

9 MARCH 2018 / FREE EVERY FRIDAY

NME

MUSIC
FILM
STYLE

STEFFLON DON
BOW DOWN

"AN INSTANT CULT CLASSIC"



DAILY STAR

J O A Q U I N P H O E N I X



BEST ACTOR
FESTIVAL DE CANNES

A LYNNE RAMSAY FILM



BEST SCREENPLAY
FESTIVAL DE CANNES



LITTLE WHITE LIES

**"TAXI DRIVER
FOR A NEW CENTURY"**

THE TIMES



THE TELEGRAPH

**"REAFFIRMS RAMSAY AS ONE OF
OUR GREATEST LIVING FILMMAKERS"**

JORDAN FARLEY, TOTAL FILM



THE IRISH TIMES

**"PHOENIX'S VERY
BEST WORK"**

THE TELEGRAPH



THE SKINNY



THE TIMES

**"A PERFECTLY CRAFTED
VISCERAL EXPERIENCE"**

LITTLE WHITE LIES



FLICKERING MYTH

**"EXTRAORDINARY... A MUSCULAR
AND TIGHTLY WOUND MASTERPIECE"**

THE LIST



HEYUGUYS



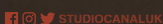
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NME

Hello...

SOME THINGS YOU NEED to know about Stefflon Don: she had a Posh Spice doll and Spice Girl shoes when she was a kid; at the shoot for this week's cover feature she played, among other party bangers, 'Boom, Boom, Boom, Boom!!' by the Vengaboys, 'Telephone' by Lady Gaga and 'Wannabe' by the Spice Girls; her pre-show ritual is twerking; she was once upon a time a cake decorator and a hairdresser; she used to live in Rotterdam, and speaks fluent Dutch; she brought her Mum to February's VO5 NME Awards 2018; she thinks that because there's no Glastonbury this year we should all just go to the pub; and she's dropping a brand-new mixtape... this month. It's gonna be enormous. Also in this week's issue you will find valuable wisdom from the mothers of pop stars, a compelling argument for why every day should be International Women's Day, a strange story about Nic Cage and Miss Piggy, and a weird stat about the Oscars red carpet. Enjoy yourselves.

TOM HOWARD
Acting Editor
@tomahoward

Jack White p30

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Stefflon Don

UK rap's got a new queen.
Hear her story

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NME

110 SOUTHWARK ST
LONDON
SE1 0SU
TEL 020 3148 + Ext

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Mother's Day, Sunday 11th March



AGENDA

WHAT EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT THIS WEEK



"Just keep doing it, and don't let anyone fking tell you anything different. If you know what you want, grab it with both hands."**

TOM GRENNAN
Rising singer-songwriter



"Believe in myself and go for what I want. She gives me the confidence I need to keep going. Without her, I would find it very hard."

PIXIE LOTT
UK pop champ

"Stay humble."

TROYE SIVAN
Star of screen, musicals, pop

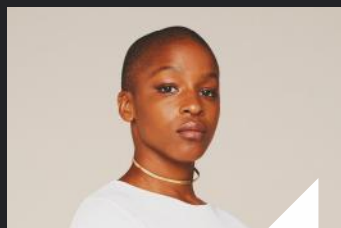


"Listen. Just listen. Listen to people when they're speaking. Be polite. Act as you would want to be acted towards."

DAVE
Future rap king

What's the best advice your mum's ever given you?

Mother's Day's on Sunday. Don't you dare forget



"Be yourself. I used to go to sleepovers – my mum was born in Nigeria and never understood it as part of culture. Why would I leave my own bed to go and sleep in someone else's house? She just said, 'Don't show up the family and just be yourself'. The way she said it, it meant something. She always says it when I go anywhere."

JULIE ADENUGA
Beats 1 DJ



"My mum gives me strange advice. I don't know if it's appropriate. I'll pass."

ELLIE ROWSELL
Wolf Alice



"Always be confident. Never look back. Be sure to shower before anything. Always shower!"

ESTE HAIM
Haim bassist



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Charlize Theron as Elaine Markinson in *Gringo*

Five truths from Charlize Theron and David Oyelowo about *Gringo*

It's a dark farce set between Chicago and Mexico, and it's decent

1 IT VERY SUBTLY ENCOURAGES THE LEGALISATION OF WEED

Charlize: "I was a pothead for many years – I have not been for many years – but I might reconsider going back now that there's so many different strains. I don't give a f**k, I've seen what medical marijuana has done for people with severe health issues. My mum suffered with a foot condition for years – she couldn't play sports until I bought her a marijuana cream. We have to educate ourselves a little bit more and not generalise drugs. When you look at examples in the Netherlands and in many other parts of the world where we have decriminalised drugs, and we look at addicts and treat them the same we do people with diabetes, you have a healthier society. Until you take that criminalised element out of it, it will always be a problem. And there will be violence around it. And... we're gonna smoke a joint."

David: "Absolutely, let's do it."

Charlize: "I'm just gonna rub my mum's foot cream on you."

2 HAROLD'S IMMIGRANT STATUS GROUNDS THE FILM'S ABSURDITY

David: "In the original script, [Oyelowo's character] Harold's name was Harold Salinger; you saw this dweeby, nerdy guy who's a bit gormless – and that in and of itself isn't that interesting to play. Where does that come from? Why is he naive? Why so trusting? I think anyone who is an immigrant, or the child of immigrants, knows there's something about being in a country outside of your comfort zone that means you trust people probably more than you should. So much of what Harold Soyinka goes through suddenly felt more believable than before. I saw that in my parents, who emigrated to the UK, and I emigrated [to the US] with my kids 11 years ago. It just felt truthful to me."



Harold Soyinka (David Oyelowo)

3 CHARLIZE'S RUDE LINES MADE HER APOLOGISE

Charlize: "They're all f**king terrible. The first three days on this movie, I found myself apologising profusely to our crew, to our actors, to Nash [Edgerton, director]... I was literally in the service table getting my lunch, like, 'Sorry I said that today.'"

4 ELAINE'S SLINKY IS A POWERFUL SYMBOL OF HER DISDAIN

Charlize: "I played around with a couple of things, but this Slinky I liked just because it was a f**king toy and she was paying more attention to that than an actual human being standing in front of her."

David: "It made me feel small."

Charlize: "That's what I was aiming for."

5 THEY GOT SOCIAL COMMENTARY INTO AN ACTION FILM

David: "I was looking for something lighter, but I didn't want to do something that was self-consciously funny. Nash and I were able to push the script further by making Harold a Nigerian immigrant – which is something you really don't see every day. Even within an action-comedy we managed to get social commentary in there."

Gringo is out now

AGENDA



JENNIFER LAWRENCE

Was a lairy, wine-loving hero at the Oscars, climbing over seats and being mad fer it.



WILEY

Had a blast as he picked up his MBE, despite the fact it was freezing as f**k.



ELTON JOHN

Stormed offstage in Vegas, told a fan to "F**k off". Hold me closer, angry Elton.



THE EMOJI MOVIE

Named Worst Picture at the Razzies, for its "toxic-level lack of originality".



Daddy cool

Nicolas Cage stars in mad new horror movie *Mom And Dad*, in which parents try and kill their kids. We asked him WTF it's all about

Nic as Brent Ryan
in *Mom And Dad*

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What attracted you to the film? It's quite a wild storyline...

"Yes it is, and I think that's part of what attracted me to it. When I read the script I felt that the story was totally taboo [but] I knew that, for as horrible as what was going on, there would be some ability to have some comedy about it because it is so wrong and so shocking."

There's an amazing scene where you smash up a pool table. How do you psych yourself up for scenes like that?

"I do find things – whether in my own life history or in current events – that get me to a place where I don't have to act. When I did *Joe* [in 2013] I had to do a bar brawl scene and do something that would get me to that level of anger. I just read in the paper that day that a toddler had just fallen into a pit of wild dogs in a zoo and was eaten and mauled to death. I found that heartbreaking and angering."

Are you a horror movie fan?

"Yes, but not a horror movie fan like so many of them have become today, in terms of gratuitous slash or violence. I don't watch movies like that. They nauseate me. I don't enjoy seeing women being tortured in cinema, or young people being stabbed, or any of that. But I do think there have been a couple of very creative horror films recently: *Babadook*, *It Follows*, *The Witch*. Certainly the Japanese have always had a great style with ghost stories and I thought that the *Ringu* movie was far and away one of the best horror films I've ever seen."

What's the scariest moment in cinema history?

"I think that *The Exorcist* really took it to a whole new level. I think the final exorcism scene in that movie."

You've got loads of films coming out this year – why do you keep yourself so busy?

"I have multiple reasons for wanting to work. One of them is, to be blatantly honest, I can be a little self-destructive if I'm not focused on my job. I like the structure of work. It's the difference between maybe having one bottle of wine versus two. So there is a routine and a structure to it. Also I have had to deal with mistakes of the past and I have had to dig myself up and out of a rabbit hole financially. And third, I enjoy it."

"I can be a little self-destructive if I'm not focused on my job"

We're interviewing the Muppets tomorrow. Do you have a question for them?

"Well, I always had a crush on Miss Piggy but I never knew why. Could you ask her why I had a crush on her?"

Shall we ask her on a date for you?

"Er, possibly. That'd be fun."

Read the *NME* review of *Mom And Dad* on page 34

INTERVIEW: LEONIE COOPER



Delivering Awesome



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Country life

As series two hits screens, Charlie and Daisy May Cooper dish the dirt on their stellar Cotswolds comedy *This Country*

SEVEN YEARS AGO, siblings Charlie and Daisy May Cooper found themselves at a bleak crossroads. Unemployed and broke, they returned home to the sleepy Cotswolds town of Cirencester to share the dusty attic of their parents' home.

As they battled joblessness and crippling boredom, the siblings channelled their frustrations into tales of the unusual hometown characters that had shaped their childhood. Their early efforts would eventually transform into *This Country*, the acclaimed BBC mockumentary that presents their unique vision of Cotswolds

life, and which has earned the pair a BAFTA nod as two of the UK's breakout comedy stars.

The show returns for its second series this week, seeing the duo star as troublemaker cousins Kerry and Kurtan Mucklowe. A typical episode portrays the itinerant no-hopers following the routines of their admirably mundane lives in stories that mirror the Cooper siblings' real-life experiences – even if it's risked placing the pair on a collision course with some of the town's real-life residents.

In one of the first series' most memorable scenes, the pair crack open a bottle of Lambrini and march through town, crassly celebrating the death of Mr Perkins, a much hated woodwork teacher. The real Mr Perkins, it transpires, is still very much alive and the scene has transformed him into the

unlikeliest of classroom celebrities, since the Coopers refused to change his name. "We've heard stories of the kids at our old school who've started chanting, 'You're dead! You're dead!' at him," Charlie explains. "It must be a nightmare for him. I'm starting to feel really guilty."

In fact, the show's success has made it harder to work with the stories of Cirencester's most eccentric characters, says the RADA-trained Daisy. "It's changed now," she explains. "Especially when you're observing something. People will stop me and say, 'You're going to put this in your show, aren't you?'"

While the first series was a perfect introduction to the fishbowl lives of Kerry and Kurtan, the second sees many more possibilities thrown into the mix – with romance beckoning for Kurtan. Predictably, it won't last – his is a creation that, like all the best sitcom characters, is eternally doomed to his circumstances. "It's in the vein of shows like *Only Fools... and Steptoe And Son*," Charlie reckons. "They try so hard but there's



Martin (Paul Cooper) and Kurtan (Charlie Cooper)

always something holding them back."

Series two also offers a greater role for ex-con Martin Mucklowe, Kerry's lolzy on-screen dad, played by Daisy and Charlie's actual father. "Our dad never had any acting experience," says Charlie, "but he's just got funny bones." But working with your dad does have its drawbacks: in one episode, Kurtan and Martin have a post-work piss-up together. "When you're in the pub and your real-life dad is telling these elaborate stories about shagging," Charlie reflects, "...it's f**king weird."

***This Country* series two is on BBC iPlayer now**

DAISY ON KURTAN:

"Kurtan is very pedantic. He likes things a certain way, but he has a very good moral compass and a very good heart. He absolutely loves Kerry, even though he's unbelievably irritated by her. There's a scene in the new series when he's making sandwiches and he's doing it so meticulously, but yet with so much annoyance. It says a lot about Kurtan."

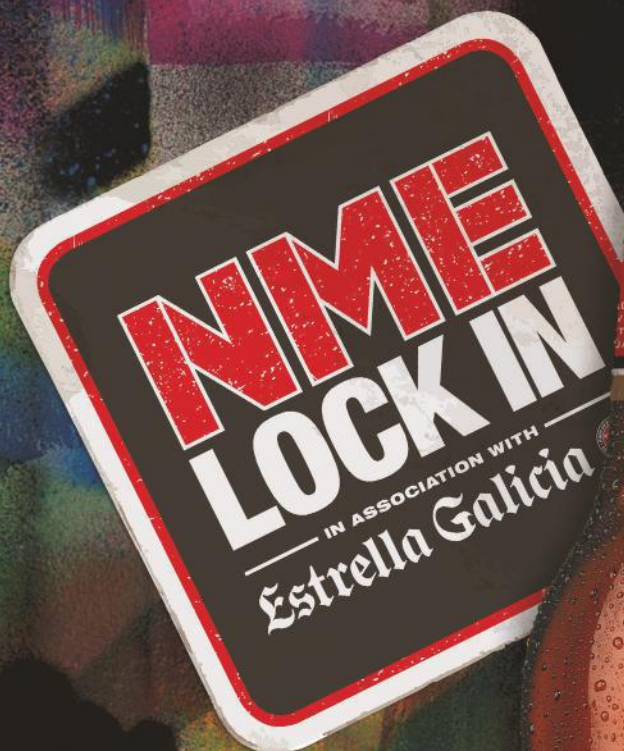
CHARLIE ON KERRY:

"It's all about bravado with Kerry. She's one of those people who gives it all mouth, but deep down she's a little child. There's so much vulnerability to her and that's what makes her quite sweet and likeable. Any time she tries to be tough, she's immediately undercut. There's a scene in the new series where she's sent a series of letters by a secret admirer. It's here where you see how vulnerable she really is."



Kurtan (Charlie) and Kerry (Daisy May) in *This Country*

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ON THE RECORD

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THIS WEEK

Every day should be International Women's Day

I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU celebrated International Women's Day this year. I did it by loudly singing the songs of Courtney Love, Nina Simone and Patti Smith while cooking two pies to look like boobs and welding a piece of metal wall art in the shape of a uterus *and* simultaneously smashing the patriarchy. Then I had a lie-in and watched repeats of *Broad City*. This, I imagine, is much the same as they do in Italy where the day is named La Festa Della Donna and has been celebrated since the end of WWII. Originally a socialist knees-up, the Italian take on the March 8 proceedings involves women ghosting men for the whole day while they surround themselves with flowers and delish wine and cook up a tasty-sounding cake called torta mimosa, the key ingredient of which is citrusy booze. Sounds like a right laugh, doesn't it? In fact, it sounds like the kind of thing that shouldn't just be limited to a once-a-year celebration.

There's no doubt in my mind that International Women's Day is a Very Good Thing Indeed, but what does that mean for the other 364 days of the year? Are these by default an almost endless run of International Men's Days? Well, yeah... Remember when you were seven and you'd ask your parents on Mother's Day when Children's Day was, and they'd sigh and say, "Every day is Children's Day"? It's basically that all over again, but you replace kids with grown men. Saying that women's achievements should only be shouted about and celebrated on one day of every year negates the amazing, largely silent work that women do in the shadows, every second of

"There's so much to fight for: equal pay, saggy gussets on tights"



International Woman Courtney Love celebrating herself

every minute. In the UK it's women who dominate the caring professions like nursing, dealing with long hours, low pay and little thanks. It's women like this that we need to be thanking and thinking of constantly, women who literally keep this country alive.

There's still so much to fight for. Equal pay, the fact that no woman I know feels safe on the

street late at night, the threat of harassment at work, the notion that when a women stands up for herself she's either hysterical or a b***h, the saggy gusset that *all* tights get at roughly 2pm. Women need more than a day to celebrate themselves – they need regular payback for centuries of repression. Oh, and tights with functioning gussets. @leoniemaycooper

PHOTO: PRESS ASSOCIATION

Last W33K IN NUMBERS

Four

The number of Spice Girls – minus Victoria Beckham – in a mooted reunion tour. Medium spice.

24

Years since it launched, pop-punk festival Vans Warped Tour bows out. Goodnight, sweet prince.

900

The length, in feet, of the Academy Awards' red carpet. Also the length of Harvey Weinstein's lawyers' bill.

100

Percentage score that much-discussed Netflix horror *Veronica* achieved on Rotten Tomatoes. Tasty!



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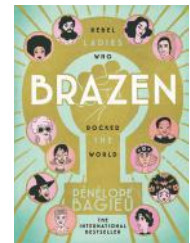
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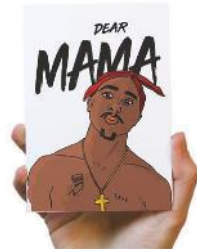
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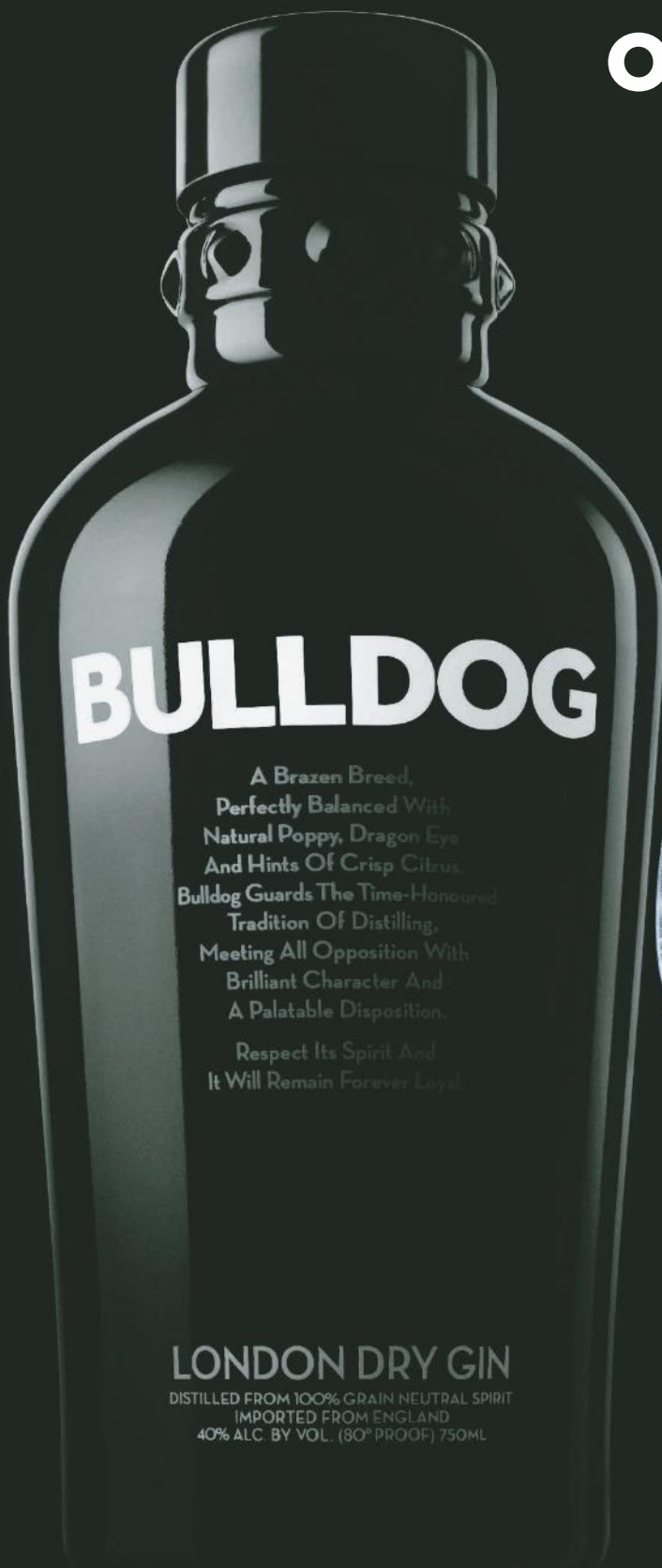


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SMOOTHER ON THE INSIDE



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What's on your Headphones?

THIS WEEK

Swanage

MATTHEW ROBERTS >

28, project surveyor

Listening to:
JAY-Z & KANYE WEST
*N***as In Paris*

"It's from the golden age of Kanye."

Wearing: Pull&Bear jacket, River Island cardigan, Sports Direct T-shirt.

Best thing about Swanage: "It's a beautiful part of the world."



< KRISTINA RUDENKO

23, animation student

Listening to:
MUSE

New Born

"I discovered them when I was an emotional teen. Me and my sister would go on long walks in Tallinn and just listen to Muse."

Wearing: Vintage jacket, dungarees and shirt from Snooper's Paradise, Dr. Martens boots.

Best thing about Swanage: "I love watching the steam trains."



< HOLLY MCLACHLAN

22, student

Listening to:
FLORENCE + THE MACHINE
Cosmic Love

"It reminds me of school and [being] a teenager."

Wearing: New Look jacket, River Island shirt, trousers from the Beatnik Emporium.

Best thing about Swanage: "Soul Funk Festival is a must."

BEN HIGGINS >

28, security officer

Listening to:
TWO STEPS FROM HELL
Never Give Up On Your Dreams

"It's energetic, powerful and really smacks you in the face."

Wearing: Joe Browns shirt, Blue Bolt jeans.

Best thing about Swanage: "Corfe Castle is a derelict place with a creepy atmosphere."



"Soul Funk Festival is a must"

PHOTOS: KIMBERLEY EDWARDS



MILLION

DOLLAR

BABY

Stefflon Don acts like a superstar. And, thanks to a megabucks record deal, she's becoming one. Larry Bartleet meets Britain's hottest new rapper

PHOTOS BY ZOE MCCONNELL

ACCORDING TO HER track record, Stefflon Don is going to be late. Almost every interview the rapper's done since the release of her 2016 mixtape 'Real Ting' is prefaced with a tally of the hours journalists have spent expecting her arrival. But not today. Today, Steff is bang on time. In fact, when I arrive at the north London studio hosting her *NME* cover shoot, it's *she* who has already been here for hours.

Staring down *NME* photographer Zoe McConnell from a throne, Steff's sporting a Union Jack minidress, a flowing red gown and a choker reading 'DON'. Looking utterly regal beneath her jewel-encrusted crown, the rapper vogues to Spice Girls' 'Wannabe' and Popcaan's 'Family' – her team singing and dancing along – then reaches for the VO5 *NME* Award she won last month, on the raised middle finger of which she's popped a glittering diamanté ring. There's no ambiguity here: 2018 is hers for the taking.

The east Londoner has leapt from unsigned artist to Drake collaborator in three years, initially making waves with gender-flipping remixes of songs by British grime crew Section Boyz and Mississippi rap bros Rae Sremmurd, and latterly using a blend of hard-hitting bars ('16 Shots'), melodic dancehall ('Hurtin' Me') and disarming cheek ('Tight Nooki') to win fans with lyrics that swerve in and out of Patois.

In the past year alone, Steff has performed on US TV, done a *Vogue* shoot, won Best New Artist supported by Vans at the VO5 *NME* Awards and released a video [for 'Ding-A-Ling'] starring an actual tiger. Following this interview, she'll fly out to New York for a gig with Damian Marley, immediately return to London and kick off her own UK tour, with setlists featuring her collaborations with grime king Skepta, NYC rapper French Montana and LA pop star Demi Lovato.

"It's different," she says of her schedule's escalating demands. "I get homesick – I could be in the sunniest place but I need to see normality, and normal for me is London." Right now, that's true, but for Steff 'normal' has never meant one thing. In fact,

"The better I got at rap, the more I grew into my name"



her adaptability could well be her greatest strength.

Born Stephanie Allen in Birmingham, the middle child of seven, she left the UK for the Netherlands aged four with her family. As a kid, change came easily. "Before I knew it," she says, "I knew Dutch." In Rotterdam, the city she called home for 10 years, Steff quickly made friends, but in the absence of a Jamaican community her family felt "left out" among communities from Dutch-colonised countries such as Suriname and the Antilles. "I'd know my friend for years but she'd never call me her cousin because I'm Jamaican," she says. "But she'd meet someone else and within a couple of months she's introducing her as her cousin. I'd be like, 'That's not your cousin! I've been your friend for how long? I wanna be your cousin!'"

That feeling of displacement didn't prevent Steff from finding her first musical roots in Rotterdam. Growing up with the music videos of Destiny's Child and Lil' Kim, she longed to be a singer and started writing songs aged eight. "I'd mimic songs I heard," she recalls, "relationship stuff I knew nothing about." At nine, she had her first taste of the studio, singing 'Hard Knock Life'-style vocals for a rapper called Unique. It was a huge moment. "When he played me back, I cried," she says. "I was like, 'Oh my gosh, that's me.' I felt like a superstar."

Another big change was just around the corner. Steff and her family left Holland for London when she was 14, and though she felt homesick, she continued to feed her musical passion in London studios while adjusting to school life. "I didn't fit in at first. I had a weird accent. Dutch people speak American English and my parents were Jamaican, with their own broken English. American English mixed with broken English – what the f**k's that? People were like, 'Where the f**k are you from?'"

Schooling in the "strict, not very gang-cultured, not very crime-oriented" Netherlands hadn't really prepared Steff for London life, but she soon rose to the challenge. "My outfits were atrocious," she admits, "but after a couple of months I got the drift on the swag, on what your hair should be like, what your outfit should be like."

The 26-year-old's inimitable confidence makes it hard to believe, but she wasn't always the most self-assured performer. "I didn't think rap was me," she says of her teenage self, who still harboured ambitions of being a straightforward singer. "But I was shy to sing in front of people. It'd

Steff's pop pals

Ahead of her debut album, Steff's worked with tons of big names. Here's our top five

LIL YACHTY
'Better'
Upbeat tropical ballad from the 'bubblegum trap' man's debut 'Teenage Emotions'.
Steff says: "Dreamy."

JEREMIH
'Tight Nooki'
Cheeky, steelpan-assisted dancehall about riding bananas.
Steff says: "Inspiring."

GIGGS
'Real Ting (Remix)'
Bolshy stormer on which Giggs calls himself a "Wookiee motherf**ker" without losing any gravitas.
Steff says: "Sick."

CHARLI XCX, RAYE & RITA ORA
'After The Afterparty (VIP Mix)'
Brass-backed pop confection about partying harrd.
Steff says: "Fun."

POPCAAN, SEAN PAUL, SIZZLA
'Hurtin' Me (The Remix)'
A bubbly rework of Steff's biggest hit, featuring three Jamaican music legends.
Steff says: "Lit."

be so off because I was shy." Singing is still her thing – 'Hurtin' Me,' a sung track from 2017, is her biggest hit – but she feels her rapping is where her strengths lie. "I'm not a proper singer," she reckons, "even today. I'm just OK: I know what I want to do and I sound good at it."

Her sister encouraged Steff to develop her rap skills at a studio. "She would always get gassed when I'd freestyle rap," Steff laughs. "I'd be chatting the most s**t but the flows I came up with... She just saw potential." This was a huge breakthrough. "I laid some rap and felt so much more confident. Like, 'This is easy. I ain't gotta worry about my voice crackling. I'm not shy.'

Afterwards, I remember people calling me, saying, 'Yo Steff, what you laid was fire.' I *knew* I was good."

After school Steff went to college and spent time as a cake decorator and hairdresser to fund her studio time, steadily developing her skills. "I used to look at old-school rap, how they put rhymes together," she says. "I studied my craft." Then, applying to a university scheme to study business, she took out a student finance loan and used the money to fly herself to LA to work with a producer. She planned to be there for three weeks and ended up staying for two-and-a-half months; of the resulting 10 tracks, she shot a video for one – 'Instagram It' – a song that, amusingly, she now hates.

"That's not me," she reflects. "I'm 10 times better than that." The experience gave her "an insight into how to be in the studio every day," but it wasn't until her 2015 remix of Section Boyz's 'Lock Arff' that Steff began to really find her own voice – and with it, recognition. "I liked everything about ['Lock Arff']," she says of the track that helped bring about her £1 million record deal with Universal. "That was the first time I could say, 'Shut up, I know this is sick.'"

Years previously, her now-manager had insisted she adopt the punny

Steff hearts RiRi

Stefflon Don's style is one of her calling cards – and Rihanna's her style icon. "Rihanna could just wear anything. Like a big jumper – she makes it look like an elegant dress or some s**t. She could be on a red carpet – she could just put on her Fenty stuff and look like, 'Who's that girl?' She could put on anything. A garbage bag, bruv."

moniker Stefflon Don – "'You're from London, you're like a don,'" he told her then. "I was just starting to build myself," she says, "and that name was so gangsta. I told my girls; they were like, 'What kind of f**king name is that?' – but they started calling me it as a joke. And as I got better with rap, I grew into it. I had to live up to it. That's what made me better. I didn't want to go round telling people my name and then playing a f**king s**t rap."

Her Dutch upbringing had left her open to myriad sounds, too. "Dutch schools were heavily influenced by people's cultures," she explains, "so if there was Eid we'd celebrate in

school. We'd celebrate every culture. That's opened my mind to be welcoming. I don't feel, like, 'Oh I'm black so I'll stick to my black self' – I'm cool with everyone." The same approach carries over into her music. "When I'm in the studio with a writer," she says, "I don't mind for them to take the lead and show me something new." It's the way Steff experiments – blurring genre borders – that makes her destined for global stardom.

We come onto the topic of her in-your-face lyrics. '16 Shots' is a quiver of threats; 'Envy Us' a swaggering braggadocio track; 'Tight Nooki' is... Well, you can probably guess. Steff says that once upon a time her sexually explicit lyrics were rubbish. "People would tell me, 'Steff – you need to find metaphorical ways to say what you're saying – you're not covering it up with real talent, you're just covering it up with rubbish, wide open, like 'Suck my pussy.'"

No longer. Growing up, Steff had looked up to Lil' Kim, Missy Elliott and others who spoke their mind. "I used to always be attracted to that. It seemed so sick and so powerful as a woman to be able to express yourself and not care about what anyone thinks. That drew me to become a rapper." Now, her own no-holds-barred approach comes from a similar place. "You've got to say what a girl with not so much confidence would want to say," she reckons. "Women – especially women that aren't so naughty – they listen to that type of bad stuff to be in that little moment."



She doesn't run her mouth when asked about the paucity of women on festival line-ups – particularly Wireless, which Annie Mac and Lily Allen called out this year for recruiting just three female artists. Steff's response is diplomatic: "Obviously it would be better if there was more women, but I don't know," she reasons. "They might have asked more women and they might not have wanted to do it."

Her million-pound contract with Universal – as part of which she created and signed herself to her own label – finds her chattier. "It wasn't about the money," she says. "Growing up, I always said I wanted to sign for a million. I just wanted to make it happen – and it actually did." Then, after a *perfect* pause, "I knew I could have waited and got more."

Because waiting is something many of Steff's interviewers enjoy moaning about due to her now notorious lateness, I've got to know: does she *like* making people wait? "That was before! I've been good, innit! Before I didn't know the importance of being on time. I thought people could wait a bit." We *will* have to wait slightly longer for her second mixtape – featuring Drake's pal Future, among others – but she's confident it'll be worth it. "It's gonna be lit," she says. "I don't care if it sells nothing."

So – with so many of her ambitions already realised, what's her next big goal? "Everyone to know me," she replies. "World domination."

It's only a matter of time.

NME

"I wanted to sign for a million – and I actually did"

KEEPING UP WITH THE JONES

As the super-strong and super-dour detective Jessica Jones, Krysten Ritter is the breakout star of Marvel's TV shows. Olly Richards meets her as season two hits Netflix

Firstly, having just binged the new episodes of *Jessica Jones*, it's good to hear you sounding like a happy person and not dour and angry.

"In *Jessica Jones* I am absolutely acting my ass off! I'm not nearly as dark as she is. I'm much more alive and joyful."

The first season was a massive hit. It's been over two years since it was released, so where are we going in season two?

"She's dealing with the aftermath of Killgrave [the mind-controlling villain, played by David Tennant]. She's battling with the internal struggle of whether she's a killer and a monster, or whether she did the right thing [in killing him]. A lot of the issues that we dealt with in season one don't just go away because of Killgrave's death. Jessica is really trying to find her place in the world. She's dealing with sudden notoriety. People suddenly know who she is and they either want her to kill people or they're afraid of her. We get deeper into her psychological situation and her backstory, which then leads to a plot we don't see coming."

Does that sudden notoriety resonate with you? You were well known before this show, but it's really sent you to another level.

"I can totally relate to that. You have to live your day-to-day life a little differently. There's definitely no handbook on handling that, but I think I certainly handle it better than Jessica Jones does."

As well as being part of your own hit show, you're also a piece of the massive Marvel universe. Are you expected to know what's happening in all the other areas?

"No. On the television side, I'm dear friends with the [*Defenders* cast] so I know what's going on there... There's not a lot of crossover with the [movies]. I did go and see *Black Panther* opening weekend like everybody else, but that's more because I heard it was amazing rather than doing homework. And I loved it."

***Black Panther* was a big step in terms of diversity for Marvel. Your show is still the only female-fronted Marvel property...**

"Yes. That's changing, though [*Captain Marvel*, starring Brie Larson, is currently in production]... I try not to scare myself with the idea that that's some sort of heavy responsibility, but I certainly feel proud of that."

Krysten (right) with director Deborah Chow



As a woman working in such a male-dominated part of the industry, I want to ask your take on what's happening currently with the momentum of the Time's Up campaign. What changes are you seeing?

"I certainly notice there is much more of a mandate to give opportunities to women. With our show, we hired all women to direct our episodes [on season two]. There's much more of a mandate to represent diversity, which I think is huge. I've been working for a long time and certainly 10 years ago, maybe even five, that wasn't there. I think we're starting to see real change. We're starting to see more women get shots at showrunning, writing. I think the Time's Up movement is amazing and it's only going to help make things more fair and help audiences see more stories. We're going to see more people represented in front of and behind the camera. It's the most extraordinary thing that's happening. You can feel it, that everyone's fired up and passionate."

Place the face

Jessica Jones made her a star, but you may remember Ritter from one of these fine, and a couple of not so fine, projects



Someone Like You (2001)

Did you see this moderately successful 2001 Ashley Judd comedy? Then you saw Ritter's first (uncredited, non-speaking) acting role, as a model.



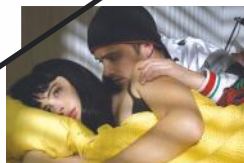
Gilmore Girls (2006-2007)

One of Ritter's earliest successes was as a college friend of Rory Gilmore in the fast-talking mother-daughter comedy.



27 Dresses (2008)

In a kind of much softer, less nuanced, not-really iteration of her *Jessica Jones* persona, Ritter played goth Gina in this massive but not very good Katherine Heigl rom-com.



Breaking Bad (2009)

Ritter had a brief but superb recurring role as Jesse's girlfriend, Jane, who offered him the possibility of a brighter future – until she choked to death on her own vomit as Walt watched.



Don't Trust The B---- in Apartment 23 (2012)

Something of a cult hit – ie it had some dedicated fans but got cancelled after two seasons – this sitcom starred Ritter as a con-merchant who hatches schemes with James Van Der Beek from *Dawson's Creek*, playing himself.

**"TIME'S UP
IS AMAZING.
IT'S ONLY
GOING TO
HELP MAKE
THINGS
MORE FAIR"**



In what ways can you feel it?

"You see it in the shows that are coming out. You see a character breakdown and they're open to all ethnicities or it says, 'This character could be a man or a woman'. That is very different."

You wrote your first book, *Bonfire*, last year. Are you glued to your desk from 9am-5pm or do you cram just before the deadline?

"I am very disciplined. As soon as the proposal was [accepted], I was fully focused. Hard deadline. Pedal to the metal. Writing every day as soon as I wake up. I work the best when I first wake up. I'll get up, get the coffee rocking, go to my computer and then work until my brain is tired."

You should be teaching this. You could help a lot of far lazier people.

"That is absolutely my next career. On set, I'm always the person doing life-coaching. I'm so into it. People naturally share struggles with me and ask questions. I am an extremely good pep-talker so I am very happy to give them advice based on what I've learned along the way. I think that's because I didn't really have that growing up. I didn't have someone to give me the tools."

Where did you get those tools?

"If I'd ever meet a particular kind of person, or a woman who was more established than me, I would hang on their every word and learn as much as possible. I still do, whether it's one of the directors on our show or Carrie-Anne Moss [who plays Jeri Hogarth on the show]. I'll glue myself to people who know more about a subject, and squeeze them for all their information."

Are you the sort of person who hates a day of doing nothing?

"Well, if I'm tired I might – no, what am I saying? I can't do nothing. I definitely work a lot and take on a lot of projects, but not stuff that feels like work to me, because I've found jobs that are my favourite hobby. So nothing is 'work'. That said, if I feel run down I can do a day where I'm just knitting on the couch, watching documentaries."

But that's not a day of doing nothing, you see. You'll end that day with a scarf or a jumper.

"True. I am still producing something. One hundred per cent. I cannot do nothing."

NME

Jessica Jones season two is available on Netflix now

THE ART OF THE DEAL

As The Breeders release their fifth album, frontwoman and estranged Pixies bassist Kim Deal talks Kevin EG Perry through her rock'n'roll life

Deal (right)
with Pixies
in 1989



JOINING PIXIES (BECAUSE THEY MADE HER LAUGH)

In January 1986, a week after moving to Boston from Dayton, Ohio, Kim spotted an ad in the *Boston Phoenix* placed by future Pixies bandmates Charles Thompson (AKA Black Francis) and Joey Santiago. "Most of those adverts were guys going, 'Looking for blonde singer aged 19-22. Hair must be between shoulder length and mid-back,' or, 'Looking for drummer with a PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDE'," she explains. "So, 'Looking for someone into Peter, Paul and Mary and Hüsker Dü. No chops' caught my eye. I thought it was funny."

HER IRONIC PSEUDONYM

On the first two Pixies releases, 'Come On Pilgrim' and 'Surfer Rosa', Kim was credited as Mrs John Murphy, taking her then husband's name as an arch feminist joke. "Somebody said that when I worked in a doctor's office," she explains. "'My name is not Ethel. My name is Mrs Howard Rosenstein.' Holy s**t! I need to show her respect by calling her by somebody else's name!"

WRITING THE BEST PIXIES SONG (AT LEAST ACCORDING TO KURT)

'Surfer Rosa' only featured one song with lyrics by Kim – 'Gigantic', a voyeuristic ode to a well-endowed man – but it made such an impression on Kurt Cobain that in 1992 he said, "I wish Kim was allowed to write more songs for the Pixies, because 'Gigantic' is the best Pixies song and Kim wrote it." Kim reacts modestly, "Well, it's better than somebody saying, 'Oh God, you suck.'"



The Breeders in 2018 (l-r): Josephine Wiggs, Kim Deal, Kelley Deal, Jim Macpherson

"I don't think anyone thought 'Cannonball' would get played on the radio"



The Breeders in 1990

FORMING THE BREEDERS

Kim formed The Breeders with Throwing Muses guitarist Tanya Donelly, and their debut 1990 album 'Pod' was hugely influential – not least on Nirvana. "I think they got Steve Albini to record 'In Utero' because they really liked 'Pod,'" says Kim. "I remember Dave Grohl saying he really liked the drum sound, but I always felt bad for Dave because the drum sound for 'Pod' sounds huge because there's so much empty space for the drums to ring out. Poor Dave had all these guitars and bass playing all the way through."

TOURING WITH NIRVANA

In 1992, following the success of 'Nevermind', Nirvana invited The Breeders to join their tour. It was eye-opening for Kim's twin sister Kelley, who had joined on guitar, and new drummer Jim Macpherson. "The first show with Nirvana was one of Macpherson's first shows out of Dayton, Ohio ever," laughs Kim. "He asked Dave Grohl, 'What are those big black boxes?' Dave is like, 'You idiot, they're monitors. You listen to the band through them!' I think that's why Nirvana enjoyed touring with us so much: to see it through other people's eyes."

RECORDING 'CANNONBALL' THE MOMENT PIXIES SPLIT

Black Francis unilaterally disbanded Pixies in 1993, but Kim had the perfect riposte. "I was in the studio literally recording 'Cannonball' when Kelley came down the hallway and said, 'Pixies broke up'. I said, 'OK, get out of my way,'" remembers Kim. The song was NME's Single of the Year and 25 years on remains an indie rock staple. "I don't think anyone thought it would get played on the radio," says Kim. "I wasn't thinking, 'This is it! This is my ticket!'"

Kim -yay

Three essential Kim Deal tracks

PIXIES 'Silver' (1989)
Haunting, Vaseline-inspired track co-written with Black Francis for 'Doolittle'.

THE BREEDERS 'Divine Hammer' (1993)
Kim mocks her religious upbringing on a wave of jangly indie pop riffs.

THE BREEDERS 'Wait In The Car' (2018)
Over punk power chords, Kim sings about finding the right words – then opts for 'meow'.

BECOMING AN INDIE ICON

The success of second Breeders album 'Last Splash' helped seal Kim's image as the embodiment of rock-star cool. During the '90s she was the subject of tribute songs from the Dandy Warhols ('Cool As Kim Deal') and Japanese rockers The Pillows ('Kim Deal'). "I loved it but was kind of horrified at the same time," says Kim. "I've never heard the Dandy Warhols one. Are they actually saying I'm cool or are they being facetious? I've listened to The Pillows because I can't understand what they're saying. They're probably singing about their cat called Kim Deal."



'Pod' 1990



'Last Splash' 1993



'Title TK' 2002



'Mountain Battles' 2008



'All Nerve' 2018

GETTING THE BAND BACK TOGETHER

In 2013, Kim reunited with Kelley, Jim and bassist Josephine Wiggs to play shows marking the 20th anniversary of 'Last Splash'. At the end of the year, they were offered more gigs. "That's when my OCD kicked in: 'Wait, that's not the 20th anniversary anymore,'" says Kim. "Our friends told us we should release another album. We kept adding stuff to our setlist and that started the recording of the album."

TEAMING UP WITH THE GENERATION SHE INSPIRED

The result is 'All Nerve' – a strange and visceral rock album which features, among many other things, a Courtney Barnett guest spot on 'Howl At The Summit'. For Kim, it was a chance to collaborate with someone she'd first heard of as a fan. "She'd covered 'Cannonball'," explains Kim. "They did a pretty good version: shambolic and kind of casual."

NEVER STOPPING

While it's been 10 years since last Breeders album 'Mountain Battles', Kim says she hopes there'll be another sooner and bristles against the suggestion she's not prolific – pointing to her solo seven-inch series and busy touring schedule. "I want to defend myself. I do music constantly but sure, I'm 'not prolific,'" she says, her voice dripping with sarcasm. "Let's go with that."

NME

The Breeders' new album 'All Nerve' is out now



Kim (left) with Red Hot Chili Peppers' Flea, Courtney Love and Frances Bean Cobain, 1993

RADAR

THIS WEEK'S ESSENTIAL NEW RELEASES

Best NEW tracks

And when to drop them

BEST FOR STRUTTING YOUR STUFF

CALPURNIA

City Boy

It's Mike from *Stranger Things*' band! Sounds like: The Velvet Underground kicking it with Pavement.

BEST FOR BIGGING YOURSELF UP

**D DOUBLE E
FEAT. SKEPTA**

Nang

The rappers want you to know – with no doubt whatsoever – that they're cool in the extreme.

BEST FOR MOVING ON

THERESA WAYMAN

Loveleaks

"I feel like we're failing," the Warpaint guitarist croons on this bruised, buzzing burst of alt-pop.

BEST FOR PLAYING ON REPEAT

JACK WHITE

*Over And Over
And Over*

The king of Nashville slings the kitchen sink (and then some) on this wild concoction of soul, prog and rock.

BEST FOR LAUGHING BITTERLY

MATT MALTESE

Greatest Comedian

The sardonic singer-songwriter ups the tempo on this thumping, sarcastic chamber-pop ballad.

BEST FOR BEING A BOSS

THE KILLS

List Of Demands

Alison Mosshart and Jamie Hince return with a minimalist rocker that morphs into electro psychedelia.

BEST FOR MAKING YOUR POINT

DAVE

Hangman

The vital, socially conscious south London MC continues his mission to put the world to rights.

BEST FOR GETTING TROPICAL

LIV DAWSON

Talk

Thought tropical house was played out? Wrong! The nascent pop star proves it's still hot as hell.

BEST FOR WEARING SEQUINS

NATALIE PRASS

Short Cut Style

The indie-popper goes all Studio 54 on your ass with this swirling dervish of disco beats and handclaps.

BEST FOR DECLARING HOLINESS

YEARS & YEARS

Sanctify

Olly Alexander and co. combine the themes of 'Like A Prayer' with the fuggy funk of 'I'm A Slave 4 U'.



FOR MORE NEW MUSIC,
GO TO NME.COM

PHOTO: DAVID JAMES SWANSON

Brave hearts

There's no sugar-coating the Mercury Prize-winning trio on their third LP, which attacks power-holders and evil no-gooders

YOUNG FATHERS

Cocoa Sugar



POLITICS RAGE

EDINBURGH TRIO

Young Fathers have always existed left-of-centre but only a couple of steps shy of the mainstream. A 2014 Mercury Prize win for decidedly strange, scrappy soul debut 'Dead' didn't catapult them towards all-out stardom. Nor did a spot on Danny Boyle's 2017 *T2 Trainspotting* soundtrack, or the more chiselled and streamlined 2015 LP 'White Men Are Black Men Too'. But the message around third album 'Cocoa Sugar' is that it's a more linear

version of the beat-driven, homemade pop they've been sporting for half a decade; a final shift to more familiar, crowd-pleasing territory.

The reality is that Young Fathers couldn't sound straightforward and by-the-numbers if their career depended on it. Every bit of their output

– spanning back to early mixtapes 'Tape One' and 'Tape Two' – shares the same spirit: music that's in-your-face, rough around the edges and uncompromising. They've always made bracing pop built from scrapheap parts, and 'Cocoa Sugar' is no different. All three members alternate between raps, chants and honeyed

vocals, often shouting over each other like they're scuffling over the same microphone. African rhythms – spanning from Alloysious Massaquoi's Liberia-via-Ghana upbringing, and the Nigerian roots of Kayus Bankole – are set against wobbling synths, Graham 'G' Hastings' toy-shop percussion and looped piano notes. It's a signature sound entirely belonging to them, so why mess with a proven formula?

If they've streamlined anything, however, it's their ability to express fire and rage against the powers that be. Young Fathers have always had a cause to rally against (they once banned *The Sun* and *Daily Mail* from red-carpet interviews because of their discriminatory views) and 'Cocoa Sugar' began being pieced together in

the wake of 2016's Trump victory, so there's plenty of ammo for their frustration. But instead of coming off preachy, the trio's politics is expressed by looking at the bigger picture. 'In My View' is a power-hungry standout – the sound of royals lording it up, consuming "*fine wine and foie gras*" with no concern for the common man. 'Wow' is a dread-ridden critique of class and consumer culture, and 'Border Girl' is a more subtle take on modern woes than its title might suggest. In that sense, 'Cocoa Sugar' is like an angst-ridden teenager finally realising why they're so angry.

But frankly, Young Fathers shouldn't need to simmer down or spoon-feed what they do to gain popularity or make a better living. They've made it this far by being unlike any other band

in the country, equally motivated by writing great pop songs and sounding completely alien. 'Cocoa Sugar' isn't a filtered version of what came before. Instead, it cements their status as riled-up oddballs determined to reinvent the wheel. **Jamie Milton**

Best track

'HOLY GHOST'

A neat summary of what Young Fathers do best: playful, rage-filled pop made by instruments that could have been found in a skip.

Young Fathers (l-r): Kayus Bankole, Alloysious Massaquoi, Graham 'G' Hastings



Masterstroke

One of modern indie's most iconic guitarists finds new life in his family history

ALBERT HAMMOND JR

Francis Trouble



DEATH IDENTITY FUN

NEAR-DEATH experiences.

The oblivion of heartbreak.

Getting royally, transcendently high. Musicians

have long cited numerous different life events as provoking them to really consider who they are. Albert Hammond Jr's own catalyst is slightly more unusual than that. In 1979, his mother miscarried his twin brother Francis, unaware at the time that Albert was still growing inside her. A few months later, he was born alongside a lone reminder of the baby he'd briefly shared her womb with – a fingernail.

The guitarist had long been aware of that first half of the story, but only recently discovered the existence of that small piece of his sibling. He says the news helped him find his "lost persona" in Francis – and later become more himself – and it was after that that his fourth solo album really



began to take shape.

What is that lost persona?

From the sound of 'Francis Trouble', it belongs to a hopeless romantic, a straight-talking deep-thinker, and an

adventurer driven by lust, among other things.

"I saw you as someone I wanted to trust / I saw you as everyone I wanted to f**k,"

Albert barks on the frenetic

surf-rock of 'ScreamER'.

On 'Strangers' he's more contemplative, thinking aloud, "How strange the feeling to be strangers / Who strain for feeling".

Despite a situation some might consider sad or dark being the glue behind it, 'Francis Trouble' is a bright blast of radiant, prismatic indie rock. More surprisingly still, it's Albert's most fun record yet, hurtling along on his trademark zipping guitar lines. It has its gloomier moments, like the jagged 'Tea For Two', but for the most part the mood is set to exuberant. Musically, the aforementioned 'Strangers' sounds like a surreal stroll through The Beatles' Pepperland, while 'Dvsl' is a howling, high-spirited jaunt.

Over the years, Albert has taken on a few personas: the impossibly cool New Yorker with The Strokes, the cinematic indie sweetheart on his 2006 debut 'Yours To Keep', for example. As it turns out, larger-than-life, playful Albert is the one that suits him best. **Rhian Daly**

Best track

'SCREAMER'

An unholy combination of urgent punk delivery and sweet melodies so sunny you could catch a tan.





The American dream

The Talking Heads icon uses optimism – and eccentricity – to bandage the world's ills

DAVID BYRNE
American Utopia



IN THE OPENING weeks of 2018, David Byrne went on tour. Not with his live show, but with a presentation. From New York to Milan, he conducted lectures under the banner Reasons To Be Cheerful. Those sessions were about spreading optimism; in a world where depressing news is never far away, Byrne spotlighted the positive things humans are doing, progressive initiatives in areas from technology to transport. Practical ideas that are improving the world. The point is: in these dispiriting times, the 65-year-old still believes in hope and, more importantly, is encouraging people to do the same.

It's clear, then, that 'American Utopia' isn't a sarcastic title for the former Talking Heads man's first solo album in 14 years. It neither points and laughs at the present mess, nor claims to map the future. Instead, in its own (abstract) way, it confronts the Big Questions: everything from 'How did we get into this mess?' to 'Can we start over?'

If that sounds about as fun as *Peston On Sunday*, fear not: it never wallows in those quandaries because, well, it's a David Byrne album. Which is to say, it's melodic, goofy and highly quirky.

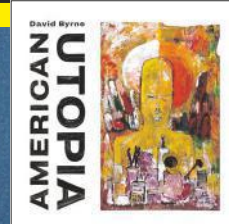
Take, for example, the lyrics from 'Every Day Is A Miracle' – a song that has a sunny chorus that sounds like UB40: "Cockroach might eat Mona Lisa / The Pope don't mean s**t to a dog / And elephants don't read newspapers / And the kiss of a chicken is hot". Figure that out.

It's an album packed with Byrne's trademark eccentricity, with

the odd accessible moment. The delightful 'Everybody's Coming To My House', written with long-term collaborator Brian Eno and featuring Sampha, is the best of those.

For the Talking Heads traditionalists, the closest thing here is 'It's Not Dark Up Here'. Elsewhere, 'Doing The Right Thing' has a tantalisingly banging outro and 'This Is That' is a beautiful, theatrical ballad. "The mind is a soft-boiled potato," he sings at one point. Coming from anybody else that'd be ridiculous. From Byrne, it not only sounds like a reasonable observation, but also kind of profound.

Greg Cochrane



STRANGE & TRUE

David Byrne is an avid cyclist and once designed a range of bike racks installed across New York.

Thrills and chills

Gutsy, gripping and, in the end, horrifying

YOU WERE NEVER REALLY HERE

15 Joaquin Phoenix, Ekaterina Samsonov



HORROR PSYCHOLOGY VIOLENCE

LYNNE RAMSAY'S LAST film, 2011's *We Need To Talk About Kevin*, explored a mother's struggle to bond with her son who grows up to become a serial killer. But this muscular follow-up, a thriller about a deeply disturbed hitman, feels even more chilling. Joaquin Phoenix brings a brutish physicality to antihero Joe, a traumatised American war veteran who now works in the underworld. In a series of flashbacks, Ramsay gives us breadcrumbs to piece together bits of Joe's psychology: we see his mother hiding from his violent father, and Joe watching a child being murdered during the Gulf War. These scarring experiences appear to have left him detached and isolated, though he clearly loves his mother (*Orange Is The New Black*'s Judith Roberts). Joe seems in control of his bleakly functional life until he's hired to

find Nina (impressive child actress Ekaterina Samsonov), a politician's daughter who's been kidnapped and imprisoned at a brothel for wealthy paedophiles.

It's a grisly premise which keeps getting grislier. Ramsay ratchets up the tension by refusing to explain too much. The film isn't just viscerally disgusting because of its blood, guns and gut punches – it's also progressively unsettling because we're never really sure what's going on. A fantastic score from Radiohead's Jonny Greenwood underlines the menace, but Ramsay daringly slips in a few moments of light relief. A scene in which Joe and a heavy he's taken out sing Charlene's schmaltzy 'I've Never Been To Me' provides a much-needed gasp of air before the horrifying finale.

Anyone without a cast-iron stomach will find parts of *You Were Never Really Here* difficult to watch. But because Ramsay has crafted such a gutsy and gripping thriller, you'll be willing yourself not to look away for too long. **Nick Levine**



FOR FANS OF



TAXI DRIVER

WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT KEVIN

Nina (Ekaterina Samsonov) and Joe (Joaquin Phoenix)



The Ryans (l-r): Carly (Anne Winters), Brent (Nicolas Cage), Josh (Zackary Arthur) and Kendall (Selma Blair)

Think of the kids

Nic Cage is in berserker mode in this really quite silly black comedy

MOM AND DAD

15 Nicolas Cage, Selma Blair, Anne Winters



COMEDY DARK PREPOSTEROUS

HOW MUCH YOU ENJOY *Mom And Dad* will probably entirely come down to your feelings on Nicolas Cage. If you find him sometimes a little over the top, this won't be for you. He's on berserker setting here. No line is spoken when it can be shouted, with accompanying tics and flailing arms. Every silence is there to be filled, loudly. His performance is not out of step with the movie, which matches him for enthusiasm, absurdity and absolute disdain for subtlety.

Cage and Selma Blair play a typical suburban couple with two children, a stropky teenager, Carly (Anne Winters), and a pre-teen, Josh (Zackary Arthur). For unexplained reasons, every parent in the neighbourhood suddenly turns on their children and

gruesomely kills them. Strangled. Suffocated. Squished with hammers. Young bodies are piling up all over the place and Carly and Josh look like they're going to be next. The movie turns in to a bloodier version of *Home Alone* as Mum and Dad try to murder their kids and their kids try to outwit them and, if necessary, kill them first.

It's an icky, interesting idea for a black comedy, but it never bears the fruit it could. Writer-director Brian Taylor (one half of the team behind *Crank*) gets across his satirical idea of parents unleashing their private occasional wish that they'd never had kids, but not in a way that's ever particularly funny. He mostly squirms away from the bloodier violence, because it involves children, so it doesn't have the gross, gory comedy of something like Peter Jackson's *Braindead* or Sam Raimi's *The Evil Dead*. Frantic editing tries to make potentially comically absurd scenes frightening, but instead confuses them. A scene of a woman giving birth to a child, whom she then wants to kill the second she becomes a mother, is a really clever idea but in reality it's mostly screaming.

Uncomfortable rather than entertaining. It's left to Cage to try to turn the film into a gonzo comedy by being as mad as possible. If you enjoy his wildest excess as entertainment in itself, fill your boots. Otherwise, it's a whole lot of shrieking about nothing. **Olly Richards**

STRANGE & TRUE

Nic Cage says this is his favourite film of the last 10 years. Not *Kick-Ass*. Not *Trespass*. This.

Under THE RADAR

YOU HEARD IT HERE FIRST

Goat Girl

All hail the lo-fi urban country sounds from south London's coolest gang

LET'S GET THE SUPER-weird name out of the way first. Brixton guitar gang Goat Girl are named in tribute to legendary comic Bill Hicks and his twisted alter-ego Goat Boy. "He was quite satirical and we also have a tongue-in-cheek way of looking at the world," says singer Lottie, who's releasing the band's awesome, self-titled debut album alongside her comrades in twanging south London country scuzz rock: Naima, Elly and Rosy. We grabbed Lottie for a chat ahead of the record's release on the Rough Trade label on April 6.

What did you bond over when the band first got together?

Lottie: "I remember watching *Dig!* So the Brian Jonestown Massacre was quite a big one, and people like Silver Jews and the Country Teasers – when we heard them we changed our tune and how we were writing music. We weren't scared of saying really outrageous things anymore."

Can you hear the sound of London in your music?

"Definitely. There's social awareness and social commentary in our music because of the crazy town we're living in."

There are 19 tracks in 40 minutes on the album...

"We had so many different ideas! We try and fit different things into one song, but it doesn't work. Also we get quite bored! We recorded the foundations of each track in one day last summer."

There's a cover of 'Tomorrow' from the Buggy Malone soundtrack in the mix...

"I think *Buggy Malone* is probably one of the best musicals! It wasn't a conscious thing – we were in the studio and I just started randomly playing these chords and singing the song over the top. We were also trying to cover Britney Spears' 'Toxic' for a bit, but it didn't ever come to a finish."

The song 'Creep' is about dealing with a gross man on the train. Was that based on a real incident?

"Yeah, he was making me feel really uncomfortable, but also it's a song that says don't be afraid – you can smash their head in as well."
Leonie Cooper

DETAILS

From: South London

Buy: 'Goat Girl' is out April 6

Live: Deaf Institute, Manchester (March 31), The Cluny, Newcastle (April 9), Sneaky Pete's, Edinburgh (April 10)

STRANGE & TRUE

Goat Girl signed their record deal on Brexit day. Let's hope their future is mighty brighter than the UK's.

Best track

'THROW ME A BONE'

Menacing and moody, this sinister two-and-a-half minutes sounds like PJ Harvey swimming across the River Styx. Killer.

FOR FANS OF



PHOTOS: HOLLY WHITTAKER



"There's social awareness in our music"

L-r: Naima, Elly, Lottie, Rosy





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All rise

Rita Ora is one of the star names playing brand-new Essex festival RiZE

2017 WAS THE FINAL YEAR of V Festival – the 21-year-old August extravaganza that hopped between Chelmsford's Hylands Park and South Staffordshire's Weston Park. For those mourning the Essex site, there's no need to flick a V: out of the old festival's ashes has risen RiZE, a new fest for 2018, with headline sets from Stereophonics and the VO5 NME Awards 2018's Godlike Genius himself – Liam Gallagher. Elsewhere crowds can take in performances from earnest south London rapper Dave, rising pop star Raye, V veterans Manic Street Preachers, and the 'Anywhere' hitmaker Rita Ora – plus many more.

FESTIVAL

RIZE FESTIVAL

Hylands Park,
Chelmsford
August 17-18

LINE-UP HIGHLIGHTS:

Liam Gallagher, Rita Ora, Dave, Bastille, Manic Street Preachers, MNEK, Raye, Years & Years, Rag'n'Bone Man, Stereophonics, Tom Grennan, James Bay, Circa Waves

TICKETS: From £59.50

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DROWNED IN SOUND

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CHVRCHES J HUS BUGZY MALONE FOUR TET SAMPHA

CARL COX ERIC PRYDZ ANNIE MAC SOLOMUN MARCO CAROLA MK ANDY C

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CIRCOLOCO PRESENT JAMIE JONES ^{B2B} SETH TROXLER ^{B2B} THE MARTINEZ BROTHERS

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ADAM BEYER NINA KRAVIZ JON HOPKINS ^{LIVE} BICEP ^{LIVE & DJ SET} JOSEPH CAPRIATI

GREEN VELVET HOT SINCE 82 THE BLACK MADONNA ^{PRESENTS WE STILL BELIEVE} JACKMASTER

SIGRID STEFFLON DON MARIBOU STATE THE BLAZE IAMDDDB KELELA

EATS EVERYTHING KÖLSCH DAVID RODIGAN ^{PRESENTS RAM JAM} RICHY AHMED SOLARDO

MOTOR CITY DRUM ENSEMBLE MABEL EARL SWEATSHIRT NOT3S RAYE

SOUL II SOUL YOUSEF STEVE LAWLER CAMELPHAT ALAN FITZPATRICK

DENIS SULTA MIDLAND KINK PEGGY GOU MALL GRAB ARTWORK

MY NU LENG TQD ^{FT ROBAL T. DJ Q & FLAVA D} SHY FX GOLDIE ^{12-14 SET} FRICTION CASISDEAD

YOUNG MARCO HONEY DIJON SHANTI CELESTE KIM ANN FOXMAN CRISTOPH

HYPE & HAZARD DONAE'O LEVELZ CRUCAST ^{FT SKEPSIS DARKZY, NOTION, MR VIRGO & BRU-C} SASASAS HAMMER

VIRGIL ABLOH JOE KAY (SOULECTION) ROSS FROM FRIENDS ^{LIVE} CONFIDENCE MAN

MNEK DERMOT KENNEDY JESSE JAMES SOLOMON JAMZ SUPERNOVA HAAI

DETLEF ICARUS RANDALL YOTTO MELLA DEE OR:LA LAUREN LANE MELÉ

BONTAN TONI VARGA CHANNEL ONE BARELY LEGAL SOSSA LAUREN LO SUNG CHIMPO

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DMA'S

Sydney garage-rockers

APRIL

Fri 27 Rock City, Nottingham. **Sat 28** Academy, Manchester. **Sun 29** Northumbria University, Newcastle.

MAY

Tue 1 O2 Forum, London. **Fri 4** Tramshed, Cardiff. **Mon 7** Junction, Cambridge. **Tue 8** Waterfront, Norwich. **Wed 9** Beckett Students' Union, Leeds. **Thu 10** O2 Academy, Bristol. **Mon 21** O2 Academy, Bristol. **Tue 22** Barrowlands, Glasgow. **Wed 23** Alhambra, Dunfermline. **Fri 25** O2 Institute, Birmingham. **Sat 26** Plug, Sheffield.

TELL ME MORE:

Following dreamy singles 'Dawning' and 'In The Air', the band release second album 'For Now' on the day their UK tour begins.

TICKETS: £15-£16.50

ON SALE NOW

DVSN

Canadian R&B duo

MARCH

Thu 15 Academy, Manchester. **Fri 16** O2 Academy, Birmingham. **Sat 17** O2 Forum, London.

TELL ME MORE: These two are signed to Drake's label, OVO Sound, and guested on his 'Views' track, 'Faithful'.

TICKETS: £18-£22.50



FICKLE FRIENDS

THE WEEK'S BEST GIGS

CARO

Fri 9 The Albert, Brighton. **Sat 10** Clwb Ifor Bach, Cardiff.

COSMO

SHELDRAKE
Thu 15 The Boileroom, Guildford.

CUPCAKKE

Tue 13 Dome, London.

FEEDER

Sat 10 Academy, Manchester. **Sun 11** Barrowlands, Glasgow. **Tue 13** O2 Academy & Underground, Leeds. **Wed 14** O2 Academy, Birmingham.

FICKLE FRIENDS

Sat 10 Chinnerys, Southend. **Sun 11** Epic Studios, Norwich. **Mon 12** O2 Academy, Oxford. **Wed 14** Wedgewood Rooms, Southsea.

JAKE BUGG

Fri 9 New Theatre, Oxford. **Sun 11** Guildhall, Southampton. **Mon 12** The Great Hall, Exeter. **Tue 13** Dome, Brighton.

JAMES BAY

Thu 15 Electric Brixton, London.

JUNGLEPUSSY

Sun 11 Birthday, London.

H.E.R.

Fri 9 KOKO, London. **Sat 10** O2 Academy, Birmingham.

HOOKWORMS

Fri 9 The White Hotel, Manchester.

INSECURE MEN

Fri 9 Thekla, Bristol. **Sat 10** Bodega, Nottingham. **Sun 11** Broadcast, Glasgow. **Tue 13** Think Tank?, Newcastle. **Wed 14** Soup Kitchen,

Manchester. **Thu 15** Hare & Hounds.

KING NO-ONE

Fri 9 Welly Club, Hull. **Sat 10** Fibbers, York. **Wed 14** Camden Assembly, London. **Thu 15** Leadmill, Sheffield.

MAHALIA

Sat 10 Castle & Falcon, Birmingham. **Sun 11** Arts Centre, Norwich. **Tue 13** Band On The Wall, Manchester. **Wed 14** & **Thu 15** Omeara, London.

MAJID

JORDAN
Fri 9 O2 Institute, Birmingham.

MIST

Fri 9 Rock City, Nottingham. **Sat 10** O2 Academy, Leicester. **Sun 11** O2 Academy, Bristol. **Thu 15** O2 Forum, London.

NICK HAKIM

Thu 15 Brudenell Social Club, Leeds.

ONRA

Wed 14 The Fleece, Bristol.

PEGGY GOU

Sun 11 Oval Space, London.

PRETTY VICIOUS

Sat 10 Clwb Ifor Bach, Cardiff. **Mon 12** Lending Room, Leeds. **Tue 13** The Louisiana, Bristol. **Wed 14** The Joiners, Southampton. **Thu 15** The Borderline, London.

RAE MORRIS

Thu 15 O2 Academy, Newcastle.

REJJIE SNOW

Fri 9 Motion, Bristol. **Sat 10** Lemon Grove, Exeter. **Wed 14** Roundhouse, London.

SIGRID

Mon 12 Concorde 2, Brighton. **Wed 14** O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire, London.

SIR WAS

Wed 14 The Lexington, London. **Thu 15** Headrow House, Leeds.

SOPHIE

Tue 13 Heaven, London.

STEALING SHEEP

Fri 9 The Arts Centre, Ormskirk.

STEFFLON DON

Fri 9 O2 Academy, Birmingham. **Sat 10** Academy, Manchester.

SUPERORGANISM

Fri 9 The Haunt, Brighton. **Sun 11** CCA, Glasgow. **Mon 12** Belgrave Music Hall, Leeds.

SUSANNE

SUNDFØR
Sun 11 Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh. **Tue 13** Lantern (Colston Hall), Bristol. **Wed 14** Glee Club, Birmingham. **Thu 15** The Stoller Hall, Manchester.

TOM MISC

Fri 9 Roundhouse, London. **Sun 11** O2 Institute, Birmingham.

TUNE-YARDS

Tue 13 The Sage, Gateshead. **Wed 14** Liquid Rooms, Edinburgh.

WAKA FLOCKA FLAME

Wed 14 XOYO, London.

WILKINSON

Sat 10 Watring Hole, Perranporth. **Thu 15** USU, Loughborough.

SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE

Moby

DJ, producer, activist

THE FIRST SONG I REMEMBER HEARING

**CREEDENCE
CLEARWATER
REVIVAL**

Proud Mary

"I have this very distinct memory of being in the car with my mom around 1969, and 'Proud Mary' came on the radio. I refused to get out of the car until the song had ended, and I think at that point my mom should've figured out that I was going to spend my life as a musician – and that I was also probably an addict."

THE FIRST SONG I FELL IN LOVE WITH

CW MCCALL

Convoy

"It was the first single I ever bought. It was such a huge single that they made a movie based on it. I bought the single and – I'm not exaggerating when I say this – I listened to it 40 times in a row."

THE FIRST ALBUM I EVER BOUGHT

GEORGE MARTIN

Live and Let Die OST

"I just bought it for the song 'Live And Let Die'. It amazed me because it was so deceptive – it starts off so innocent and then it becomes one of the darkest, most evil songs ever recorded."

THE FIRST GIG I EVER WENT TO

YES

*Madison Square
Garden, 1979*

"My mom dated local musicians so she dragged me to local nightclubs to hear whatever band her boyfriends were playing in. I was 13, but the concert itself wasn't the most exciting part about it – it was the fact that it was in New York City on a school night surrounded by older kids smoking pot."

THE SONG THAT REMINDS ME OF HOME

ACE FREHLEY

New York Groove

"I grew up 45 minutes from Manhattan so I revered New York City. I hated the suburbs where I lived and all I wanted was to be there. Then when I moved back to New York, especially when I started drinking and doing a lot of drugs, that song became my anthem for a good night out. So it was both aspirational from when I was growing up and utterly debauched from when I actually lived there."

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MORE SOUNDTRACKS

THE SONG I WISH I'D WRITTEN

DAVID BOWIE

Heroes

"Every time I hear it, I love it, and I'm happy that I was able to become friends with David Bowie. We did an acoustic version of it together at Carnegie Hall and one of my greatest memories was when we rehearsed in my living room, just the two of us, me playing guitar and him singing."

THE SONG I DO AT KARAOKE

50 CENT

In Da Club

"I think there's something funny about a skinny middle-aged white guy doing hip-hop songs."

THE SONG I CAN'T GET OUT OF MY HEAD

DONNA SUMMER

MacArthur Park

"A friend of mine talked me into joining a dating site and 'MacArthur Park' is the song that I have for my chosen song on the website. Sadly no one has commented on it – I keep waiting for someone to say what an inspired choice of music it is before I realise how old I am and most people don't know the song."

THE SONG I CAN NO LONGER LISTEN TO

BOB MARLEY

Three Little Birds

"I've heard some of those songs so many times in the worst context. 'Three Little Birds' is such a beautiful song but I've heard it in terrible bars and at frat parties, so as much as I love Bob Marley, his music was embraced and adopted by the people I really loathed growing up."

THE SONG I WANT PLAYED AT MY FUNERAL

CAT STEVENS

Morning Has Broken

"That was the song my mom had played at her funeral. I was too hungover and I missed it, so it would be an acknowledgement of that. Unsurprisingly, I'm sober now. It's clearly a sign that things aren't working out when you sleep through your mom's funeral."

Moby's new album
'Everything Was
Beautiful, And Nothing
Hurt' is out now



The wisdom
of the NME
archives

FABRIZIO MORETTI

The Strokes

March 11, 2006

"Anyone who said we were going to be the next big thing – we proved them wrong! Old ladies don't know our name."



INTERVIEW: LARRY BARTLETT