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# NIGHTSHIFT

Oxford's Music Magazine

Free every  
month.  
Issue 127  
February  
2006

## The Young Knives

*The Geek  
Shall  
Inherit  
The Earth  
- Interview  
inside*

Also inside this issue:  
The best local music news and reviews

plus  
Six pages of local gigs

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# NEWS

**Nightshift: PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU**  
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**THIS YEAR'S TRUCK FESTIVAL** takes place over the weekend of Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> / Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> July at Hill Farm, Steventon. This will be the ninth Truck Festival and as well as the usual eclectic mix of bands and DJs, organisers are promising a number of improvements on past years, including camping facilities for the Sunday night as well as a wider range of food on sale. Last year's Truck sold out well in advance, with a much higher than usual percentage of out-of-town music fans making the trip to Steventon as the event's reputation grows. As such, tickets for Truck 2006 will go on sale to local fans a month earlier than national sales. Tickets this year are £40 and are on sale from February 1<sup>st</sup>, without booking fee, from The Zodiac, Polar Bear Records, Windjammer Music (Didcot), Dawson's (Abingdon), The Music Box (Wallingford), Record Savings (Banbury) and Rapture (Witney). Regular ticket and line-up details are available at [www.truckfestival.org](http://www.truckfestival.org). Last year's festival, headlined by The Magic Numbers and Biffy Clyro, raised over £40,000 for The MacMillan Trust, Amnesty, The Pakistani Earthquake Appeal and local charities.

**THE PURPLE TURTLE** has been confirmed as the sixth venue for this year's Oxford Punt. The annual showcase of the best new bands and singers in Oxfordshire, organised by Nightshift, takes place on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May, across six venues in Oxford city centre. Other venues already confirmed are Borders, Jongleurs, The City Tavern, The Wheatsheaf and The Cellar.

Any bands or solo artists wishing to take part in what has long been one of the highlights of the Oxford music calendar, can submit demos, clearly marked The Punt, to Nightshift at PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU. The only rules for consideration are that all acts must be from Oxfordshire, be unsigned and have some gigging experience. Deadline for demos is the 15<sup>th</sup> March.

As ever there will be a limited number (100) of all-venue Punt Passes, priced £7 each (plus

booking fee, where applicable). Passes are on sale from Polar Bear Records on Cowley Road or online from [oxfordmusic.net](http://oxfordmusic.net), from February 1<sup>st</sup>.

**THE DOWNLOAD** is set to continue to broadcast local music for the foreseeable future after a successful first year on BBC Radio Oxford 95.1fm. The weekly show, which goes out between 6 and 7pm every Saturday, is set to branch out from this month with the first of a series of monthly live broadcast gigs in conjunction with The Club That Cannot Be Named at the Zodiac. The first gig takes place on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> February, with sets from Belarus, A Silent Film, 100 Bullets Back and Where I'm Calling From. There are also plans to release a compilation CD of acoustic tracks recorded live for the show by artists such as Goldrush, Fell City Girl, Joff Winks, Richard Walters and Ally Craig. In another planned change to the show, gig reviewer Suzie Healey will be taking over more of the presenting duties, alongside Download host Tim Bearder and David Gillyeat.



**YOUTH MOVIE SOUNDTRACK STRATEGIES** return to local action next month with their first Oxford gig in a year. The post-rock champions play the Zodiac on



**MOGWAI** lead an exciting line-up of acts coming to Oxford over the next few months. The post-rock innovators play at Brookes University Union on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> April. Tickets are on sale now, priced £14 from [wegottickets.com](http://wegottickets.com). Also appearing at Brookes are Brighton's retro hip hop starkets **The Go! Team**, who play at the Union on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> March and American lo-fi heroes **Death Cab For Cutie** on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March. Recently booked gigs for the Zodiac include East London rapper **Kano** on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> March, awesome American symphonic rockers **Secret Machines** on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March and cult legends **Sleater Kinney** on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> April. Tickets available from the box office on 01865 420042



*Morrissey makes his first live appearance in Oxford for over 20 years when he plays at the New Theatre on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> May. The pop legend last played in town at the same venue with The Smiths, back in 1985. The gig at the New Theatre is part of Moz's most extensive UK tour in years, to promote forthcoming album, 'Ringleader Of The Tormentors', which is released on 3<sup>rd</sup> April. Tickets for the New Theatre show are on sale now from the venue's credit card booking line - 0870 606 3500 or in person from the box office in George Street.*

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March with support from Tired Irie and Foals. Tickets, priced, £6, are available from the box office (01865 420042). Youth Movies are currently recording their new album, due for release on Fierce Panda later this year.

**BELARUS** release their debut single this month. 'Standing In The Right Place' is out on Precious Records on February 20<sup>th</sup>. The band, formerly known as Spacehopper, are being managed by Andy Ross, the man who discovered Blur and founded Food Records in the 90s. The new single was produced by Dave Eringa, best known for his work with Ash and The Manic Street Preachers. Belarus play the Zodiac on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> February. Tickets, priced £5, are available from the box office (01865 420042).

**WITNEY GETS A NEW LIVE MUSIC VENUE** next month with the opening of Ignition at Witney United's Marriot Stadium. Ignition is a 200-capacity venue, complete with PA and lighting system and promoters Rich Wickson and Nath Payne are looking for Oxfordshire bands to play the opening night on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March. Initially at least Ignition will be a free-entry venue. Bands interested in playing should call 07812 948 965 or email [info@ignition-venue.com](mailto:info@ignition-venue.com).

**JIM REID** has rearranged his Oxford gig for Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March at the Cellar. Jim's gig there late last year was cancelled after his mother died. Reid was the singer in 80s indie legends The Jesus and Mary Chain. Advance tickets are available from the venue.

**G&D's ICE CREAM CAFÉS** in St Aldates and Little Clarendon Street are keen to play unsigned local bands' CDs instore. Acts can drop their CDs off in either of the cafés.

A Quiet Word with

# The Young Knives

## “I WAS BEGINNING TO GET

pretty sick of gigging then turning up to work feeling like shit. Now I can go down to the Coldroom rehearsal studio and feel like shit, or sit in a meeting with our accountant. It's so much more rock and roll.”

## HOUSE OF LORDS, BASS

player and singer with the Young Knives, and a young man better known to his mum as Thomas, is talking to Nightshift about quitting his job to concentrate full time on the band he formed with his brother Henry Dartnall and drummer friend Oliver

Asked five years ago.

Having become firm favourites on the Oxford music scene since their relocation from their childhood home of Ashby de la Zouche, The Young Knives have been earning themselves an enviable reputation in the music industry and national press since teaming up with ultra-hip label Transgressive last year and releasing the 'Junkie Music Makes My Heart Beat Faster' EP, produced by Gang Of Four guitarist Andy Gill. Attention towards the band has gradually risen over the past twelve months to the point where they're being tipped as the band to watch this year by journals as diverse as *The Guardian*, *The Sunday Times* and *NME*.

## FOLLOWING ON FROM LAST

autumn's acclaimed 'The Decision', The Young Knives release a new single on Transgressive this month, 'Here Comes The Rumour Mill', with their second album due in the summer. With the band's career in the ascendancy and gig commitments coming thicker and faster, it was finally time for the three friends to make the break from 9-5 drudgery and live the dream, a move that singer and guitarist Henry describes as “fucking wicked”.

OLIVER: “Me and Henry left the office on our last day to rapturous applause but I think they were just pleased to see the back of us. We would always turn up late the morning after a gig, stinking of booze and then pretend to work. Having no day job has enabled us to concentrate more on gigging and rehearsals but also allowed us to drink more and stay up later.”

## 2005 WAS QUITE A YEAR FOR THE

band; as well as the two releases on Transgressive, the band embarked on a series of national tours, including a month-long stint with fellow rising starlets The Rumble Strips, and played at V Festival, featuring on Channel 4's televised highlights of the event. 2006, meanwhile, looks likely to see the band's star rise even higher.



*The Young Knives get used to comfortable living. L-r: Henry, Oliver, House.*

HOUSE: “I think the highlight of 2005 for me was either playing at V Festival or at the Barbican with Gang of Four. Playing in front of those size of audiences is a really surreal experience. Also going on bigger tours has been really great. I've really enjoyed not having to go back to my house and see all the plates that need washing.”

With the thrill of so much expectation on a band, comes pressure, doesn't it?

HENRY: “I don't feel that pressure really. I mean we can only do what we can do and the rest is up to the gods, or something. I mean when someone says we are the ones to watch, hopefully that makes people watch us, and if they do watch us then hopefully they will like some of the songs we write. If they don't then there isn't much we can do about that. Anyway haven't we been the ones to watch since 2002? I am hoping we will still be the ones to watch in 2015; 'Will this be their year?'”

## MUCH IS BEING MADE IN THE

national press about the new wave of eccentricity in British bands. For their part, The Young Knives have been name-checked alongside Maximo Park and former labelmates The Mystery Jets as well as being singled out as the avant garde of sports jacket chic. How do they feel about such labelling, and particularly that most uncomfortably ambivalent term, eccentric?

HOUSE: “I am always a bit weirded out by reviews that talk in great detail about our image. It doesn't seem all that important. We are definitely not avant garde and I don't really like the term eccentric, it makes me think of people in Oxford riding round on an antique bicycle with a white Panama hat on and a French stick in the basket. It's like they're screaming, 'Look at me I am goofy and odd-ball like Quentin Crisp or Lovejoy!'. Hopefully we are interesting musically and people recognise that we are trying to do something a bit different. I

think avant garde bands get reviews in *The Wire* and no-one listens to them.”

OLIVER: “The funniest was the *NME* saying we looked like paedophiles. Sorry, I must have missed the meeting that set this as the standard for acceptable journalism. I think generally it's dangerous to label bands, in our case the sport jacket look. I mean you might really hate sports jackets, be put off our music and miss something really special.”

Are there any other bands around at the moment that you feel particular affinity with?

HENRY: “Most of the bands that we play with. We are all in

similar boats so there is always something to talk about. We spent 30 days on the road with The Rumble Strips. I think they are amazing and I would definitely buy their records, which is the most important thing, isn't it? But their sound is not one that is successful yet; I mean there is no one in or near the charts like them so they have to carve their own furrow. But hopefully the time is right for original music; then again let's all keep listening to the shit people tell us is good.”

Do you feel that the time you've had beneath the glare of the national press has allowed you to become the band you want to be?

HENRY: “We have sort of always been the band that we have wanted to be but we always want to be better. None of this is really down to the national press because they don't effect how we write music, well not that I am conscious of anyway. The rewarding part of being in a band is definitely recording, writing and performing. Of course the number of people that watch us doing these things is increased by press exposure so I am probably talking horse shit.”

HOUSE: “You aren't this time, Henry. We have always written songs together and many of the ideas come from just jamming together. I think it would be very difficult for us to start writing songs thinking, 'we better make sure this one's a hit single.' Plus we became aware very quickly that most of what is written about bands in the national press is a lot of old shit. The journalists have probably never even seen the bands and have just read the press release or what someone in another magazine has written about them.”

## THE YOUNG KNIVES SHOULD BE

familiar to any regular follower of Oxford music. Since they arrived on the local scene as Ponyclub they've thrilled audiences with both their music and their increasingly entertaining stage presence. For the uninitiated, The Young Knives' sound is a tightly-wound, effervescent

collision of great guitar pop music – Supergrass, The Pixies, Adam and the Ants – and some of the more bizarre gems of the New Wave movement, notably Pere Ubu, Sparks and Gang Of Four. Songs like ‘Coastguard’ or ‘The Decision’ are oblique, often surreal vignettes about strange happenings in a mundane world. Their lyrics are littered with freakish, incongruous imagery (most famously, horses in the New Forest running in their Sunday best). As much as the music and their gently caustic humour, it’s what marks The Young Knives out as something wholly special.

HENRY: “I like odd lyrics, ones that make you notice the words, so it’s a bit of both. I like to steal things from conversations and things I see written in shop windows. So we are like lyrical wombles. There is a line in one of our songs that goes ‘we were fighting on the drive under the security light’, which I got from my old boss at work; he had a punch up on his drive with a neighbour who was being too loud. He came in to work in all his business clothes with gravel in the palms of his hands. It just made me laugh.”

What drives you and influences you now as a band and how much has that changed since you started out?

HENRY: “Showing off & no.”

OLIVER: “I think we’ve always enjoyed writing music and this definitely pushes us on. If it ever became a chore I’m pretty sure the band would implode. Presently we’re all gearing up to the next single and then album release, which we’re really excited about. It’s exciting to see the next level we’re all reaching for become a reality. We’ve always been a striving band and I don’t think that will ever change.

HOUSE: “I think we have always done that thing where we listen to music as a band in the car or I’ll hear something and play it to Oliver and we all say, ‘shit, how did they think of that?’ That always inspires us to try and do something better the next time we write a song.”

**‘HERE COMES THE RUMOUR MILL’** is the latest fruit of The Young Knives’ working relationship with producer Andy Gill, which began after the band sent him a demo early last year. As one of the most in-demand producers around, not to mention a member of the recently-reformed Gang Of Four, the name to drop for aspiring young rock bands over the past couple of years, Gill’s association with The Young Knives has only enhanced their critical and popular status.

HOUSE: “Andy was our first choice for a producer and he instantly wanted to do it so there was really no question about doing it with anyone else. He constantly challenges us to think about the songs. Sometimes we will decide that we definitely have it exactly right and sometimes it will change in the studio. A lot of other bands we have met have found this idea really difficult and can’t

understand how we can change something that we have been playing for ages in one way but I have always found it a really positive experience; Like re-wallpapering the front room.”

Transgressive is often thought of as a launch pad label, a bit like Fierce Panda. In its short lifetime the label has launched the careers of The Subways and The Mystery Jets, and more recently Battle and Regina Spektor. Are you sticking with the label or are there plans afoot to go to a major?

HENRY: “They are pretty neat and really enthusiastic. You can’t buy that.”

HOUSE: “Yeah, if they will keep us we are staying. They two guys who run the label are like a young Ant and Dec. If we suggest doing something or write a new song they invariably scream, ‘We love it’, and then run round hugging everyone. It’s quite a positive working environment.”

Before the release of the new single, The Young Knives will play their biggest local headline show to date, upstairs at the Zodiac. Their last Oxford gig downstairs at the Zodiac sold out; how does it feel now coming back to headline upstairs? What are their feelings now about the Oxford music scene, particularly having been out on tour for so much of the last year?

HENRY: “I didn’t know we were playing upstairs until you told me, that is exciting.”

OLIVER: “The Zodiac gig will be our biggest Oxford gig to date so it’s a bit daunting. We want to make sure that it’s a really amazing gig, particularly if it’s someone’s first Young Knives experience. It will be a novelty to be allowed to use the dressing room too – when we’ve supported bands there before we would be half naked in the stairwell out back with people walking through all the time. I think the Oxford music scene is still as vibrant as ever. It’s annoying not being able to go to Oxford gigs as often. Most recently I missed a Foals gig I really wanted to go to as we had to play to some trendy wendy London types.”

**FOR NOW AT LEAST THEN, THE** Young Knives can busy themselves writing and recording the new album and dreaming of imminent fame and fortune. If they could have one thing happen to them as a band, aside from instant fame and fortune, what would it be?

HENRY: “House and Ollie get laid.”

HOUSE: “Henry gets a heroin addiction and me and Ollie get to watch him slowly fade away.”

OLIVER: “Henry would get a haircut and cheer up.”

Maybe they’ll all have their dreams come true. Fame and fortune at least would seem to be the safest bets for now.

**The Young Knives play The Zodiac on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> February. ‘Here Comes The Rumour Mill’ is released on 27<sup>th</sup> February on Transgressive.**

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Fri 10<sup>th</sup> Mike Ellis Blues Band (8.30pm) £3  
Sat 11<sup>th</sup> Tounsi & Raggasaurus (8.30pm) £3  
Sun 12<sup>th</sup> Wittstock Fund-raiser Audio Pollution, Glenda Huish, Nat & Peach + more (7.30pm) £4  
Thu 16<sup>th</sup> Agents of Jane + Nat & Peach (8.30pm) FREE  
Fri 17<sup>th</sup> Headcount + Beelzebozo + Junkie Brush + More (8.30pm) £3  
Sat 18<sup>th</sup> Assassins of Silence + The Mood (8.30pm) £3  
Sun 19<sup>th</sup> Electric Jam (8.00pm) FREE  
Thu 23<sup>rd</sup> Nicholas Lyne + Laima + Jamie Huddleston (8.30pm) FREE  
Fri 24<sup>th</sup> Uniting The Elements + Mary’s Garden (8.30pm) £3  
Sat 25<sup>th</sup> Reservoir Cats (8.30pm) £3  
Sun 26<sup>th</sup> And No Star + Meet Me In St Louis + Wait For Coniston + The Vanity Score + From The Ashes (5pm) £3

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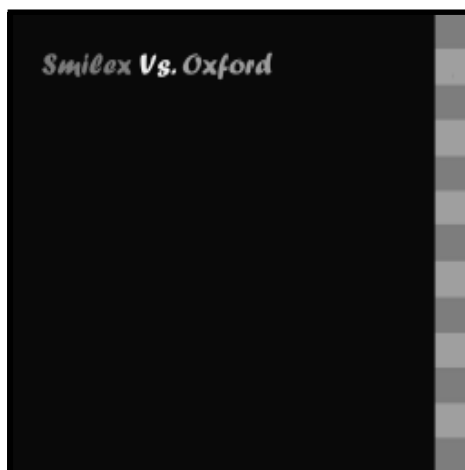
## SMILEX

### **'Smilex Vs Oxford**

*(Quickfix)*

Remix albums are always a minefield, particularly if, like Smilex, you haven't even released a proper album yet. It's all too easy to get a bunch of mates to twiddle about with your songs and then slap each other on the back as you admire your incestuous tomfoolery. Except that Smilex have a pretty substantial line-up of mates.

The dozen remixes offered here come courtesy of The Young Knives, Boywithatoy, The Evenings, Youth Movie Soundtrack Strategies and Sunnyvale Noise Sub-Element amongst others. Maybe not household names, but pretty much the elite of local noise experimentation. And with Smilex's hectic blend of glam and garage rock providing an uncluttered blueprint to work from, the results are pretty decent. While Boywithatoy and The Evenings prefer to tweek the originals a little – the former



adding a glitchy drum&bass sheen to 'Quickfix', while the latter electrofies 'Sex For Sale' – others bludgeon the songs into their own image. Chief amongst these is The Gentleman Distortionist with his dissection of 'Kidz Klub 666' and Sunnyvale's epic, nine-minute remodelling of 'Noize!' into an industrial

cacophony. There are cut-up drum&bass reworkings from DJ Juicy and drone-heavy electronics from The Monroe Transfer, while The Young Knives – who have already covered Smilex's 'Sex For Sale' on 2004's split EP – come on like synth-pop pioneers The Normal as they tackle 'She Won't Get Out Of Bed'. Maybe a little surprisingly, the best remix here comes courtesy of All You Miss, who do some heavy-duty damage to 'Pennies From A Pigskin', a world away from their grunge-pop day jobs.

Taken as a whole, the combination of Smilex's spiky rock and the electro-heavy treatments meted out points more to the likes of Marilyn Manson and Fear Factory than the often poppish originals would ever suggest. The album might be little more than a niche curiosity for local die-hards, but it stands together as a successful experiment. And now, I think it's about bleedin' time they furnished us with a debut album proper.

**Dale Kattack**



## SUPERGRASS

### **'Fin'**

*(Parlophone)*

Supergrass restate their indie credentials with a coloured 7" and download-only single release, the third to be taken from 'Road To Rouen'. Dipped in hazy sunshine and drenched in lysergic delay, it's spaced-out and cut adrift even by the easy-going standards of the album. Not really sure how it'll work as a single, but that's equally the case with the previous two singles. 'Road To Rouen' works best as a mood piece taken as a whole. 'Fin' is intricately palatial, like delicate oriental china, but to work

its pastoral psychedelic magic to full effect, it needs likeminded company, or at least be twenty minutes long. There's barely time to load up a fat one here, never mind let its effect take hold.

**Victoria Waterfield**

## JOFF WINKS BAND

### **'Share My Blues'**

*(JWB)*

The title sounds too much like that great clarion cry of angsty grunge bands the world over: feel my pain. What the world really doesn't need right now is another young man feeling sorry for himself.

In fact Joff Winks doesn't sound too imbued with self pity on his second single, which follows on from airplay on Zane Lowe's Evening Session as well as Xfm and Radio 6 for last summer's debut, 'Someone Else's Words'. And nor should he feel sorry for himself. Because although he's a relative newcomer on the block, Joff sounds like he's been around for years, both in the accomplished songwriting arrangements and the slightly weary style he adopts.

'Share My Blues' is lachrymose but equally uplifting, tending heavily toward wee small hours AOR; it's a bit staid and stilted to be

honest and the b-side, 'Juniper', would have made a far better single, floating where 'Share My Blues' wallows. Pitched somewhere between Steely Dan's poppier moments and Supergrass' more reflective side, it rides on a softly circling keyboard riff with an air of nonchalant 60s folk-rock. That it's over five minutes long, and Joff is already making inroads into radio play perhaps explains why it's tucked away at the back-end of the single, but in an overcrowded market place of self-consciously melancholic songsmiths, the chinks of light 'Juniper' let in will probably take him further than anything.

**Dale Kattack**



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## BLUE KITE

### 'Ways Of Knowing'

(Own Label)

After recruiting local chanteuse Kate Garrett into their ranks, Blue Kite released their third, and best, album last year, 'Resolution', a complex, carefully crafted amalgam of gothic pop, acid-folk and jazz rock. Reports from the band themselves suggest Kate may be on her way out of the band, which will become a more studio-bound project. That would be a shame because if this latest EP proves anything, it's that Kate really is their secret weapon. Pete Lock's reedy voice can't quite stamp its authority on 'Ways Of Knowing', relying on Kate's hushed backing vocals to lend it strength. The song itself wants to be a carefree jazz-pop

tumble but it's too discreet and considered – the flanged guitars too reined in, the jazzy shuffle too scared to really let loose.

Contrast this with a reworked 'Disappointed' from the last album – free-flowing Mariachi horns and a far looser spirit give Kate's warm, strong voice a firmer base from which to soar, while Pete's voice works better as a back-up. Perhaps the problem lies with the band's individual strengths as musicians: it's only when they sound like they're not afraid to let go of their tight grip on arrangements and maybe make mistakes that their spirit really blossoms.

**Dale Kattack**

## BELARUS

### 'Standing In The Right Place'

(Precious)

Having started life as Spacehopper, wowing us with the understated grandeur of debut single 'Silent Film', as well as some seriously stadium-sized gigs around local venues, including one for Nightshift's 100<sup>th</sup> issue celebrations back in 2003, Belarus have been quietly busy getting ready to be properly huge. To wit, they've been snapped up by manager Andy Ross (who started Food Records and discovered Blur), and this first single under their new guise is produced with an elegant touch by

Dave Eringa, who has previously worked with The Manics and Ash.

Belarus' stock in trade remains epic, almost soulful torch songs that expand to fill whatever space they're allowed. In small pub venues they sound huge; give them a stadium and they'd fill it with sound. Vocalist Lee Alder's soft Jeff Buckley-style vocals will inevitably draw comparisons with Coldplay and Keane, and it's a crowded market place they're moving into, but 'Standing In The Right Place' also hints at Belarus' more rockist edge, closer to Feeder at times.

The song billows up from its slight, acoustic beginnings to a bombastic finale and a life on the big stage seems certain. Better still, they've got about half a dozen songs in their set that dwarf this.

**Dale Kattack**



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# GIG GUIDE

## WEDNESDAY 1<sup>st</sup>

### DELICIOUS MUSIC OPEN MIC NIGHT:

**Far From The Madding Crowd**

**OXFORD IMPROVISORS: The Port Mahon**

**IMSOC BATTLE OF THE BANDS: The Wheatsheaf**

**PHONIK SESSIONS: The Cellar** – Live funk jam session.

**FOLK SESSION: The Exeter Hall, Cowley**

## THURSDAY 2<sup>nd</sup>

### DELICIOUS MUSIC JAZZ, BLUES &

**FOLK NIGHT: Far From The Madding**

### *Saturday 4<sup>th</sup>*

## BE YOUR OWN PET:

### The Zodiac

Ever more dangerous times, these, for young bands hoping to make their own little way in life. Teenage DIY punkers Be Your Own Pet, all sweet 17 and used to producing lo-fi punk rock singles with hand-drawn sleeves in their Nashville basement, suddenly find themselves swept up in a particularly frenzied A&R scramble after wowing all and sundry at the South By Southwest and CMJ music conferences. Suddenly they're The New Yeah Yeah Yeahs and signed to XL Records, home to The White Stripes. It's unusual for an American band to get this treatment so quickly, but the band's youthful exuberance seems set to carry them along while they fully hone their sound – a sound that takes in the likes of Sonic Youth, Yeah Yeah Yeahs, Pixies, Life Without Buildings and – oh yes – Bis along the way. Chaotically melodic, their main focal point is vivacious blonde singer Jemina Pearl, a lass full of squealing, cartoonish vitriol who occasionally reminds you of Kathleen Hanna. With early singles 'Damn Damn Leash' and 'Fire Department' already becoming collectors items, the band release their latest offering, 'Let's Get Sandy' this month with their debut album due soon. Expect music press overload any day.

## FEBRUARY

**Crowd** – With blues duo Chico & The Man.

**LETZ ZEP: The Zodiac** – Led Zeppelin tribute. Perhaps unsurprisingly.

**PORT MAYHEM with THE DHARMA + NICHOLAS + SYLVIA: The Port Mahon** – Psychedelic funk rock with touches of The Doors and Pink Floyd from The Dharma.

**POLAR REMOTE + GLOW: The Cellar** – Sweeping, epic indie rocking from Reading's Polar Remote, plus glitchy electro-pop from Glow.

**TRUE RUMOUR: The Exeter Hall, Cowley** – Mellow, 80s-styled pop.

**SUGAR MONKEY: The Bullingdon** – Touring indie rockers.

**JAZZ NIGHT: The City Tavern**  
**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford**

**Community Centre** – Weekly all-comers music, poetry and performance art club.

**BARCODE TRIO: The Hollybush, Osney** – Weekly 'energy jazz' residency.

**SKYLARKIN: The Brickworks** – Weekly dose of reggae, funk, ska, Afrobeat and Latin.

**SABOTAGE: The Zodiac** – Weekly rock club night from The Club That Cannot Be Named playing the latest metal, hardcore and indie sounds.

## FRIDAY 3<sup>rd</sup>

**KLUB KAKOFANNEY with THE EVENINGS + BARRY & THE**

**BEACHCOMBERS + MARY'S GARDEN + RISING DRAGON: The Wheatsheaf** – Top dollar local bill at tonight's Klub Kak, with off-kilter synth-rockers The Evenings headlining.

Madcap punk jokers Barry & The Beachcombers continue to dig up strange artefacts from their warped little world, while darkly-tinged rock newcomers Mary's Garden find a splendid middle ground between Sinéad O'Connor and The Mission.

**HAMMER Vs THE SNAKE + ZERO POINT FIELD + ACCIDENTALLY INNOCENT + THE GULLIVERS: The Zodiac (downstairs)** – Eclectic local bands showcase.

**SKYLARKIN with THE NINE-TON PEANUT SMUGGLERS: The Zodiac (upstairs)** – Authentic old school ska and soul from Sir Bald Diddley's Peanut Smugglers at tonight's Skylarkin' extravaganza, while Ska Cubano's Natty Bo, Aidan Larkin and Jason King spin ska, reggae and r'n'b sounds.

**OXFORD FOLK CLUB OPEN NIGHT: The Port Mahon**

**BOSSAPHONIK: The Cellar** – Live jazz dance and urban Brazilica with Sirus B.

**ACOUSTIC NIGHT: The Victoria, Jericho**  
**KING B: The Exeter Hall, Cowley** – Live blues with singer Claire Johnson.

**BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon**

## SATURDAY 4<sup>th</sup>

**BE YOUR OWN PET: The Zodiac (upstairs)**

– Ebullient Texan garage rockers – see main preview

**JR EWING + BLOODROSES + FROM THE ASHES + ESCAPE ROUTE PATTERN: The Zodiac (downstairs)** – Norwegian progressive punk cult stars make their Oxford debut, following on from their All Tomorrow's Parties showing, where they appeared at the request of kindred spirits The Mars Volta. Support comes from local screamo newcomers Bloodroses, plus post-rockers ERP.

**AND NO STAR + ALLY CRAIG + JAMIE HYATT + CHRIS BEARD: The Exeter Hall, Cowley** – Wantage post-rockers ANS headline with support from promising singer-songwriter Ally Craig, plus Family Machine's Jamie Hyatt and Harry Angel frontman Chris Beard.

**THE G's + SHE CRIES + MARS RYNEARSON: The City Tavern** – Local bands showcase featuring promising newcomers She Cries, leaning towards the mellower side of Led Zep, plus Moocher frontman Mars.

**SIMPLE: The Bullingdon** – Funky house club night

**AMYAS MERIVALE: The Port Mahon**

**PETE & JAMES: Magic Café (1pm)**

## SUNDAY 5<sup>th</sup>

### DELICIOUS MUSIC OPEN MIC

**SESSION: The Old School House**

**ELECTRIC JAM: The Exeter Hall, Cowley** – Jam along with the in-house rhythm section; all musicians welcome.

**FEVER PITCH: The Black Horse, Kidlington**

## MONDAY 6<sup>th</sup>

**KENT DUCHAINE: The Bullingdon** –

Return of the long time blues favourite and former partner of the late Johnny Shines, Kent Duchaine, singer and slide guitarist out of Minnesota, playing traditional Delta blues in







*Monday 13<sup>th</sup>*

## **JACK ROSE / CHRIS CORSANO / LAST OF THE REAL HARDMEN:**

### **The Port Mahon**

And just to prove that acoustic nights don't have to be an endless succession of dull Dylan wannabes, here are three of the scene's more idiosyncratic performers. Jack Rose is better known as guitarist with psychedelic drone-rock band Pelt, but his solo material, as shown on recent album, 'Opium Musick', is a far gentler beast, harking right back to pre-war American blues, ragtime, Appalachian mountain folk and Indian temple music. Rose plays in the style of John Fahey and Blind Willie Johnson, whose 'Dark Was The Night, Cold Was The Ground' he radically reworked, and has succeeded in taking acoustic folk music right back to its most basic form, while keeping it fresh. Contrasting with him is drummer Chris Cosano who plays dynamic and inventive rock and jazz solo sets and has played with Thurston Moore and Jim O'Rourke, while Last Of The Real Hardmen is the solo project of Lords guitarist Chris Summerlin, like Rose, taking a more serene path from his band job, with a style more akin to Ry Cooder or Dave Pajo.

the style of Muddy Waters, Robert Johnson and Lightning Hopkins on his trusted Leadbessy National steel guitar.

#### **IDIOT PILOT + THE SEAL CUB**

**CLUBBING CLUB: The Zodiac** – Another chance to catch the much-vaunted Washington State duo, finding some middle ground between Deftones, Aphex Twin and Radiohead, plus support from offbeat Wirral newcomers The Seal Cub Clubbing Club.

**FUN LOVIN' CRIMINALS DJs: The Zodiac** – FLC frontman Huey and long-term DJ partner Mateo play a selection of hip hop, rock and party tunes into the wee small hours.

### **TUESDAY 7<sup>th</sup>**

**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Exeter Hall, Cowley**

**JAZZ CLUB with ROGER INNES: The Bullingdon**

**DELICIOUS MUSIC OPEN MIC JAM SESSION: The City Tavern**

**BEARD MUSEUM with CHRIS BEARD: Ba Ba, Cowley Road** – The Harry Angel frontman does his solo acoustic thing at tonight's Beard Museum excursion to the Cowley Road.

**ACOUSTIC OPEN MIC SESSION: The Hobgoblin, Bicester**

**CHIARINA: Café Rouge** – Weekly acoustic jazz, folk and pop residency.

### **WEDNESDAY 8<sup>th</sup>**

**HITECHJET + THE ONCE OVER TWICE: The Bullingdon** – Boisterous but melodic punk-metal from Hitechjet in a Wildhearts vein, plus infectious hardcore noise from The Once Over Twice.

**DELICIOUS MUSIC OPEN MIC NIGHT: Far From The Madding Crowd**

**HIT & RUN: The Cellar** – Drum&bass and hip hop club night.

**FOLK SESSION: The Exeter Hall, Cowley**  
**IMSOC BATTLE OF THE BANDS: The Wheatsheaf**

### **THURSDAY 9<sup>th</sup>**

**AGENT BLUE + HALF RABBITS + HARLETTE: The Zodiac** – Glam-tinged indie punkers out of Stoke, slowly but surely making their way to the top of the pile with a new album, 'Stolen Honda Vision', for Fierce Panda after a failed dalliance with Universal. Big favourites with Babyshambles, but don't hold that against them. Local supports come from new wavers Half Rabbits and grungey punklets Harlette.

**MULES + NATIONAL SNACK + WITCHES: The Cellar** – Oddly-shaped rockabilly-cum-punk noise from Nightshift tips Mules, coming on somewhere between Talking Heads and The Meteors, with a polka edge. Zappa and Primus-influenced jazz rocking from National Snack, plus understated orchestral electro-pop from Witches.

**DELICIOUS MUSIC JAZZ, BLUES & FOLK NIGHT: Far From The Madding Crowd** – Featuring Jazz duo Viente Dedos.

**JOHN THOMPSON + OSPREY + BOB & CLAIRE LLOYD + ADY DAVEY: The Exeter Hall, Cowley** – Local acoustic showcase.

**JAZZ NIGHT: The City Tavern**  
**PEACH & NAT + DAN AUSTIN + NICK MAKE THEATRE: The Port Mahon**

**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre**

**BARCODE TRIO: The Hollybush, Osney**

**SKYLARKIN: The Brickworks**

**SABOTAGE: The Zodiac**

### **FRIDAY 10<sup>th</sup>**

**THE KOOKS + THE AUTOMATIC: The Zodiac** – Brighton-based poster boys for the new wave of British indie rock. Which roughly translates as, they sound a bit like The Libertines and Razorlight. Don't get too excited at the back. Any road, it's already sold out so what harm can we do?

**SEXTODECIMO + SOW + SKULLTHRASH: The Wheatsheaf** – None-more-heavy night of uber-metal with sonic carnage incarnate Sextodecimo pitting their sludgy grindcore up against raging metalcore tyrants Sow.

**OXFORD FOLK CLUB with BRIAN PETERS & GORDON TYRRALL: The Port Mahon** – Traditional English folk featuring flute, guitar and accordion.

**GOODFELLAZ: The City Tavern** – Good-time party tunes.

**MIKE ELLIS BLUES BAND: The Exeter Hall, Cowley**

**BLUNTED: The Cellar** – Funk, soul and breakbeats club night.

**ACOUSTIC NIGHT: The Victoria, Jericho**

**BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon**  
**SATURDAY 11<sup>th</sup>**

**BELARUS + A SILENT FILM + 100 BULLETS BACK + WHERE I'M CALLING FROM: The Zodiac** – The first live broadcast gig from BBC Radio Oxford's Download local music show. Belarus, who release their debut single on Precious Records this month, headline, bringing a bit of epic indie rocking to the Zodiac, while A Silent Film are equally impressive with their emotive and complex rock. 100 Bullets Back mix up 80s synth-pop

*Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup>*

## **JULIAN COPE:**

### **The Zodiac**

Eccentric genius might be an overused term but Julian Cope is one person it can be applied to without a hint of embarrassment. From the sublime synth-soul pop of Teardrop Explodes, through the spaced-out brilliance of solo albums like 'World Shut Your Mouth' and 'Peggy Suicide', to the wilful nihilism of his Brain Donor project, Cope has been both prolific and consistently inventive. A prodigious consumer of hallucinogenic drugs, but also an intelligent and articulate author of books on krautrock and ancient stone circles; a songwriter with few equals over the past 25 years, but also a chaotic performer, one of the most fascinating things about Julian Cope is guessing which one will turn up to play on any given night. His last visit to the Zodiac, two years ago, was a solo affair that exposed his most esoteric side, but tonight's show features a full band, including sometime Spiritualized guitarist Doggen. He'll be promoting most recent album, 'Dark Orgasm', inspired both by humankind's alienation from an increasingly technological world, the oppression of religion and the Iraq war, as well as by his return to psychedelic drug intake. With it he's back on rocking form and remains an unmissable live spectacle.





*Friday 17<sup>th</sup>*

## COLDCUT: The Zodiac

Despite being one of the most influential and innovative acts of the past 20 years, Coldcut remain an elusive and maverick presence on the underground music scene. DJ duo Matt Black and Jonathan Moore came together at (the then still pirate station ) Kiss in the mid-80s but quickly earned a reputation as one of the most influential remix teams on the planet – notably their reworking of Eric B & Rakim's classic 'Paid In Full' – as well as pioneers of cut-up technique and the incorporation of multi-media into their live shows and releases. The duo also helped launch the careers of Lisa Stansfield (on 'People Hold On') and Yazz (as part of the Plastic Population), and started up Ninja Tune Records, but it's for their highly innovative melding of hip hop, electro, sampling and video manipulation, as well as their fervent pursuit of the DIY ethic that has made them the force they are today, forever remaining on the cutting edge of music and video technology. Coldcut have taken William Burrough's cut-up technique, Throbbing Gristle's fake corporate and DIY marketing and Grandmaster Flash's groundbreaking hip hop and created something unique. Tonight's show, promoting new album 'Soundmirrors' should be a unique experience, and afterwards you can stay for Peepshow, Oxford's premier multi-media dance club that probably owes its entire existence to Coldcut's pioneering work.

with a bit of Franz Ferdinand post-punk. Newcomers WICF continue to promise great things with their oddball mix of new wave and alt.country.

**METRONOMY: The Cellar** – More quality underground electro noise down at the Cellar with the visit of Brighton's Metronomy – aka former rock drummer Joseph Mount. Armed with an out of date computer and a drum machine, he's drawing on influences as diverse as Devo, Zappa, NERD and The Ramones to create lo-fi electro-punk noise that captures the spirit of primitive 70s synth-pop, along with rudimentary rockabilly and ambient electronic music.

**FOXES + THREE SECOND MEMORY + THE YUKONS: The City Tavern** – Local bands showcase.

**THIS AIN'T VEGAS + THAT FUCKING TANK + OCTOBER ALL OVER: The Wheatsheaf** – Sunderland's finest return to Vacuous Pop's live music club night, touting

new album, 'The Night Don Benito Saved My Life'. Taut, angular hardcore noise that mixes Fugazi's propulsive dynamics with a jerky Devo edge and a goodly side order of primordial rage.

**PORKER: The Port Mahon**

**TOUNSI + RAGGASAUROS: The Exeter Hall, Cowley** – Exotic world dance sounds from Tounsi.

**COALITION: The Bullingdon**

**JONNY FLETCHER: Magic Café (1pm)**

### SUNDAY 12<sup>th</sup>

**THE BEARD MUSEUM with EARNEST COX + SHUYTER JANSEN + NAAMA HILL MAN + CHANTELLE PIKE: The Purple Turtle** – Gloucestershire's finest pop eccentrics headline tonight's Beard Museum night, mixing up Go-Betweens style sunshine melodies with more esoteric synth-rock noise.

**AUDIO POLLUTION + GLENDA HUISH + NAT & PEACH: The Exeter Hall, Cowley** – Fundraiser for the Wittstock music festival.

**DELICIOUS MUSIC OPEN MIC**

**SESSION: The Old School House**

**SALSANEROS: The Cellar** – Live salsa.

**SCOOBY DON'T: The Black Horse, Kidlington**

### MONDAY 13<sup>th</sup>

**CARVIN JONES: The Bullingdon** – Flamboyant Phoenix-based electric blues-rock guitarist very much in the Jimi Hendrix vein, drawing praise from the likes of Eric Clapton and Albert Collins, kicking out covers of Hendrix, Clapton and Stevie Ray Vaughan amongst others.

**HIDDEN IN PLAIN VIEW + FASTLANE + CHINESE FINGERTRAP: The Zodiac** – One-off headline date for the New Jersey Drive-Thru emo rockers in between tour dates supporting Simple Plan, keeping it fast and simple and looking at the dark side of life with new album, 'Life In Dreaming'. Promising local hardcore rockers Chinese Finger Trap support.

**JACK ROSE + CHRIS CORSANO + LAST OF THE REAL HARDMEN: The Port Mahon** – Bare-bones blues and Mountain folk from the sometime Pelt guitarist – *see main preview*

**MAIRE NI CHATHASAIGH & CHRIS NEWMAN: Nettlebed Folk Club** – Maire, rated as the greatest living Celtic harpist, teams up with acclaimed acoustic guitarist Chris for a night of 17<sup>th</sup> Century jigs and reels and modern folk song.

**STACKS OF SOUL: The New Theatre** – Classic hits-themed soul review.

### TUESDAY 14<sup>th</sup>

**JULIAN COPE + NOUGHT: The Zodiac (upstairs)** – Return of the artist formerly known as My Sqwubbsy in full rocking style. Oxford's magnificent jazzcore heroes support – *see main preview*

**MORNING RUNNER: The Zodiac (downstairs)** – Coldplay... Keane... Athlete... Morning Runner. Gonna be huge, don't you doubt it for a minute.

**TWIZZ TWANGLE + GLENDA HUISH + JEREMY HUGHES: The Port Mahon** – Off-kilter electro-pop and general rock mayhem from Twizz, plus sometime Phyal frontwoman Glenda Huish.

**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Exeter Hall, Cowley**

**JAZZ CLUB with THE TOM GREY**

**QUINTET: The Bullingdon**

**DELICIOUS MUSIC OPEN MIC JAM**

**SESSION: The City Tavern**

**DELICIOUS MUSIC VALENTINES NIGHT**

**LOVE-IN: Far From The Madding Crowd**

**INTRUSION: The Cellar** – Goth and industrial club night.

**CHIARINA: Café Rouge**

### WEDNESDAY 15<sup>th</sup>

**DELICIOUS MUSIC OPEN MIC NIGHT:**

**Far From The Madding Crowd**

**FOLK SESSION: The Exeter Hall, Cowley**

**IMSOC BATTLE OF THE BANDS: The Wheatsheaf**

### THURSDAY 16<sup>th</sup>

**THE PADDINGTONS: The Zodiac (upstairs)** – Shambolic teen punkers making inexplicable rise through the Brit indie ranks.

**REGINA SPEKTOR: The Zodiac (downstairs)** – Kooky, arty jazz-folk strangeness from New York's Moscow-born songstress Regina, virtually unknown on this

*Saturday 18<sup>th</sup>*

## KOMA & BONES: The Cellar

The Cellar spent much of last year quietly becoming the best place to catch underground dance acts and DJs on the way up and tonight's appearance by Koma & Bones can only enhance the venue's reputation. The Lancaster-based trio (that's former DJing partnership Koma and Bones – Andy and Chris to their mums – and bass producer Proteus – Jude to *his* mum) are currently enjoying a meteoric rise on the breakbeat scene with their heavyweight style that makes the crossover into house and electro. As well as releasing records for Doriga and Freakaboom Records, they've been signed to TCR, the label run by house luminary Rennie Pilgrem. The result has been two albums, a fresh-sounding but primitive debut, 'Blinded By Science', and the more expansive and realised follow-up, 'Shutterspeed', which not only proved to be a formidable mix of sharp, skippy sonics, meaty electro, grainy synths and weighty breakbeats, but also showcased their ability to move from pure dancefloor into more song-based material – perhaps not so surprising for a band as in thrall to Radiohead and Joy Division as they are to the likes of Mantronix. They've also made their name remixing New Order and Kosheen and tonight will probably be the last chance to catch them in such intimate surroundings.





*Monday 20<sup>th</sup>*

## INFADELS: The Zodiac

Dance-rock crossover? It usually means an ill-fitting mess of self-consciously hip reference points and fails to satisfy on both counts. But when it does work, you're onto a winner. And East London's Infadels could be this year's surprise breakthrough act, having played a blinder on the John Peel Stage at Glastonbury last year, as well as supporting Faithless and the like-minded Radio 4 on tour. The band's debut album, 'We Are Not The Infadels', shows off a band possessed of both a melodic punky swagger, and the requisite big beats. Echoes of both The Clash and Chemical Brothers put Infadels in the same ballpark as Hard-Fi, but with their laidback trancy vibe and cockney geezer vocals, they might even be the reincarnation of Flowered Up. The band's live shows come replete with smiley faces on sticks and a come-together clarion call. So, are you ready for another Acid House-fuelled summer of love? You might just get one whatever.

side of the Atlantic but having made her reputation by word of mouth Stateside with a trio of acclaimed albums as well as a tour support to The Strokes in 2003. A new compilation album is released this month to introduce her to British music fans, showing off her contorting vocal style as well as her gypsy folk, avant-jazz and grungy pop musical leanings.

**NAPOLEON III + JEREMY SMOKING JACKET: The Cellar** – Lo-fi abstract laptop and guitar pop from Napoleon III, plus excellent oddball experimental electronic noise from Rose Kemp's Jeremy Smoking Jacket project, coming on somewhere between Flux and Pram.

**AGENTS OF JANE: The Exeter Hall, Cowley**

**GREEN SPACE: The Bullingdon** – Live rock.

**THE EPSTEIN: The Port Mahon** – Country rocking in a Flying Burrito Brothers style.

**DELICIOUS MUSIC JAZZ, BLUES & FOLK NIGHT: Far From The Madding Crowd** – With ukulele duo The Yukons.

**JAZZ NIGHT: The City Tavern**

**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre**

**BARCODE TRIO: The Hollybush, Osney**

**SKYLARKIN: The Brickworks**

**SABOTAGE: The Zodiac**

**FRIDAY 17<sup>th</sup>**

**COLDCUT: The Zodiac** – Groundbreaking electro duo – *see main preview*

**OXFORD FOLK CLUB with MARTYN WYNNDHAM-READ:**

**The Port Mahon** – Laid-back songs and stories from the Australian singer and guitarist.

**CHRIS BROKAW + GET CAPE, WEAR CAPE, FLY +**

**SCARECROWS + THE JESUS**

**YEARS: The Wheatsheaf** – Singer-songwriter Chris has played with Come, Codeine and Evan Dando in his time as well as his own band but tonight is a solo set in support of his new album on Mogwai's Rock Action label. London acoustic-electro maverick Get Cape supports, alongside Worcester's Tortoise-influenced jazzers Scarecrows and Derby's post-hardcore instrumentalists The Jesus Years.

**HEADCOUNT + BEELZEBOZO +**

**JUNKIE BRUSH: The Exeter Hall, Cowley** – Heavyweight St Valentines-themed gig with local punk-metal titans Headcount going head to head with doomy metallers Beelzebozo and frenetic new wave terriers Junkie Brush in the ultimate lovers tiff.

**ACOUSTIC NIGHT: The**

**Victoria, Jericho**

**BOSSAPHONIK: The Cellar** – Afro dance, jazz, Cuban funk and reggae fusion with Sa-Mon-Di.

**BACKROOM BOOGIE: The**

**Bullingdon**

**THE PETE FRYER BAND: The Magdalen Arms**

**SATURDAY 18<sup>th</sup>**

**THE YOUNG KNIVES: The Zodiac (upstairs)** – Home-town show for Oxford's brightest rock stars – *see main interview feature*

**IONICA + SYLOSIS: The Zodiac (downstairs)** – Double bill of local hardcore metal.

**KOMA & BONES: The Cellar** – Fast-rising stars of breakbeat – *see main preview*

**SWAY: The Coven** – Rising star of UK hip hop plugs his debut album, 'This Is My Demo', following on from tour support to Dizzee Rascal

**DELPHI + ARCTIC WOLF + DIVINITY**

**SCHOOL: The City Tavern** – Local bands night, including funk rockers Arctic Wolf.

**ASSASSINS OF SILENCE + THE**

**MOOD DOOR: The Exeter Hall, Cowley** – Hawkwind tribute.

**TARNISH: The Port Mahon** – Gothic synth-rock.

**THE CLIFFHANGERS + DEADZILLA:**

**The Wheatsheaf** – Long overdue farewell

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*Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup>*

## JOSEPH ARTHUR: The Zodiac

Discovered by Peter Gabriel in the mid-90s and signed to his Realworld label, Ohio songsmith Joseph Arthur is another of those artists for whom widespread critical acclaim (a *Rolling Stone* album of the year) as well as celebrity endorsement (REM and Wilco are also huge fans) has never translated into commercial success. His debut album, 'Big City Streets' virtually disappeared on release and by the time he relocated to New Orleans to record his last album, 2004's 'Our Shadows Will Remain' Arthur has lost both his record deal and his manager. Still, all fuel to the fire because, get past the occasional pseudo-Buddhist mysticism, and he's an occasionally visionary writer and performer, forever injecting global influences into his intense brand of country rock. Musically he mixes up eerie atmospherics, repeated phrases and dense washes of effects, while vocally he shifts between baritone and shrieking falsetto, owing as big a debt to the likes of Bowie and Barry Adamson as he does to the master of morose, Leonard Cohen or Jeff Buckley.

gig from the theatrical local rockers.

**JUNKIE BRUSH + EXP + NARCISSISM:**

**The Mill, Banbury** – Spiky new wave and punk racket from Junkie Brush, plus proggy hardcore from Narcissism.

**SIMPLE: The Bullingdon**

**LES CLOCHARDS: The Chester Arms** – Louche ballads in French, English and Spanish.

**JON-PAUL DAVIES: Magic Café (1pm)**

### **SUNDAY 19<sup>th</sup>**

**THE BOY LEAST LIKELY TO: The Zodiac**

– Lo-fi pop duo already being touted as the new Badly Drawn Boy, writing plaintive love songs with nods to Teenage Fanclub and Blur, fresh from supporting James Blunt on tour.

**DELICIOUS MUSIC OPEN MIC**

**SESSION: The Old School House**

**ELECTRIC JAM: The Exeter Hall, Cowley**

**NATION: The Black Horse, Kidlington**

### **MONDAY 20<sup>th</sup>**

**INFADELS: The Zodiac** – Infectious rock-dance crossover starlets – *see main preview*

**BOCCIGALUPE & THE BAD BOYS: The Bullingdon** – New Jersey rockers fronted by

singing keyboardist Tony Amato, a veteran of the Asbury Park music scene since the 1970s. Muscular r'n'b, rocking blues and barroom boogie in the vein of Springsteen, Nils Lofgren and Southside Johnny.

**BOB FOX: Nettlebed Folk Club** – The amiable English folk singer does his trad thing.

### **TUESDAY 21<sup>st</sup>**

**JOSEPH ARTHUR: The Zodiac** – Much-vaunted singer-songwriter- *see main preview*

**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Exeter Hall, Cowley**

**JAZZ CLUB with PADDY MILNER: The Bullingdon** – The UK jazz piano virtuoso guests at the Bully's weekly jazz club, mixing up blues, jazz and boogie woogie.

**SHUYLER JANSEN: The Port Mahon**

**DELICIOUS MUSIC OPEN MIC JAM**

**SESSION: The City Tavern**

**CHIARINA: Café Rouge**

### **WEDNESDAY 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**SUNBURNED HAND OF THE MAN +**

**HUSH ARBORS: The Port Mahon** – More esoteric sounds courtesy of Vacuous Pop Records, tonight featuring Boston bearded Sunburned Hand Of The Man, aka Jon Maloney, prolific but inconsistent purveyor of ghostly free jazz, space rock drones and ethereal folk ballads. Support comes from Missouri's Hush Arbors, aka Keith Woods, solo acoustic performer in a blissful forest folk tradition.

**DELICIOUS MUSIC OPEN MIC NIGHT:**

**Far From The Madding Crowd**

**FOLK SESSION: The Exeter Hall, Cowley**

**DOUGHNUT KINGS: The Bullingdon**

**HIT & RUN: The Cellar**

**IMSOC BATTLE OF THE BANDS: The Wheatsheaf**

### **THURSDAY 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**STELLARSTARR\*: The Zodiac (upstairs)** – Return of New York City's rising stars, following in the slipstream of Killers and Editors, promoting rather ace new album, 'Harmonies For The Haunted': new wave with epic scope and some theatrical bent, inspired by The Bunnymen, Psychedelic Furs and Teardrop Explodes.

**JOHNNY TRUANT + WATERDOWN: The Zodiac (downstairs)** – Return trip to the Zodiac for Brighton's heavyweights, currently scaring emo crowds with their metalcore racket and set to release new album, 'In The Library Of Horrific Events' this month, produced by Killswitch Engaged's Adam D. Support comes from Germany's Waterdown, last seen at the Zodiac headlining over Funeral For A Friend.

**DJ DEREK: The Zodiac (downstairs)** – The Bristolian ska DJ launches his new 'Sweet Memory Sounds' album on Trojan Records.

**HELLSETT ORCHESTRA + UTER + ECONOLINE: The Cellar** – More camp gothic cabaret from Nottingham's Hellsett Orchestra, at turns operatic, theatrical and farcical with their jazz-flavoured, organ-led Hammer Horror pop, partway between The Cardiacs and Zutons. Glasgow's lo-fi electronic pop trio Uter support, along with long-standing underground indie tryers Econoline.

**DELICIOUS MUSIC JAZZ, BLUES & FOLK NIGHT: Far From The Madding Crowd** – Featuring Jazz Emporium.

**JAZZ NIGHT: The City Tavern**

**NICHOLAS LYNE + LAIMA BITE + JAMIE HUDDLESTON: The Exeter Hall, Cowley** – Local acoustic showcase.

**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre**

**BARCODE TRIO: The Hollybush, Osney**

**SKYLARKIN: The Brickworks**

**SABOTAGE: The Zodiac**

### **FRIDAY 24<sup>th</sup>**

**GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES with UNDER THE IGLOO + SCRIPT + HARVEY: The Zodiac** – Ambient electro-rocking from Under The Igloo, promoting recent debut album, 'Circlesend', at tonight's GTI, with support from eclectic local popstrels Script, plus Fairport and Nick Drake-influenced folk-rock from Wiltshire's Harvey.

**ALMANDINO QUITE DELUX + HARRY**

**ANGEL + HARLETTE: The Wheatsheaf** – Spazz-jazz rockabilly action, Italian style – *see main preview*

**UNITING THE ELEMENTS + MARY'S GARDEN: The Exeter Hall, Cowley** – Ever-touring melodic German rockers return, with support from gothic rockers Mary's Garden.

*Friday 24<sup>th</sup>*

## ALMANDINO QUITE DELUX / HARRY ANGEL / HUNTING LODGE / HARLETTE: The Wheatsheaf

Forever conscientiously scouring the globe for crazy rock and roll sounds, this month Oxfordbands.com unearths some serious swampabilly gothic rocking from Italy in the shape of Almandino Quite Delux, a band prone to taking to the stage dressed in Mexican wrestling outfits while riding kiddies bikes. Theirs is a female-fronted form of high-wired, spasticated blues and rock'n'roll that owes plenty to Pussy Galore, The Cramps and Captain Beefheart, while remaining cartoonishly fun at heart. It's the essence of rock music deconstructed, stripped bare and played good and loud, much in the same manner as Guitar Wolf; no place for fiddly guitar solos tonight, kids. Joining them on a bill of seriously good new talent are local favourites Harry Angel – last month's Nightshift cover stars with their intense gothic rock attack, plus convoluted, jazz-sprinkled metallic mayhem from Bristol's Hunting Lodge, and effervescent grunge-punk lasses Harlette.



**OXFORD FOLK CLUB:** The Port Mahon  
**ACOUSTIC NIGHT:** The Victoria, Jericho  
**HQ:** The Cellar  
**BACKROOM BOOGIE:** The Bullingdon  
**PETE FRYER + PHIL FREIZINGER & SUE SMITH:** The Chester Arms

### **SATURDAY 25<sup>th</sup>**

**LOUIS XIV:** The Zodiac (*upstairs*) – San Diego glam-rockers, resurrecting the ghosts of T-Rex and Ziggy Stardust with their eponymous debut concept album about a boy who believes he is the 18<sup>th</sup> Century French king of the same name. Takes all sorts.

**WOLF MOTHER:** The Zodiac (*downstairs*) – It's time to ROCK! Australia's hottest new guitar-slingers make like the last 30 never happened, crunching through the Led Zep, Sabbath and Hendrix riffs with admirable aplomb and taking their heavy rocking sound on an epic psychedelic trip on the back of sky-reaching organ solos and extended guitar solos. They're about a fingernail's width away from being Spinal Tap and as such are to be heartily encouraged.

**RESERVOIR CATS:** The Exeter Hall, Cowley – Party-friendly heavy blues rockers.  
**MR FOGG + KANED CITIZEN + THE TURBULENCE:** The City Tavern – Local bands showcase night.

**AMBERSTATE:** The Port Mahon  
**ROLLERCOASTER Vs CHICKS WITH DECKS:** The Cellar – Indie, new wave, electro and 80s alternative sounds.

**LES CLOCHARDS:** The Flowing Well, Sunningwell

**SEV:** Magic Café (1pm)

### **SUNDAY 26<sup>th</sup>**

**AND NO STAR + MEET ME IN ST LOUIS + WAIT FOR CONISTON + THE VANITY SCORE + FROM THE ASHES + MORE:**  
**The Exeter Hall (5pm)** – Extended bill of rock noise at the Ex with promising young Wantage instrumental post-rockers And No Star headlining. There's also spasticated post-hardcore from Meet Me In St Louis, intricate post-rock from Wait For Coniston, emo in a Taking Back Sunday vein from The Vanity Score and melodic metal from Coventry's From The Ashes, plus more bands to be added.

**THE KEYBOARD CHOIR + MICHAEL & LUCY WRIGHT + REBECCA MOSELEY:**  
**The Port Mahon (5pm)** – The second Pindrop Productions session finds local synth orchestra The Keyboard Choir playing a specially-composed piece, inspired by Steve Reich and Brian Eno. Support comes from vocal and Jewish harp duo Michael and Lucy Wright, plus local songstress Rebecca Moseley.

**THE RIFLES + MILBURN:** The Zodiac – Mod revivalism from Jam-indebted rockers The Rifles. Considerably more exciting support from Sheffield's Milburn, recent tourmates with kindred spirits Arctic Monkeys, replete with witty, acerbic lyrics and hook-heavy punked-up pop anthems like cracking recent single, 'Showroom'. Expect big things very soon after a series of riotous London and hometown gigs.

**BEARD MUSEUM with RICHARD WALTERS + BAREFOOTIM + MISTER LEE:** The Purple Turtle – more gentle pop thrills at The Beard Museum with ace local songsmith Richard Walters headlining.

**THE DRIFTERS:** The New Theatre – Easy soul legends.

**DELICIOUS MUSIC OPEN MIC SESSION:** The Old School House  
**SALSANEROS:** The Cellar

**BIG EYED FISH:** The Black Horse, Kidlington

### **MONDAY 27<sup>th</sup>**

**CONNIE LUSH & BLUES SHOUTER:** The Bullingdon – Powerful blues singing from Monday night blues favourite Connie, regularly voted best female blues singer in the UK.

**CHRIS & KELLY WHILE:** Nettled Folk Club – Mother and daughter folk duo.

### **TUESDAY 28<sup>th</sup>**

**CALIBAN:** The Zodiac – German metalcore heroes and recent tour support to Hatebreed, back to promote new album, 'The Undying Darkness' on Roadrunner Records.

**THE OSMONDS:** The New Theatre – Donny, Jimmy, Merrill, Jay and Dave return to the UK for a headline tour after last year's package tour alongside The Bay City Rollers and David Essex, and bizarrely finding themselves undergoing a critical reappraisal after all but disappearing from view having sold nearly 80,000,000 records in the 70s. All the hits, teeth and more from the men in white.

**OPEN MIC SESSION:** The Exeter Hall, Cowley

**JAZZ CLUB with THE TOM GREY**

**QUINTET:** The Bullingdon

**DELICIOUS MUSIC OPEN MIC JAM SESSION:** The City Tavern

**VERTIGO:** The Cellar – Live bands and indie hits.

## *the port mahon*

### **Live Music in Febuary**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Oxford Improvisers
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Port Mayhem with The Dharma + Nicholas & Sylvia
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Oxford Folk Club Open Night
- 4<sup>th</sup> Amyas Merivale
- 9<sup>th</sup> Peach & Nat, Dan Austin and Nick Make Theatre
- 10<sup>th</sup> Oxford Folk Club with Brian Peters & Gordon Tyrall
- 11<sup>th</sup> Porker
- 13<sup>th</sup> Vacous Pop presents Jack Rose + Chris Corsano + Last Of The Real Hardmen
- 14<sup>th</sup> Twizz Twangle + Glenda Huish + Jeremy Hughes
- 16<sup>th</sup> The Epstein
- 17<sup>th</sup> Oxford Folk Club with Martyn Wynham-Read
- 18<sup>th</sup> Tarnish
- 21<sup>st</sup> Shuyler Jansen
- 24<sup>th</sup> Oxford Folk Club Open Night
- 25<sup>th</sup> Amberstate + wRants
- 26<sup>th</sup> The Pindrop Performance presents  
 The Keyboard Choir + Michael & Lucy Wright + Rebecca Mosely (5pm)

*Book your band into play at Oxford's best small music venue!*

**82 St Clements, Oxford. Tel: 01865 202067**



## **The Cellar**

Frewin Court, Off Cornmarket Street, Oxford  
[www.cellarmusic.co.uk](http://www.cellarmusic.co.uk)

### **LIVE MUSIC - FEBRUARY**

#### **Wednesdays - Phonik sessions**

*Open jam based around our Funk, Jazz, deep house band*

#### **Thursdays - Big Hair**

**£1.50 a Pint ALL NIGHT!!!**

*DJs playing indie, rock, 80s Pop, and Surf + Bands*

2nd Feb - ZELEGA + POLAR REMOTE + GLOW

9th Feb - THE MULES + NATIONAL SNACK + WITCHES

16th Feb - NAPOLEON IIIrd + JEREMY SMOKING JACKET

23rd Feb - THE HELLSET ORCHESTRA + UTER + ECONOLINE

#### **Fridays - Bossaphonik**

*Live Jazz Dance Night*

3rd Feb - SIRIUS B Freestyle Records.

Urban Brazilica Samba + Soulful dance floor Latin

17th Feb - SA-MON-DI Afro-dance Jazz afro-

Cuban Funk and Reggae in a unique fusion

#### **Saturday 11th Feb - Des n Tiny s Indie disco**

Feat. METRONOMY Punked out electronic live act

**FOR FULL LISTINGS AND INFORMATION  
 VISIT OUR WEBSITE**

# LIVE

## BEDOUIIN SOUNDCLASH

### The Zodiac

On the back of Radio One airplay, and a tour with the Ordinary Boys, Bedouin Soundclash's first UK headline tour rolls into Oxford and, perhaps surprisingly, to a sold out crowd. Upping their value for money rating, the Soundclash serve as their own support band, simply surrendering the vocals over to Vernon Mayton for some more traditional dub and reggae sounds, which set the tone nicely.

Taking a quick break, the band bounce back with 'Living in Jungles', one of the livelier tunes from last year's 'Sounding a Mosaic'. What should be a fiery opener comes off dimmer than on record, and following it up with 'Shelter' the three piece become a two piece as the guitar is lost to technical difficulties which continue, stifling the showcase of new material. While the crowd is happily forgiving, composure isn't fully recovered until they pick things up with 'Rude Boys Don't Cry' which, given the band's penchant to throw in covers, disappointingly isn't a dub take on the Cure classic. Nonetheless we still get Eddie Grant and Sean Penn thrown in and the party picks up with songs like 'Gyasi Went Home'. This is all well and good, but when their material veers to slower dub grooves, the passion and pounding power that captivates with such music is missing, something that can be sensed in the apparent lack of chemistry between band members. At times it works, as on 'Shadow', but it takes crowd pleaser, 'When The Night Feels My Song', to give this set a truly happy ending. Strangely it is the encore where Bedouin Soundclash seems to win over the waverers, putting the Clash in Soundclash with a Joe Strummer cover, followed by a stripped-down new song, and an intriguing cover of U2's 'New Years Day', meaning that when the night comes full circle and Mayton returns for the evening's closer, it's hard not to crack a smile as crowd and band at last lock into this last groove.

Patrick Casey



Photo by Becky Perry

## THE EPSTEIN / THE DHARMA

### The Cellar

For The Epstein, it's forever 1969 and lazy days are spent tuning up banjos, wading through the bayou and having cosmic flashes in the

Californian desert. A confusing and conflicting supposition that may be, but you get the point. They are firmly and stubbornly in thrall to

the sunbaked country rock of Creedence Clearwater Revival, Crosby Stills Nash & Young and the Byrds in their 'Sweetheart of the Rodeo' period. Tonight they oscillate between heartfelt, blues-tinted Gram Parsons-esque

melodies, drenched in slide guitar and gorgeous three-part harmonies, and an odd combination of bluegrass and desert music – something like a *Zabriskie Point* hoedown, if you will. Whilst the modern equipment the band uses sometimes eclipses the purity of the songwriting, resulting in an unfortunate 'modern country' sheen, when The Epstein get it right it's impossible to deny the charm and warmth exuding from the stage. They could be something special.

The Dharma share their blissed-out sense of psychedelic haziness, but dress it up in layers of swooping synthesisers, sound effects, featherlight funk rhythms and oddly soulless vocals, like if Syd Barrett had been replaced early on by Mark Knopfler. Whilst they're technically flawless – an almost note-for-note 'Riders On The Storm' gets heads nodding, for example – they don't engage. Like a band who have practised and practised but don't know what they're aiming for, The Dharma have all kinds of sounds at their disposable but no clue how to organise them into something new.

Simon Minter

Saturday 22nd & Sunday 23rd July 2006  
Hill Farm, Stevenon, Oxfordshire

# TRUCKNINE

Truck rolls round once again to showcase some of our favourite music, on the back of a truck, on a farm, in rural Oxfordshire. Amid the heady aroma of new pale and doughnuts, friends, lovers and enemies will be entertained, with a diverse selection of acts, across six stages, ranging from winning indie kids, via semi-respectable looking folkies, to drinkblazers in big jackets.

Check [www.truckfestival.org](http://www.truckfestival.org) for outlet updates, line-up info as it comes in, and also other super exciting information detailing disabled access, pictures from last year, and a discussion forum.

Tickets priced at £40 are available locally from 1st February from these outlets (cash sales only, personal calls only):

Baby John's (Didcot), Dawsons (Abingdon), Music Box (Wallingford), Peter James Heating (Wantage), Polar Bear (Oxford), Rapture (Witney), Record Savings (Banbury), Sound Machine (Steeving)

Available online from [www.sagetickets.com](http://www.sagetickets.com) from 1st March, subject to booking fee and terms & conditions.

Subject to licence. Truck is a charitable event.





## NOVEMBER / THE MONGROLS / SHE CRIES / SILENT ECHOES

### **The City Tavern**

Four new bands; two electric, two acoustic, two great, two pretty shit. A great thing about nights like this is that you get a snapshot of bands in the throes of development, learning to walk so to speak. Too many gig lists are getting clogged up with bands recalling past glories, even if they do keep promoters happy.

It's difficult to say anything positive about Silent Echoes, an acoustic three-piece, except that they exude enthusiasm and seem blissfully unaware of just how woeful they are. Too much plaintive wailing, too little attention to song structure. That said, many a good band has started from a lower point and they get a better reception than Coldplay did at Brookes in 2000.

She Cries are the diamond in the mud tonight and another acoustic three-piece, who also perform as a rock band. From the outset they bowl us over with dazzling maturity and astonishing depth and subtlety. Reminiscent of Led Zep's acoustic moments, with a hint of Nick Drake, they blend perfectly crafted, very British pop melodies with clever wordplay, all exquisitely

performed. They sound more like a band with years of experience and a huge back catalogue, from which they've picked out the very best for us. Their demo hasn't left my machine since.

On to the full bands now, and The Mongrols look like they're not used to being on stage. Enthusiastic and energetic, they make a lot of noise but little of it seems to make any sense. They do look good, especially the bassist who looks like he's just arrived from New York, 1976. A triumph of style over substance, maybe they just need to listen to some better bands like...

November are more like it. Sharp, tight, controlled, they've obviously put a lot of time and effort into honing their songs and style.

Tipping a nod to US bands like Dinosaur Jr and The Strokes, they've already developed a refreshingly original set of numbers that could easily get some record company cheque books flapping. 'Sarah' already sounds better than a lot of the dross currently filling the airwaves, and they pleasingly defy the stereotype of student bands being crap.

*Art Lagun*

## STINKING LIZAVETA / DEGUELLO

### **The Cellar**

Deguello are much more than your average hairy rock band in thrall to the lure of distortion. Lurking beneath an ostensible shell of bristling hardcore, taking in elements of Black Flag's bullish aggression and the fuzzed-up sounds of early Mudhoney, there's a pretty vicious beast lurking. Passages of repetitive, doomy riffing, locked into place by loping, circular bass hooks that turn in on themselves, escalate into trippy, almost Swans-like gravity. Elsewhere, the addition of a lap steel adds the kind of atmospheric aftertouch otherwise picked up by Bardo Pond or Skullflower. For every moment of faintly uninvolved, heads-down rocking, there are at least two of fascinating contrast, and the sense that even if they're not quite the finished product, a lot of the most interesting local noises in 2006 will be coming out of Camp Deguello.

By contrast, after celebrating their tenth anniversary as a band recently, Stinking Lizaveta are a finely-honed outfit, as well-bred to churn out

ENORMOUS riffs as a greyhound is to chase those little metal rabbits. Confusingly labelled as post-rock, probably 'cos, y'know, they don't have a singer and Chicago's own Mr Clangy, Steve Albini, recorded them, they owe far more to a mute Sabbath or the behemoth doom of Kyuss. For all the ostentatious, wah-drenched soloing of mad scientist frontman Yanni, it's the crushing rhythms supplied by puissant metronome Cheshire Agusta that lend coherence to the Lizaveta sound, and in short bursts, they're absolutely exhilarating. At length, however, structural similarities across tracks and the same signature squalling guitar sound throughout don't do Lizaveta any favours, lending a sense of monotony to the tail end of a forty-minute set that would have been joyously exhausting left at the half-hour mark. More of a short sharp kick in the teeth than a drawn-out, brutal mugging, as it were.

*Stuart Fowkes*



## **February**

Every Monday:

### **THE FAMOUS MONDAY NIGHT BLUES**

*The best in UK, European and US blues. 8-12. £6*

6<sup>th</sup> **KENT DUCHAINE** (USA)

13<sup>th</sup> **CARVIN JONES** (USA)

20<sup>th</sup> **BOCCIGALUPE & THE BAD BOYS** (USA)

27<sup>th</sup> **CONNIE LUSH & BLUE SHOUTER** (UK)

Every Tuesday:

### **THE OXFORD JAZZ CLUB**

*Free live jazz plus DJs playing r'n'b, funk and soul until 2am*

7<sup>th</sup> **ROGER INNES**

14<sup>th</sup> **THE TOM GREY QUINTET**

21<sup>st</sup> **PADDY MILNER**

28<sup>th</sup> **THE TOM GREY QUINTET**

Every Thursday:

### **BULLSEYE**

*Student Indie, Festival, Funk (10pm-2am - £2 or free entry with flyer from The City Arms)*

Every Friday:

### **BACKROOM BOOGIE**

*Funk, soul and R&B. 9-2am Free B4 10pm; £4 after.*

Every Sunday:

### **THE CHAPEL - LOCAL BANDS SHOWCASE.**

*8-11pm. £3*

*Plus*

Wed 1<sup>st</sup> **COMEDY CLUB** with **GLEN WOOL, NICO & JOE**. Compere Silky (8.30pm; £6.50)

Thu 2<sup>nd</sup> **SUGAR MONKEY** plus support (8.30pm; £3) followed by Bullseye

Sat 4<sup>th</sup> **SIMPLE** - Funky House with Justin Robertson (9-2am)

Wed 8<sup>th</sup> **HITECHJET** plus **ONCE OVER TWICE** - Punk, metal and hardcore night (8.30pm)

Sat 11<sup>th</sup> **COALITION** (9-2am)

Wed 15<sup>th</sup> **LIVE BAND NIGHT** - call for details

Thu 16<sup>th</sup> **GREEN SPACE** (8.30pm; £3) followed by Bullseye

Sat 18<sup>th</sup> **SIMPLE** - Funky house, residents night (9-2am)

Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> **DOUGHNUT KINGS** (8.30pm)

## SHIRLEY/ THE BROTHERS/ THE SHAKER HEIGHTS/ BABY GRAVY

### **The Zodiac**

Young people are great. They have such belief that things will work out, no matter how implausible it looks. Take teenage band Baby Gravy. They have the youthful fire to believe that they can start a six piece melding Sexy Breakfast-style prog-pop with dubby bass, The Psychedelic Furs' sax parts and vocals in the style of The Slits, and make it work. Of course it doesn't work at all. It sounds like two bands playing two songs at once. Badly. But sometimes a noble failure is worth a hundred safe successes. Watch out for this lot, they could really surprise us. As long as they don't start taking the easy route.

Much as The Shaker Heights do. They could really use some of Baby Gravy's open-minded outlook. Their chiming, slightly drony rock is a bit like early U2 (if you're being kind) and a bit like The Velvet Underground's 'Loaded' (if you're being saintly). Listening to them is like finding a pebble washed smooth by the sea: immediately pleasant to the senses, but ultimately forgettable.

Oxford music is known for many things, but white funk is not one of them, which makes The Brothers an unusual proposition. They burst

onto the stage in a flurry of mid-80s funk rhythms and oodles of glistening Rhodes, headed by a frontman strutting about like a bantam impersonating John Inman. At times it's somewhat uninspired, but the best tracks sound like The Rolling Stones' 'Start Me Up' played in the style of Beck's 'Midnite Vultures' LP, which is something you don't see everyday. Shirley's music is a frightening mixture of Bryan Adams, Los Lobos and McFly with occasional Santana guitar solos and fists aloft choreography. Risible on paper, but in a weird inversion of the Baby Gravy principle, Shirley get away with it by putting in the hard work. Thus their songs are impeccably arranged, convincingly performed and all a neat two minutes long, with barely the space for their adulatory fans to catch a breath in between. Four grown men throwing shapes and singing about their outlaw status is clearly ridiculous, and Shirley's relentless chirpiness is guaranteed to make the more straight-faced music fan physically sick, but I'll admit they made me grin for 30 minutes.

Which is no mean feat, when you think about it.

*David Murphy*

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## MY FATHER THE BEAT

### **The City Tavern**

Local shoegazing popsters Tiger Club were just hitting their stride when they split two years ago; Meanwhile, Back In Communist Russia were at their creative peak when they dissolved shortly afterwards. As such the coming together of refugees from both camps should make for one of the more highly anticipated new bands in Oxford this year.

Tonight's gig at Delicious Music's new City Tavern residency is My Father The Beat's third gig and there's still plenty of untidiness about the band to be ironed out, but equally more than enough evidence that some of the things that made their previous incarnations a bit special have made the trip with them. Singer James Robson sometimes has trouble stamping his authority on the moody, rambling tracks, notably the synth-heavy 'Alice', which cries out for a vocalist of the calibre of Grace Jones to infuse with real

menace. Still, with its brittle machine beat and unsettling atmospherics, courtesy of former MBICR keyboard player Tim Croston, it manages a pleasingly uneasy middle ground between Joy Division and Soft Cell.

MFTB are more at home when they get a bit baggy and casual, 'Bad Green' following the path of 'Sympathy For Devil' in the sullen style of Happy Mondays, while their awkward stabs at funk work in a Talking Heads kind of way, while forever threatening to lurch into Heaven 17 territory. More abstract, almost orchestral instrumental tracks find some useful ideas searching for a bit of cohesion, but set-closer 'S.L.A' is a fine old clamour of old Velvet Underground influences with James finally revealing some timbre in his voice. They've got the pedigree, My Father The Beat are already looking like they can run with it.

*Victoria Waterfield*

## THE RELATIONSHIPS/ LES CLOCHARDS

### **The Exeter Hall**

Tonight is a night of revelations, a time for Oxford's best kept musical secrets to be unveiled to a select few.

First of these is what a great little venue The Exeter Hall is becoming, the small room coupled with the minimal PA make for a crisp, fresh sound.

Les Clochards (that's French for The Tramps) soon achieve the remarkable feat of making the Ex seem like a Parisian café. The combination of accordion, stand up bass, guitar and drums soothes the atmosphere magically. One of the biggest compliments you can pay Les Clochards is that their own numbers sit easily alongside the works of Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht. The closing number, one of their own compositions, is just beautiful.

The Relationships start their set shakily but hit their stride about three songs in when Richard Ramage's and Andy Smith's vocals start to gel nicely. The set draws mainly from last year's 'Scene' album and sees the Relationships

sounding fuller and more rounded than before, while making it appear effortless at the same time.

That Richard's lyrical overview of suburban England helps to give the band an edge over indie pop contemporaries is known, but tonight it's the understated beauty of Angus Stevenson's guitar lines (especially on the twelve string) and Tim Turan's powerful drumming that drive the band.

The lilting 'English Blues', playful 'Hide and Seek' and 'Something Strange' are the pick of the bunch tonight and the set ends to rapturous applause.

They're tempted back for what Richard introduces as "a medley of songs about long forgotten fifties comedian Brian Wisdom", which translate as new song, 'Living in a House with Brian Jones' and long-time live favourite, 'Wisdom of the Ancients'.

'Brian Jones' proves they've got the songs to carry on where 'Scene' left off. Time to unlock the secret Oxford.

*Russell Barker*

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## REBECCA MOSELY/ ALLY CRAIG/ TOM PARNELL

### **The Exeter Hall**

Tonight's gig concludes with all three performers sharing the stage, basking in a mutual respect that is rarely seen outside of folk gigs.

However it's the individual performances that really impress, and Tom Parnell commences proceedings (he will later appear as Rebecca Mosely's cellist) with his piano driven ballads. It's not often that you find the words 'pedantic' 'spurious' or 'pretentious' gracing a rock band's lyrics, but here they are in Parnell's sharp and witty tunes, which appear to be about subjects as diverse as religion and VAT. At times he can seem a little po-faced, but when he finds the point between parody and self-importance he is totally engaging. Ally Craig also has plenty of songs that are drenched in humour, although more often than not, it's a wit that is ever so slightly dark. That said, he still manages to find room for those staples of the folk scene: trains, and Aussie soap opera *Neighbours*. Whatever his subject matter, Craig is an engrossing performer. His guitar

style is so unusual half of the evening is spent trying to work out exactly how he plays at all, and then there's his voice. At its best in the quieter moments of the set, his voice is soaked in a gentle warmth that calls to mind some of Jeff Buckley's most sublime moments. You could quite happily listen to him all night long.

Similarly, Rebecca Mosely is equally blessed. Hers is a voice that is dangerously fragile, at times strangely detached and yet somehow still steeped in emotion. She brings out the best in accompanist Tom Parnell, whose cello parts are rarely overbearing, instead fleshing the songs out and adding a mournful yearning quality. Despite the sorrowful nature of the songs, Mosely often has you dreaming of sun blessed summer evenings where beards and thick woollen jumpers are nowhere to be seen; chilled lager takes precedence over foaming nut brown ale and unnecessary stereotyping is a thing of the past.

*Allin Pratt*



## REBUS / MARY'S GARDEN

### The Cellar

The demise of The Factory was one of last year's greatest disappointments. The band looked and sounded so damn near perfect it was almost inevitable they had to implode under the weight of interpersonal friction.

Singer Laima Bite and guitarist Moty Dimant have emerged from that break up to form Mary's Garden, along with former-Bridge frontman Colin MacKinnon, tonight playing keyboards while wearing a rather incongruous feather boa that makes him look like a bus driver in drag.

The darkly shaded glamour of The Factory has re-emerged with Mary's Garden. The band cut an almost gothic groove – strip away Laima's voice from a couple of tracks and you'd find something not a million miles away from The Mission – while songs billow up like storm clouds, Laima's voice, full of portent, the siren that drives them on.

The opening number sounds like Sinead O'Connor fronting Dead Can Dance before it spirals off on a heroic stadium rock trip. Elsewhere the bitter purity of Laima's voice is undercut by a coyness that recalls Mekons singer Sally Timms,

while the epic scale of the twin guitar and keyboard wash flows from grandiose folkiness to full-on Euro-rock pomp. In these latter moments you can see small cracks appear: tonight is Mary's Garden's second gig and at times they're still unsure of where to go. For the most part though, this is a seductive a journey into the dark side

By stark contrast, Reading's Rebus offer competence over magic every time.

Perhaps they've spent too long hanging out with neighbours The Cooper Temple Clause, but without learning too much along the way. They adopt the Coopers' all-out sonic attack tactics but here's a case of empty vessels making the most noise.

Occasionally the antiquated synthesizer will cut an interesting shape and promise to lift the whole affair onto another level, but just as quickly it's back to the workaday.

Rebus have named themselves after a Scottish TV sleuth. Perhaps they could ask him to investigate where all their tunes have vanished to.

**Dale Kattack**

## FRESH OUT OF THE BOX PRESENTS DEVIL'S GUN

### The Zodiac

Fresh Out Of The Box have been running breakbeat nights at the Cellar in Oxford for about two years now and tonight marks a move up the scale to a big venue.

You know it's going to be a good night when you're the first one dancing. My head is bobbing as soon as I walk upstairs to the sounds of some funky old school hip-hop. When The Invisible Man steps up to the turntables he's set up pretty well to take the party further, dropping breakbeat classics like 'Funk Hits The Fan' and a remix of the jungle anthem 'Original Nuttah'.

Next up is the man Soundz, a wicked producer hooking up with some heavy talent at the moment and killing it in the mix every time. By now the place is packed and the party is alive.

So cue Devil's Gun, a six-piece production and live outfit comprising a guitarist, percussion, two members samples

and keyboards, a female vocalist and a male MC with hair to rival Afroman.

A blinding opener ensues with big, meaty bass, guitar licks to kill for and some excellent percussion from a guy who seems to have his drumsticks in his mouth more than in his hand.

Although Devil's Gun manage to keep the pace and energy going, the rest of the set lacks the punch they open with, with a lot of the tunes sounding more like Goldfrapp than the raw breaks they're known for. For me the party seems at the fullest with Fresh Out Of The Box residents, telling us all we should probably come back next time for a funky party with these guys. That's what it's all about: not who's playing, but the atmosphere. Which was definitely soaring. We'd recommend FOTB every time. Roll on Krafty Kuts.

**DJ Indecision**

## ACTION AND ACTION / MEET ME IN ST LOUIS / THIS TOWN NEEDS GUNS

### The Wheatsheaf

If the soulless mediocrity of 21<sup>st</sup> Century pop is enough to make Jimi Hendrix turn in his own vomit, then he'd be heartened to know that deep in the MySpace.com underground *massif*, whole armies of post-hardcore and indiememo guitar bands are cranking their axes up to 11 and leaving blood on the frets.

Action and Action, the first of tonight's fresh and very high quality line-up, batter the Million Dead legacy with sharp unpredictable rhythms and earwax-melting drums. Like Spy Vs Spy moshing with Burning Airlines, and a singer who sounds like James Dean Bradfield fronting Mineral, A&A beggar belief how hard and tight a band can play without collapsing.

Surrey's Meet Me In St Louis match them for calamity and refrain but with a more 'skinny white boys in tight jackets' look. "We need to act like we don't need this shit, and then they give us this shit for free" is a typical dose of their theatrical panache caught in the whirlwind of a This Ain't Vegas

happy-slapping spree. Both talented *and* molar-grinding in its brattish pugnaciousness.

Locals This Town Needs Guns, may well have started out at the same time as Fell City Girl, only to be left tinkering in the garage and coughing in their smoke as FCG burned rubber to the horizon. But like a weighty turbo-charged Bentley, TTNG are now picking up a relentless speed, and on the evidence of this maturing behemoth of a set, by the end of the year they will be hurtling, brakeless, onto everybody's 'Best Of' lists. In doing so the windswept anthems will gradually shed their Radiohead, Incubus, Sunny Day Real Estate snakeskin for one of even brighter originality. Singer Stu Smith's Johnny Greenwood-meets-Buddy Holly lovechild looks will break the hearts of the festival girls and boys and with luck the bassist's moustache will be lying in his bathroom basin. Dodgy name, very, very promising band.

**Paul Carrera**

## DR SHOTOVER GREET'S A NEW DAWN

Top of the morning to you! You're looking well! So am I, you say? Why, thank'ee sir! Yes, it's all wonderfully wonderful, isn't it? Birds tweet, flowers flower etc etc... I even quite like Coldplay's new DVD! (No, all right, that WAS a slightly tasteless joke...). Back on the booze? Yes I am as a matter of fact, how astute of you to notice! What do I think of the new government directives banning Gentlemen's Clubs from being for

Gentlemen only? Doesn't worry me at all, to be quite frank - this place is full of chaps one couldn't describe as gentlemen, what? "Pikey" Pilkington-Smythe springs directly to mind, as does Lord "Chavvy" Charlesworth... Anyway, I'd be quite happy to see more members of the, ahem, fairer sex around the place... nothing wrong with some lightly clad aristocratic totty perched prettily on the leather armchairs, ha ha ha, as long as it's not Tara Palmer Tompkinson, heaven forfend! What do you mean, have I forgotten something? The Oxford music scene, you say...? Maybe next time.

**Next month: More blushing debutantes**



*"Oh yes, Dr S! Is it THIS way to the billiard room?"*

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# DEMOS

*If you do not supply us with a proper contact number and address as stated below, we will not review your demo.*

## DEMO OF THE MONTH

### ZUBY

Zuby, or Nzube Udezue to give him his full name, is a UK-born, Saudi Arabia-raised Oxford University student previously educated in an American school in the Middle East. During that time he's immersed himself in hip hop and now at 19 years of age is recording his own songs. And remarkably accomplished they are too. While Zuby tends very much towards the commercial end of US hip hop, and tends to rap with an Americanised accent (probably forgivable given his schooling), he mostly avoids the gangsta clichés, keeping the bragging to a minimum on tracks like 'Before', with its slick, almost jazzy backing that sounds like it was recorded and produced somewhere way beyond a bedroom four-track. Here he raps about mixing with Oxford Uni's public school elite and their attitudes towards a young black guy. His style is pretty laidback but the delivery is clear. Sometimes you think it's all a bit too clean cut or in thrall to the American rap big guns, but there's enough invention here, notably in the backing tracks - 'Baby Baby's' moody synthetics and 'Tonight's' chipmunk backing vocals, to suggest a serious commercial future could be Zuby's if he wants it.

### NETWORKS OF WIRE

More students but of very different nature here, with three-piece band Networks Of Wire skulking in the shadows of Coldplay. There's a hint of Glaswegian moodists The Blue Nile in songs like 'Buried Deep Beneath The Snow', although young'uns would doubtless point more readily to the likes of Keane as the singer emotes wearily in a Jeff Buckley style over the top of some serene indie pop where the bass throbs gently and guitars spangle discreetly. It's all executed with consummate professionalism, though you worry it'll all get horribly lost amid the veritable ocean of similarly inclined bands around at the moment. But that shouldn't detract too much from an accomplished debut.

### JABERWOK

If Oxford can produce a decent hip hop band in Big Speakers, it can sure as heck produce a decent funk band as former Nightshift Demo Of The Monthers Jaberwok once again ably prove. As ever, such music is always best appreciated live where the uncomplicated party vibe can be infectious, but this five-track demo grabs a goodly slice of their live sound and shakes its rump for 25 minutes. The main source of inspiration is still The James Taylor Quartet and Isaac Hayes (there's even a track knowingly-titled 'A Proper Shafting'), although this new demo is rockier than its predecessor, leaning far more towards The Red Hot Chili Peppers (notably the singer's Anthony Kiedis-styled rapping), while the spaced-out 'Juicebox' moves from classic Blaxploitation soundtrack to spacey rock and a breakdown talky bit that could be Hawkwind at their most stoned and cosmic. Mostly Jaberwok are about simple funky rock and acid-jazz, all choppy Hammond and heavily-flanged guitars; the rapping occasionally borders on parody but give them a room full of shiny, happy people and you can bet they'll get them moving.

### POPULAR WORKSHOP

Based in London but an Oxford band by proxy, Popular Workshop feature former members of Querelle, Tiger Club and Xmas Lights and this demo appears to have been produced by demo page resident Umair Chaudhry, although it's some way away from is normal industrial-strength doom stock-in-trade. Instead first track 'All About Vikki' is frantic, spasticated punk-funk that might be mistaken for Gang Of Four fronted by John Lydon but actually sounds remarkably like 80s art rockers Age Of Chance. Sometimes shouty, sometimes thrashed-out and screamingly belligerent, it sets a good scene for the rest of the demo but the band don't rise to the occasion, preferring a more considered approach on 'Pop Song', coming on like an Eastenders Futureheads, and the drone-abilly skronk of 'Fuck Shit Up', with its languorous cockney rant that draws on The Fall and Stump for inspiration. Plenty of evidence that there's a potentially excellent band all set to emerge, and they've already picked up airplay on Xfm, but for now they're still looking for a stronger sense of their own identity.

## ACTION AND ACTION

More belligerent, tightly-angled off-funk post-punk noise here from Action And Action, promising much fizzing, frenetic fuzz in a typically Fugazi-inspired kinda fashion. And so it is for the first few minutes of the demo, first song 'Square' scraping out of the blocks armed with a guttural bark that sounds like the singer's shouted himself hoarse at the footie the day before they went into the recording studio, but from thereon in, it gets depressingly generic, every standard facet of post-hardcore noise chucked into the mix but with scant regard for any real soul or fire until the whole thing collapses in an untidy heap of slowly simmering angst and resignation. There's no real aggression or conviction here and most of the songs here sound like something Dive Dive might have toyed with and discarded at rehearsals.

## YVONNE LAKE

A young lady from the school of earnest, overly-serious singer-songwriters, we guess Yvonne does this all solo as her photo shows her on stage armed with a guitar in front of an empty drum kit. Her acoustic songs are melodic but glum heartbreak pop of the kind you can generally find at any and every open mic session. She does earn bonus points for not warbling, whining or getting all Mother Earth-ish on us, but generally the music is too timid and – dare we say it – bland to grab your soul and twist it. Her best effort is the slightly jazzier 'Send A Postcard', which is similar in mood to Laima Bite, but sadly lacking the spark of desolate brilliance that makes Laima such a star in waiting.

## GREENACRE

Young men from the provinces playing rock music. That's rock with a capital R and probably an exclamation mark after its name. Oh, and the prefix emo. Yes, there are loud bits and quiet bits, slow bits and fast bits. Verses where the singer yelps gently and choruses where someone shouts very loudly and ferociously so you can't really tell what the fuss is all about. There is some standard metal riffage and plenty of punky, spunky power play, but it is all extremely formulaic in its not entirely unenjoyable way. Not that we're discouraging such things. All teenagers should be made to join a punk rock band as a rite of passage, just so long as young men from prosperous English market towns don't start thinking they're in any way hard done by in life. Hey, can you imagine

what Congolese or Iraqi emo would sound like? If it was even allowed in the first place.

## RUBIX

Abingdon newcomers Rubix are one of those pleasantly unassuming bands who simply ask us to tell them what they sound like, since they aren't quite sure, like the musical equivalent of slightly bemused tourists with an upside down map wandering around Barton looking for Magdalen Tower. Well, it's our duty, if not pleasure, to inform them that what they mostly sound like is a bit of a mess, but one that might be sorted out with a few months hard practice and a bit of divine intervention. It's bluesy indie rocking of a rudimentary nature, notable mainly for the singer's apparent inability to do much more than shout each line at the top of his voice before pausing long and hard for a sharp intake of breath. Most of the songs here outstay their welcome at around the six-minute mark before simply fading out innocuously, like a rather dull party guest who's just realised nobody is listening to his excruciating anecdote about the time he swallowed a lump of hash, mistaking it for a toffee and ended up talking to a shrub in Cutteslowe Park.

## THE DEMO DUMPER

## BLOSSOM BROWN

Gentle reader, we get sent some rancid old shit here at Nightshift, really we do, but there are depths to which even the most execrable of bands never sink in their quest to create The Worst Demo In The World Ever. And one of those depths is singing over a karaoke CD. Blossom here even rang us up to check we'd received her CD, so keen was she for a review. That was before we'd actually listened to it in its full appalling glory, else we'd have climbed down the telephone and stuffed several kilos of cement down her throat just to stop her from singing anything ever again. So anyway, here are nine 'interpretations' of old singalong faves as diverse as 'That Old Devil Called Love', 'Eye Of The Tiger', 'Holiday' and, worst of all, 'Tainted Love', each as cheap and tinny as you'd expect from a kiddie's home karaoke machine and knocked out with the style and finesse of an out of tune, mortally ill Robert Wyatt. Blossom: please, *please* just fuck off, okay? Even a bunch of stoned students wouldn't find this funny.

Send demos for review to: Nightshift, PO Box 312, Kidlington, Oxford, OX5 1ZU.

**IMPORTANT:** no review without a contact address and phone number (no email or mobile-only). No more than four tracks on a demo. If you can't handle criticism, please don't send us your demo. Aw heck, you're not taking the slightest bit of notice of this are you?

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<b>Fri 03 HAMMER ON THE NAGS</b> <small>A REMAKE OF THE 1954 FILM</small>	<b>Thu 23 STELLANOSKY</b> <small>A REMAKE</small>
<b>Fri 05 THE FINE TOP PLAYERS</b> <small>THE 1935 FILM</small>	<b>Thu 25 JOHNNY TRIANT</b> <small>A REMAKE OF THE 1935 FILM</small>
<b>Sat 06 DE YOUR OWN PITY</b> <small>A REMAKE</small>	<b>Fri 24 UNDER THE HILLS</b> <small>A REMAKE</small>
<b>Sat 08 AN EWING</b> <small>A REMAKE OF THE 1935 FILM</small>	<b>Sat 26 LOUIS XIV</b> <small>A REMAKE</small>
<b>Mon 09 THE FIRST FILM</b> <small>A REMAKE OF THE 1935 FILM</small>	<b>Sat 28 WOLFGANG</b> <small>A REMAKE</small>
<b>Thu 08 AGENT BLUE</b> <small>A REMAKE OF THE 1935 FILM</small>	<b>Mon 26 THE RIFLES + MILBURN</b> <small>A REMAKE OF THE 1935 FILM</small>
<b>Fri 10 THE HONOR</b> <small>A REMAKE</small>	<b>Thu 28 CALHAN</b> <small>A REMAKE</small>
<b>Sat 11 BELAHIN + A SILENT FILM</b> <small>A REMAKE OF THE 1935 FILM</small>	
<b>Mon 12 HIDDEN IN PLAIN VIEW</b> <small>A REMAKE</small>	
<b>Thu 14 JULIAN COPE</b> <small>A REMAKE</small>	
<b>Thu 16 MORNING RINDER</b> <small>A REMAKE</small>	
<b>Thu 18 THE PATRIOTISM</b> <small>A REMAKE OF THE 1935 FILM</small>	
<b>Thu 19 BEYOND THE STARS</b> <small>A REMAKE</small>	
<b>Fri 17 COLLECT LIVE</b> <small>A REMAKE</small>	
<b>Fri 17 QUENCH</b> <small>A REMAKE</small>	
<b>Sat 18 THE YOUNG HAYES</b> <small>A REMAKE</small>	
<b>Sat 19 THE BOY LEAST LIKELY TO</b> <small>A REMAKE OF THE 1935 FILM</small>	
<b>Mon 20 INVADE</b> <small>A REMAKE</small>	

## Club Feb

<b>Fri 05 MAYANNE'S SOUNDSTORM</b> <small>A REMAKE OF THE 1935 FILM</small>
<b>Mon 08 FLY LOVIN' CRIMINALS</b> <small>A REMAKE OF THE 1935 FILM</small>
<b>Thu 07 HAMMER &amp; TOPGUN</b> <small>A REMAKE OF THE 1935 FILM</small>
<b>Fri 10 SLIDE</b> <small>A REMAKE OF THE 1935 FILM</small>
<b>Fri 17 PREPARING</b> <small>A REMAKE OF THE 1935 FILM</small>
<b>Thu 23 IN THE RIVER</b> <small>A REMAKE OF THE 1935 FILM</small>
<b>Fri 24 FRESH OUT THE BOX</b> <small>A REMAKE OF THE 1935 FILM</small>
<b>Sat 25 SOURCE: SIX MONTHS</b> <small>A REMAKE OF THE 1935 FILM</small>

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