'Get Lucky' in Hell"

Lizzo on Daft Punk

going the Arcade Fire route and trying that four-on-the-floor of a disco beat?"

Charlotte "It's like dance music without the euphoria. It's quite bleak."

Katie "I really like it, there's a real nihilism to it."

Honor "It takes me back to a New York basement."

Lizzo "Yeah. But one in the '80s."

Krishnan "How old were you in the '80s?"

Lizzo "I was born in '88 so I was—"

Richard "Briefly one."

Krishnan "And it takes you back to those times?"

Lizzo "Everything is recycled... why can't we come up with something new?"

Laura Marling Master Hunter (Virgin)

►RELEASED April 16

►PEAK UK CHART POSITION n/a

Katie "I respect Laura Marling but I don't relate to her version of Englishness."

Stuart "It's odd she's singing in an American accent."

Lizzo "Y'all have been killing the Americano. The Mumford Brothers? Y'all have been copying our accents for years."



Lee, Charlotte and Krishnan: look at all those damn croissants

Honor "Jake Bugg sounds like Chet Atkins. In the States it's such a sound that's been done."

Lizzo "The singing voice of pop music is American. Then you hear bands like Arctic Monkeys and you're like, you *can* sing in many different accents."

Stuart "All the Scottish bands used to sing with American accents, then that changed overnight."

Lee Was that 'cos the music they listened to was American? The Beatles didn't sound English."

Charlotte "You can see how this song is based in English folk. It's about what's acceptable in the mainstream."

Krishnan "Do you sing with an accent?"

Charlotte "No. Because I was trained, so it's a no-no to sing with an accent. You enunciate and keep your voice neutral."

Richard "If she wants to sing with an American accent, we should let her."

Daft Punk Get Lucky (Daft Life/Columbia)

►RELEASED April 19

►PEAK UK CHART POSITION 1

Krishnan "I read the Channel 4 news in a Daft

Punk mask!" (Shows round a photo on his phone)

Richard "You can listen to this over and over, you never tire of it."

Charlotte "The idea of bringing Pharrell, Nile Rodgers and Daft Punk together was so smart. It may be a bit generic but it's a perfect pop equation of loveliness."

Katie "Is the word 'generic' insult or praise?"

Lizzo "It's feelgood but it's not obscure. Pharrell will go down in history as that MF-er that did it."

Krishnan "That's how I'd like to be remembered."

Lizzo "That MF-er?"

Richard "Lee, you look unconvinced?"

Lee "I don't listen to this kind of music. It sounds super-generic to me. I know it would be great in a club but I would never put this at home."

Richard "Has this song not been in your consciousness all year?"

Lee "No. It's the first time I've heard it!"

Lizzo "It's everywhere! I think they're playing this in Hell!"

Courtney Barnett

Avant Gardener (Milk!/ Marathon Artists)

►RELEASED September 19

►PEAK UK CHART POSITION n/a

Krishnan "This is about going into anaphylactic shock while gardening. Maybe she was allergic to peanuts and accidentally ate one? Or she got stung by a bee."

Honor "I like this a lot. It's super '90s."

Richard "I love it."

Stuart "I like the guitars."

Lizzo "The lyrics are the same stream of consciousness that Kanye does, except Kanye is crazy. I bet she's hilarious. I'd like to meet her."

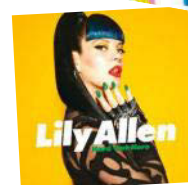
Katie "Australia is the new California. They're slackers I can believe in. Maybe you have to work too hard in California these days to drop off the edge?"

Charlotte "Even though she's not singing about anything *that* important, she's captured the mood and the moment with her storytelling. I love it and I love her."

Katie "I like how we're all fighting over who gets to be her new best friend."

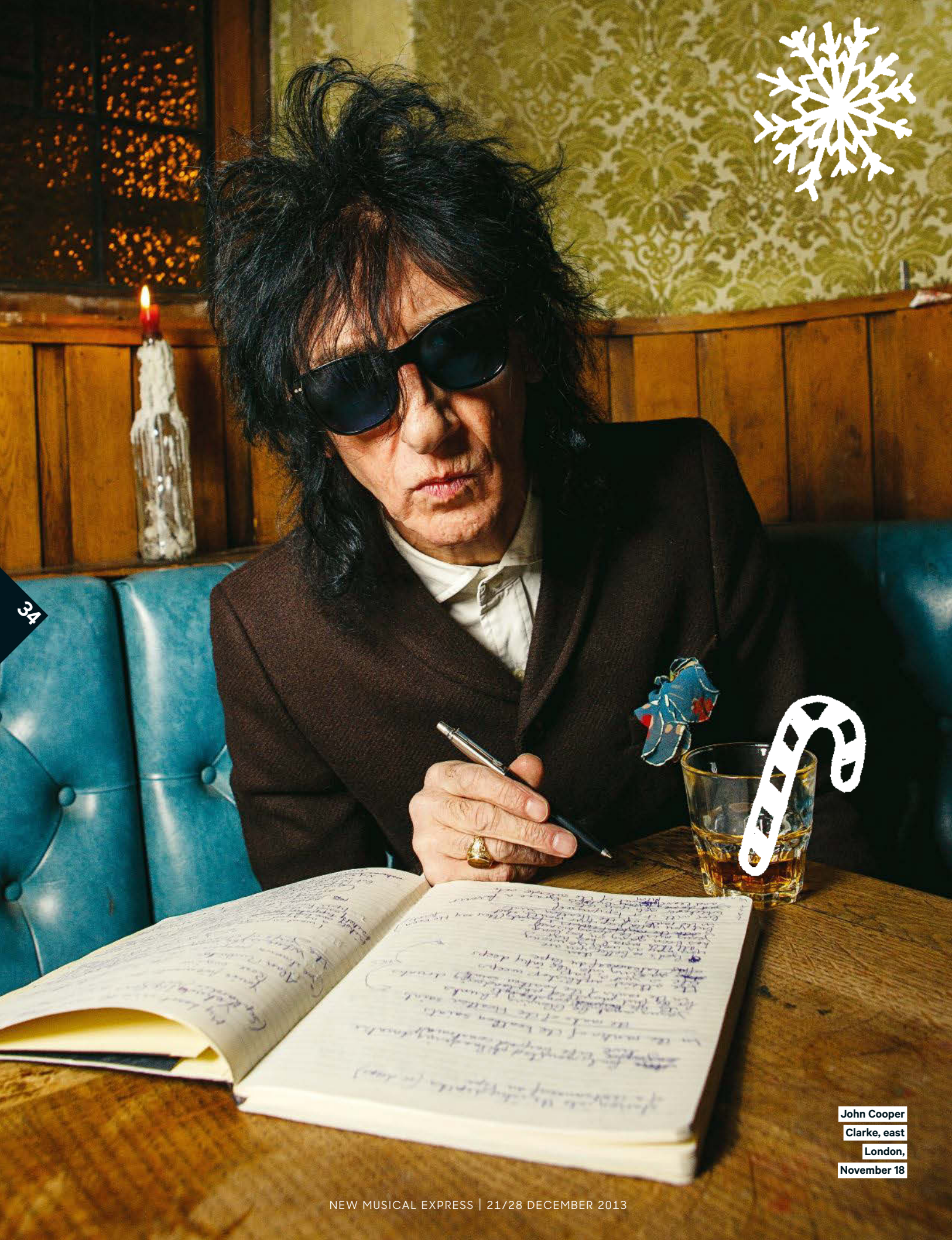
Lizzo "I wanna be her friend too!"

Krishnan does a quick and unscientific whip-round to determine the panel's best and worst songs of the bunch. We have an unequivocal loser, and with the exception of Stuart and Honor (who prefer Factory Floor), the panel is unanimous when it comes to picking a winner...





34



John Cooper
Clarke, east
London,
November 18



Let me be your vacuum
 cleaner
 breathing in your dust.
 Let me be your Morris Marina
 I will never rust
 if you like your coffee hot
 let me be your coffee pot
 you call the shots
 I wanna be yours



"Poetry is recession-proof"

John Cooper Clarke

PORTRAIT BY RICHARD JOHNSON

Beloved once again thanks to Arctic Monkeys, punk poet John Cooper Clarke is still too rebellious to be a national treasure, finds Jenny Stevens

Everyone looks when John Cooper Clarke walks into a room. It's dark by the time he turns up late to an east London pub, but he still casts quite the shadow. Heeled boots, cocktail-stick legs, suit as immaculate as his hair – jet black and backcombed five inches high. He's like a young Bob Dylan meets an old Ronnie Wood. When he smiles, his gold teeth glimmer. "Honestly, I'm worth more dead than

alive. I ain't gonna be smiling on me way back to the tube. Not round here anyway. Heh heh heh."

John Cooper Clarke laughs a lot. A phlegmy cackle sometimes punctured by a hiss through the teeth for extra enunciation. These days, the punk poet's got a lot to laugh about – the recent revival of his work has snowballed after Alex Turner, who'd long cited John's ferocious social commentary as the reason he started writing lyrics, set Clarke's 1983 poem 'I Wanna Be Yours' to music on Arctic Monkeys' 'AM'. "My second Number One album," John says, waving a cigarette – a blatant flouting of the smoking ban that nobody dares mention. "The first one all started here in this pub," he says – it's where he met Plan B, who asked him to appear on 'Ill Manors'. Since then, John's been touring bigger and bigger venues, DJed on BBC 6 Music, made regular TV appearances, and become the voice of McCain oven chips – something he evidently finds hilarious as he reels out the specially commissioned poem at gigs. He's just finished recording a Christmas special of *Celebrity Mastermind*. "I never saw meself in that chair... it's terrific. Who could complain? Heh heh."

In the '70s and '80s, John Cooper Clarke ignited a revolution in poetry. He toured with the Pistols, The Clash, Buzzcocks, bringing his Salford drawl to his tales of everyday life, from how you'll never see a nipple in the *Daily Express* to shit public transport where "the fucking train is fucking late, you fucking wait you fucking wait" ('Evidently Chickentown'). Then there's the dystopian characters of 'Beasley Street' where a "baby dies in a box", and sleep is a "sneak preview of death". He found beauty and wit in the most gruesome parts of British culture. He dislocated poetry as an artform solely for the middle and upper classes and he taught a generation that exploring words and language isn't a betrayal of working-class roots.

But then he stopped. Lost to heroin, the writing dried up. "I don't look back at it," he says. "Miserable. If poetry's a sickness then that's the cure for it. All sorts of things get in the way of poetry when you're on that shit... I didn't think I'd write new material again. When you lose it it's like the intuitive part of you dies. 'Cos that's all I've ever been able to do. Without that, well, what's my job?"



It took a long time for him to get clean, he says. But after years on methadone, the turn of the century marked a new chapter when he found an unlikely new fanbase after one of his poems got put on the GCSE English syllabus. "That's when things really turned around for me," he says. "I became compulsory in schools, and I couldn't be more happy about that. I thought, 'Finally, I'm in a position to make people miserable. And there's nothing they can do about it!'" He cackles, this time with a pantomime hiss at the end.



"I'm seen as a rabble-rousing firebrand... a class enemy. Heh heh" John Cooper Clarke

"That gave me a whole new generation of fans – people Alex [Turner]'s age. And it's done me nothing but good. People of all ages come to my shows now, and you couldn't want more than that. I'm not interested in appealing to one kind of style ghetto. The more the merrier."

The timing couldn't have been better either. For the first time in over a decade, he started writing new material. The new poems are classic John Cooper Clarke, albeit filled with a fear of aging that's probably quite natural to a 64-year-old. 'Bedblocker Blues', 'Pleb Squad', 'Happiness Index Update' and 'Nautically Themed Drinks Evening Blues' are just some of the numbers he reads from his tatty red notebook today.

"I never had a didactic mission about poetry," he recalls. "I always remember what Salvador Dali said: 'By the ultra-local shall you achieve the universal.' That's what I do. I look at very ordinary things longer than is healthy. I have this compulsion to record moments. I don't think what I write is gritty realism. It's tweaked, heightened. 'Beasley Street' could be anywhere and that's why it has this wide appeal. It's about making where you live resonate in a magical way."

Despite his fantastical leanings, John will always be known as a left-wing social commentator even though he's insistent that his work is never partisan. "It's always implied, rather than being strategically political," he says.

He's inherently mistrustful of politicians ("you think they can't get any worse and then they get worse"), but he'd never not vote and shakes his head fervently at the suggestion that there's a culture of apathy. "From what I can see people are fired up about a lot of issues," he says. "But I think there's a general lack of patience among the young, as there always has been, about the slow-moving democratic process."

And while he calls Cameron's gagging of press freedom a "disgrace" and the cuts to the NHS and education as "terrible", poetry is, he says, "impervious to government cuts".

"It couldn't be more accessible. All you need is a biro and a piece of paper... nothing standing in your way. Cuts schmut. It might affect the film and music industries where technology is needed, but poetry is recession-proof."

He's proud that he's inspired a new generation to write lyrics of dissent. "When I first started doing what I do, there was no example of it in popular culture. Now I see evidence of it wherever I go. Plan B, Arctic Monkeys. I was watching Eminem on telly the other day and he's ploughing a similar furrow I guess. Social lyrics."

But intertwined as he is with musician fans, it's not as simple as putting poetry to a tune. His biggest-selling album, 'Snap, Crackle & Bop', saw Factory Records' Martin Hannett on production, which, on reflection, he says feels at times like "one of me feet is nailed to the floor... poetry and music don't always make a lot of sense, because poetry should be music on its own."

Alex Turner managed it with 'I Wanna Be Yours', though. "I always approached that poem in a very throwaway manner," he recalls. "But at its heart, it's a very romantic piece because I reduce myself to a commodity for the great happiness of the object of my love. So at its heart it's as romantic as anything anybody ever wrote. All credit to Alex for spotting that and approaching it in a very serious way. He's made it into a beautiful song."

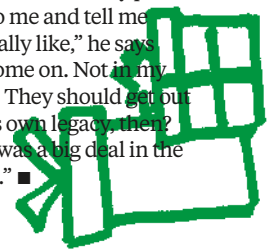
He says he wouldn't put his poetry to music again. "But it is successful some of the time. Because when it's right it sounds like Lou Reed. 'Black Angel's Death Song' or 'Sister Ray'." He vaguely knew Lou Reed. He lived with Nico for two years in his heroin days, but their relationship was only ever platonic. They met in Manchester but when she went on tour to Italy, forgot to pay her rent and got evicted, John put her up in his flat in Brixton. "She was living at my place for two years. John Cale was there for a while as well when he was producing her album 'Camera Obscura' in '85. I had two-fifths of The Velvet Underground staying in me gaff, which was nice. You won't find a bigger Velvets fan than me. I love that band."

As for new bands, he says since his 19-year-old daughter moved out, he's out of touch but he still goes to gigs, "Did you see Arctics at Earls Court? Fantastic." He reels off a list of other favourites: Jack White, Miles Kane ("very dapper, him and Alex look like The Walker Brothers, heh heh") and Jake Bugg: "He's fantastic. It's old school. Looks good. I like his voice, I like his songs."

While he's excited by his recent recognition in the music world, he's disdainful about how he's perceived by the chattering classes who dish out poetry accolades. In June, he was given an honorary doctorate by Salford University for bringing poetry to non-traditional audiences for over three decades. Asked if he'd want to be poet laureate, he doesn't hesitate to say yes. But he's doubtful it'll ever happen. "I think I'm seen as a rabble-rousing firebrand whipping the peasantry into new heights of discomfiture about various social injustices. They see me as a class enemy." He gives off a throaty cackle. For the first time it's not clear whether he's joking or not.

But for Alex Turner, Steve Coogan, Kate Nash, Jarvis Cocker, Ben Drew, Bill Bailey, Billy Bragg and the countless others who hold him up as a hero, his works remain lyrical masterpieces of modern life from the man who democratised poetry in a way nobody else has ever come close to replicating. As Roddy Doyle once said, "Football is the only sport, Guinness is the only drink and John Cooper Clarke is the only poet."

"People often come up to me and tell me I'm the only poet they actually like," he says with a grin. "But an 'ero? Come on. Not in my understanding of the term. They should get out more." How does he see his own legacy, then? "My legacy? Let's just say I was a big deal in the 20th century. Heh heh heh." ■



John accepting his honorary doctorate from Salford University in July

John's Random Xmas Memories

Who is the worst behaved member of your family at Christmas?

"Probably me. They're a model family my lot. None of that spoiled brat business."

How do you spend Christmas Eve?

"Shopping for presents. TK

Maxx. Monsoon. HMV. The Perfume Shop. Gap. I might see what Primark's got to offer. There's no excuse for anybody looking like shit any more. The high street's never been better. I've never felt more catered for, frankly. Have you noticed my clothes fit better? That's Topman.

They do this XXS. My size! Sir Philip Green's beautified the high street."

Which member of the nativity do you most identify with?

"Well, it's not the baby Jesus. Not at my time of life. I suppose one of the three kings. Balthazar. The guy with the frankincense. I'll go for the cheap option."

What will you remember 2013 for?

"As the year I became a general practitioner. At last! My honorary doctorate. It was terrific. A bit of dinner, bit of a speech. You get to wear them heavy robes. Wasn't a bad hat, either, a Henry VIII number. Velvet. Didn't get to keep it though."

RANDOM XMAS MEMORIES



Thomas Mars
Phoenix

What weird family rituals do you have at Christmas time?

"When I was growing up, my mother was freaked out by Christmas, so we would tend to go away to the least Christmassy places ever, such as the beach. So my idea of Christmas is very much not like everyone else's."

Ellie Rowsell
Wolf Alice

How can the BBC make Christmas Top Of The Pops good again?

"I reckon they should ask Wolf Alice to curate it and then it might be fun. I would have all the X Factor rejects."

Which member of your family is the worst behaved at Christmas?

"Everyone in my family is pretty badly behaved at Christmas. Too much Baileys floating around. We drink pints of Baileys in our house."

What will you remember 2013 for?

"I guess it was the year that we started doing Wolf Alice properly. And it's the year I got a real guitar – one that's not a piece of shit. It's the year I started doing what I wanted to do."



Does your family send out a round robin letter?

"No! I don't think anyone would do that in France. The big tradition here is more the New Year's resolutions, probably more than in any other country. We always use the holidays as an excuse to make plans to be better. But it's probably less honest than compiling a kind of report card on the past year, as new year's resolutions are always broken."

What's on French TV on Christmas Day?

"Nothing. It's the worst. But my father's French and my mother's German, and the Germans love their board games – in our house there's often a lot of that, which I actually enjoy."



Simon Neil
Biffy Clyro

What will you remember 2013 for?

"It's tough to pick one moment. Headlining Reading and Leeds was a dream come true, but I think I'll remember 2013 as the year we defied all odds and got a pretty weird double album to Number One."

How do you spend Christmas Eve?

"We used to go to the pub all night and then have terrible hangovers all of Christmas Day, but now we sit in watching telly and wait 'til midnight to open one present each. Very exciting!"



David Lovering
Pixies

What will you remember 2013 for?

"The advent of Pixies 2.0. It's got faster processing speed, richer graphics and a newer bass response."

What kind of family rituals do you have?

"The holiday wouldn't be complete without taking my two boys to see Santa at The Grove [in LA]: the most surreal, pretentious and materialistic outdoor shopping mall there will ever be."

Which member of the nativity do you most relate to?

"The nativity scene depicts Baby Jesus, Mary and Joseph, shepherds, the Magi and various animals. The one I relate to most is Fernando, Mary and Joseph's pet cat. He was originally in the nativity scene, but at the time of the photograph he was frightened away by the ox."

What's the most inappropriate thing you've ever done at Christmas?

"It involved 20 ounces of eggnog and a female elf. Santa erased me from his list for a good five years after the incident."

Christmas is a season of goodwill. But who doesn't deserve forgiveness this year?

"I can forgive, but I cannot forget. It's just another way of saying I will not forgive. You know who you are!"

What are you after for Christmas?

"A case of playing cards, the Tardis and the continued stamina for a rockin' 2014."



Jared Swilley
Black Lips

What's the most inappropriate thing you've ever done at Christmas?

"Four years ago I was at my ex-girlfriend's house for Christmas night. Everyone got drunk and her mom started coming down the stairs because she wanted us to go to bed. So everyone played dead. I grabbed a pillow and pretended I was asleep. I had shorts on but no underwear. My balls were hanging out and she saw them, but I was pretending to be asleep so I didn't realise she'd seen my nuts."

What's the worst party you've been to?

"Church."

Which member of your family is the worst behaved at Christmas?

"There's one who takes some Xanax sometimes and doesn't make a lot of sense. Just to clarify, she's not always sauced, but most of my family get sauced during the holidays. I think it's pretty common. You just have to set a limit. But my family drinks a lot. We're Irish. It's in my blood, buddy."

Ronnie Vannucci
The Killers

Which member of your family is worst behaved at Christmas?

"Me. Duh."

What will you remember 2013 for?

"Being divisible by 11."

Which Christmas song do you secretly wish you could listen to all year round?

"'Little Drummer Boy'."

I really do."

What's the most inappropriate thing you've

ever done at Christmas?

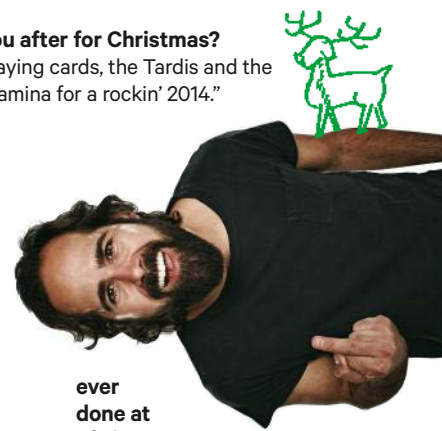
"I'm a little angel."

How do you spend Christmas Eve?

"Making cookies for Santa."

What present do you want?

"To melt faces at Wembley Stadium again."





Ferreira tale of New York

She's one of 2013's most talked-about pop stars, but label battles and drug charges mean no-one would have wanted to be Sky Ferreira this year. She's well aware of her reputation, discovers Amy Rose Spiegel, and determined to take control of it in 2014

PHOTOS BY MATT SALACUSE

If you ask Sky Ferreira, there was no better motivation to sign with a major label than the prospect of never having to attend high school again. "It reminded me of a child prison," the 21-year-old explains as she flops around a couch in mismatched socks and a faded Tupac shirt on a dusky Greenpoint afternoon. "My mom was going to kick me out of the house if I dropped out," Ferreira says. Fortunately, she had an escape plan in mind. "I knew I needed a record deal."

It might sound far-flung for a kid to count on musical success as a surefire exit strategy, but it worked for Ferreira – in a sense. "I made a music Myspace and my mom thought it was cute – she didn't know I was contacting producers to sign me." That is, until, at 17, Ferreira started bringing her to meetings with record companies. On one occasion, Sony invited her to producer Rick Rubin's house. "I talked a big game, which was charming to label people at first. They were like, 'Oh, that's funny, that's cute!'" She laughs. "It wasn't as charming when they started working with me and realised I didn't want to be bossed around." She's chipper, but there's a hard note of irony in her voice. As Ferreira would soon learn, she may have escaped the prison of school, but teenage girls are often screwed

over by the music industry no matter how headstrong they are.

As 2013 bows out, Ferreira is finally celebrating her independence, having wrested control back from label executives to release her debut record *her* way. Her handlers controlled her career from the time she was first signed in 2009 right up until this October, when 'Night Time, My Time' was released in the US (it's out in the UK next year). "I've been overworked and manipulated," she spits. "Everyone was thinking, 'I hit the jackpot! I got a 17-year-old blonde girl who writes pop songs!' There were dollar signs everywhere. It's hard to compete with that as an actual person."

Capitol Records pushed back Ferreira's debut again and again for almost three years. She

**"You're either
crazy, difficult or
dumb. My life story"
Sky Ferreira**

struggled to advocate for herself. "I didn't know any better because I was so young, and I didn't have people around me who had my best interests in mind," she says. Although her breakout 2012 single 'Everything Is Embarrassing' was met with adulation online, by that point it had been several years since she was first touted by her label and the press as the next big thing. Some had begun to question whether a full Ferreira album would ever see the light of the day, including Ferreira herself. "The second time I got shelved, I was so depressed that I couldn't do anything for a year," she says.

When Ferreira recalls her heartache over that period of stasis, it's the one moment during our conversation where she nearly comes off as the "damaged girl" archetype that she's been pegged as, momentarily lacking her trademark defiance. While she's been a point of online discussion for years, those conversations didn't always focus on her songs. Her (mostly online) critics favoured incredulous dissections of her second career as a model and rumours of her bad behaviour, both of which reached a fever pitch when, hours after walking the runway for Marc Jacobs in September, she and her boyfriend were arrested for possession of ecstasy and heroin. She discusses the

incident with relative candour, and sarcasm: "When I got in trouble, I was able to see who my friends were. Thank *God* it happened before my album came out!"

Ferreira doesn't attempt

to apologise for her behaviour. "People forget that I'm human! They take everything to extremes with me. It's either, 'Oh, I love her!' or 'I can't stand her, she did this and this.'" It would be another month before the world could judge Ferreira on the merits of her work instead of her reputation. Snarky online critics seem to think her stalled career is her fault, but she never stopped trying to move forward. "I've seen people who ride the hype and never put anything out, so the whole time I was working on music. I just didn't know exactly what I wanted to do," she explains.

After her label reportedly tried to push the album back again, Ferreira successfully fought to get it out this year. It's the product of two-and-a-half intense weeks in the studio with LA producers Ariel Rechtshaid and Justin Raisen, and the results are dazzling—as if '70s

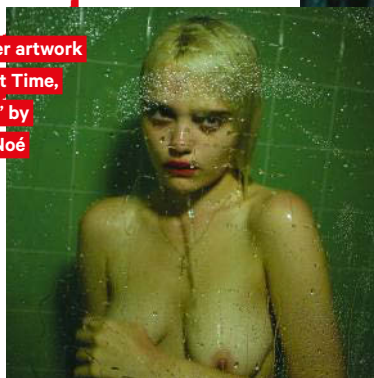
NYC luminaries Blondie and Suicide were chopped and screwed by a spaced-out 21st century production team.

The quality of the work Ferreira puts forth on 'Night Time...' is a solid rebuttal to those who wrote her off as an overhyped, unsubstantial It Girl, and she knows it. "The case wasn't, like, you release a record and everyone gets to know you through the music. Everyone *already* thought they knew me, so there was a lot of pressure." She was able to use the frustrations that came from snide dismissals of her work to inform its strongest parts, as when she wrote the lyrics for the track 'I Blame Myself'.

"Before the album, people made me into anything they wanted because there wasn't anything out there that showed who I really was, and I was starting to get angry about it," she says, sighing, although she's quick to clear up any idea that she considers herself a victim. "I take full responsibility for what I do, but I'm not going to change myself to make other people happy, because they're going to think whatever they want."

Ferreira's not just saying this: If she were susceptible to taking her critics' opinions to heart, she probably wouldn't have chosen such jarring artwork for 'Night Time...'. It features a Gaspar Noé photograph of her standing topless and free of makeup in a shower, looking uneasily away from the camera. Although her breasts are exposed, the picture is not only triumphantly un-sexy, but also unsettling in its stark counter-

The cover artwork for 'Night Time, My Time' by Gaspar Noé



"I've been overworked and manipulated" Sky Ferreira

approach to the way young female musicians are expected to use their bodies, especially when you consider that Ferreira experienced sexual abuse as a young teenager.

"You're supposed to sell your body in a way that's like...it's OK to be sexy when it benefits



On the catwalk for Marc Jacobs at New York Fashion Week in September

TOUCH THE SKY

The peaks and troughs of Sky Ferreira's 2013

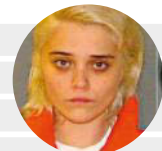
10

- 9 January 7 Sky makes her TV debut performing 'Everything Is Embarrassing' on *Late Night With Jimmy Fallon*, with backing from The Roots.
- 8
- 7
- 6
- 5
- 4



March 14
Battling illness at SXSW, Sky croaks through three of her four scheduled shows and scraps the last one, facing suspicious criticism for doing so.

- April 22 "It's finished @arielrechtshaid @jonbrion @breakmirrors", Sky tweeted, posting an Instagram photo of a CD-R marked "ALBUM Final".
- June 5 In an interview with *Marie Claire*, Sky announces that her long-awaited debut record is called 'I Will', and that it will be out by the end of summer.
- July 12 An interview with *British GQ* confirms that her debut album won't be out until 2014.
- September 12 Sky finally announces her debut album, 'Night Time, My Time', to be released on October 29 (in the US) on Capitol Records.
- September 13 Sky and boyfriend Zachary Cole Smith of *Diiv* are arrested in NY. They are both charged with possession, among other misdemeanours.



September 13
Sky and boyfriend Zachary Cole Smith of *Diiv* are arrested in NY. They are both charged with possession, among other misdemeanours.

Lit up: Sky in
Greenpoint,
Brooklyn,
November 2013



Although Ferreira can

figuratively speak for herself for the first time, she's been having some difficulty with her voice in more literal terms: her vocal cords haemorrhaged just weeks before her record was released, requiring her to cancel tour dates with Vampire Weekend just as her luck was starting to change. "My voice isn't completely back," she says, which is obvious – she sounds not dissimilar from a cartoon amphibian right now. "It's frustrating because that's the difference between me and a million other people – I have a good voice!" It's what keeps her from feeling discredited when people dismiss her, Ferreira says, so it's been rough on her self-esteem. "I'm a perfectionist, so

Right before I wrote it, I went to four continents in a week, and I was in the process of switching managers. It was fucked up! So I was whining. I take everything personally, which is not always the best thing, but it works when I'm writing."

It would be a mistake, though, to think Ferreira's sensitivity is going to get the best of her anytime soon. The vindication she feels at having *her record*, done *her way*, out in the world at last is plain, and she's determined to keep her momentum. Having recently played on David Letterman's show, she's breaking beyond blogs, joining the likes of Icona Pop as bona fide real-world pop sensations (both bands will support Miley Cyrus next year).

"For a while, I was very easygoing, but then I started saying no, and then I was *difficult*, and *a bitch*, but I was just standing my ground. To maintain the quality of your work, you have to say no to things. But there are still some times when you have to compromise." She pauses. "You have to trust the people you're working with, but I'm not doing things I don't want to do for people I don't know anymore. Like with the Gaspar photo – I trusted him because I knew him. I wouldn't take my shirt off for just anyone... Except that my topless album cover is everywhere!" She cracks up.

When asked how she manages business disagreements after everything she's learned, Ferreira says, "I still have to weave my way through the bullshit, but I handle situations a lot better than when I was younger. My favorite thing to say now is, 'I'll think about it', because that means no. But as long it looks like I'm considering other people's ideas, they don't think I'm shutting them down, which is what gets used against me." She rolls her eyes, but she's clearly proud of herself. "A lot of egos are involved in that whole world. You're either crazy or you're difficult or you're dumb – that's been my life story." Not any more. ■

everyone else," she laughs, unruffled by the negative reactions certain audiences had to the picture: "Most of the people who had a problem with it were men. At this point, I feel like I'm doing a bad job at being a feminist if I'm *not* making someone angry. People wanted me to sit there and be quiet," she explains with the kind of frankness that can only come from years of that exact treatment. "But I'm making art and doing things that are true to my work." And she's amused when the picture's detractors say she's objectifying herself because she's topless: "I'm not trying to sell my body. But it's my body to sell if I did want to! This kind of cover isn't even what sells – what sells is your face, shot by a fashion photographer, but I didn't want to do something like that. I do that all the time." Now that Ferreira has finally reclaimed the power to do she wants as an artist, she seems somewhat less than eager to compromise it anytime soon.

when I'm not doing something as well as I know I can, I get depressed. I've been trying not to let it ruin my shows and have fun with it instead. And then, of course, people are like, 'She's a hot mess! She's crazy!'"

For all the fun she pokes at the way she's perceived, Ferreira is surprised by some responses to her album. "It's really poppy, but people keep saying it's a sad girl record. But I feel like it's an angry girl record!" she says, citing Fiona Apple as an influence before describing the process of writing 'Nobody Asked Me (If I Was Okay)', the track that responds most directly to her label grievances and career obstacles. "I was emotionally and physically exhausted.



Performing
at Pitchfork
Festival in
Chicago,
July 21

September 16
After being released on bail, Sky and Zachary cover Cat Power's 'Nude As The News' at the Basilla Soundscape festival in Hudson, NY.

October 2
Vocal cord problems force Sky to cancel support with Vampire Weekend on their tour through southern American states.

October 10
Continuing her defiant streak, Sky unveils the 'Night Time...' artwork, an unsettling photo shot by famed photographer/director Gaspar Noé.

October 21
Sky and Zachary perform at the 10th anniversary tribute gig of Elliott Smith's death; Cat Power duets on 'Pretty (Ugly Before)'.



October 28
The version of 'Night Time, My Time' that Sky wanted to release finally comes out, to very positive reviews.

November 12
Miley Cyrus invites Sky and Icona Pop onto her 2014 tour. Consider February's headlines written.



November 26
Sky returns to US network TV, playing 'You're Not The One' on ...Letterman, and announces volume one of a B-sides collection from the 'Night Time...' sessions.



RANDOM XMAS MEMORIES

Cate Le Bon

How are you spending Christmas Eve?

"This is my first not spent in Wales in my family home. I am going up a mountain outside LA to stay in a wooden cabin in the snow with friends and a *Mr Bean* DVD, so it's not all bad."

What weird family rituals do you have at Christmas?

"We always have beef. Never turkey. Turkey is not the meat of treats. My mother will cook at least 40 Yorkshire puddings. My personal best is currently 18."

Sam Fryer Palma Violets

How would you make Christmas *TOTP* good again?

"I'd have Fred from Spector presenting it – he'd be great. I'd also have a bit of punk; maybe Baby Strange, because they have good punk hits and they're thinking about writing a Christmas song."

What will you remember 2013 for?

"I think I'll remember 2013 for one of my favourite bands in the world, Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds. They released one of the best records they've ever made and they're still going strong. We saw them recently and they're still the best live band in the world. They're unbelievable."

Do you have any weird family Christmas rituals?

"All of Christmas Day really centres around my cat. She gets the most presents, she runs the house – it's her day really. She pretty much bosses everyone around. It's not really a ritual, it's just something that happens. She's a bit of a nightmare because she's so good-looking. Everybody's kind of whipped by her – pussy-whipped, as it were. It's just her rules."



Nile Rodgers

Which member of your family is worst behaved at Christmas?

"Oh, no question, my Aunt Mabel, my mother's sister. Everyone in my family is an ex-heroin addict, so I suppose after they left their heroin stage they just drank overly. And they're all incredibly bright. So they want to argue about the most ridiculous subjects in the world. Mabel is always the leader of the pack."

What's the most inappropriate thing you have done at Christmas?

"My ex-partner and I took a trip around Christmas time. We went away to write records but ended up gambling an excessive amount of money. We were trying to lose on purpose, so we were making enormous bets. But we wound up winning and we left the Bahamas with this huge amount of money. They thought we were drug dealers."

What do you want for Christmas?

"Time off?! I'm going to take four months off from doing concerts and focus on making records. I have a lot of collaborations left to finish."

How will you remember 2013?

"As the beginning of the third chapter of my life. Chapter one was Norma Jean and Diana Ross. Chapter two was Bowie, Madonna, Duran Duran, The B-52's. Chapter three is Daft Punk, Avicii, Disclosure, Guetta and Chic again. My new Chic record is so good, I'm really proud. Normally I wouldn't admit this, but what I'm hoping for next year is to have a Number One record with Chic. I might consider that the greatest day of my life."



Yannis Philippakis Foals

What would you do to make Christmas *TOTP* good again?

"I didn't even realise that was still happening. What is it now, like six acts from *X Factor* and Jessie J?

Yeah, I'm down with that. It doesn't need changing."

Which Christmas song do you secretly wish you could listen to all year?

"I do actually like Wham!'s 'Last Christmas'. I like George

Michael. I'm not an avid fan, but the world would be a sadder place if he hadn't made those songs."

What's the most inappropriate thing you've ever done at Christmas?

"I've done drugs in a church on Christmas Eve off a present that was meant for someone else. I was probably about 17, so I can just about put it down to being young and stupid."



Mackenzie Scott Torres

What will you remember 2013 for?

"This is the year that my life changed."

What's the most inappropriate thing you've done at Christmas?

"One year friends and I 'deer humped'. You rearrange the reindeer statues in people's yards into vulgar positions."

Do you send out a round robin letter?

"My mum does that every year. It's embarrassing."



Jon Hopkins

Have you ever re-gifted?

"No. I'm a very lazy gifter but not to that extent. Chiefly, my plan is just to gift the bare minimum of people."

Do you have any strange family rituals?

"We play a spirited game of *Pictionary*. Me and my brother drink beer heavily in the afternoon, so the course of the game is set."

Which member of the nativity do you most identify with?

"I starred in the school play as Herod. And I was very good by all accounts."

Q&A INTERVIEWS: LEONIE COOPER, RHIAN DALY, NOEL GARDNER, GAVIN HAYNES, AL HORNOR, JAZZ MONROE, LOUIS PATTISON, DAVID RENSHAW, LAURA SNAPES, ANDY WELCH, LISA WRIGHT, DEAN CHALKLEY, ANDY FORD, DAN DENNISON, DAN KENDALL, JENN FIVE, TOM OXLEY, REX



Oli Sykes
Bring Me The Horizon

What's your favourite Christmas soap storyline?

"Do you remember on *Coronation Street* when they got a load of money and made that train crash? It was all CGI and stuff. That was good. Or *Hollyoaks*, 'cos they always kill about 50 people."

How can they make Christmas *TOTP* better?

"They should do scratch'n'sniff again – do that for Lady Gaga. I didn't even know they still did it, to be honest."



Katie Crutchfield
Waxahatchee

Which member of your family is worst behaved at Christmas?

"Probably me! I have two sisters – we all get along really well. It usually goes OK, but my other sister – not Allison – had a baby this year, so maybe the baby will be the worst behaved!"

How do you spend Christmas Eve?

"Usually I'll be with my parents and my sisters. When we go back down to Alabama, friends from home will usually come over. We used to make this thing we called 'Christmas in a glass', which is gin and Buffalo Rock, which is this ginger ale that you can only get near Alabama. It's really, really spicy."

Which member of the nativity do you most identify with?

"Probably the shepherd. I just like lambs a lot. We were driving around Wales in the middle of nowhere on tour and there were sheep everywhere. They're so cute. When you get close they're pretty gross, but they're so adorable from afar."



Carson Cox
Merchandise

How do you spend Christmas Eve?

"Normally I get real drunk with my friends, then go to church. My mum goes to church every Christmas Eve, and as a sign of solidarity I always join her. As a kid, I remember thinking we were all here to hear stories, lessons, genuinely reflect on life. But no, it's just people afraid to die, grasping onto the past in a way that's really unhealthy."

Is there a Christmas song you can listen to all year round?

"I've just downloaded both of Mariah Carey's Christmas albums. The production is pretty insane. And there's Eazy-E's 'Merry Muthafucking Christmas'. A real filthy party record. Hip-hop and R&B Christmas albums are pretty good!"

Do your family have strange festive habits?

"I'm actually in the middle of recording a Christmas song with my mum. My mom really wants to sing with me, but it's really hard to find a project we can both sing on. So she called me up one day saying, 'Carson, I have the song, I have the music...' In the end she sang it into my answerphone."

Have you ever spent Christmas away from your family?

"I have a lot of friends whose family live a long way away, so they spend it with me and my family. I'm the kind of person that should hate Christmas – it's a big, empty commercial experience – but it's amazing when you're a kid, and I'm not the sort of person to divorce myself from that feeling."



Courtney Barnett

Do *Home And Away* and *Neighbours* have Christmas specials?

"Not really. Our parents only let us watch ABC – news, current affairs and stuff – 'cos they thought commercial TV was stupid. But we always used to watch the *Mr Bean* Christmas special as a family – everyone found that pretty exciting."

Who's the worst behaved at Christmas?

"We're a pretty reserved family. I guess usually my mum doesn't drink much, so at Christmas if she has one glass of

Champagne she gets giggly. And that's about as badly behaved as our family gets."

What are the signs your mum's had a bit too much?

"Well, she laughs a lot and talks a lot in a high-pitched voice. But my brother and my dad and I, we top up her Champagne glass so she thinks she's still on her first one. Which is kind of like spiking someone's drink, I guess; it's not really funny. But it's hilarious – she's always like, 'But I've only had one glaaaaass!! I can't be... tip-sy.'"

Aaron Dessner
The National

How do you usually spend Christmas Eve?

"By the fire on my brother's farm in upstate New York. Last year I was in Denmark drinking aquavit. By the fire. There has to be a fire."

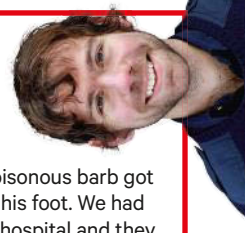
What's been your worst Christmas?

"When we were young there were lots of cousins, and all the adults would be drunk. We were in Florida fishing and my

brother Bryce kicked a catfish and a poisonous barb got stuck in his foot. We had to go to hospital and they had to do surgery to get this thing out."

What will you remember 2013 for?

"My daughter turned two and said her first sentence: 'I like these shoes.' They were little Converse."





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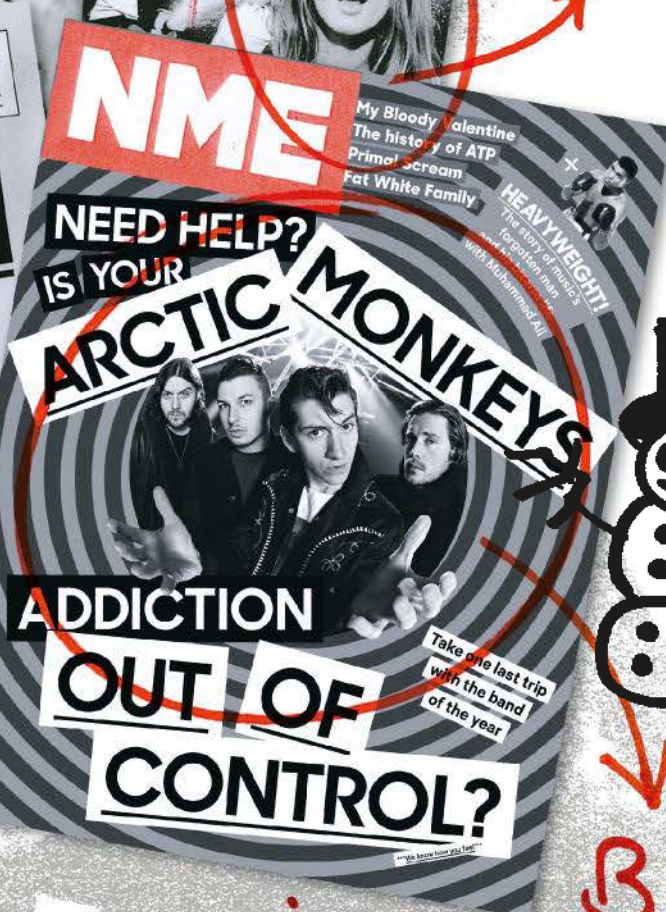
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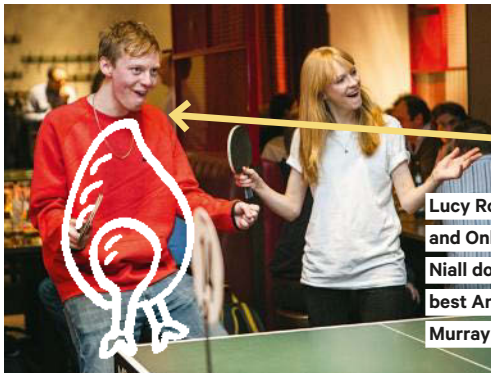
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The



Lucy Rose
and Only Real's
Niall do their
best Andy
Murray faces



Broken bones,
bromances and
bacon beer - we
knew 2013's pub
crawl would be
eventful, but we
never anticipated
this. Leonie Cooper
keeps order while
Rhian Daly guards
the kitty

PHOTOS BY JENN FIVE

Chunder



Matt Wood
gets twisted



The victims

Get to know
the drunken
crew who
took part



► **Jamie Reynolds**

► AGE 33
► BAND Klaxons
► SKILL Keeping calm in the face of carnage



► **Lucy Rose**

► AGE 24
► BAND Lucy Rose
► SKILL Staying comparatively sober



► **Matt Saunders**

► AGE 26
► BAND Telegram
► SKILL Snogging his bandmates



► **Matt Wood**

► AGE 24
► BAND Telegram
► SKILL Absurd facial hair cultivation



► **Jordan Cook**

► AGE 20
► BAND Telegram
► SKILL Climbing things



► **Sam Toms**

► AGE 24
► BAND Temples
► SKILL Master of disguise



► **Andrew Hung**

► AGE 31
► BAND Fuck Buttons
► SKILL Slipping away early



Sam Toms is spooked by Charlie Boyer's volley



Leaning tower of geezer



Games

Ever since the dawn of time, we've spent late November hauling musicians around Camden in an attempt to pour Christmas spirit down their necks. But following the news of Tribes' recent split, we decided to move proceedings; after all, dividing our bar tab between four more thirsty mouths will only result in heinously sensible levels of tipsiness. This year, Holborn, central London, is our host, with a twist on the usual "pub golf" format: proceedings begin in Bounce, a ping-pong club, and an unnervingly active zone for some of our distinctly un-sporty cohort.

Normally – and sensibly, it transpires – we only have one representative per band. But this year, alongside solo acts Lucy Rose and **Only Real** (aka Niall Galvin) we have three of Telegram – that's Matt Saunders, **Matt Wood** and Jordan Cook, though **Temples**' Sam Toms has come impersonating Telegram's Oli Paget Moon, wearing a fairly unconvincing wig. Charlie Boyer has brought his four Voyeurs – Danny Stead, Sam Davies, Samir Eskanda and Ross Kristian – while Andy Hung and Benjamin John Power of Fuck Buttons both put in fleeting early appearances. We also have one-quarter of Klaxons in Jamie Reynolds, as well as Joe 'Connor' Conaboy from *X Factor* boyband rejects, Kingsland Road. He looks terrified.

The contestants arrive in Bounce with a disregard for our 6pm start time. "Have you heard of Musician's Meantime?" asks Telegram's Jordan. Once finally assembled, Ben spots the box of *Twister* in *NME*'s box of tricks, and threatens to steal it. He then asks to be exempted from all physical games, blaming a dodgy wrist, sustained after being pushed off a wall in Turin by The Haxan Cloak. He shakes his head awaiting the arrival of his bandmate, wondering what the hell he's doing here. "I'm quite a lightweight," worries Lucy Rose, looking at the three buckets of beer on the table. ➔



Sam Davies goes cyclo



Handily, the bacon beer looks like Pepto-Bismol



► **Benjamin John Power**
► AGE 29
► BAND Fuck Buttons
► SKILL Making excuses



► **Niall Galvin**
► AGE 22
► BAND Only Real
► SKILL Very tall = good ping-pong reach



► **Charlie Boyer**
► AGE 24
► BAND Charlie Boyer And The Voyeurs
► SKILL Poetry



► **Danny Stead**
► AGE 24
► BAND CB&TV
► SKILL Looking good in black



► **Sam Davies**
► AGE 19
► BAND CB&TV
► SKILL Skinny legs – good for Twister



► **Samir Eskanda**
► AGE 24
► BAND CB&TV
► SKILL Smoking weed



► **Ross Kristian**
► AGE 24
► BAND CB&TV
► SKILL Rizla Game pro



► **Joe Conaboy**
► AGE 19
► BAND Kingsland Road
► SKILL Breaking bones



Charlie Boyer
and Telegram:
about to
smash it



Rizla Game
time... or
an eyebrow-
waxing party?



ROUND ONE

"I'm not cool enough to be here," mumbles Connor, watching as the Voyeurs and Telegram dive across the table. But soon, the unlikely friendship of the night is struck when a shy, sober Connor and Jamie team up for doubles. Turns out Connor is a huge fan, but his ping-pong prowess (or lack thereof) pales compared to his Klaxons worship. They lose to Team Chief Kegwin, aka Lucy and Niall. "We should get 10 points for being gentlemen. We let them win," suggests Connor. Nice try.

Niall and Lucy turn out to be the champs, while second place goes to Jordan and Sam. Ben and Andy come in third, which isn't too bad considering they tried to wimp out moments ago. Spoilsport Andy decides to leave. "Can you just write that I was dissuaded by our loss," he says as he slips a paddle into his backpack. With table tennis completed, the bands demolish the generous bar tab. While most present are happy with bottled lager, Telegram and the Voyeurs order fancy cocktails with pink umbrellas.

Klaxons 0 Lucy Rose 10 Telegram 5 Fuck Buttons 1 Only Real 10 Charlie Boyer And The Voyeurs 0 Connor -5



Charlie Boyer
and the
Kingsland
Road Voyeurs

ROUND TWO

Time to move on to The Craft Beer Co pub around the corner. Outside, the aroma of weed clouds around a certain Voyeur. Jamie points out Samir as the source. "Teacher's pet!" shouts the culprit. "Do I get extra points for grassing him up?" asks Jamie. Samir's bandmate, guitarist Sam, hijacks Lucy's bike and gleefully rides around Leather Lane, where we arrive at our venue. We unceremoniously take over the top floor bar, where the Voyeurs and Telegram decide to build a pyramid of glasses before we commence the next round. That no glasses are smashed is a miracle. They're saving that trick until later.

This round tests the contestants' potential as beer tasters. Points will be awarded for the fruitiest description, and given that we're drinking "doughnut bacon maple ale", it shouldn't be difficult. "It tastes like shit," says Connor getting the lowest mark again, while Samir regains goth points with this florid description: "It's like I slaughtered a pig 2,000 years ago and he's making a horrible noise". Ben – now playing as a one-man team – murmurs something about TCP and Lucy says it's like having moisturiser

on her tongue, while Jamie, who was actually born in a pub, says it's like "falling asleep in a dark, fruity forest". Charlie comes up with an entire poem that rhymes "Leather Lane" with "can't remember your name". We have a winner, and it's not bacon-flavoured beer.

Klaxons 5 Lucy Rose 10 Telegram 5 Fuck Buttons 2 Only Real 10 Charlie Boyer And The Voyeurs 10 Connor -10

ROUND THREE

The Rizla Game next, with an identity written on a fag paper that's glued to your forehead. Jamie dubs Connor (now very drunk) both William and Kate, who in turn decides that Telegram's Matt should be Brandon Flowers. They both guess correctly, but points are deducted due to cheating. The Voyeurs go more obscure, branding each other late Velvet Underground guitarist Sterling Morrison and sci-fi author JG Ballard. "Everyone cheated but us two!" shouts Lucy, gesturing to Niall (aka late racing legend Ayrton Senna), before grimly finding out she was Calum Best all along. Ben opts out entirely.

Klaxons 0 Lucy Rose 10 Telegram 5 Fuck Buttons 2 Only Real 10 Charlie Boyer And The Voyeurs 15 Connor -15

ROUND FOUR

As soon as the Twister board is brought out Ben disappears, thus disqualifying Fuck Buttons. Their friend Gordon gamely stays on, but will soon regret this decision. We've smuggled in a large bottle of off-licence best tequila and rules are quickly thrown out the window. A three-man tower is attempted by Telegram, but Jordan topples onto the floor with a thud. We try one

Charlie births
wee Matt Wood



more time on the mat but a swaying Connor takes everyone down with him again. "I don't want any more beer, I just want fried chicken," he yells. Instead, he has another beer and tries to experience life as a member of an indie band. As Sam lends him his wig and Connor pulls on a white fur coat, we're face to face with a supergroup we never knew we wanted: Charlie Boyer And The Kingsland Road Voyeurs. Connor looks like he might puke.

Klaxons 0 Lucy Rose 15 Telegram 15 Fuck Buttons Disqualified Only Real 10 Charlie Boyer And The Voyeurs 15 Connor -20

ROUND FIVE

The next round is arm wrestling, and naturally, indie is keen to prove its prowess over pop: everyone wants to take on Connor, who hasn't endeared himself this evening. Put it down to



The arm
break as it
happened





Thank God
there's not
a war on

Matt
Saunders
swigs for
victory



enthusiasm, which he brings lashings of to the first – and, sadly, last – round of elbow-based grappling. Fuck Buttons' lone pal **Gordon** leaps to the opposing chair. Amid a flurry of shutter noises as *NME* photographer Jenn snaps the momentous occasion, there's an ominous crack that definitely didn't come from her camera. Gordon's arm is broken. Horribly broken – his right arm, just above the elbow. Ambulances are called. Connor is shocked and then profusely apologetic. As a mark of respect, the round is dismissed and no points awarded, though

Their arsenal

58 BOTTLES OF PERONI
2 TIPPING POINT COCKTAILS – vodka, gin, rum, tequila, orgeat, maraschino liqueur, absinthe, orange bitters, grenadine, lime, pink grapefruit, lemonade
2 HURRICANE COCKTAILS – rum, vanilla syrup, lime, passionfruit, orange, pineapple
1 APPLEJACK SLIM COCKTAIL – whisky, ginger syrup, lemon, cloudy apple juice, ginger beer
11 WHISKY AND COKES
6 VODKA AND COKES

2 WHISKY AND LEMONADES
5 PINTS OF CRISTAL BEER
1 BOTTLE OF TEQUILA
20 GLASSES OF KERNEL IPA BEER
50 GLASSES OF ROGUE VODOO DOUGHNUT BACON MAPLE ALE
30 GLASSES OF BIG INFLATABLE COWBOY HAT IPA BEER
20 GLASSES OF NACHO PIZZA PORT CARLSBAD BEER
4 SCOTCH AND AMARETTOS

Connor loses a full 10. The mood takes a sombre turn. "And I thought punk was dead," says Jamie. **Klaxons 0 Lucy Rose 15 Telegram 15 Fuck Buttons Disqualified Only Real 10 Charlie Boyer And The Voyeurs 15 Connor -30**

ROUND SIX

It takes a good hour for the ambulance to arrive, leaving poor Gordon groaning in the corner, although the barman kindly brings over pints with straws so he can keep drinking. The show must go on! Our final round is Musician Pictionary. Pens and paper are handed out and pictures of Beyoncé's bottom, Este Haim's bass face, Connan Mockasin's moccasins and Craig David's abs are drawn. Connor and bandmate Jay accidentally smash some pint glasses. The

pub has stopped serving us. Another *X Factor* contestant, Sterling Ramsey from Rough Copy, turns up. Lucy gets top points for her picture of Este.

Klaxons 0 Lucy Rose 25 Telegram 15 Fuck Buttons Disqualified Only Real 10 Charlie Boyer And The Voyeurs 15 Connor -30

VERDICT

The pub is trying to get rid of us, so we swiftly tot up the points: Lucy Rose is the winner. "I can't believe it," she says during her speech, collecting a tacky plastic trophy. "This is the high point of my career – it's just a downwards spiral from here."

Lucy Rose Wins!



Matt Saunders
and Matt Wood
pucker up

VICTORY LAP

Not even a broken arm and a clear victor can deter this lot's lust for booze. After Connor and Jamie swap numbers and follow each other on

Twitter, much to Connor's glee,

Jamie joins assorted Telegrams and Voyeurs to hit up the only bar we know will still be open: The Haggerston on Kingsland Road. Ironically enough, Kingsland Road have gone home, as have Lucy and Niall. By now everyone is utterly

demolished. And what do British men like to do when they've lost the power of speech and reason? Snog each other, of course, as Telegram's Matts Saunders and Wood ably demonstrate. Therein lies the true meaning of Christmas: love to (and between) all men. ■

A massive thank you to Bounce (121 Holborn, London EC1N 2TD; find out more about The Next Men's new DJ residency, starting February 22, at bouncepingpong.com) and The Craft Beer Co (82 Leather Lane, London EC1N 7TR; "The best beer bar in London" according to ratebeer.com).



YuleTube

Swap 2013's listless festive listings
for this crop of classic Christmas
TV specials, all available online

▶ Knowing Me, Knowing You

▶ **STARRING** Steve Coogan, David Schneider, Mick Hucknall
▶ **LENGTH** 46 min
▶ **WHERE TO FIND IT** In handy quarter segments on YouTube
▶ **WHAT HAPPENS** Alan hosts a Christmas TV extravaganza which inevitably falls foul of Murphy's law (you know, the

one about 'everything that can go wrong...').

▶ **BEST BIT** An ultra-depressing montage about what happens at Christmas in Norwich ("the city of mustard"), which finds Alan shamelessly shilling for Rover cars and delivering a box of secondhand toys to a hospital ward full of unimpressed kids.



▶ The Star Wars Holiday Special

▶ **STARRING** Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, Peter Mayhew
▶ **LENGTH** 97 min
▶ **WHERE TO FIND IT** YouTube
▶ **WHAT HAPPENS** Han and Chewbacca journey to the Wookiee homeworld to celebrate 'Life Day'. Awfulness ensues.
▶ **BEST BIT** 'Best' is a strong word to use about any aspect of this sorry affair.

▶ The Office

▶ **STARRING** Ricky Gervais, Martin Freeman, Lucy Davis
▶ **LENGTH** 45 min (Part 1); 50 min (Part 2)
▶ **WHERE TO FIND IT** Google it
▶ **WHAT HAPPENS** It picks up where series two left off: with Brent being made redundant and Dawn moving to Florida.
▶ **BEST BITS** David Brent's version of 'If You Don't Know Me By Now' and (spoiler alert) Dawn and Tim *finally* getting together.



▶ A Charlie Brown Christmas

▶ **STARRING** The voices of Peter Robbins, Chris Shea, Tracy Stratford
▶ **LENGTH** 25 min
▶ **WHERE TO FIND IT** Online if you know where to look
▶ **WHAT HAPPENS** Disillusioned by commerce, Charlie Brown rediscovers the meaning of Christmas by directing a nativity play.
▶ **BEST BIT** All of it, with a special mention for Vince Guaraldi's soundtrack.



▶ Blackadder's Christmas Carol

▶ **STARRING** Rowan Atkinson, Tony Robinson, Robbie Coltrane
▶ **LENGTH** 42 min
▶ **WHERE TO FIND IT** On Dailymotion, or on UK Gold
▶ **WHAT HAPPENS** Blackadder is "the nicest man in England" until a visit from the Spirit of Christmas convinces him to become an absolute bastard.
▶ **BEST BITS** The exquisite one-liners, such as: "I fear that you wouldn't understand, blessed as you are with a head emptier than a hermit's address book".



▶ Peep Show

▶ **STARRING** David Mitchell, Robert Webb
▶ **LENGTH** 26 min
▶ **WHERE TO FIND IT** YouTube, on the 4oDCComedy channel
▶ **WHAT HAPPENS** In the *Seasonal Beatings* episode, Mark invites his family round for Christmas dinner, but his best-laid plans go awry thanks to Dobby and Super Hans.
▶ **BEST BIT** Jeremy's face when he sees what Mark has got him for Christmas: firefighters ("in case we get a barbecue"), a pair of kitchen tongs and a Scotrail sleeping mask.



▶ At Home With Vic And Bob

▶ **STARRING** Vic Reeves, Bob Mortimer, Graham Fellows
▶ **LENGTH** 180 min
▶ **WHERE TO FIND IT** YouTube
▶ **WHAT HAPPENS** A typically anarchic evening with Vic and Bob, with sketches, infomercials and fireside chats. This is where *Shooting Stars* made its debut.
▶ **BEST BIT** Graham Fellows' cult comedy creation John Shuttleworth performs 'The Christmas Orphan', a sad ballad about a little boy "whose parents were overcome by fumes when fire swept through their home".



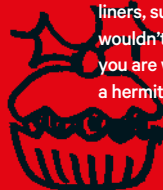
▶ Father Ted

▶ **STARRING** Dermot Morgan, Ardal O'Hanlon, Frank Kelly
▶ **LENGTH** 55 min
▶ **WHERE TO FIND IT** YouTube, on the 4oDCComedy channel
▶ **WHAT HAPPENS** In *A Christmassy Ted*, Ted is set to win a Golden Cleric award after helping a group of priests to escape from "Ireland's biggest lingerie section".
▶ **BEST BIT** Mrs Doyle tries to guess the name of a mystery guest: "Father Neil Hannon! Father Keith Cullen! Father Kieran Donnelly! Father Mick McAvoy! Father Hiroshima Twinkie!"



▶ The Vicar Of Dibley

▶ **STARRING** Dawn French, Peter Capaldi, Orla Brady
▶ **LENGTH** 45 min
▶ **WHERE TO FIND IT** It's on YouTube in five parts
▶ **WHAT HAPPENS** Geraldine struggles to eat her way through four separate Christmas lunches in *The Christmas Lunch Incident*, and receives a proposal from a *Songs Of Praise* producer.
▶ **BEST BIT** Future Time Lord Peter Capaldi turns up from out of nowhere on Geraldine's doorstep to pop the question, but his proposal isn't all it seems to be... ■



RANDOM XMAS MEMORIES

Theo Hutchcraft Hurts

Which member of your family is worst behaved at Christmas?

"I always go to watch Middlesbrough play on Boxing Day and my dad still finds great enjoyment in trying to stop me from being able to walk by half-time."

What will you remember 2013 for?

"A blazing summer and almost losing an eye."

What's the most inappropriate thing you've ever done at Christmas?

"I once woke up so rough that I forgot where and who I was and I screamed 'fuck off' at my young brother when he came in the room in the morning to say 'Merry Christmas'. A touching moment of kinship."

How do you spend Christmas Eve?

"I'm from a very small town in North Yorkshire with a ridiculous amount of pubs. So mostly I go back there and just pretend I'm 17 again and sing until I lose my voice."



**Sara Quin
Tegan And Sara**

What's the worst possible theme anyone could suggest for a Christmas fancy dress party?

"When people dress in, like, sexy elf costumes, it just blows my mind. I don't

understand it. I associate Christmas with winter, it being freezing cold, with everyone having runny noses and the flu. Super sexy, guys!"

Which Christmas song do you secretly wish you could listen to all year round?

"I actually do listen to 'A Charlie Brown Christmas' all year round, sometimes in July in total fucking sunshine."

How can the BBC make Christmas TOTP good again?

"There should be more

alcohol involved. The acts on the show should only be allowed to do Christmas songs and there should definitely be crazy collaborations. I really wanna see Daft Punk and Dolly Parton doing 'Rockin' Around The Christmas Tree' together."

Which member of the nativity do you most identify with?

"One of the sheep. I'm kinda OK being on the fringes of the action. You'd have to have some God complex to say Jesus. Literally, a God complex."



**Jim Scavunos
Nick Cave &
The Bad Seeds**

Which member of the nativity do you most identify with?

"Melchior, Persian scholar and one of the three Magi. My middle name is Melchior - that's why I identify with him. Plus I really dig gold, frankincense and myrrh, and I'm a wise guy too."

What Christmas film do you never need to see again?

"Every one ever made except for *Santa Claus Conquers The Martians*."

So there's a cactus with fairy lights on it. There's nothing quite like being in the high desert in Joshua Tree when it snows - it's so surreal."

Do you have a favourite Christmas song?

"'White Christmas' by Bing Crosby is pretty awesome. Although I don't like him - he was a bad man. I can't help but think of him beating the shit out of his kids."



Brody Dalle

How do you spend Christmas Eve?

"We give a present away and get drunk on eggnog. We're usually in the desert for Christmas, which is nice."

Andrew Hung Fuck Buttons

Is there a Christmas song you could listen to all year round?

"I love Low's 'Christmas' album, and I still listen to that all year round, actually. It's properly good, perfect for night-time."

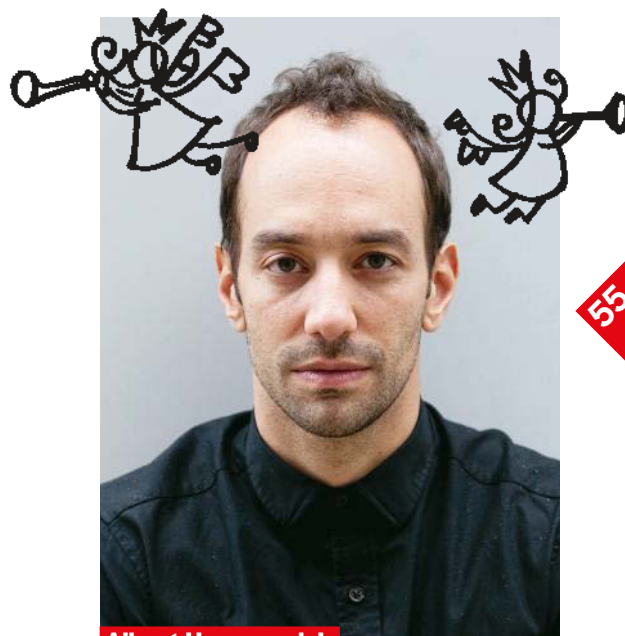
Do your family have any strange Christmas rituals?

"There are quite a lot of Chinese Christmas traditions that probably seem strange to people. We take a metal bin and a cooked chicken to our loved ones' graves, place

incense candles around it and burn some effigies of money. It's slightly weird. But here's the weirdest bit - if I have a girlfriend with me, she's not allowed to come with us, she has to stay in the car. I'd probably stay in the car too if I could, to be honest."

How could they make Christmas TOTP good again?

"Get rid of all the bands, just bring back Pan's People strutting their stuff. I'd watch that."



Albert Hammond Jr

What's been your worst Christmas?

"Last year I was sick and alone in my apartment. I had broken up with my girlfriend and everyone was with their families. I just watched movies, closed the curtains, drank chicken noodle soup and took NyQuil. It was pretty depressing. This year's going to be wonderful, but my god, you think some crazy stuff when you're alone like that."

What will you remember 2013 for?

"I recorded and released the five best songs I feel I've written. I know I'm in a successful band, but just being the guitar player and not the singer, it's not a given that you can go back out. I don't want to get dorky about it, but I totally am taking a risk."

What Christmas song do you secretly wish you could listen to all year round?

"'The Chipmunk Song' by Alvin And The Chipmunks. Alvin And The Chipmunks' 'Christmas With The Chipmunks' was the first vinyl I had as a kid."

Tell us a Christmas joke.

"Roses are reddish, violets are blueish, if it weren't for Christmas, we'd all be Jewish."

It's beginning to look a lot unlike Christmas...

Sick of the same old Christmas songs? You've never seen The Pogues, Wham!, Cliff and Mariah this way...



R
I
L

POLICE

CHRISTMAS COMICS



57

FAIRYTALE
OF
NEW YORK

LAST CHRISTMAS

A CAUTIONARY TALE OF REGIFTING

KRISTYNA BACZYNSKI



KRISTYNA BACZYNSKI

ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS YOOOOOOOOVVUUUU!



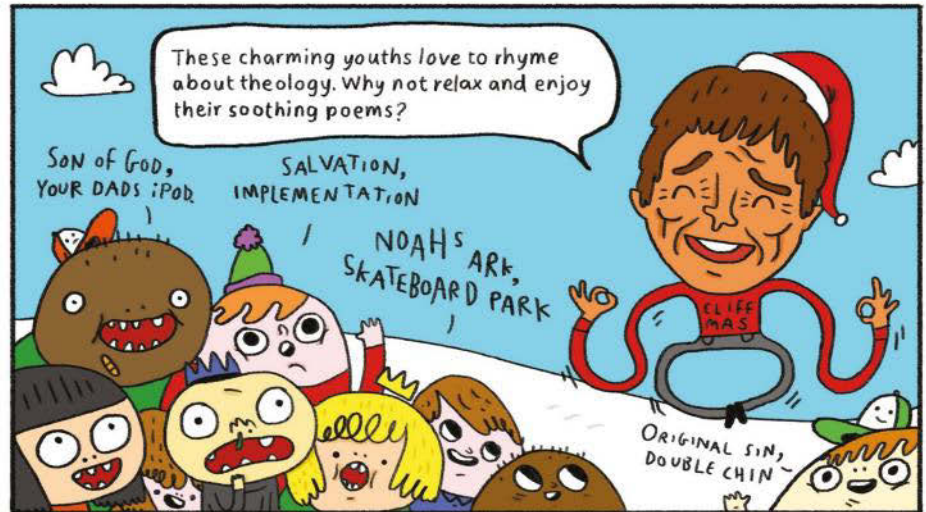
CHRISTMAS HITS ARE RECORDED DURING MID-SUMMER, THE MOST DIFFICULT TIME OF THE YEAR TO FEEL 'FESTIVE'.



TO HELP MARIAH CAREY GET INTO THE SPIRIT OF THE SEASON THE LABEL FLEW IN FOUR FESTIVE GHOSTS.

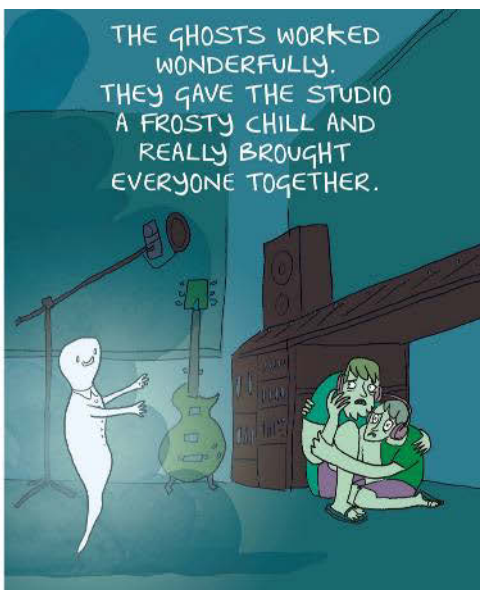


MISTLETOE AND WINE



59

JOE LIST



DAN BERRY



The Waitresses (clockwise from top): Dan Klayman, Mars Williams, Billy Ficca, Tracy Wormworth, Patty Donahue and Chris Butler



The Wrap Pack

One-hit wonders? Never! 'Christmas Wrapping' has become a cruel legacy for The Waitresses, who wrote it to please their label and eventually split because of it. Cian Traynor speaks to the cast behind an accidental festive classic

61

Chris Butler hates Christmas. It's not just because of his rough upbringing in Ohio, where his family treated the holiday as a chance to express their distaste for each other.

Nor is it simply because, as a self-confessed Scrooge, the faux jolliness has always grated against his sour demeanour. It also has something to do with 'Christmas Wrapping', the 1981 holiday hit Butler wrote with US new wave band The Waitresses. It's the reason his singular style of songwriting is best known for a Christmas song covered by the Spice Girls.

Over a decade before the likes of Liz Phair, Bikini Kill and Sleater-Kinney helped redefine what a female voice could say in mainstream culture, The Waitresses squeezed previously taboo topics such as social imbalance, emotional honesty and sexuality into complex pop music. So when Butler wrote a throwaway song about a busy single woman who'd rather be alone than endure Christmas, its unique perspective produced an accidental hit.

By the time the Spice Girls covered 'Christmas Wrapping' in 1998, Butler was returning to his experimental roots: recording songs using archaic equipment like wax

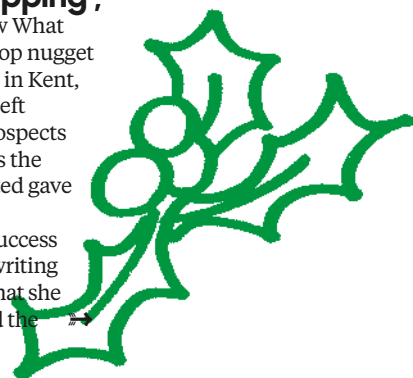
cylinders and writing abstract poetry. "I felt all sophisticated, like an avant-garde New Yorker," he says. "Then along comes the most commercial entity in the fucking world covering a song of mine. It felt... awkward."

But, in a way, the song is emblematic of The Waitresses: witty, off-kilter pop offering sociological snapshots from a female perspective. Butler had no interest in formulaic love songs. Instead he would channel his songwriting through a 'big sister' protagonist – "a working woman with big dreams" – to articulate issues that, he says, most men were clueless about.

Before 'Christmas Wrapping',

The Waitresses had a hit with 'I Know What Boys Like', an irresistibly detached pop nugget that satirised Butler's local bar scene in Kent, Ohio. The state's industrial collapse left graduates like Butler with few job prospects throughout the 1970s, though he says the "low-wattage desperation" it generated gave home-grown music an edge.

Ohio's Chrissie Hynde had found success in the UK with The Pretenders, later writing the song 'My City Was Gone' about what she left behind, while Devo, Pere Ubu and the



Dead Boys were lured away from Cleveland and Akron by record labels. Reports of their progress at CBGB and Max's Kansas City in New York tantalised Butler and, using a friend's equipment, he demoed 'I Know What Boys Like'.

Initially the song embarrassed him. He was in a high-brow band called Tin Huey and this just felt like pure pop fluff. "I vividly remember playing them my demo and the cold silence that preceded the words, 'It's not for us.'" Undeterred, he walked into a bar one afternoon and stood on a chair to ask if anyone was up for doing something different. The voice that piped up belonged to Patty Donahue, a 22-year-old waitress working her way through college. Together they fleshed out 'I Know What Boys Like' into something Butler felt confident taking to New York.

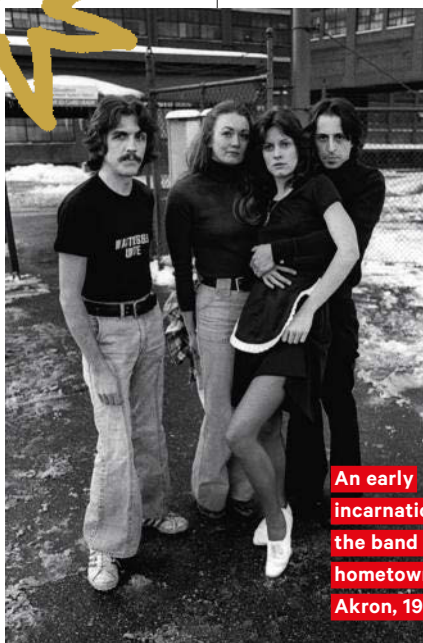
"Christmas songs always broke my heart in a lot of ways"

Chris Butler

Full of tricky rhythms, the music of The Waitresses was an angular jumble of jazz, ska and funk, and Donahue was just as unconventional. More of an actor than a singer, she'd step into character to deliver conversational lyrics with a playful, gum-snapping nonchalance.

"Patty was like Lucille Ball," says Waitresses drummer Billy Ficca, sitting in the lobby of a Dublin hotel ahead of a gig with Television. "She could've walked straight into *Saturday Night Live* because she had that *flair*: very pretty and a great sense of humour."

It didn't take long to find others who saw the same potential. When Butler slipped an acetate of 'I Know What Boys Like' to Mark Kamins, a DJ at famed NYC nightclub Danceteria, he took it to Island Records as proof of his talent-spotting ability. The label were interested. But when they asked Butler where his band was, he bluffed, "Um, they're back in Ohio." After a hasty search, Butler wired his last \$50 to Donahue so she could catch a bus to New York.



An early incarnation of the band in their hometown of Akron, 1976



Playing live in LA in 1983

Drawing inspiration from the discordant wizardry of Captain Beefheart and XTC, he enlisted an extraordinary cast of musicians: drummer Billy Ficca, a founding member of seminal post-punk group Television; experimental saxophonist Mars Williams, a future member of The Psychedelic Furs; keyboard classicist Dan Klayman; and funk-jazz bassist Tracy Wormworth, who would later be snapped up by Sting as a touring bassist and join The B-52's.

The Waitresses' first sessions together

produced B-side 'No Guilt', which depicted Butler's female protagonist asserting her independence following a break-up: "*I'm sorry but I don't feel awful/It wasn't the end of the world*". Butler had the sense of a cultural milieu afoot – "a long overdue woman's revolution" – and he wanted to be part of the dialogue.

"I noticed there were two or three stereotypes of women in music: the hard-rock babe, the sensitive folkie and maybe the black diva. I thought, 'Where's the normal working woman? Where's the female Bruce Springsteen?' It seemed pretty natural to build an honest personality that reflected what was going on around me."

'I Know What Boys Like' became a staple

The Waitresses' specials

Wasn't Tomorrow Wonderful? (1982)

The band's debut album was funny, danceable and packed with insightful storytelling. A fusion of ska guitar and saxophone, it was singer Patty Donahue's attitude that lifted the album to Number 41 in the US charts.

I Could Rule The World If I Could Only Get The Parts (1982)

This EP acted as a stopgap sampler. Its five tracks included the sitcom theme tune 'Square Pegs', a live recording of Tin Huey's experimental 'The Smartest Person I Know' and festive favourite 'Christmas Wrapping'.

Bruiseology (1983)

Rushed to market to capitalise on the band's momentum, this difficult third album caught The Waitresses under-prepared and overworked. The result is a cluttered, over-complicated affair that, despite some clever motifs, has dated poorly.



of college radio, and despite Island refusing to spend money on its promotion, it gained enough momentum to reach Number 62 on the US charts two years later, in 1982.

'Christmas Wrapping' only came about after The Waitresses were farmed out to Island subsidiary ZE Records, a leftfield label with a roster featuring Suicide and John Cale. To Butler's frustration, debut album "Wasn't Tomorrow Wonderful?", was put on hold owing to distribution issues and he was required to write a song for ZE's alternative seasonal compilation, 'A Christmas Record'.

"[Label head] Michael Zilkha seemed to think it was a great irony to have the likes of Alan Vega doing a Christmas song. I perceived it as an annoyance. We didn't have the time nor the material... and Christmas songs always broke my heart, in a lot of ways, so I tended to react to it very negatively."

Butler finished the lyrics to 'Christmas Wrapping' in a taxi on the way to the studio. The band banged the song out in two days and then resumed gigging for survival off the back of 'I Know What Boys Like'. That winter, while preparing for a show in Rochester, Butler phoned his girlfriend and discovered that The Waitresses were all over the radio. "I said, 'Finally! We've been working that damn song for nine months.' But she told me, 'Um, no... it's your Christmas song.'"

Much like Blondie's 'Rapture', which was a groundbreaking success in the same year, 'Christmas Wrapping' drew from New York's burgeoning hip-hop scene to get its point across: "No thanks, no party lights/It's Christmas Eve... turned down all of my invites". The song would peak at 45 in the UK charts, warranting a follow-up EP, 'I Could Rule The World If I Could Only Get The Parts', which contained 'Christmas Wrapping' and the theme song for high school sitcom *Square Pegs*, starring a 14-year-old Sarah Jessica Parker.

Its success also led the band to Polygram, where Butler was granted his first choice of studio and co-producer for a second album: Richard Branson's Manor in Oxfordshire, the UK's first residential studio, and Hugh Padgham, who was about to become one of the most in-demand producers in music.

However, a new set

of problems awaited. Butler had always written complex arrangements, fearful that if he didn't sustain the interest of a gifted group of players, they'd grow bored. He envisioned 'Bruiseology' as a dark, brooding saga for his female protagonist – the middle chapter in a planned three-album arc. But the band was exhausted and Padgham's commitment to begin work on The Police's 'Synchronicity' left them with little time.

"Our band just kind of imploded," says Butler. "It was a hard deadline and it looked like we weren't going to make it, though thankfully we did. But it cost us: it killed the band."

Padgham recalls little of the sessions – "either the drugs and alcohol were too good or I'm mentally blocking it out" – and seems shocked at the lack of information about

The Waitresses online. Perhaps more tellingly, he doesn't hear a hit single when he pulls up 'Bruiseology' on Spotify.

"If I remember, Chris was an inveterate worrier. I've got a feeling that everything was a problem. Billy, the drummer, seemed to have a real self-confidence crisis. Then there was Mars, the saxophone player, who was quite mad and great fun. But the

lasting memory is that Patty and Chris always seemed to be rowing."

'Bruiseology' fared poorly and the band folded shortly after its release in 1983. In Butler's liner notes to 1990's 'The Best Of The Waitresses', he wrote: "How could a bunch of stubborn people who refused to be clichés stumble smack into a typical showbiz crash-and-burn?"

Asked how he'd answer that now, Butler groans and briefly slips into silence. "Maybe volatile people in a high-stress industry equals irritability and eventual collapse," he says. "The whole idea of being a successful rock'n'roll fuck-up is a myth. It doesn't work. You might love each other, you might love what you're doing, but sometimes that's not enough."

Pushed on where it all went wrong, Ficca is reticent. "Even if a marriage breaks up, it doesn't mean it was a bad marriage. It was just time. Sometimes a band's energy is done when they've made their point."

But if The Waitresses had made their point, why would Butler write an unrealised third album? Why would Donahue continue as Patty Donahue & The Waitresses before becoming a label A&R? (She died from lung cancer in 1996.)

"It was all about the focus," Ficca says with a sigh. "The Waitresses involved a lot of personalities. Maybe there were differences in what everybody wanted or felt they deserved."

After years of seeing covers (Glee, Kate Nash, Martha Wainwright) and samples (Jay Z, Chris Brown, Girl Talk) accumulate, Butler has fantasised about resurrecting The Waitresses. There's something incomplete about the recently released 'Just Desserts: The Complete Waitresses', and given the clarity of hindsight, Butler understands why.

"Patty really allowed herself to enjoy [the experience] more than I did. She was, how do I say this diplomatically, prone to excess. Her personality would change accordingly and that didn't help. But she was a talent and I was demanding of her for someone with no experience. I felt responsible because The Waitresses was my 'baby'. Had I known it would collapse on me, I would've had much more fun. But I turned it into a job real fast."

No Wave Noel



A Christmas Record 1981

ZE's Christmas compilation was arguably the first fully formed alternative holiday record. In 1981, with the label's critical standing eclipsing its commercial prospects, its founders deemed the prospect of a leftfield Christmas album "improbable and delicious". So when ZE's artists were called upon to give Christmas a rock'n'roll edge, the results were suitably dark. Cristina's 'Things Fall Apart' chronicles festive ennui with lines like, "They killed a tree of 97 years and smothered it in lights and silver tears", while Was (Not Was)'s 'Christmas Time In The Motor City' depicts an unemployed Santa being refused food stamps. Though The Waitresses' 'Christmas Wrapping' would become a seasonal favourite, James Chance's 'Christmas With Satan' dealt in nightmarish jazz. Two revised versions of the album were released in 1982 and 2004, but the original (issued on white vinyl in the UK) remains a collector's item.

NME QUIZ

OF THE YEAR

A QUOTES

1 Why did one One Direction fan tell NME News Editor Dan Stubbs to go and "suck on a cow's dick" via Twitter?

2 "I am Picasso. I am Walt Disney. I am Steve Jobs." Which rapper said this onstage in Paris in February?

3 "Someday it would be interesting to read all the MI5 files on Britpop. The wool was pulled right over everyone's eyes there." Which legendary noise-maker said this?

4 "We left the fucking plug on the floor on purpose, didn't even plug phono leads into the master out, turned all the EQs fully down... AND DIDN'T EVEN TAKE HEADPHONES!" Which dance act protested against miming at Wembley?

5 "I'm a bit... I dunno, I just haven't got... I'm a bit sort of, paranoid to ring him up." Who was nervous about asking Thom Yorke to collaborate?



6 "When I get offstage, promoters and big people in the industry come back and go, 'Oh, you could be Madonna! Or you could be Johnny Rotten! It's a thin line.'"

Which singer was claiming this?

7 "There are moments of supreme beauty and greatness, and some of it is the same old shit. But the guy really, really, *really* is talented. He's really trying to raise the bar." Who was giving Kanye West so much praise?

8 "Penguins, man! You gotta love them. They're dead, dead cute!" Which singer revealed himself as an animal lover?



9 "I have got a bit of an issue with cardigans. They're shit, aren't they?" Which singer made

his thoughts clear regarding a certain upper body garment?

10 "I love that girl more than anything. She's probably way too busy for someone like me, but I'd love to work with her." Who was keen on a collaboration with twerk queen Miley Cyrus?

B ALBUMS

1 Who enjoyed their first ever UK Top 10 with second album 'Arc'?

2 How many years had elapsed between the release of My Bloody Valentine's 'Loveless' and its belated follow-up 'm b v'?

3 Which of these did *not* get a 10th anniversary reissue this year? A. Death Cab For Cutie – 'Transatlanticism'; B. The White Stripes – 'Elephant'; C. Songs: Ohia – 'Magnolia Electric Co'?

4 David Bowie made a shock comeback this year with 'The

Next Day' – what was the name of the last studio album he had released?



5 Jay Z's 'Magna Carta Holy Grail' album was initially made available for free to customers of which mobile brand?

6 What was the title of The Killers' first 'best of' collection?



7 What was the name of the track on Arcade Fire's 'Reflektor' that's reprised briefly later on the record?

8 What did Liam Gallagher initially want to call Beady Eye's second album, 'BE'?

9 Who sang guest vocals on the title track of Manic Street Preachers' 'Rewind The Film'?

10 Haim's debut album 'Days Are Gone' pipped which US superstar to the top of the UK albums chart?





C FESTIVALS

- 1 Who did Alex Turner ban from Arctic Monkeys' festival performances this summer?
- 2 How many minutes of The Rolling Stones' Glastonbury performance were broadcast by the BBC this year?
- 3 Who did Trent Reznor blame for Nine Inch Nails' "production" problems at Reading & Leeds?
- 4 Where did Foals make their UK festival headline debut?
- 5 Where did Manic Street Preachers give their only UK festival performance?

6 Which birthday did T In The Park celebrate this year?

7 The All Tomorrow's Parties holiday camp festivals came to an end this year. Which band closed the final event?

8 What was the only UK festival The Stone Roses performed at?

9 At which UK festival did Warpaint make their live comeback this year?

10 Who played a UK festival for the first time in 44 years?



D TOURS

1 Which '70s band returned to the UK to play their classic debut in full this autumn?

2 Paramore were joined by which Manchester group for several European summer dates?

3 Katie C's sister's band supported Waxahatchee on tour. What are they called?

4 Who performed with a mariachi band on the UK leg of their tour?



5 Justin Welch stood in as drummer on some Suede dates. But which Britpop-era band was he in?



6 The singer of which band on the NME Awards Tour proposed to his girlfriend after the London show?

7 Happy Mondays hit the road again this year, playing which of their classic albums in full?

8 Which of these singers did NOT join The Rolling Stones onstage this year – Taylor Swift, Katy Perry, Kelly Clarkson?

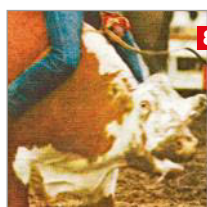
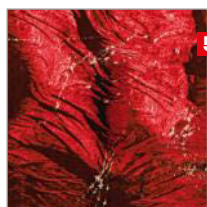
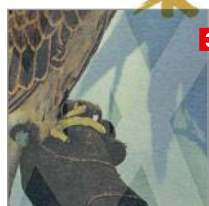
9 Which band set up a competition that offered fans the chance to play a giant cowbell with them on their US tour?

10 Whose special shows at cities and towns throughout the world were known as Gentlemen Of The Road stopovers?



E ALBUM ARTWORK

Which 2013 record sleeves are these close-ups taken from?



F COLLABORATIONS

1 Which US singer/songwriter co-wrote a track on Jake Bugg's 'Shangri La' album?

2 The Julie Ruin features two members of which riot grrrl band?

3 Which track on Queens Of The Stone Age's '...Like Clockwork' featured Elton John?

4 Which Australian artist did Foals work with on 'Holy Fire'?

5 Which Britpop musician

produced Frankie & The Heartstrings' second album this year?

6 Which British guitarist appears on Arctic Monkeys' 'AM' and also joined them on tour?

7 Who co-wrote the Miles Kane track 'You're Gonna Get It' and performed it with him at the NME Awards?

8 Out of a host of guest stars, who is the only other rapper to appear with Eminem

on 'The Marshall Mathers LP 2'?

9 As well as 'Get Lucky', on which other song from Daft Punk's 'Random Access Memories' does Pharrell Williams sing lead vocals?

10 Which Britpop icon co-produced Palma Violets' debut album '180'?





G DEATHS

1 Which legendary designer who created sleeves for Pink Floyd, Muse and Buffy Clyro died in April?

2 Two members of which Iranian band were shot dead in November?

3 Which member of The Pogues passed away in October?

4 Which country singer was shot dead in Nashville in November after an argument with a barman about smoking on the premises?

5 What was the name of The Charlatans' drummer who passed away in August aged 44?



6 Alan Myers died in June. Which new wave US band did he drum for between 1976 and 1986?

7 Trevor Bolder died of cancer in May. Which instrument did he play in David Bowie's one-time band The Spiders From Mars?

8 Which founding member of The Doors died in May?

9 The man who opened the Woodstock festival died aged 72 this year. Name him.

10 According to his wife, Laurie Anderson, Lou Reed died peacefully while performing which Chinese martial art?



H GUESS WHO

1 My band released their third album, I wrote a comedy review of a rapper's new LP and stuck up for people who take selfies.

2 I'm based in Leeds, I'm friends with The Cribs and I turned 100 this year.

3 We celebrated the 10th anniversary of our debut album, we made the first

ever music video on top of the Empire State Building and we used a gospel choir on our single.

4 We marked a big anniversary, picked up a prize at the NME Awards and one of us started a band with his girlfriend.

5 I slugged off Spotify, did a lot of DJing and toured with my supergroup.

6 I released a solo album, got stick for investing in 'tax-efficient' schemes and then the PM refused to slag me off as he had done Jimmy Carr for doing the same thing.

7 I got out of rehab, played an album in full with my band at Reading and got a starring role in a movie.

8 We got Bowie to sing with us, did a weird video with papier-mâché heads and toured under another name.

9 I put out a film about a recording studio, saw my old band celebrate a big anniversary, and went back in the studio with my current group.

10 I overcame drug addiction and released an album with the band I'm in, but only toured my solo stuff.



I CONTROVERSIES

1 What happened when Danny Brown performed onstage in Minneapolis in April?

2 Johnny Borrell's solo album 'Borrell 1' failed to make the Top 100 of the UK charts. How many copies did it sell in its first week?

3 Who was James Blake introduced as at this year's Mercury Prize?

4 What did Liam Gallagher use as a

mode of transport in a pub this summer?

5 Whose comeback video provoked allegations of racism?

6 What happened when Mumford & Sons visited Atlanta?



7 Which rapper broke a fan's arm

after stagediving at a London show?

8 Which veteran US band got stick after replacing an original member with a person with the same first name?

9 Who put out a statement supporting Russell Brand after he called for an anti-voting revolution on TV?

10 Whose picture with the UK Prime Minister led to a storm of criticism?



J LYRICS

1 "The present has no ribbon/Your gift keeps on giving"

2 "Like a hairline crack in a radiator/Leaking life"

3 "Our song escapes on little silver discs/Our love is plastic, we'll break it to bits"

4 "You know I'm bad at communication/It's the hardest thing for me to do"

5 "Come home, practically all is nearly forgiven"

6 "I'll turn the plane round, your ass keep complaining/How you gon' be mad on vacation?"

7 "I don't know what time it was/I don't wear a watch"

8 "We're gonna separate ourselves tonight/We're always running scared but holding knives"

9 "Like the beginning of Mean Streets, you could be my baby"

10 "Do you think you can go to the 18th hole/Or will you flip-flop the day of the championship?"

Compiled by ALAN WOODHOUSE (answers on page 85)



RANDOM XMAS MEMORIES



**Eoin Loveless
Drenge**

What's the worst festive party you've been to?

"We had a Christmas meal last year with our auntie's mate, and afterwards he thought it was appropriate to bring out some crumb and have a cheeky Christmas spliff. It was fucking weird – we didn't have turkey, we had lamb rogan josh. He toked away while we played *Scrabble*."

Who's the most badly behaved member of your family at Christmas?

"No-one's badly behaved because everyone just wants to have a nice time. Isn't that what Christmas is about? Not being a knob?"



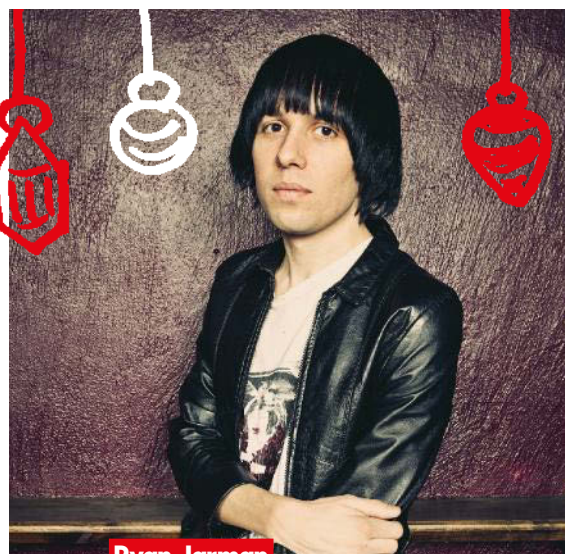
**Caroline Hjelt
Icona Pop**

What's the worst idea for a Christmas fancy dress party?

"Sexy Santa! There's nothing sexy about Christmas. It's impossible to feel sexy when you're full of eggnog. And there's definitely nothing sexy about Santa. He's an old man who flies around creeping into bedrooms. NOT SEXY."

What Christmas movie do you never need to see again in your life?

"Every Christmas, Swedish people watch a Donald Duck special on TV. I could recite every line I've seen it so many times. Just thinking about it is making me want to scratch my eyes out."



**Ryan Jarman
The Cribs**

How would you make Christmas *TOTP* good again?

"The best Christmas songs were glam-rock songs, so you need to have some of that on there and not give a fuck about being cool. Hopefully some unpretentious glam-rock band will come out with a really good Christmas song again. I'd like to play *TOTP*. I think it'd be cool if we rewrote 'Martell' with Christmas lyrics. Maybe Cribsmas will become an annual thing and that'll take over from *TOTP*..."

The worst Christmas party you've been to?

"When we were 15, me and Gary crashed a party in the next village and there were a lot of people from school that we didn't really get on with. We smoked a load of weed and things got really out of control. Social services turned up and took a really young kid away. That was a really bad party, and I think it may have been our fault in a lot of ways."

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**Jono Ma
Jagwar Ma**

Do your family send a round robin Christmas letter? How awful is it?

"I've got relatives in the States and they always send these group emails. There's always these back-handed compliments poking fun at the fact that me and Dave [Jono's brother and Foals' video director] don't do real jobs. 'It's good to hear that Robert's got his medicine degree and so-and-so is getting married...' It's all a bit hard to endure."



Mac DeMarco

What will you remember 2013 for?

"I'll probably remember it for the mayor of Toronto smoking crack. The mayor shouldn't be smoking crack, but the way he held himself with it was pretty good. Around Toronto there's a hockey jersey, but instead of a player name it says Mayor Ford and the number is 69."

What do you want for Christmas?

"A free trip to the dentist. I really need to get my teeth cleaned. I haven't gone to the dentist in about six years. There's no rock star dental insurance. You can't get that. The music industry's not gonna clean my teeth for me! It's insane!"



**Harry Koisser
Peace**

Which of your family is worst behaved at Christmas?

"We have Uncle Ray and he's a total legend. He's the uncle who's really into AC/DC and

had an electric guitar and would be rude at the dinner table. He has guns as well – there's been a lot of situations with guns. We won't go into them."

What will you remember 2013 for?

"Definitely my engagement, which was a significant move. Album release. Tours a-doing. Songs a-writing. Homes a-moving. Big year."

**Justin Young
The Vaccines**

What's the most inappropriate thing you've ever done at Christmas?

"You know when you're a kid you're told not to put your elbows on the table? I once did and the table collapsed. All the food fell on the floor and our dogs ate it all. I was only five. My parents might have set it up to teach me a life lesson. It was very traumatic."



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NME

Reviews

► THE DEFINITIVE VERDICT ■ EDITED BY TOM HOWARD



Bad Religion Christmas Songs

**The Los Angeles punks
add some three-chord
riffage to a bunch of
festive classics**



accompaniment to an evening's pogoing to Clash B-sides after you've taken your mutt-on-a-string for a stroll down Camden Lock. Whatever the reason, the links between the safety-pinned subculture and the ho-ho-ho-ing of Santa Claus are strong.

Since Shane MacGowan and his scuzzy street folkers in The Pogues joined forces with Kirsty MacColl in 1987 for the finest Christmas song ever laid to tape – no arguments against 'Fairytale Of New York' here, please – there have

► Punks bloody love Christmas. Maybe it's because of the festive colours – those potent reds, greens and golds reminiscent of the tartan bondage trousers on sale in Vivienne Westwood's King's Road shop in the late 1970s. Or perhaps it's down to the easy access to mulled wine – the perfect

been enough punk-rock tributes to Christmas to hide behind every door of the advent calendars belonging to each of the 12 lords a-leaping. From the Ramones' 'Merry Christmas (I Don't Want To Fight Tonight)' to The Vandals and their 'Oi To The World' album – the title track of which was covered by No Doubt – via Rancid, Blink-182 and even Weezer, most second- and third-wave punk bands have done their bit to boost Father Christmas' ego. The only bands missing are the bastions of punk, like the Sex Pistols and Buzzcocks, who didn't find it necessary to muddy their reputations with novelty hits about getting dumped on Christmas Eve.

Bad Religion are no strangers to the Christmas song. But instead of penning their own odes to the season, these middle-aged Los Angelinos have taken another route popular with punks – that of the comedy cover, an art finessed by Fat Wreck Chords supergroup Me First And The Gimme Gimmes. Bad Religion have previously

ILLUSTRATION: JIMMY TURRELL

thrashed their way through 'The First Noel', 'Silent Night' and a little something they called 'God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen', but 'Christmas Songs' is the first time they've pulled together an entire album of festive tunes. In the spirit of goodwill to all men, it's for charity too,

THE BEST CHRISTMAS PUNK SONGS

Ramones

Merry Christmas (I Don't Want To Fight Tonight) 1989



Joey namechecks Santa's reindeer and reminds us that Christmas isn't the time to break hearts. With jingle bells, naturally.

The Vandals

Oi To The World 1996



With lyrics about a racially motivated attack that ends with both parties drinking bourbon in a pub, it's political punk perfect for seasonal skanking.

Blink-182

I Won't Be Home For Christmas 2002



A typically teenage tale of a modern-day Scrooge who batters carol singers with a baseball bat.

Rancid

X-Mas Eve (She Got Up And Left Me) 2007



Tim Armstrong gets dumped. "She" obviously wasn't a Ramones fan.

from Bad Religion's 1993 album 'Recipe For Hate'. With its lyrics about religious authoritarianism, proceedings take a suddenly bleak twist. Something for all the Scrooges out there it may be, but it's also the least cringeworthy moment on the whole record. ■ LEONIE COOPER

THE DETAILS

► **RELEASE DATE** Out now ► **LABEL** Epitaph ► **PRODUCERS** Brett Gurewitz, Greg Graffin, 'Evil' Joe Barresi ► **LENGTH** 19:01 ► **TRACKLISTING** ►1. Hark! The Herald Angels Sing ►2. O Come All Ye Faithful ►3. O Come, O Come, Emmanuel ►4. White Christmas ►5. Little Drummer Boy ►6. God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen ►7. What Child Is This? ►8. Angels We Have Heard On High ►9. American Jesus (Andy Wallace Mix) ► **BEST TRACK** American Jesus (Andy Wallace Mix)

5

MORE ALBUMS

Various Artists For Folk's Sake It's Christmas 2013

For Folk's Sake

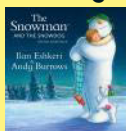


There will be gnashing of teeth. There will be rending of garments. And that's just on seeing the band names. But if you only buy one festive-themed folk compilation this Christmas, make it this one. As is often the case with such records, the quality veers wildly: many songs sound like they were recorded in the hope of landing the John Lewis ad (we're looking at you, Jessie Moncrieff & The Pollyanna Band), but there are enough flashes of oddball charm and whimsy – like Joe Innes & The Cavalcade's 'Santa Says "Relax"', or the Radiophonic Workshop barminess of Emperor Yes' 'Time Frog 4000' – spread across these 14 tracks to make it worth your while.

■ BARRY NICOLSON

6

Ilan Eshkeri & Andy Burrows The Snowman & The Snowdog OST



Raymond Briggs, author of children's book *The Snowman*, which was published in 1978 and made into an animated film in 1982, wasn't involved in its 2012 sequel, *The Snowman And The Snowdog*. It turned out to be more flimsy and less wondrous/trippy than the original – music included. Where the original had Peter Auty singing the haunting 'Walking In The Air' (before Aled Jones re-recorded it), here we're offered former Razorlight drummer Andy Burrows belting out a po-faced and over-produced soft-rock ballad, 'Light The Night'. It ruined the film, making it seem like a music video, and here it overshadows Ilan Eshkeri's more appropriate pop-classical compositions.

■ PHIL HEBBLETHWAITE

5



NME
ALBUM
OF THE WEEK

Various Artists

Psych-Out Christmas

'Tis the season to be fuzzy, with Iggy Pop, Sleepy Sun, Psychic Ills and more

► Psychedelic legend has it that Santa's red suit is a colour-coded reference to the hallucinogenic toadstools favoured by European reindeer and used as a cheap trip by their human herders. Believe that and 'Psych-Out Christmas' will more than meet your needs. Elephant Stone's sitar-drenched take on The Beatles' 'Christmas Time (Is Here Again)' and The Fuzztones' overdriven stomp through The Sonics' 'Santa Claus' are the peaks, while Sons Of Hippies find a festive theme within The Zombies' 'Time Of The Season'. Sleepy Sun, Psychic Ills and Dead Meadow also get on board for a wayward sleigh ride through carols, classics and originals. Bizarre archive curios include a twanging 'Jingle Bells' instrumental by cult South Korean psych band He 5 and vintage frivolity from US voiceover artist Len Maxwell's nonsensical 1964 album 'A Merry Monster Christmas'. It finishes on a true high, with a drawl through 'White Christmas' from Santa's favourite elf, Iggy Pop. ■ STUART HUGGETT



7

THE DETAILS

► **RELEASE DATE** Out now ► **LABEL** Cleopatra ► **PRODUCERS** All self-produced ► **LENGTH** 55:29 ► **TRACKLISTING** ►1. Intro – Christmas Monster Party ►2. Christmas Time (Is Here Again) – Elephant Stone ►3. It's Christmas Day – The Cosmonauts ►4. Silent Night – Quintron & Miss Pussycat ►5. Jul Song – Dark Horses ►6. What Child Is This? – Sleepy Sun ►7. No More Christmas Blues – The Vacant Lots ►8. Time Of The Season – Sons Of Hippies ►9. Santa Claus – The Fuzztones ►10. Christmas Tears – Eli Cook ►11. Little Drummer Boy – The Movements ►12. Jingle Bell Rock – Quintron & Miss Pussycat ►13. Frosty The Snowman – The Candy Store ►14. Run Rudolph Run – Psychic Ills ►15. Mele Kalikimaka – Dead Meadow ►16. Jingle Bells – He 5 ►17. White Christmas (Guitar Stooge Version) – Iggy Pop ► **BEST TRACK** White Christmas (Guitar Stooge Version) – Iggy Pop

NME
GIG
OF THE WEEK

Loom

The Riverside

Sheffield

Dec 8



72



An aggressive run through their
recent EP 'Lice', plus mistletoe
abuse and stage tumbles

Halfway through Loom's set, singer Tarik Badwan cranes his neck and manoeuvres a bundle of mistletoe dangling from the ceiling into his mouth. He has little regard for the correct use of the poisonous plant at this time of year. He spits it back out before snarling his way through 'Acid King City' and tumbling from the stage with all the grace of a drunken gymnast looking for a fight. The mistletoe still swings above the stage, at one point getting tangled in Matt Marsh's guitar. The band reach an aggressive peak on 'Lice', a melding of 'Bleach'-era Nirvana and the swampy blues of The Gun Club, the band who adorn Badwan's T-shirt tonight. Crashing to a finale with 'Bleed On Me,' they leave without ceremony, caring even less for goodbyes than they do for festive traditions. ■ HAYLEY AVRON

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TOM MARTIN

Eagulls

The Moon Club, Cardiff
Friday, December 6

DIY punks from Leeds preview their debut album with a set that's short, loud and great

Eagulls' self-titled debut album, recorded nearly a year ago, will finally be released in March 2014. Conceivably, it could be the Leeds' DIY punk champions' springboard to wider recognition – it's certainly good enough. The scattered tendrils of the quintet's sound have coalesced into a powerful and focused riff on post-punk, gothic rock and '80s American hardcore. It begins with 'Nerve Endings', as does their first headline gig in Cardiff. Eagulls are big fans of cult Portland band Wipers (whose 'Mystery' they've covered in the past), and this driving paean to anxiety evokes their glorious, paranoid clang. Members of Autobahn, fellow dark-rock newcomers from Leeds who've joined the headliners on this two-date micro-tour, loyally take up their position at the very front of the crowd.

To begin with it feels like there's a cloak of gloom around the band, which makes it difficult to gauge the audience's level of enjoyment. But this soon dissipates, with the help of hefty volume. 'Coffin' is a flagship

Eagulls number of sorts – it was the lead song on their self-titled 2012 EP – and ignites a moshpit. Vocalist George Mitchell, meanwhile, is resplendent in a black polo neck. A rakish frontman, charismatic without even seeming to try, he says very little between songs, and there's so much reverb fizzing from his mic you can't make

it out anyway. Liam Matthews (guitar), Mark Goldsworthy (guitar), Tom Kelly (bass) and Henry Ruddell (drums) crash from one song into another with the absolute minimum of time wasted.

Songs like 'Yellow Eyes' are crammed full of phasing effects and chorus pedal overload, and the band crank their amps deep into the red – just about everyone *NME* talks to afterwards is surprised by quite how loud this lot are. They pull off the trick of making themselves sound like a Big Rock Band, even though they're not – their origins and ethics are firmly rooted in the Leeds underground, and tonight they're playing to 60 people in a dark club in Cardiff. 'Hollow Visions' walks to the beat of a military drum, conjuring the kind of stone-faced early-'80s vibe that Savages fans would find thrilling. 'Possessed', their most bombastic creation to date, comes with the panda-eyed swagger of The Cure at their finest, and it closes a set of terrific, ear-ringing punk rock that's barely half an hour long and all the better for it.

With stoic efficiency, Eagulls pack all their equipment away as soon as they finish their set. On to the next one.

■ NOEL GARDNER

THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD



Emma, Bristol, 26
"It was fucking amazing and made my ears bleed. But in a good way."



Max, 27, South Africa
"They seemed like uptight office workers from the 1980s and had a lot of chorus guitar effects."



Sophie, 27, Cardiff
"The frontman was very commanding and they had a great new wave vibe."

8

MORE GIGS

Braids

The Deaf Institute, Manchester

Wednesday, December 4
They've downed their keyboards and guitars in favour of hushed electronics and drum pad patterns, but the material aired tonight from Braids' beautiful second album 'Flourish // Perish' confirms that their best assets are still their natural ones. Raphaëlle Standell-Preston manipulates her own vocals using electronics, organising them alongside the breathy sampled sounds of 'Amends', but the spine only truly tingles when she lets them soar free on an untitled new track. Likewise, it's 'Together' that fully ignites a delicate set when Austin Tufts pounds his full drum kit. The new direction promises much, but it needs balance. ■

SIMON JAY CATLING

7

Wild Beasts

O2 Academy 2, Oxford

Thursday, November 28
"We've been in a room together for a long time," says singer Hayden Thorpe. "There's only so much of three guys you can take," adds bassist Tom Fleming. "Your mother will tell you that." After months making their fourth album, Wild Beasts are rejuvenated: as boisterous as they were before heartache took hold on 2011's 'Smother', with a galvanised synth grind evident in the new songs they play. The baroque 'Wanderlust' explores uninhibited love, 'Sweet Spot' pleads for orgasmic release, 'Pregnant Pause' falls over simple piano and a sonar blip and 'A Dog's Life' is majestic and grandiose. Wild Beasts are chasing the magic within perfect moments of lust and romance.

■ LAURA SNAPES

9



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4 BRISTOL THE FLEECE

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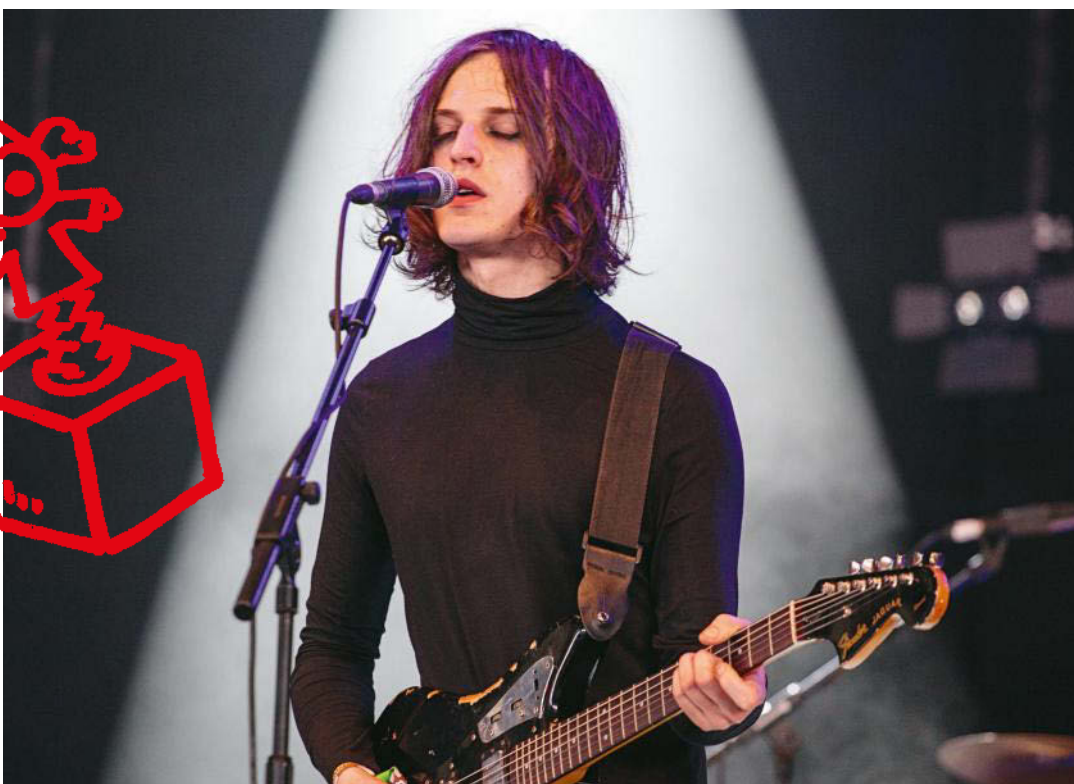
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NME Guide

▶ GOING OUT. STAYING IN. MISSING NOTHING ■ EDITED BY RHIAN DALY



Cut Copy

The Australian group formed by DJ Dan Whitford alongside Tom Hoey, Mitchell Scott and Ben Browning will show off their fourth album 'Free Your Mind' around the world next year. The UK will be treated to their vibrant electro at four dates in April.

► **DATES** Glasgow O2 ABC (April 12, 2014), Manchester The Ritz (15), London The Forum (16, 17)

► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC

► **PRICE** Glasgow £13; Manchester £13.50; London £17.50

► **ON SALE** now

► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £1.35–£1.75 booking fee; Glasgow from cutcopy.net with £1.51 booking fee

Reading & Leeds Festivals

The festivals have announced the first bands who'll be playing Richfield Avenue (Reading) and Bramham Park (Leeds) in 2014. Pop-punk stalwarts Blink-182 will play their only UK shows of the year when they headline the Main Stage, and Jake Bugg, Disclosure and the returning Metronomy have also been confirmed for the August bank holiday weekend.

► **DATES** Reading Richfield Avenue, Leeds Bramham Park (August 22–24, 2014)

► **PRICE** £202.50

► **ON SALE** now

► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £8 booking fee

PUP

The Canadian punks' heavy tunes caused a stir at New York's CMJ festival. They'll make their way to the UK for the first time next year to preview tracks from their self-titled debut album that's due for release next spring.

BOOKING NOW

The hottest new tickets on sale this week

Toy

The London psych group take their second album 'Join The Dots' on the road next spring, culminating in their biggest UK show at Shepherd's Bush Empire.

Are you enjoying playing songs from the new record?

Dominic O'Dair, guitarist: "Most definitely. We've been playing as many songs as possible off 'Join The Dots'. Once you record a song it starts to develop, and on tour they take on a new lease of life. Anything can happen, really. Sonically, inevitably, they always sound a bit wilder and vicious."

Which new tracks are your favourites to perform?

"'Fall Out Of Love', because the second half of the song is really open and it feels kind of expressive. 'Join The Dots' is really fun to play live, and we've been doing that every night on this tour. There are a few we haven't played yet, like 'Frozen Atmosphere' and 'Left To Wander'. They'll be nice to play just for little moments of respite."

How are you feeling about your Shepherd's Bush Empire show?

"Pure excitement. We played with British Sea Power there and they sounded amazing. It's going to be an important gig for us. It just feels lovely that people would come and see us there."

► THE DETAILS

► **DATES** Brighton The Old Market (February 18, 2014), Bristol Thekla (19), Southampton Talking Heads (20), Birmingham The Rainbow (21), Nottingham Bodega (22), Leeds Cockpit (23), Manchester Gorilla (24), Newcastle Cluny (26), Glasgow King Tut's Wah Wah Hut (27), Liverpool East Village Arts Centre (28), Norwich Studio (March 1), London O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire (April 26)

► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC

► **PRICE** £10; London £12.50

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► **FROM** NME.com/tickets with £1–£2.90 booking fee



► **DATES** London The Miller (February 5, 2014), Bristol Exchange Basement (6), Manchester Soup Kitchen (7), Edinburgh Electric Circus (8), Birmingham The Flapper (9), Nottingham Bodega Social (10), Cambridge Portland Arms (11), Southampton Joiners (12)
 ► **SUPPORT ACTS** Slaves (all dates except London and Bristol), more TBC
 ► **PRICE** £7; London £9.60; Birmingham £5; Southampton £6
 ► **ON SALE** now
 ► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with 75p-£1 booking fee; Bristol from exchangebristol.com with £1 booking fee; Cambridge from wegottickets.com with 70p booking fee; Birmingham from birminghampromoters.com with 50p booking fee; Southampton from joinerslive.co.uk with 60p booking fee

Circa Waves

Liverpudlian quartet Circa Waves are one of the UK's most promising new bands, and will head out on their second ever headline tour in February to spread the word about their frenetic indie.
 ► **DATES** Dunfermline PJ Molloy's (February 11, 2014), Aberdeen Tunnels (12), Glasgow King Tut's Wah Wah Hut (13), Newcastle Cluny (19), Sheffield Leadmill (20), Manchester Soup Kitchen (21), Nottingham Bodega (23), London Sebright Arms (24)
 ► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
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 ► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £1 booking fee; Dunfermline from ticketweb.co.uk with 95p booking fee; Glasgow and Aberdeen from ticketmaster.co.uk with £2 booking fee



Circa Waves head out on tour in February

Slaves

Kent duo Isaac Holman and Laurie Vincent headline two shows in St Albans and London. Expect howling punk and surreal tales.

► **DATES** St Albans The Horn (February 5, 2014), London The Black Heart (6)
 ► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
 ► **PRICE** St Albans £5; London £6.60
 ► **ON SALE** now
 ► **FROM** NME.com/tickets with £1 booking fee; St Albans from ticketweb.co.uk with 95p booking fee

Planningtorock

On second album 'All Love's Legal', Jam Rostron tackles gender inequality and sexual identity on a series of experimental dance collages. She'll recreate the record next year in Glasgow, Leeds and London.

► **DATES** Glasgow Broadcast (February 14, 2014), Leeds Belgrave Music Hall (15), London Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen (18)
 ► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
 ► **PRICE** Glasgow £7; Leeds £10; London £10.50
 ► **ON SALE** now
 ► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £1-£2.65 booking fee; Glasgow from ticketweb.co.uk with £1 booking fee

Neil Young & Crazy Horse

Neil Young was due to tour the world this year, but scrapped the planned dates when Crazy Horse guitarist Frank 'Poncho' Sampedro fractured his hand. "My gut tells me this is really the last tour," Sampedro told *Rolling Stone* before the accident. So this date could be one of their final UK shows.
 ► **DATES** London Hyde Park (July 12, 2014)

► **SUPPORT ACTS** The National, Phosphorescent, Flyte, Caitlin Rose, Tom Odell and more TBC
 ► **PRICE** £66.60
 ► **ON SALE** now
 ► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £7.32 booking fee

Angel Olsen

Missouri singer-songwriter Angel returns in February with her second album 'Burn Your Fire For No Witness', which was written in a year of "heartbreak, travel and transformation". She'll come to the UK for two dates, after its release.
 ► **DATES** Manchester Soup Kitchen (March 23, 2014), London Dingwalls (25)
 ► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
 ► **PRICE** Manchester £8; London £12.50
 ► **ON SALE** now
 ► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with 80p-£1.25 booking fee

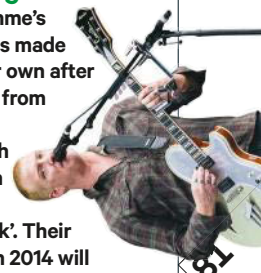
FESTIVAL NEWS

Isle Of Wight

Biffy Clyro are among the first acts to be announced for 2014's Isle Of Wight Festival. After conquering Reading and Leeds this year, the Scottish trio will head to Newport's Seaclose Park to headline the main stage on June 13. Tickets are on sale now from ticketmaster.co.uk at £170 for weekend passes and £70 for day passes.

Queens Of The Stone Age

Josh Homme's rock titans made 2013 their own after returning from a six-year break with the album '...Like Clockwork'. Their assault on 2014 will include headlining Olso festival Øya on the weekend of August 5-9. Tickets are £235 for a five-day pass or £79 for a day, from billettsservice.no



TOUR NEWS

Haim

Danielle, Este and Alana will return to arenas next year when they join Kings Of Leon at Milton Keynes Bowl on June 22. Tickets are on sale for £55 from seetickets.com



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GOING OUT

Everything worth starting the year with a hangover for

Disclosure

After a manically busy 2013, Guy and Howard Lawrence could easily have taken the biggest party night of the year off for a well-deserved rest. Instead of curling up in front of the TV and watching Jools' *Hootenanny* in their slippers, though, the brothers will help three cities see in 2014 with a soundtrack of fine house tracks from debut album 'Settle'.

► **DATES** Sheffield O2 Academy, Leeds Canal Mills, Birmingham Gatecrasher (all December 31)
► **TICKETS** Sheffield £25 from ticketweb.co.uk with £3.12 booking fee; Leeds £25 from ticketarena.co.uk with £3 booking fee; Birmingham £42.50 from gatecrasher.nutickets.com with £4 booking fee

Club NME NYE Ball

Club NME returns for its annual end-of-year party, and two of the most exciting new bands in the country

will perform. Brummie quartet Superfood bring the grungy Britpop of recent single 'Bubbles' to the opening slot while hotly tipped Camden locals

Wolf Alice return to cap off a triumphant year.

► **DATES** London KOKO (December 31)
► **TICKETS** £15 from ticketweb.co.uk with £1.87 booking fee

Baby Strange

After releasing their first two singles 'Pure Evil' and 'Friend' and supporting Swim Deep and Palma Violets this year, Baby Strange return to Glasgow to play a special Hogmanay party. The Vaccines' DJ set will keep it going until the early hours.

► **DATES** Glasgow O2 ABC (December 31)
► **TICKETS** £15 from ticketweb.co.uk with £1.87 booking fee

Troumaca

"2013 turned out to be a sun-kissed year for us. We want to dip our toes

in it one last time with all our friends and lovers." So said Troumaca as they announced this intimate party to bring the last 12 months to a fitting end, performing tracks from debut album 'The Grace'.

► **DATES** Birmingham Old Crown (December 31)
► **TICKETS** £10 from ticketsellers.co.uk with £1 booking fee

Annie Mac Presents

The Radio 1 DJ takes her club night to the Warehouse Project. With four rooms of music featuring the likes of Totally Enormous Extinct Dinosaurs, drum'n'bass stalwart Andy C, rising Bedford-born producer Lil Silva and homegrown garage star Redlight, plus a set from Annie Mac herself, it'll be a massive night.

DATES Manchester Warehouse Project (December 31)
TICKETS £49.50 from whpboxoffice2013.eventgenius.co.uk with £7.43 booking fee

Joy Orbison

Dance producer Peter O'Grady tops an impressive bill in Nottingham, promising a mix of house, dubstep and garage.

► **DATES** Nottingham Stealth (December 31)
► **TICKETS** £40 from alt-tickets.co.uk with £4 booking fee

Simian Mobile Disco

Jas Shaw and James Ford are masters of crafting the ultimate party set, and cap off a busy year spent on the road with one more blowout. They'll DJ in

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Windows Phone

Baby Strange

Belfast on New Year's Eve to celebrate the start of 2014 in style.

► **DATES** Belfast Queen's University (December 31)

► **TICKETS** £22.50 from ticketmaster.co.uk with £2.75 booking fee

Charlie Boyer & The Voyeurs

The band bring debut album 'Clarietta' to the intimate surroundings of the Old Blue Last, with Kent duo Slaves in support. Is Tropical, O Children and Rhythm Connection's Dan Beaumont and Nadia Ksaiba will be among those on the decks after midnight.

► **DATES** London Old Blue Last (December 31)

► **TICKETS** £15 from billetto.co.uk with booking fee TBC

The Horrors

Before they drop their as yet untitled fourth album next year, The Horrors head up to Liverpool for an NYE DJ set. Expect a mix of psych, garage rock and freakbeat.

► **DATES** Liverpool The Shipping Forecast (December 31)

► **TICKETS** £10 from ticketarena.co.uk with £1.20 booking fee

Bondax

Teenage dance duo Adam Kaye and George Townsend ring in the new year with smooth, R&B-flecked house tracks like 2013's 'Giving It All'.

► **DATES** Bristol Motion (December 31)

► **TICKETS** £30 from eventbrite.co.uk with £4.10 booking fee



Haim play Jools' Annual Hootenanny on BBC Two, December 31

STAYING IN

The best music on TV, radio and online this week

Haim

Jools' Annual Hootenanny 2013/14

In 2013 the LA sisters have been on the *NME* cover twice, topped the charts with their debut album 'Days Are Gone' and played with Primal Scream at Glastonbury. On New Year's Eve they'll celebrate their year by playing tracks from that record. The Kinks' Ray Davies will also be there to welcome in the New Year.

► **WATCH** BBC Two, 11.30pm, Dec 31

Blondie

Talks Music

Hear Debbie Harry and Chris Stein tell the stories behind seminal New York no wave hits such as 'Call Me', 'Hanging On The Telephone' and 'Heart Of Glass'.

► **WATCH** Sky Arts, 9pm, Dec 23

The Clash

This Is Radio Clash

In this two-hour special on the London firebrands, bassist Paul Simonon and guitarist Mick Jones reunite

to play some tunes and reminisce about their time as sloganeering punk pioneers.

► **LISTEN** BBC 6Music, 1pm, Dec 26

Jarvis Cocker

Sunday Service

In his first of two shows over the Christmas holidays, the Pulp frontman reveals what happened when he joined Brian Eno's weekly a capella session. His second programme marks the end of his stint in the 6Music studio as he prepares to take a sabbatical in

2014. He'll be looking back over his favourite moments from the show, from meeting David Attenborough to being joined by author Nick Hornby.

► **LISTEN** BBC 6Music, 4pm, Dec 22 and 29

Sex Pistols

Never The Mind The Baubles: Xmas '77 With The Sex Pistols

Directed by Julien Temple, this film looks back at Christmas 1977 using unseen footage of the Sex Pistols and interviews and archive clips from the band's last UK concert with Sid Vicious.

► **WATCH** BBC Four, 10pm, Dec 26

Top Of The Pops

BBC One

TOTP returns for two special episodes, celebrating some of the biggest artists of the year. Chase & Status and Rudimental feature on Christmas Day, and Tinie Tempah and London Grammar join in the fun on New Year's Eve.

► **WATCH** BBC One, 2pm, Dec 25; 5.30pm, Dec 31

See Tinie Tempah on Top Of The Pops, December 31

THINGS WE'D LIKE FOR CHRISTMAS

This week's objects of desire



NECKLACE

Peace

Cheap high street jewellery be gone! The

Birmingham band have made an official necklace.

► **BUY** £10, peace.officialmerchshop.com

JUMPER

Death From Above 1979

Wrap up with a jumper adorned with the noise-rock duo's logo.

► **BUY** \$44.99, kt8merch.com



PILLOW

Wu-Tang Clan

Get good and comfy for those long hours of Christmas TV with this plush 20th anniversary pillow.

► **BUY** \$55, shop.wutangclan.com



JUMPER

Metallica have issued two Christmas knits. Metal has never been so festive.

► **BUY** \$74.99, metallica.com

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CLUES ACROSS

1+4A Imagine Dragons or dream of reindeer... (5-7)
8 ...Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer; had a version everyone knows... (8)
12+102A ...Are we moved by his 'Cupid'?... (3-5)
16 ...'Or are we Dancer'? (7)
17 Single connection between Wild Beasts and Fleetwood Mac (9)
18 Learn any old version of an early Pink Floyd number (6-5)
19 The playthings of Primal Scream (5)
20+91D Parquet Courts using gleaming precious material (5-2-4)
21+92A Their albums include 'Porcupine' and 'The Fountain' (4-3-3-8)
22 Ed Harcourt hadn't met these people who appeared on his album (9)
23 Mobiles number from Germany going over their heads (8-2-6)
26+66D She was related, but not to Findlay (4-6)
28+75D Somehow I'm last, Percy, to get Hookworms' album (5-6)
32 A bit of an angry answer from The Cribbs (4)
34 Merseybeat group whose hits included 'Needles And Pins' (9)
35 King Krule makes it doubly simple for himself (4-4)
37 Continually play a Bink-102 number (6)
39 Flat charge includes a bit of Disclosure (5)
42 Gets in a small mention of an early Wild Beasts EP (3-3)
45+47A The faint sound of Tinie Tempah (4-3)
48 (See 87 down)
49 Slower turn to the left with Wolf Alice's vocalist (7)
51 'A Snowflake Fell (And It Felt Like A _____)', mini album from Glasvegas (4)
52 (See 25 down)
55 Speaks of completing Young Knives album '_____ Of Animals And Men' (6)
56 Punk/reggae band whose singles included 'Babylon's

Burning' and 'Staring At The Rude Boys' (4)
59 (See 41 down)
60+8D Hot club act torn apart performing a Lemonheads album (3-6-5)
61 (See 58 down)
62 "For knowing that someone in this life, loves with a passion called _____", from The Jam's 'Start!' (4)
64 White Lies followed the usual procedure for this album (6)
65 NME's sad hatchet job of a Muse performance (7)
67 (See 67 down)
69 Braxton or Basil (4)
70 Tracy Bonham EP that created a buzz (3)
72 "Liars, fakes and _____ of moving pictures/What's the difference?" The Cribbs (5)
74 Figures it's either an album by Cat Stevens or single by Soft Cell (7)
76+78A Sung hit to make a disturbance with Metronomy (6-3)
80 'Get It On' with a glam rock group (1-3)
81 (See 25 down)
83 So hear somehow of an album by folk singer June Tabor (6)
85 'Stan Bowles' and 38 down, but it's not those people (6)
87+11D Colourful writing on a Massive scale (4-5)
89 (See 86 down)
92 (See 21 across)
94+95A Blue Nile's Paul Buchanan solo outing was at some point above ground level (3-3)
97 Eurodance act whose Turbo B supplied 'The Power' (4)
98 Title of song double A-sided with Blur's first single or Tom Odell's latest (1-4)
102 (See 12 across)
103 'The _____ Height', Biffy Clyro single or 'An _____ For Living', Joy Division EP (5)
104 Roots Manuva act was not hot enough (3-4)
105 A bit of dismay, obviously, with Dr Feelgood guitarist (4)

106 "And school's out early and soon we'll be learning/ And the lesson today is how to _____", from The Boomtown Rats'
107 Their line-up has included Gram Parsons and David Crosby (5)
108 Fleetwood Mac song from 1982's 'Mirage' (5)
109 (See 12 down)
110 "Temperature's rising, fever is high/Can't see no future, can't see no _____", from John Lennon's 'Cold Turkey' (3)
111 (See 70 down)

CLUES DOWN

1 Talking Heads album issued without a cover (5)
2 "Outside, inside, this is the moon without a tide", 2006 (4-4)
3 One star cavorting around to a Teardrop Explodes number (7)
4 Glaswegian alt.rock band whose 'Son Of A Gun' was covered by Nirvana (9)
5 Rick Rubin's studio where Jake Bugg recorded (7-2)
6 William _____ artist and producer who goes around the world (5)
7 Strangely meets Reef while doing a Kinks number (3-2-4)
8 (See 60 across)
9 Melissa Etheridge in personal agreement on her album (3-1-2)
10 "Footsteps on the dance floor remind me baby of you/ _____ in my eyes, next time I'll be true", 1988 (9)
11 (See 87 across)
12+109A Savages tell us to shut up during their performance (7-8)
13 A fruitful month for singer with Chvrches? (8)
14 Alt-rock band fronted by Mike Peters (5)
15 Worsens eventually with the inclusion of a Lightning Seeds number (5)
23 A vain hope between two banks for Bill Callahan's album (5-5)
24 Argues over petty matters

with guitarist from The House Of Love (7)
25+52A+81A "Leonard Bernstein, Leonid Brezhnev, Lenny Bruce and Lester Bangs", 1987 and 1991 (3-3-3-2-3-5-2-2-4-2)
27 Gary Stringer's band that hailed from Glastonbury (4)
29 Futureheads number recorded during a spare afternoon (4)
30 Beach Boys album recorded partly at 5 down? (1-1)
31 Heavenly label band fronted by James Bagshaw (7)
33 Who are of the age group I belong to (2-10)
36 Ramones hunt around for a Neil Young song (8-3)
38 "Got my friend called _____, he's been my friend since we were young", by 85 across (6)
40 Radiohead express some sympathy for playing this to us (5-5)
41+59A Not heard hype so awful about one of Wild Beasts (6-6)
42+43D Eminem has a similarity to a donkey? (3-4-4)
44 "Such a pretty house and such a pretty garden/No alarms and _____", 1998 (2-9)
46 "There is no wrong, there is no right, the circle only has one _____", Travis (4)
50 "In a cafe or sometimes in a crowded _____, I've been near you but you've never noticed me", from Stevie Wonder's 'My Cherie Amour' (6)
53 Their albums include 'A Nod Is As Good As A Wink...To A Blind Horse' (5)
54 Alice In Chains indicate a willingness to perform (5)
57 At rest, perhaps, with a Sleigh Bells album (6)
58+61A "So recognise your age, it's a _____/ Turn another page on the _____", The Sweet (7-7)
63 Skunk Anansie guitarist coming from 53 down (3)

66 (See 26 across)
67+67A Album with tracks 'Golden Years' and 'TVC 15' (7-2-7)
68 Hear cute arrangement by electronic duo (8)
70+111A "How many roads must a man walk down before you call him a man", 1963 (7-2-3-4)
71 Destiny's Child hit sung with feeling (7)
73 A bit of extra knowledge needed to name '70s hitmaking record label (3)
75 (See 28 across)
77 Saw a band whose drill was to hammer out metal music (4)
79 Love treats to be organised by The Mars Volta (10)
82 The Ting Tings will be on the move after this number (2-4)
84 The Smashing Pumpkins with music from the islands of the tropical Pacific (7)
86+89A "Trying to taste the difference between a lemon and a lime", XTC (6-7-8)
87+48A '70s teenybop group fronted by Leslie McKeown (3-4-7)
88 Depeche Mode single that's no good to anybody (7)
90 One of The Woodentops getting a little sweet (4)
91 (See 20 across)
93 "And the stains coming from my _____ tell me 'go back home'", from The White Stripes' 'Seven Nation Army' (5)
96 Aztec Camera's singer-songwriter _____ Frame (5)
98 Plan B's soundtrack album '____ Manors' (3)
99 Vocalist on The Velvet Underground's first album (4)
100 Disconnected wire of The Grateful Dead (4)
101 Devour in a wild way the album by Tyler, The Creator (4)
102 "Gonna sing you an old country song from the heart so I can _____ your name", Jake Bugg (3)
105 Danish art-rockers have got in somewhere (3)

NOVEMBER 16 ANSWERS

ACROSS

1 Situation Comedy, 9 Melvins, 10 History, 12 De Stijl, 14 Rubbish, 17 Young Love, 19 MCA, 21 Tribute, 25+3D Waiting For An Alibi, 26 Ice, 27 Alisa, 29 War, 31 N-R-G, 32 Gott, 33+34A His/N'Hers, 35+13D Ten Ten

DOWN

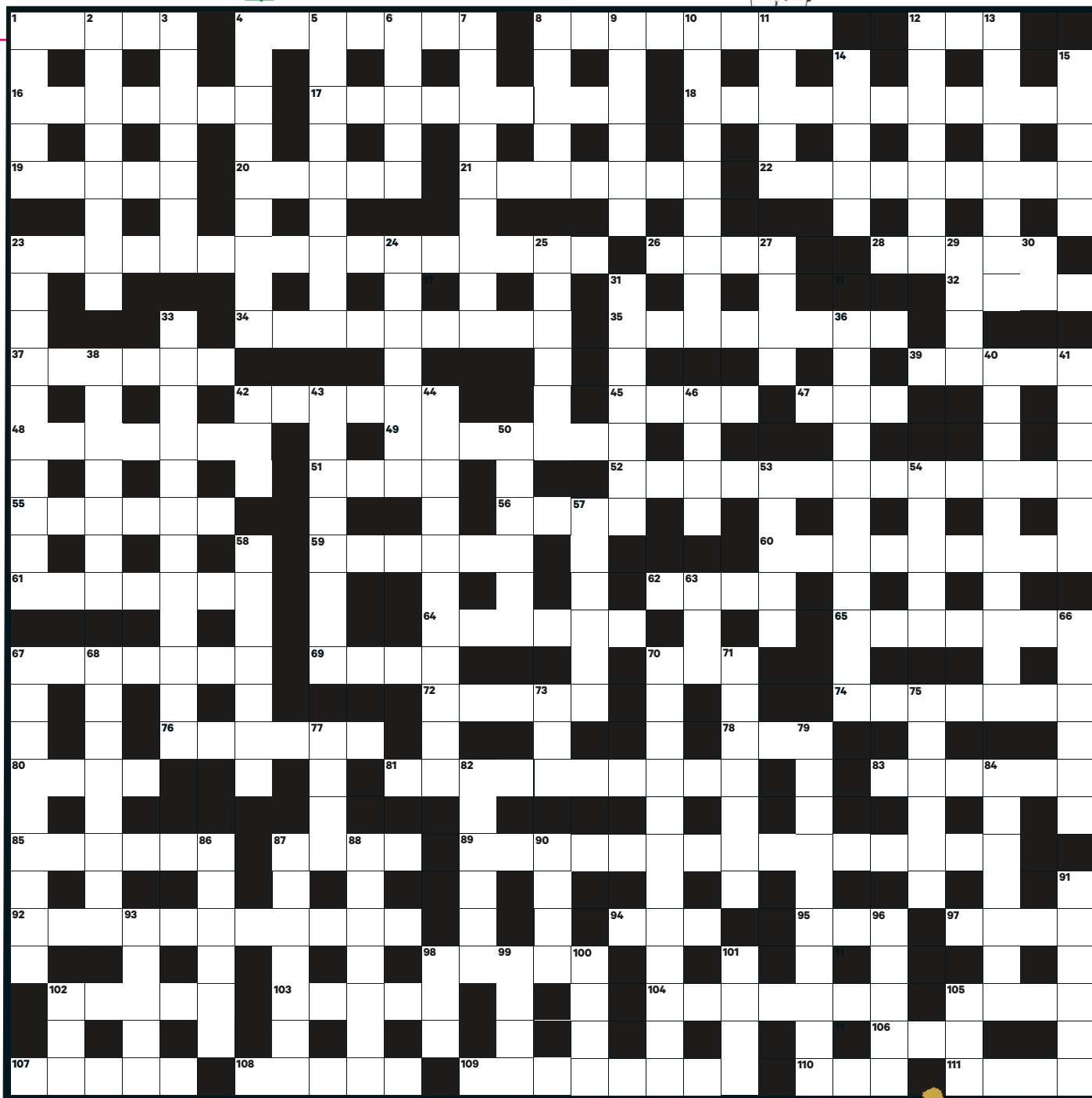
1 Someday, 2+6D Tales Of Us, 4 It's All Over Now, 5 Nowhere, 7 Echo, 8 Yeh Yeh, 11 TRB, 15 Blueprint, 16 Soca, 18 Oar, 19+24A Midnight Special, 20 Algiers, 22 Iha, 23 Ultra, 24 Saffron, 25 Welch, 28 Sir, 30 Age



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Compiled by
TREVOR HUNGERFORD



85

NME QUIZ OF THE YEAR ANSWERS

A. QUOTES 1. Harry Styles won Villain Of The Year at the NME Awards 2. Kanye West 3. Kevin Shields 4. Disclosure 5. Paul McCartney 6. MIA 7. Lou Reed 8. Peter Dinklage 9. Liam Gallagher 10. Lily Allen 11. Everything Everywhere 12. 22 3. B 4. Reality; in 2003 5. Festival #6 6. 20th 7. Mogwai 8. Isle Of Wight 9. End Of The Road 10. Eton John 11. D. TOURS
Hawley 10. Justin Timberlake 11. Festivals 1. His mum 2. 60 3. Biffy Clyro 4. Lattitude 5. Festival #6 6. 20th 7. Mogwai 8. Isle Of Wight 9. End Of The Road 10. Eton John 11. D. TOURS
1. Television 2. Dutch Uncles 3. Sweetie 4. Elastic 5. Arcade Fire 6. Peace 7. Bunnies 8. Kelly Clarkson 9. MGMT 10. Mumford & Sons 11. Kanye West
12. Disclosure 13. Settle 14. Scavage 15. You're Nothing 16. Palma Violets 17. 180 18. Peace 19. In Love 20. Janelle Monae 21. The Electric Lady 22. Yeah Yeah Yeahs 23. Mosquito 24. Parquet
Courts 25. Light Up Gold 26. Primal Scream 27. More Light 28. F. Collaborations 29. Brendan Benson 30. Bikini Kill 31. Fairweather Friends 32. Jagwar MAs Jono Ma 33. Bernard Butler 34.
Bill Ryder-Jones 35. Paul Weller 36. Kendrick Lamar 37. Lose Yourself To Dance 38. Pulp's Steve Mackey 39. Deaths 1. Storm Thorgerson 2. The Yellow Dogs 3. Philip Chevron
4. Wayne Mills 5. Jon Brookes 6. Devo 7. Bass 8. Ray Manzarek 9. Richie Havens 10. Tai chi 11. H. GUESS WHO 12. Ezra Koenig 13. Brudnell Social Club 14. Yeah Yeah Yeahs 15. The Crips
16. Thom Yorke 17. Garry Barlow 18. Billie Joe Armstrong 19. Arcade Fire 20. Dave Grohl 21. Albert Hammond Jr 22. I. CONTROVERSIES 1. An audience member performed oral sex on him
2. 594 3. James Blunt 4. A dog 5. Lily Allen 6. They got thrown out of a strip club 7. George Watsky 8. Pixies 9. Morrissey 10. Haim 11. J. LYRICS 1. Duff Punk 2. Suede 3. 'It
Starts And Ends With You' 4. Haim 5. Franz Ferdinand 6. Right Action 7. Kanye West 8. Bound 2 9. Queens Of The Stone Age 10. 'My God Is The



86



Cats, catalogues and
daft catchphrases: it's
Christmas chez Vic and Bob

NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS | 21/28 DECEMBER 2013





FROM
THE
VAULTS

Yule wouldn't let it lie!

NME, 22/29 December 1990

With their wildly surreal variety show spoof *Vic Reeves' Big Night Out* having gone from a small comedy club to a slot on Channel 4, Reeves and Bob Mortimer invited NME's Andrew Collins round to their showbiz pad for a festive feast. Brown ale, turkey, human hair and bowls of ice were all on the menu...



A way in a manger/No crib for a bed/The little lord Jesus/Lays down his sweet head." Except he doesn't! Because they wouldn't let him lie! They would not let the little Lord Jesus lie!

Not in the weird and sort of bendy world of Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer; the parallel prism where 'ye' merry gentlemen get no rest whatsoever, where the herald angels make festive noise-stroke-gestures (hark!) and the real wise men are, at any moment, likely to cry "Look at the quality of that myrrh". Yes. It's Christmas over at Vic and Bob's place.

Chestnuts are roasting on an open fire, Santa's on his way, he's loaded lots of pastes and residues on his sleigh, and the scene is set for a Pig Right Out sesh, with brown ale, parsnips,

turkey, a sizeable sausage, Big Night sprouts, bowls of ice ("for afters") and that all-important plate of hair ("There's always space for some hair at any time of year"). It's been a fantastic year for Reeves And Mortimer Elite Products – a spectacular first TV series, an NME cover, a laff-riot UK tour, cream-of-the-crop guest

appearances, pipped to the post for Best Newcomers in LWT's first annual Comedy Awards by Pauline Quirke (well done, Pauline, well done). But today it's time for Britain's top fairy-light entertainers to catch a quick and well-earned breath, far away from the

prying tabloids and the damp-gusseted fans. "Shall I serve up and be a gentleman?" asks Vic, at the head of the table, dressed in plus-party-fours and fetching 'kerchief.

"Yes. Be a decent man," responds sidekick Bob, also at the head of the table, very large head forcibly persuaded into a top party

**"Nuts! They
can live up a
Christmas party"
Vic Reeves**



The sprouts, hair
and sausage
take their toll



FROM
THE
VAULTS

"It's a smart bucket!" Bob assures me. "A full metal bucket. I got him a canister, signed by Chelsea right-winger Pat Nevin."

Vic: "Cos I like air."

Anything nice in your stockings?

"My feet," quips Vic. He is not a funny man.

"You know those little bar-football players?" asks Bob. "I have the hair off of those. Tangerines. PIES!"

And what did you get for Les?

"A grape. I can see his hackles rising already."

As the pies and ice go down, Bob settles in for a quiet evening alone. He is, of the two, very much the recluse. Meanwhile, Vic girds his tweedy loins for a tip-top celebrity Christmas bash over at new pal Frank Carson's place.

Who else is on the guestlist, Vic?

"Hitler, Patrick Swayze, Raleigh, Cortés, Marco Polo... all the great explorers. Sir Clive Sinclair, but this time he's bringing some sea salt. Not a C5. Sea salt. Philip Harbin, he's coming up. We'll conjure up the first Neanderthal Man. A couple of old Tudor anglers..."

Sounds like fun. Vic's Pickwick 'Christmas Favourites' LP trundles round the Dansette as we take our leave ('O Comb All Ye Faithful', 'Good King Wenceslas', 'While Shepherds Watch Their Cheeky Little Fox' – all the hits). The food was good. The hair was good. The meat products were deep and crisp and evenly spread.

It's a shame The Man With The Stick couldn't join us for this unique, educational and, in a way, slightly sad feast, but he's lying low to avoid the Pole Tax.

Now there's a 'Funny Thing'. ■

hat for the merry occasion. Able assistant Les, as silent as "that" famous night, intervenes, and weighs into the festive bird with a keen knife, probably dreaming of a white-coated Christmas. Who knows?

"What do you reckon livens up a Christmas party?" asks Vic, with a knowing and almost rhetorical swagger, wiping the aptly named 'silly string' from his palm.

"A game of *Twister*," suggests Bob, coquettishly.

"What about nuts? They can liven up a Christmas party!"

"Not the walnut, mate."

"A sprig of parsley livens up anything!"

What does Christmas mean to you, I enquire, from a special vantage point under the table, next to Les and the cat's bowl.

"PIE!" exclaims Vic, raising his left arm in a Masonic kind of way.

"Yeah I like PIE!" echoes Bob, mimicking this odd arm-gesture.

"I like Don McLean and 'American PIE!' Vic furthers. "And Humble Pie!"

I ask Les to exclusively reveal his thoughts on Christmas, and he scrawls the following note: "I have no concept of Christmas at all. I don't actually know what this is. The cat knows more than me, but the cat's lost its tongue. It's just pretty colours really."

Here's a trick question: why do we celebrate Christmas on the 25th of December?

Bob: "Because there's always a local derby match on the 26th."

Have you heard of Jesus?

"Of course I have! Christmas was the day Jesus got his one breadth swimming certificate at Thornerby Baths."

Vic takes up the Nativity story: "He went into a palm tree on a donkey. Herod. Isn't that right? On the 25th, Moses was found in a basket with Herod. King Solomon came out of the mines and Buzz Aldrin was there, when the pyramids were built. People forget about the pyramids all too easily – and they forget about triangles in general. *Apart* from those triangles you get in Quality Street."

**"I got Vic a canister,
signed by Chelsea
winger Pat Nevin"
Bob Mortimer**

The meal is then rudely interrupted by the unplanned arrival of a terrible, terrible man in a brown mac and glasses – Mr Graham Lister.

"OH NOOOO!" Vic and Bob cry. Les

mis-serves a forkful of hair.

"Calm yourself, Reeves!" bellows our uninvited guest, "I know plenty of doctors and dentists who would be only too glad of my company on this very special day." His new routine, entitled 'Laughs With Brandy Butter', drives everyone from the kitchen. "You smug fops!" cries Lister, as he is professionally ejected from the premises.

Thankfully, in the spirit of peace and goodwill, I am assured that visiting carol singers receive no such short shrift at Chez Reeves.

"I give 'em money, but I put it on the end of a fish slice so I don't have to touch them."

"I run," counters Bob. "I run around the upstairs of the house – always ending up in the bathroom."

Good dinner otherwise though, gents?

"I'm completely assuaged!" Vic burps, politely.

A single ball of stuffing is proffered to Les, as we retire, discussing the pros and cons of Bernard Bresslaw's golf swing, to the drawing room for mince pies, gifts and a bowl of ice each. Vic has bought Bob a bucket for Christmas.



For Les (left)
Christmas is
"just pretty
colours"

DEREK RIDGERS

THIS WEEK IN 1995



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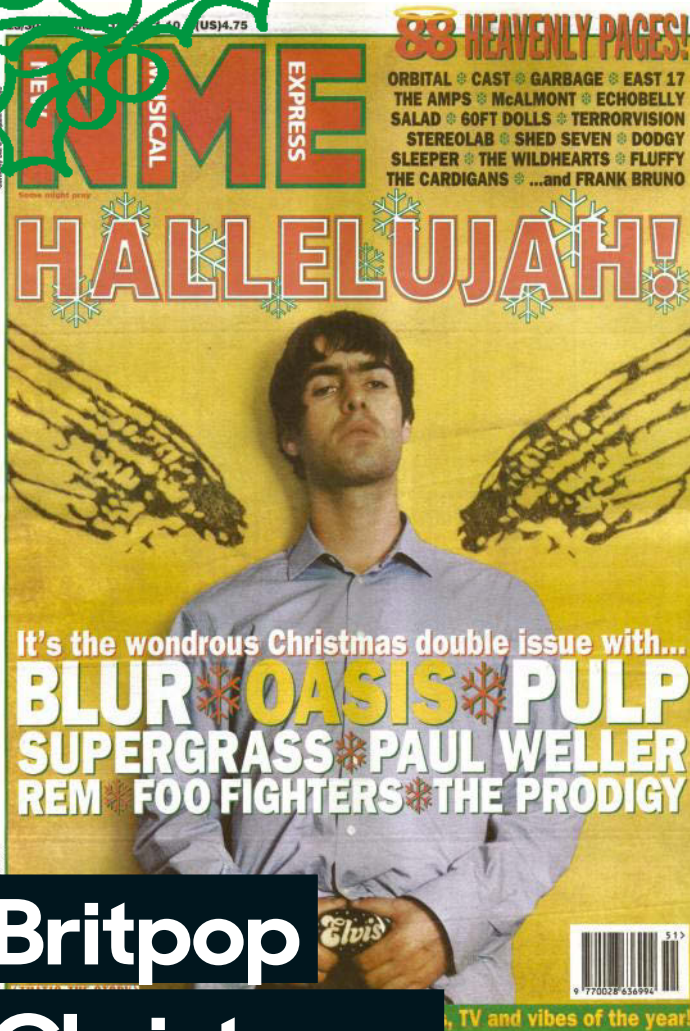
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Britpop Christmas

Damon and Liam are both on the NME cover – but not together. Alex James ponders life as a sex symbol

Readers can choose between two covers – angelic Damon and saintly Liam – and the issue is filled with stars like Brett Anderson, Jarvis Cocker and Shaun Ryder posing before an angel-wing backdrop. Meanwhile, Noel Gallagher honours his favourite acts, from The Beatles (obviously) to Pink Floyd (“I can play every song on ‘The Wall’”) and Portishead (“Joy Division for the ‘90s”).

Elsewhere, NME’s Johnny Cigarettes corners Blur to discuss turning down a Wembley Stadium gig, the death of Britpop (“Any band that’s still Britpop in a year is seriously fucked,” says Damon) and answer some near-the-knuckle questions. Do they like being sex

symbols? “Do sex symbols save whales?” Alex argues. “People like me are just whores really.” Do they get suggestive fanmail? “I have notes which say, ‘I’m a sexy 18-year-old and I want to fuck you, I live at ‘blah’, and it’s only two blocks away!’” Which member was most likely to wake up with a penis tattoo? “Alex,” says Damon, “and it would say ‘shitfaced again.’”

A BIT OF A BLUR

With an unlimited champagne budget, NME’s Sylvia Patterson hits the members’ bars and exclusive drinking establishments of Soho and Covent Garden on a mission to recreate an average night out for “the nation’s premier bon viveur” through blagging power alone. Dropping Alex James’ name and claiming to be Whigfield gets her nowhere fast, but she does manage to sneak into the Groucho for two minutes before being evicted.

MORAL PEOPLE

Pulp sit down for a festive game of *Consequences*, answering moral dilemmas including what they’d do if they a) got hit on by a friend’s date; b) woke up naked in a hotel hallway; or c) found themselves stuck in a copulating couple’s wardrobe. They explain they’d a) do them a favour by taking the date off their hands; b) hide in the bathroom; and c) write a song about it before the shagfest had finished.

ALBUM OF THE YEAR

 **Tricky - ‘Maxinquaye’ 9/10**
“Maxinquaye” is a benchmark album that reveals fresh layers of texture with each listen, that revels in an atmosphere of tension, paranoia and claustrophobia. Album of 1995.”

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

► Black Grape’s ‘Reverend Black Grape’ is declared Single Of The Year, narrowly pipping Supergrass’ ‘Alright’ and Pulp’s ‘Sorted For E’s & Wizz’. ‘Common People’ is number eight.

► Snoop Dogg’s murder trial enters its third week – he and his bodyguard are accused of shooting ex-gang member Philip Woldemarian. Tupac Shakur sits in on the court sessions in support of Snoop.

► The inaugural NME Pub Golf contest takes place in Camden. Tony Wright from Terrorvision triumphs over members of Dodgy, Shed Seven, Fluffy and 60ft Dolls.



DO MISTLETOE & WINE KILL BRAINCELLS? Vs THE FANS

WE FIND THE ROCK STAR, YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS



Kirsty MacColl and
Shane MacGowan



**Tony
Mortimer**

East 17 singer

1 East 17's 'Stay Another Day' was Christmas Number One in 1994. What was Number Two?

Julian Garrett, London, via email

"I was partying, how do I know? I know we knocked [Baby D's] 'Let Me Be Your Fantasy' off the top. Band Aid?"

WRONG. 'All I Want For Christmas Is You' by Mariah Carey.

"You're joking! That was such a big Christmas hit and it never got to Number



One because of us? Legendary! Cheers mate, that's made my Christmas."

2 Which indie-rock band covered Paul McCartney's festive hit 'Wonderful Christmastime' in 2012?

Laura Fripp, Coventry, on Twitter

"HAHA! I don't know." **WRONG.** The Shins. Have you heard of them?

"No, not at all! Nought out of two so far!"

3 In which countries besides the UK did 'Stay Another Day' get to Number One?

Carol Devonshire, London, via email

"How many? There's three? So, the UK, Sweden... Denmark? It's not France because our only Number One in France was 'It's Alright', so... Ireland?" **CORRECT**

"I've got one! I still to this day don't know how it was a Christmas Number One. We did stick bells on it to give it that thing, but people love it for Christmas."

4 What's the next line of these lyrics from The Pogues' 'Fairytale Of New York': 'When you first took my hand/On a cold Christmas Eve...'

Jamal Ritchie, Manchester, via email

"That's my favourite Christmas song of all time! 'You promised me Broadway was waiting for me.'" **CORRECT**

"I love that song, it's just an absolute drinking-in-a-pub

song, and you can listen to it and have a go at your missus at the same time 'cos it's all in the song - 'I'm just singing the song, babe...'"

5 Which brand of crisps is currently using 'Stay Another Day' in its Christmas ad campaign?

Hannah Gibson, Gillingham, on Facebook

"Doritos." **CORRECT**

6 How many X Factor winners have got to Christmas Number One?

Valerie Franks, Leicester, on Twitter

"Jesus. None?"

WRONG. Five: Shayne Ward (2005), Leona Lewis (2006), Leon Jackson (2007), Alexandra Burke (2008) and Matt Cardle (2010).

"Oh yeah, the public started a backlash with Rage Against The Machine, which I'm sure the band started as they were the winners out of that."

7 'Stay Another Day' was Number One in the UK for how many weeks?

Jack Phillips, Glasgow, via email

"Five. What I was really happy about was that Take That used to go to Number One for one week and then go out, so I wanted to stay at Number One for two weeks. Then it was three and I thought, 'We've so kicked some arse here.' Then four and five and I thought, 'People are gonna start hating me now.'" **CORRECT**

I've just done a new version of 'Stay Another Day', an acoustic version. Brian [Harvey] didn't like it, so now



Will Ferrell
in *Elf*

it's sung by someone that loves it. I recorded it with a live orchestra, it's nice."

8 Which film featured the song 'Baby, It's Cold Outside' sung by Zooey Deschanel and Will Ferrell?

Del Brown, Walthamstow, via email

"Elf. I love that film!" **CORRECT**

9 What was Christmas Number One in the year you were born?

Gareth Caldwell, Brighton, via email

"How would I know, I was two months old! That was 1970, so Paul McCartney?" **WRONG.** Dave Edmunds' 'I Hear You Knocking'.

10 Which Christmas song has sold over 50 million copies worldwide?

Regine O'Connor, Dublin, via email

"Bing Crosby's 'White Christmas'. I'm planning to just chill out this year. I'm planning a big European tour next year, so we'll see how that goes down."

CORRECT

SCORE = 6

"That's good, I could've been on a one or two there. And in answer to your question 'Does rock'n'roll kill braincells?', yes it does."





NEXT WEEK

the TOURS

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the ALBUMS

THEY DIDN'T WANT YOU TO HEAR

the HEROES

THEY DIDN'T WANT YOU TO WORSHIP

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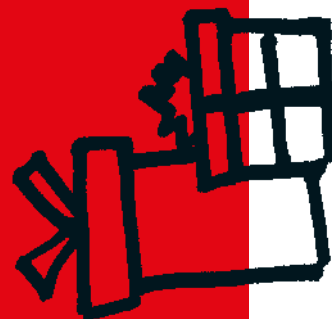
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