

email: nightshift@oxfordmusic.net

website: nightshift.oxfordmusic.net

NIGHTSHIFT

Oxford's Music Magazine

Free every
month.
Issue 130
May
2006

PUNT 2006

Pull-out Punt programme
inside

Oxford's Premier Rock
Pigs SOW Charge
Their Glasses In
Readiness For Oxford
Music's Big Night Out

**HONEST
STATIONERY**

151 COWLEY RD OXFORD • 01865 242524

*... at amazingly
low prices!*

GREETINGS CARDS, PRINTER CARTRIDGES ... AND MUCH MORE!

NIGHTSHIFT: PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU. Phone: 01865 372255

DAWSONS



More Choices

Dawsons Music (formerly Modem Music) in Abingdon, is part of a nationwide group of 11 stores, all offering great service, fantastic value and a massive range of instruments and equipment to choose from. If you haven't already visited Oxfordshire's newest musical instrument store, you should come and see for yourself.



**Behringer Pedals £14.99 EACH
OR Buy 3 for just £37.50!!!**



**Gretsch Electromatic
Hollowbody**
Various Colour Options
SAVE £100 Only £499



**Zoom G7.1U Multi-FX
complete with USB Interface**
Connects directly to a computer for recording!
SAVE £30 Only £199.99



**Takamine EG501S
Electro-Acoustic Guitar**
Includes FREE Gigbag while stocks last
SAVE £40 Only £329

All offers expire June 1st 2006

Dawsons Music • 7-9 High Street • Abingdon • OX14 5BB • 01235 524316

NEWS

Nightshift: PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU
Phone: 01865 372255 email: nightshift@oxfordmusic.net

HELLO AND WELCOME TO A VERY SPECIAL ISSUE OF NIGHTSHIFT.

Special because it's the biggest issue we've put together since Radio 1 Sound City in 1997, and special because this month sees the return of The Oxford Punt once again. The Punt takes place on Wednesday 10th May and features nineteen of the best unsigned acts in Oxford playing across six venues in one action-packed evening, starting at Borders at 6pm with singer-songwriter Ally Craig and finishing sometime after midnight at the Cellar where gabba-crazed madman Nailbomb Cults will be providing suitably frenzied climax to events. Inside this issue you'll find a four-page pull-out guide to the Punt and we hope you'll all go out and enjoy the evening and support the best new music talent in Oxfordshire. There are a few all-venue Punt Passes still available online from oxfordmusic.net, or Polar Bear Records on Cowley Road. priced at £7, otherwise just pay on the door at your chosen venue or venues.

Beyond that May looks like being one of the most hectic months for gigging we've ever known. Just look at how small we've had to make the type in our gig guide. If there's nothing that takes your fancy in there, may we politely suggest you've picked this magazine up by mistake instead of Koi Carp Breeding Monthly. Unfortunately, as explained elsewhere in the news section, various contractual agreements mean we can't announce this year's Truck Festival line-up just yet, but rest assured, no-one is going to be disappointed.

Have a great month and keep supporting live music.

Ronan Munro (Editor)

LINE-UP DETAILS for this year's Truck Festival were still not forthcoming as Nightshift went to press. The festival, which takes place over the weekend of Saturday 22nd / Sunday 23rd July at Hill Farm in Steventon, sold out two months ago but the promoters are contractually bound not to announce the details of the headline acts until other festivals have

sold out. This suggests this year's Truck headliners will be a relatively big name act, already booked to play at either the Carling Weekend or V Festival. The festival's line-up will be announced in due course on the festival website – www.truckfestival.org. Last year's event was headlined by Biffy Clyro and The Magic Numbers.

OXFORD ARTS FESTIVAL takes place on Friday 26th and Saturday 27th May. The festival, part of Oxford Arts Week, features live music, as well as a full programme of art, dance, drama and poetry across eight local venues. Wristbands are on sale now for the event, priced £7 per day or £10 for the weekend, with profits going to the Young Women's Band Project and the John Radcliffe Hospital Music Therapy Room. Wristbands are available from oxfordmusic.net



The full music line-up for the Arts Festival is:
Friday 26th May

The Wheatsheaf: Xmas Lights + Blood Roses + Sow + Smokers Die Young.

The Corner Room: King Furnace + Brother Francisco + Wingback + Inacun.

The Exeter Hall, Cowley: Harry Angel (pictured) + Phyal + Black Skies Burn.

The City Tavern: Nine Stone Cowboy + The Gullivers + Earnest Cox.

The Bullingdon: Baby Gravy + The Walk Off + 20/20 Vision + Lexxis.

Saturday 27th May

The Cellar: Chicks With Decks + The Family Machine + Neon Productions + Borderville + The Quarterfinals.

The Wheatsheaf: The Dirty Royals + The Schla La Las + Harlette + Bethany Weimers.

The Corner Room: Big Speakers + Confidential Collective + 100 Bullets Back + APSP.

The Bullingdon: Peepshow Paddy + The Brothers + Dirty Sci-Fi + Caustic Acoustic.

The Jericho Tavern: The Spiralist + Aerial.

The Exeter Hall, Cowley: Headcount + Nagatha Krusti + Greenacre + Product Of Your Control.

The Port Mahon: The Epstein + Stornoway + Another Lost Leader + Foxes!

The City Tavern: The Kate Garret Band + Fatally Yours.

Gigs and other events will run from midday through to 3am each day. For full line-up and set times check out

www.oxfordartsfestival.com.



Echo & The Bunnymen play at the Zodiac on Saturday 3rd June. The new wave legends are currently enjoying a huge upsurge in popularity as a major influence on bands like Editors, The Rakes and Battle. The band, featuring founder members Ian McCulloch and Will Sergeant, release a new album this month, entitled 'Siberia'. Tickets for the gig are on sale now, priced £16.50 from the Zodiac box office (01865 420042). Other big names coming to the Zodiac include the annoyingly-named !!! on Thursday 13th July and Aiden on Sunday 3rd September. Meanwhile **Killing Joke's** gig scheduled for last month has been re-arranged for Tuesday 2nd May due to other touring commitments. Tickets for the original date are still valid.

THE EXTER HALL in Cowley is hosting a live music festival over the May Bank Holiday weekend. The four-day event kicks off on Friday 28th April with sets from Mary's Garden, Age Of Rockets, Transmission and Through Snowy Static. Doors open at 8.30pm and entry is £3. The following day (Saturday 29th), Gappy Tooth Industries present a bill that includes Ashton Mills, Jeremy Hughes, Tandara Mandara, Steve Larkin, Life With Bears, Michael Berk, Nummernine, Phyal and Shirley. Doors open at 4.30 and entry is £3. Sunday (30th April) features a gig by The G's, followed by the Ex's usual electric jam, with local musicians welcome to come along and jam with the in-house band. The gig kicks off at 6pm and entry is free. Finally, on Monday 1st May, there is an evening of local female singer-songwriters, featuring Denise Marie, Maria Ilett, Glenda Huish, Rebecca Mosley, Laima Bite (pictured) and Fiona Elizabeth. Doors open at 7.30pm and entry is a bargain £3.



Photo by Miles Walkden

THE DOWNLOAD, which has just celebrated its first year on air with the release of a compilation CD of the best of its acoustic live sessions, continues to broadcast the best new Oxford music each week on BBC Radio Oxford 95.2fm. The hour-long show, which features new local releases as well as interviews with local and touring bands and a demo vote, is broadcast every Saturday evening between 6 and 7pm, while each show is available to listen to again online for a week afterwards. 'The Download Sessions' is on sale now from independent CD and music shops around Oxfordshire, priced £5, with all profits going to BBC Children In Need. The ten-track CD includes contributions from Belarus, Richard Walters, Ally Craig and Rebecca Mosley.

OXFORDBANDS.COM are organising an Oxford bands' World Cup five-a-side tournament on Sunday 18th June in aid of Audioscope, which raises money for homeless charity Shelter. Teams must consist of at least three members of local bands or solo artists but can be made up of members of different bands. The winning team's band or bands will play a special Oxfordbands.com gig that night at the Port Mahon. The competition takes place at the Oxford University Sports Federation ground off Iffley Road. Any bands or musicians interested should email football@oxfordbands.com before the 26th May. Entry is £3 per player.

THE WORKHOUSE release their second album at the end of this month. 'Flyover' is the follow-up to 2003's 'The End Of The Pier', and was recorded at Dungeon Studios with Rich

Haines. 'Flyover' will be released on Bearos Records and distributed by Cargo. Check out www.the-workhouse.net for more details, and next month's Nightshift for a major interview feature on the band.

THE SAMURAI SEVEN return this month with a new name and line-up. The long-time local favourites changed their name to The Dirty Royals while recording a new EP in California last year. The five-track EP, 'Obsessed America', is released in the States this month, with a limited number of import copies available in this country. Meanwhile the new-look band play their debut gig this month as part of Oxford Arts Festival. Catch them at the Wheatsheaf on Saturday 27th May.

AVID RECORDS, in Gloucester Street, looks set to keep trading for the next 18 months. The second-hand record and CD shop was set to close at the beginning of this year after the City Council increased the rent by nearly 50%, but since then a deal to sell on the shop's lease has fallen through and Avid is staying. Good news for record collectors and Oxford as a whole as more and more independent traders go out of business.

PHYAL launch their new EP with a gig at the Hope & Anchor in Islington on Tuesday 16th May. The band will be running a bus to and from the gig from Bicester and Oxford. Tickets are available now, priced £10, which includes bus travel, entry to the gig and a copy of the EP, from the band. Visit www.phyal.co.uk or email ruphyal@hotmail.com

DR SHOTOVER:

FROM BARS TO BARRICADES

May '68? I remember it well. I was in Paris at the time, with a radical street theatre group - Les Blokes Rouges, we were called. We put on impromptu performances for the workers and students occupying the Sorbonne... oh how they loved our Situationist drama, as we bellowed through megaphones and pelted the audience with stale baguettes... I still recall the day they discovered that Lefty Beaumont was an Old Etonian and threw him in the fountain in the Place de La Concorde... what larks! Ahem. Where was I? Ah yes, students. They're still at it on the barricades in Paris, apparently... good show. Not like the capitalist running dogs who pass for students round these parts... and the Oxford music scene could do with some revolutionary fervour too... where are the MC5 when you need them? Up against the wall, motherf*****s! Give 'em your last few rounds!... Phew, talking of rounds, whose is it? Ah, good man, Lefty. Mine's a Molotov Cocktail.

Next month: My Secret Life as an Entryist in the Angry Brigade.

The young Dr S makes his feelings known about the Parisian music scene - "Take that, Johnny Halliday!"



TCTmusic presents

www.tctmusic.co.uk

THE RAKES >>>
+ THE YOUNG KNIVES + THE BEER OFFS
SUNDAY 14 MAY - OXFORD BROOKES UNI SU
£11 adv

the SHINS
+ Triangle
MONDAY 22 MAY
OXFORD BROOKES UNI SU
£12.50 adv

Keep it unreal
with **MR. SCRUFF**
thursday 18 may
reading university
students onion
9-2 £11/12

THE ZUTONS
+ LITTLE FLAMES
TUESDAY 30 MAY
READING HEXAGON
£16 adv

THE COOPER TEMPLE CLAUSE
+ The Race
SUNDAY 21 MAY
READING UNIVERSITY SU
£11.50 adv

Please note shows at Oxford / Reading University are 18+ All prices subject to booking fees.
www.wegotickets.com; See Tickets 0871 220 0260; Reading Hexagon 0118 960 6060; Oxford Brookes 01865 484750

THE
OXFORD GUITAR GALLERY
LIMITED



Join us for an evening
with Lakewood Guitars

Beautiful hand-crafted acoustics from Germany

Wednesday 7 June 2006, 6.30pm


Come along for your chance to be entered in a
national grand draw to win a Lakewood guitar
– call now for your FREE ticket

9 SOUTH PARADE, SUMMERTOWN, OXFORD OX2 7JL • TEL: 01865 553777 / 514800

WWW.OXFORDGUITARGALLERY.COM • MONDAY TO SATURDAY 10AM-6PM

THE FINE ART OF QUALITY INSTRUMENTS

PROFESSIONAL MUSIC TECHNOLOGY



The boyz with the Toyz!

**THE UK'S ULTIMATE
MUSIC SUPERSTORES!**

THE UK'S BEST SERVICE, ADVICE & PRICE GUARANTEED!

PROFESSIONAL MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

UNITS 4 & 5, TYNE DALE HOUSE, COWLET ROAD, OXFORD, OX4 1JH

WWW.PMTONLINE.CO.UK

• **01865 725221**

• **01865 248083**

RELEASED

Sponsored
by



VARIOUS ARTISTS

'The Download Sessions'

(BBC Radio Oxford)

Without doubt the best thing that's happened to the Oxford music scene in the last year has been the launch and continued success of BBC Radio Oxford's Download show. Each Saturday evening the show has broadcast a wide selection of Oxford-based music for the first time on a station that most people can easily access. With the commitment of presenters Tim Bearder and David Gilyeat, and the resources of the BBC, the Download has been able to record exclusive acoustic sessions from local bands and singers, from which this collection of songs is drawn.

That these 'live lounge' recordings coincide with the continued upsurge in acoustic music nights across Oxford venues means the depth of talent being documented is formidable, while even some of the more rockist local acts have stripped down for the show.

Of the latter, both Belarus and The Epstein fare well. Belarus' understated grandeur

transfers easily into an acoustic setting on 'I Feel', while The Epstein have an authentically rootsy feel of a truck stop country soul band on 'Leave Yr Light On'. The Joff Winks Band's 'Share My Blues', is more plaintive than its original incarnation but keeps its gently uplifting vibe.

Of the artists who have emerged from Oxford's expansive open mic and acoustic sessions, there's thankfully little sign of those interminable Dylan wannabes or wailing harpies that turn your beer sour. Both Charlotte James and KTB lean as much towards jazz as folk; Charlotte's piano-led 'Games' is downbeat and smoky, her voice sweetly weather-beaten, while KTB's 'Bluebirds' is infused with a fresher spring warmth and sounds remarkably like 'Dream A Little Dream Of Me'.

Amongst the ten tracks on offer here only Los Diablos' 'Joan Of Arc' is best forgotten, an innocuous rustic strum that becomes an incongruous and abrasive acoustic thrash. Far better at thrashing it out is Ally Craig whose caustic 'Lower Standard' is deliberately lyrically uncomfortable but pushes all the right buttons. Contrast that with 'Emily Rolt's soporific, breathless vibrato and you start to get an idea of the diversity on show even within the acoustic set.

The album leaves the best 'til last, though. Richard Walters really ought to be a star beyond Oxford by now and the desolately pretty 'End Of The World Song' is reason number 253 why there's no justice in a world where Richard is a cult concern while James Blunt is the biggest selling artist in the UK.

Much more than simply another local compilation, the live, pared-down nature of these recordings shows them in their most natural light as well as showcasing some of the best songwriters in Oxford.

Dale Kattack

SMILEX

'Wet & Wild'

(Akuaba)

There's a bit of us here at Nightshift that can't think about Smilex frontman lee Christian without being reminded of Hong Kong Fuey, the karate-kicking cartoon canine crime-fighter. By day Lee is a mild mannered (for which, read mildly stoned) young man, but stick him in front of a microphone and he's transformed into a bellowing ball of fury with an Iggy Pop fetish. Which is kind of how we like our rock stars.

There's something of the cartoon about Smilex anyway, the way that however much they hate the comparison, they hark back to those

unselfconscious, irony-free halcyon days of Motley Crue, only when Motley Crue were first starting out and still sounded like a proper garage rocking beast and not an MTV-pleasing bunch of spandex pussies. 'Wet & Wild' is hysterically daft, but it's bloody great rock and roll too. Part Stooges, part AC/DC, hellbent on partying all night on LA's Sunset Strip. And it mentions vicars and seems to be about teenage sex. What more could you ask of a band?

Except maybe the odd hammed-up guitar solo, like Tom Sharp delivers on b-side, 'Baby's Got Bored', gurning into proceedings amid a tumult of churning punk power riffs. For all the cartoonish imagery though, Smilex are a band more people should start taking seriously.

Dale Kattack

FELL CITY GIRL

'Swim'

(Lavolta)

Back in the early-1980s when you pretty much needed a degree in European literature to start to understand *NME*, critics would talk excitedly of cathedrals of sound and glacial splendour. Usually in the context of the latest opus by Cocteau Twins or Echo and the Bunnymen, bands who treated guitars as tools to build something rather more splendid and intricate than mere rock songs. Fast-forward twenty years to a more prosaic time for music and music journalism and it's tempting to reinstate such purple prose in relation to Fell City Girl.

On these four tracks, which make up the band's new EP on Lavolta Records, Phil McMinn and Joe Gibbons recreate the starlit spangle and tundra-bleak headrush of those overcoat-swaddled pop dreamers of two decades ago. Along the way they sweep up memories of a later wave of introspective sonic temple builders – Ride and Slowdive in particular – but instead of hiding behind their fringes, take the whole oceanic storm to stadium rock heights.

The EP's title track is almost timid by comparison to 'There Are Statues, I'm Told' and the magnificently grandiose 'Send In The Angels', while closing number 'We've All Felt The Voltage' is a pop anthem starship voyage where Explosions In The Sky would be content to drift amongst the clouds. Easy not to notice amidst all this that Phil's plaintive, soaring falsetto is an instrument of no little exquisite wonder by itself.

So, all that aside, is 'Swim' any good? No, it's not good. It's fucking brilliant. And it confirms every ounce of promise we ever saw in Fell City Girl. This band is really something special.

Dale Kattack



Selected Oxford releases are now available on the ground floor

HMV Oxford supports local music

Open Sundays 11-5pm & late Thursdays till 7pm.

10% student discount every day

FOALS

'Try This On Your Piano'

(Try Harder)

The demise of The Edmund Fitzgerald robbed Oxford of one of its more innovative and maverick guitar bands, one that injected fresh momentum into the post-rock landscape.

Foals sees the re-emergence of Ed Fitz frontman Yannis and drummer Jack, along with refugees from another deceased local band Face Meets Grill, plus Youth Movie Soundtrack Strategies singer and guitarist Andrew Mears.

Released on Try Harder Records, co-run by Youth Movies' Al English and already responsible for heavyweight 7" outings from Blood Red Shoes and Tired Irie, this debut single from Foals was always going to take the more difficult route up rock and roll's north face, with the band describing themselves as "making the music a fax machine would make if it were trying to impress the computer".

Dinky guitar runs that sound like scattershot sequencer pulses flutter amongst jittery jazz-inflected flourishes and drum skips, the almost gossamer mania of it all somewhat akin to the incessant business of a disturbed ants nest. Against this background the fraught, almost pained vocals can initially sound incongruous but repeated listens show them to be part of a restless trip that steers a clever if fragile path between Steve Reich, Slint and Penguin Café Orchestra.

Victoria Waterfield

TREV WILLIAMS

'Guiding Star'

(Own Label)

Good old Trev; he's come in for a bit of a battering in the past in Nightshift's demo pages but merrily he comes back for more. And come back stronger if this debut album is anything to go by. Where before Trev was prone to schmaltzy romanticism, here he rocks it up a bit while occasionally showing that he's an adept tunesmith.

Opening number 'All The Demons Have Gone' is standard pub rock party fare, while 'Cut In Two' is a basic, shouty stab at The Who, but more considered moments, like the almost dreamy 'I Did It For You' and 'Hyena', with their folky take on 60s Californian pop and unobtrusive but effective female backing vocals show his strengths. In fact backing singers Hannah Rhodes and Naomi Bullock could be the real stars of 'Guiding Star', whether they're cooing softly as on 'I Did It For You' or chanting in more exotic north African style as on the Kashmir-gone-folk 'Girlfriend'.

Complimenting Trev's reigned-in Robert Plant lead vocal, they add a depth to everything they're involved with. Unfortunately the inconsistency of the album suggests Trev has stumbled on the best stuff as much by accident as design, which is perhaps an unkind thing to level at any songwriter, but the heavy-handed treatment of songs like 'Is It Greener Now I'm Gone', with its almost operatic bombast, and album closer, 'If It Makes You Sad', takes away from the essence of the songs.

Sometimes then, less is more, but as often as not the full band arrangements do give Trev more room to manoeuvre than he'd have with just voice and acoustic guitar. And compared to past offerings, 'Guiding Star' finds him going up in the world.

Dale Kattack

KING FURNACE

'Crash'

(Akuaba)

Sometimes accidents happen for a reason and trying to mend things only makes them worse. In King Furnace's case, they want to sound like Red Hot Chili Peppers but due to some hiccup 'Crash' starts off sounding rather more like Talking Heads in their first flourishes of world funk. Which is so much better, don't you think? Only, having realised what's going on they get all flustered and start banging out a load of hoary old funky rock riffs while the singer does his best Anthony Kiedis impersonation and a great opportunity goes begging.

By the time they reach the third track on this EP, 'Making Of Me', they have morphed completely into a Chili Peppers tribute band, with an almost direct steal of 'Under The Bridge', and while there's nothing at all wrong with admiring that band, equally there's little point in hackneyed retreads of a sound that has been copied to death a million times before.

Dale Kattack



Wingnut Music.

A New Way.



Presenting live music at
THE CORNER ROOM

Details and Discounts at
www.wingnutmusic.com

Friday 5 May
PAGE 44 + Subrosa 5 + guests

Friday 26 & Saturday 27 May
OXFORD ARTS FESTIVAL

Friday 2 June
UNDER THE IGLOO + A Genuine Freakshow + Worldview

Friday 9 June
THE RACE + The Plugs + guests



DELICIOUS MUSIC

Presents

LIVE IN MAY

TUESDAYS - Open Mic & Jam @ The Market Street Tavern
(previously known as the City Tavern) upstairs Charisma Bar
Live Weekly Local Eclectic Electric Jam (8pm) Free Entry!

Also on TUESDAYS Live Jazz, Blues & Folk @ Bar Milano -
Downstairs @Pizza Express (8pm) Free Entry!

2nd **Pawel Kuterba** - Electric Jazz Guitarist

9th **The Jazz Menagerie** - Jazz Standards

16th **Neil Mason** - Latin jazz Master

23rd **The Bewley Brothers** - Brilliant guitar and sax duo

30th **Jazz Emporium** - Jazz excellence

FRIDAYS @ St Aldates Tavern - Live Music FREE ENTRY

12th **Friday Street** - band brilliance covering Arctic Monkeys to U2

19th **Wallis Bird** - On her tour of the UK, Ireland and Germany.

Wallis' gutsy Janis Joplin voice is one of the brightest talents emerging today.

SATURDAYS @ The Market Street Tavern's Charisma Bar -
upstairs (In association with Up & Coming Entertainment) £4
Entry / Doors 8pm

6th **The Lickety Splits + Sleepless + The Silkroom**

13th **The G's + Transmission + Foxes!**

20th **Jones Radio + Clone Radio + The River**

27th **ARTS FESTIVAL CITY WIDE** (Fri, Sat & Sun)

Demos to **Delicious Music @ MUSIC REPUBLIC**, 99 St Aldates,
Oxford. Tel: 01865 242784 / 07876 184 623
For bookings Email deliciousmusic@hotmail.com

GIG GUIDE

MONDAY 1st

JOHN OTWAY: The Port Mahon (6am) – The Clown Prince of Pop plays his now traditional May Morning set at the Port, keeping the early morning revellers going with his usual madcap performance and eccentric pub rock.

CHICKS WITH PICKS with DENISE MARIE + REBECCA MOSLEY + GLENDA HUISH +

Monday 1st

JOSÉ GONZÁLEZ:

The New Theatre

Never mind the MySpace revolution and a return to the DIY rock aesthetic, if you want instant pop success you can't beat a bit of prime TV exposure. Which is how unassuming Swedish-Argentinean singer-songwriter José González finds himself in the Top 10 and playing a tour of theatre-sized venues on the back of a single album release, one that was only available in his home country for the first two years of its life. González's introduction to the wider world came with his vocal contribution to The Knife's 'Heartbeats' which provided the soundtrack to Sony's 'bouncing balls' commercial, while his own 'Crosses' found him played on The O.C. All of which should make José a soulless charmer. Except he's not; he's a rather lovely singer with a melancholy, plaintive style that's reminiscent of Nick Drake and Elliot Smith, while his basic acoustic folk-pop, played almost entirely on a six-string classical guitar, and with the just the slightest hint of Latin samba to it, is both hypnotic and affecting. His only album, 'Veneer', is now climbing charts across Europe, while live his selection of cover versions – from Joy Division and Bruce Springsteen to Massive Attack and Kylie – further expose his eclectic soul. Whether his current success will herald a long and successful career or simply a flash in the pop pan is anyone's guess, but he's worth enjoying while it lasts.



MAY

MARIA ILETT + LAIMA BITE: The Exeter Hall, Cowley – A night celebrating some of the best local female singer-songwriters, including melancholy folkstress Rebecca Mosley, Phyl frontwoman Glenda Huish, trip-pop chanteuse Maria Ilett and gothic pop siren Laima Bite.

SHARRIE WILLIAMS: The Bullingdon – Powerful rocking soul and gospel from projects-raised singer Sharrie and energetic backing band The Wiseguys, recalling Tina Turner at her 60s and 70s peak as well as Etta James and Billie Holiday.

JOSE GONZALEZ: The New Theatre – Gossamer Latin-inflected folk from the new darling of acoustic pop – see main preview

TEDDY THOMPSON: The Zodiac – British-born, New York-based son of Richard and Linda Thompson, riding a road away from his parents' traditional English folk sound towards a more countrified rock and wistful, melancholy soul in the style of Jackson Browne. He's collaborated with Rufus Wainwright and Emmylou Harris as well as contributing tracks to *Brokeback Mountain*.

ROOTS + CULTURE JAM: The Zodiac – Bank Holiday sound system soundclash with Oxford's Desta*Nation and Bristol's Ma_kaya crews.

BLIND PILOTS + THE RIVER: The Corridor

TUESDAY 2nd

KILLING JOKE: The Zodiac – Rearranged from last month due to bassist Raven's touring commitments with Ministry, the mighty Joke finally return to Oxford for the first time since their riotous show at the Polytechnic in 1985. Time and age may have mellowed the fanbase, but not the band. Their last, eponymous, album, featuring the original line-up of the band, plus Dave Grohl on drums, was as raw and brutal as their awesome 1980 debut, while new CD 'Hosannas From The Basements Of Hell' is similarly uncompromising. Killing Joke's sound, best heard on that debut, as well as 1985's 'Night Time' and the last two opuses, is typified by Jaz Coleman's monstrous vocal rasp and apocalyptic lyrics added to the band's monolithic industrial synth-punk that's both devastatingly bleak and surprisingly melodic. Live they remain one of the few bands who can genuinely terrify a crowd, Coleman a wild, shamanic performer, all of them the sort of blokes you really wouldn't want to mess with. Genuine rock legends: see them live then go home and destroy all your so-called hardcore albums.

JAZZ CLUB with THE TOM GREY QUINTET: The Bullingdon

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Exeter Hall, Cowley

DELICIOUS MUSIC OPEN MIC & JAM SESSION: The City Tavern

VERTIGO: The Cellar – Indie club night with live punk rock action from The Suffrajets

DELICIOUS MUSIC JAZZ, BLUES AND FOLK NIGHT: Bar Milano, Pizza Express

WEDNESDAY 3rd

PERSIL: The Wheatsheaf – Gorgeous lo-fi synth-pop and guitar drone from Amsterdam girl-

boy duo Persil, gently rocking it out in the style of My Bloody Valentine, Stereolab and St Etienne with their fuzzy guitars and squelchy retro-futurist synths.

KANED CITIZENS: The Port Mahon – Upbeat jangly indie rock.

FOLK SESSION: The Exeter Hall, Cowley

THURSDAY 4th

KLUB KAKOFANNEY with SUITABLE CASE FOR TREATMENT + JUNKIE BRUSH + RAGGASAURUS + THE NEW MOON: The

Wheatsheaf – Prog-tastic spastic jazzcore from the mighty, monolithic masters of macabre music, Suitable Case at tonight's Klub Kak, fresh from scaring the sofa-bound detritus of humanity on the Richard and Judy show alongside God of News Jon Snow. Melodic local punkers Junkie Brush support.

GALLIARDE + ANTHONY WHITEHEAD: The Exeter Hall, Cowley – Acoustic showcase.

THE EVENINGS + SUNNYVALE NOISE SUB-ELEMENT + MALE: The Cellar – Superlative electro-rocking fun and experimentation from The Evenings, mixing up the classic new wave synth-pop sounds of John Foxx and OMD with cutting edge techno noise. Equally vital support from Sunnyvale, sounding like Shellac hotwiring Kraftwerk's trans-Euro express with an assortment of power tools and bad-tempered guitars.

JOHN ETHERIDGE & DYLAN FOWLER:

Modern Art Oxford Café (5.45pm) – Two of the UK's most revered guitarists team up for an Oxford Contemporary Music evening. Former-Soft Machine chap Etheridge remains one of the most talented cult stars after working with Stephane Grappelli, John Williams and The Zappatistas and along with Fowler will be playing everything from Bulgarian and Celtic folk to jazz, classical and rock.

PORT MAYHEM with REDOX + STRANGE AURORA + BARNABAS: The Port Mahon – Psychedelic special at this month's Port Mayhem club night, with local 70s rock-cum-barn dance-cum-hippy madness combo Redox headlining.

JAZZ NIGHT: The City Tavern

SKYLARKIN: The Brickworks – Weekly dub, funk, ska and Afrobeat club night.

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon

SABOTAGE: The Zodiac – Weekly rock, punk and alternative club night.





Sunday 7th

MYSTERY JETS:

The Zodiac

Mystery Jets, who won their first demo of the month in Nightshift back in 2001, are now the most famous residents of London's isolated Eel Pie Island, as well as one of the most hotly-tipped bands around, garnering much attention and praise for their equally refreshing and perplexing fusion of pastoral prog-rock, pop-friendly reggae, Celtic folk, Caribbean oil drumming and pretty much anything else they can squeeze in between. The fact the core of the groups is father and son team Henry and Blaine Harrison adds to the strange appeal of it all. After a succession of oddball and elaborate singles, including the quirky, anthemic 'Alas, Agnes', which comes close to equalling The Arcade Fire in its wide-vision ambition, plus a series of circus-style gigs on their home turf, which have added to their eccentric reputation, the Jets release their debut album this month, 'Making Dens', one that, for all its occasional misfiring (the idea of quite literally throwing everything including the kitchen sink into every song sometimes makes for a bit of a mess) marks them apart from any other band currently rising through the ranks. Which probably means they'll miss out on the big time crossover success of more singularly-minded bands, but will hopefully mean their reputation in years to come will grow and flourish.

FRIDAY 5th

TRIO: The Holywell Music Room – Sadly not the ace German synth-pop one hit wonders of the same name but the band formed by trumpeter Tomasz Stanko, oft dubbed The Polish Miles Davis, tonight playing a set of original material as well as radical, sophisticated reworkings of standards by the likes of Wayne Shorter and Björk, aided and abetted by his improvisational backing group.

BABY GRAVY + BORDERVILLE + DIRTY SCI-FI + GPK: The Zodiac – Local bands night featuring promising new pop freaks Baby Gravy, mixing up X-Ray Spex-style punk with lopsided Hawkwind-inspired jazzy space-rock. Former Sexy Breakfast frontman Joe Swarbrick returns with his theatrical new act Borderville, while erstwhile-Factory chaps Dirty Sci-Fi bring the heavy-duty drone rock.

BARRY & THE BEACHCOMBERS + OPAQUE + SUE JORDAN: The Exeter Hall, Cowley – Wittstock Festival fundraiser featuring madcap Butthole Surfers obsessives Barry and the Beachcombers.

PAGE 44 + SUBROSA 5: The Corner Room – Birmingham-based anthemic heavy rockers headline over Wycombe's Verve and Ride-inspired shoegazing pop dreamers.

SMOKESCREEN: The Zodiac – Dubby deep house and techno club night.

ACOUSTIC NIGHT: The Victoria, Jericho
ACOUSTIC ROCK NIGHT: The City Tavern
BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon
BOSSAPHONIK: The Cellar – Soul night with Dee Nyoni and Rebecca Heyne.

SATURDAY 6th

MAGIK MARKERS + YOUNG PEOPLE + THIS IS YOUR CAPTAIN SPEAKING + THE WHIPS OF MERCY: The Wheatsheaf – Another typically esoteric night of quality leftfield rock noise courtesy of Vacuous Pop. Tonight's bill finds New England No-Wavers Magik Markers cranking up their primitive, confrontational punk, having played with Sonic Youth in the past. LA's Young People mix Gun Club-inspired gothic rockabilly with sultry mood pop, there's serene guitar soundscaping from This Is Your Captain... while former Factory guitarist Aaron returns to action with his new band The Whips of Mercy.

THE ROCK OF TRAVOLTA + SMILEX: The Zodiac – BBC Radio Oxford presents the latest in its local bands live broadcast gigs, this month featuring flamboyant instrumental stars The Rock Of Travolta, back in action after a major personnel overhaul and doing the Shellac-meets-Stravinsky-in-Add N To (X)'s-basement rock storm as brilliantly as ever. Trashy garage-rock goblins Smilex provide top notch support.
ALEX WARD & THE DEADENDS + THE NEW MOON + MARK BOSLEY BAND: The Exeter Hall, Cowley – Mixed bag of local talents with improv maestro Alex doing his thing along with melodic rockers The New Moon and Mark Bosley's eccentric brand of pop.

SIMPLE: The Bullingdon – Funky house club night with Maison, plus residents.

SLEEPLESS + THE SILKROOM + THE LICKETY SPLITS: The City Tavern – Local bands night.

DOPE AMMO PRESENTS: The Cellar – Hip hop, breaks and drum&bass.

PHIL WHITE: The Magic Café (1pm)

NORTHERN SOUL & MOTOWN NIGHT: The Elm Tree

SUNDAY 7th

THE MYSTERY JETS + THE SPINTO BAND: The Zodiac – Scrambled, everything-goes indie rocking from Eel Pie's most famous residents – *see main preview*

LOCAL BANDS NIGHT: The Bullingdon
TAKSANEROS: The Cellar – Live Latin jazz.

TAKE THE MIC: East Oxford Community Centre (3-5pm) – Under-18s open mic session, with anyone from 8-18 welcome to come along and perform.

ACOUSTIC SONG SESSION: The Exeter Hall, Cowley (3-7pm)

AT RISK + FATALLY YOURS: The Exeter Hall, Cowley – Colourful gothic rock from At Risk, plus Smiths-y indie pop from Fatally Yours.

MONDAY 8th

THE MICK PINI BAND: The Bullingdon – UK blues guitarist and singer, acclaimed as the true successor to Peter Green by none other than Eric Clapton. Using tone and dynamics rather than complex arrangements he creates dreamy, atmospheric blues rock that mixes up 60s-style British blues with Chicago r'n'b.

UGLY DUCKLING + GIANT PANDA: The Zodiac – Animal-themed double bill.

THE KATHRYN TICKELL BAND: Nettlebed Folk Club – Northumbrian smallpipes and fiddle virtuoso.

FOXES! + THE SHAKER HEIGHTS: The Corridor – 60s-styled indie pop from Foxes! plus mellow Lou Reed-influenced rock from Shaker Heights.

TUESDAY 9th

RICK WITTER & THE DUKES: The Zodiac – The man who made the first Britpop explosion such a charismatic time returns with a new band that – thrill upon thrill – features a former member of The Seahorses. There'll be new songs and a few old Shed Seven classics for all you lucky people.

JAZZ CLUB with PADDY MILNER: The Bullingdon

SIMON DAVIES + JANE GRIFFITHS & COLIN FLETCHER + MAEVE BAYTON: The Port Mahon – Acoustic night.

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Exeter Hall, Cowley

DELICIOUS MUSIC JAZZ, BLUES AND FOLK NIGHT: Bar Milano, Pizza Express

MOHAIR: The Zodiac – Launch gig for band's new 'Small Talk' album, marrying Coral-style cheer with Doors-y blues rock.

Sunday 14th

THE RAKES / THE YOUNG KNIVES: Brookes University

Anyone who fancied writing The Rakes off as a bunch of new wave revivalist chancers, desperately clinging onto the coattails of Franz Ferdinand and Bloc Party, will surely be eating their hats as the skinny boys in black from East London continue their upward march to pop fame and fortune. Tonight's gig is The Rakes' biggest Oxford show to date, following on from sell-out gigs at the Zodiac. Emerging from the same Whitechapel scene as The Libertines and Razorlight, The Rakes initially seemed content to document the mundane side of life in songs like 'Work Work Work (Pub Club Sleep)' and '22 Grand Job', but the likes of 'Strasbourg' showed a more romantic side to their character. With most recent single, 'All Too Human', they seem to have moved away a little from their angular, Joy Division-influenced sound into a lush, more synth-led style, something that can only help them escape being lumped in with the chasing pack. Tour support this time round are none other than local heroes The Young Knives, quite simply the most exciting new band to emerge from Oxford in recent years. If you've missed out on them so far, come out from under your rock and thrill to their high-wired collision of The Pixies, Supergrass and Pere Ubu; their star is rising faster even than tonight's headliners.





Monday 15th

HOT CHIP: The Zodiac

Exciting and comforting that even in these genre-fusing-weary days, a band like Hot Chip can come along and make everything sound so damn fresh again. Two years ago they were a glitchy techno-soul curiosity playing to a few dozen curious gigophiles at the Wheatsheaf; this time round they come to town on the cusp of greatness and on the back of heavy radio play and a bona fide chart hit. The Putney trio recorded their first album, 'Coming On Strong', in a bedroom for Moshi Moshi Records; they recorded the follow-up, 'The Warning', for EMI in the exact same bedroom and the glorious naivety of it shines through. Proclaiming to write folk songs for synthesizers, they take Robert Wyatt's gentle melodic bent and take it for a ride through Kraftwerk, Aphex Twin, Daft Punk, Laurie Anderson, Eno and, oh yes, The Thompson Twins. Recent Top 40 hit, 'Coming On Strong', was a clever, funny celebration of repetitive beats and a great dance track, but the new album is mostly packed with dinky, lovely synth-pop lullabies. Recent months have seen Hot Chip touring the States with Stereolab, while supports to Goldfrapp, Mylo and LCD Soundsystem have cemented their live reputation. By the summer they should be the crossover hit of the year, so get in there early.

DELICIOUS MUSIC OPEN MIC & JAM SESSION: The City Tavern

WEDNESDAY 10th

ALLY CRAIG + REBECCA MOSLEY: Borders (6pm) – Opening session for this year's Oxford Punt – *see main Punt preview pull-out*.

THE KEYBOARD CHOIR + XMAS LIGHTS + WITCHES: Jongleurs

WHERE I'M CALLING FROM + DUSTY SOUND SYSTEM + MARK CROZER: The Purple Turtle

THE JOFF WINKS BAND + SOW + SHIRLEY: The City Tavern

DEGUELLO + ASHER DUST + AND NO STAR + HARLETTE: The Wheatsheaf

NAILBOMB CULTS + JABERWOK + 100

BULLETS BACK + ZUBY: The Cellar

TRUCK FIGHTERS + SEXTODECIMO + OBIAT + GUNNBUNNY: The Bullingdon –

Heavy rock night at the Bully with Sweden's velocity stoners Truck Fighters going head to head with local sludge-core overlords Sexto, plus howling grunge killers Gunnbunny.

FOLK SESSION: The Exeter Hall, Cowley

THURSDAY 11th

FELL CITY GIRL + THE HALF RABBITS:

The Zodiac – Neck and neck with The Young Knives for the title of best band in Oxford, FCG take their epic stadium pop to the Zodiac's big stage once again to promote superb new EP, 'Swim'. Dark, new wave-inclined popstrels The Half Rabbits support.

DREW ATKINS: The Port Mahon – 60-styled rock in a Neil Young and Bob Dylan vein from the local singer-songwriter.

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon

EXIT 10: The Bullingdon – Live bands followed by Bullseye club night, playing indie faves.

PETE BEARDER: The Exeter Hall, Cowley

JAZZ NIGHT: The City Tavern

CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford

Community Centre

DJ FORMAT: The Cellar – Benefit for

Bulgarian children's charity with the UK hip hop star.

SKYLARKIN: The Brickworks

SABOTAGE: The Zodiac

FRIDAY 12th

DENISE MARIE & THE OXFORD ALLSTAR

BAND: The Exeter Hall, Cowley

TOWERS OF LONDON: The Zodiac –

Steaming Great Piles of Shite, more like.

ACOUSTIC NIGHT: The Victoria, Jericho

OLD SKOOL FUNKY MOTOWN NIGHT: The City Tavern

FRIDAY STREET: St Aldates Tavern

BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon

SATURDAY 13th

THE BROTHERS: The Zodiac – Highly promising local acid jazz, funk and rock band, coming on like a funk-up collision of 70s Rolling Stones and Beck.

ABSENTEE: The Zodiac – Lacrymose Memphis country rockers, fronted by growly cheerleader Dan Michaelson and partying like Lambchop and Smog drinking heavily with Leonard Cohen and Tindersticks.

CAROLINE MARTIN: The Port Mahon

RAMI + TANDARA MANDARA: The Exeter Hall, Cowley – Album launch gig for the local blues and folk chap.

HOTKNIFE JACKSON: The Wheatsheaf

REGGAE CLUB NIGHT: The Bullingdon

FOXES! + TRANSMISSION + THE G's: The City Tavern – Local bands night

SUNDAY 14th

THE RAKES + THE YOUNG KNIVES + THE ON/OFFS: Brookes University Union – Skinny new wave acolytes continue their upward trajectory – *see main preview*

SHACKY + JIM NOIR: The Zodiac –

Introspective dream-pop from Liverpoolian brothers Michael and John Head, continuing their romantic observation of life's grey walls with fifth album, 'The Corner Of Miles And Gil', a jazzier take on their lysergic guitar pop that hit its peak with 'HMS Fable'. The new album is released on Noel Gallagher's Sourmash label.

BABY GRAVY + SLEEPS IN OYSTERS + THE SILKROOM + AMBERSTATE: The Port Mahon – The new Melodic Oxford club night

takes a sharp left turn from typical melodic pop with headliners Baby Gravy mixing up shrill punk rock with crazed jazzy prog. Reading's Sleeps In Oysters, meanwhile, mix up glitchy electronics with nursery-rhyme synth-pop.

BEARD MUSEUM with MARIANA

MAGNAVITA + BOB STAPLES + JOHNNY

RACE: The Purple Turtle

ACOUSTIC SONG SESSION: The Exeter Hall, Cowley (3-7pm)

ELECTRIC JAM: The Exeter Hall, Cowley – Jam along with the in-house band.

MONDAY 15th

STILL REMAINS + SINAI BEACH +

DEMIRICIOUS: The Zodiac – First night of a two-week tour for Michigan's anglophile metalcore heroes, following in the musical footsteps of Shadows Fall and Killswitch Engage, coating 80s Brit metal with a hefty coat of hardcore noise. Add a shimmer of atmospheric synthesizers in the vein of In Flames to the heavyweight riffage and it's a recipe to rock. Hard. Support comes from Californian velocity metallers Sinai Beach.

HOT CHIP: The Zodiac – Dreamy electro-popping action – *see main preview*

GREGG WRIGHT: The Bullingdon – Rocking blues from California's Gregg Wright, a left-handed guitarist playing a right-handed guitar upside down. A renowned session musician who has played with Spencer Davis and Michael Jackson, cranking out classic blues and rock anthems as well as his own songs.

BARZIN + WITCHES + WAIT FOR

CONISTON + DEPTFORD MICE: The Port Mahon – Chamber pop and alt.country loveliness in a Low and Sparklehorse vein from Canada's Barzin, signed to the cult Monotreme label. Sweet lullaby pop with a dark, almost hardcore edge from Witches, post-rock from WFC, plus Godspeed-influenced noise from Deptford Mice.

Wednesday 17th

THE PAPER CHASE / JENIFEREVER / ILL EASE: The Wheatsheaf

Vacuous Pop, along with Oxfordbands.com, continue to promote some of the most intriguing and challenging live music nights around and tonight's three-act bill is no exception, seeing as it does the return to Oxford for Dallas' Paper Chase, the band formed by John Congleton as a way of channelling his frequent panic attacks. Previously better known as a producer for bands like The 90 Day Men, Congleton makes a fascinating front man, wired and intense, dealing in raw emotions, cynicism and paranoia, while musically the band come as close as anyone to taking Big Black's angled hardcore blueprint and taking it on another level. Sweden's Jeniferever provide a complete musical contrast, creating somnambulant, sweeping pop in the style of Sigur Ros and A Silver Mount Zion. New York's Ill Ease completes a very mixed bill. The solo project of Elizabeth Sharp, last seen in Oxford impressing everyone at last year's Audioscope mini-festival, who conjures up stripped-down live drum loops over which she plays arty punk folk songs, somewhere between Lydia Lunch and kd lang. A great night to discover great sounds from the underground.



CRAIG DAVID: The New Theatre – More adenoidal odes to doing the sex with laydeez from the chilled soul man.

FAIRPORT CONVENTION: Nettlebed Folk Club – English folk legends play their annual low-key show at Nettlebed's intimate folk club.
ASSASSINS OF SILENCE + THE GULLIVERS: The Corridor – Bluesy Hawkwind tribute action from AOS, plus punky indie rocking from The Gullivers.

TUESDAY 16th

BAKA BEYOND: The Zodiac – A recreation of the music and atmosphere of the African rainforests with local outfit Baka Beyond, joined for one night by south Cameroon pygmy tribe musicians, singers and dancers.

BREAKS CO-OP: The Zodiac – You want the bad news or the good news? The bad news is that Breaks Co-op is the band formed by Zane Lowe back in his native New Zealand in the 1990s with mate Hamish Clark and recently resurrected after a nine-year hiatus brought on by Lowe's shouty Radio 1 career. The good news is that they're actually really bloody good. And not in the least bit shouty. Which may be down to recruiting Oxford boy and Away Team chap Andy Lovegrove on vocals, adding a husky soul feel to the band's rustic hip hop, electronica and spiritual country pop. Pitched somewhere between Marvin Gaye and Alabama 3 on the one hand and Shack and Crosby, Stills and Nash on the other, their new album, 'The Sound Inside', recorded at Sutton Courtenay's Courtyard Studios, could be a surprise gem of 2006. Zany Zane, meanwhile, won't be touring with the band, so there won't be any shouting between the songs either.

JAZZ CLUB with THE TOM GREY QUINTET: The Bullingdon

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Exeter Hall, Cowley

DELICIOUS MUSIC OPEN MIC & JAM SESSION: The City Tavern

DELICIOUS MUSIC JAZZ, BLUES AND FOLK NIGHT: Bar Milano, Pizza Express
RUSTIC NATION: The Cellar – House and breaks.

WEDNESDAY 17th

THE PAPERCHASE + JENIFEREVER + ILL EASE: The Wheatsheaf – Emotionally-fraught post-hardcore noise from Dallas' Paperchase – *see main preview*

TOM HINGLEY: The Port Mahon – The former Inspiral Carpets frontman returns to Oxford after last month's Abingdon homecoming gig.

FOLK SESSION: The Exeter Hall, Cowley
OPEN MIC SESSION: The Marlborough House, Western Road

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

THURSDAY 18th

RAJAN SPOLIA: Modern Art Oxford Café (5.45pm) – Indian-born, Berkshire-resident acoustic guitarist, mixing up Indian classical music with jazz and blues, inspired by Ravi Shankar and Frank Zappa as well as dub reggae and acid jazz.

KULA SHAKER: The Zodiac (upstairs) – Britpop survivor Crispin Mills returns – in the same month as Rick Witter, bizarrely – to resurrect his 90s hitmaking combo and doubtless spread a little more cod-mystic eastern philosophy along with the warbling indie rock.

ADEM: The Zodiac (downstairs) – Sometime Fridge chappie brings his acoustic, hymnal pop to town in support of new album, 'Love and Planets', produced by bandmate Kieran Hebden.
ELVIS LIVES!: The New Theatre – The UK's premier Elvis Presley tribute show hits town, after the success of West End show Elvis: An American Trilogy, replete with all the classic hits, quality Elvis impersonator Alvin and a

full band and orchestra. Just like the King at his peak.

JESTER + THE RUINS: The Bullingdon – Live bands followed by Bullseye club night.

THE LAW OF US: The Port Mahon

ACOUSTIC SHOWCASE with MATT

BEESELEY + MORE: The Exeter Hall, Cowley

JAZZ NIGHT: The City Tavern

METRONOMY + MARY'S GARDEN +

TRANSMISSION: The Cellar – Lo-fi electro mash ups and antique game console soundtrack noise from Brighton's analogue geek wizard, plus atmospheric gothic rock from Mary's Garden.

CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre

BARCODE TRIO: The Hollybush, Osney

SKYLARKIN: The Brickworks

SABOTAGE: The Zodiac

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon

FRIDAY 19th

SLEATER KINNEY: The Zodiac – Fractious post-riot grrl noise making from Portland's finest – *see main preview*

GREENACRE + SKULLTHRASH + THE

HERO STORY + LEXXIS: The Zodiac – Emo rocking from The Hero Story and Wantage's Greenacre, plus thrash noise from Skullthrash.

JABERWOK + MINI MAX ORCHESTRA: The Exeter Hall, Cowley – Funk night at the Ex courtesy of the Grinning Spider promotions people. JTQ-meets-Isaac Hayes party sounds with a Chili Peppers edge from Punt stars Jaberwok, plus new local funk-rock act Mini Max supporting.

IONICA + SOW + ANDENSUM: The Corner Room – Triple bill of

local metal with full-throttle riffmongers Ionica, doomy thrash heroes Sow and proggy heavyweights Andensum.

ACOUSTIC NIGHT: The Victoria, Jericho

BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon

WALLIS BIRD: St Aldates Tavern

BOSSAPHONIK: The Cellar – Latin jazz and Brazilian beats.

SATURDAY 20th

THE DECEMBERISTS: The Zodiac – Wordy geek pop wonder from the rising cult stars – *see main preview*

BRIGADE + FIGHTING WITH

WIRE: The Zodiac – Anthemic indie rocking in the style of Placebo and Biffy Clyro from London's Brigade, plus grungey rock from Jetplane Landing's Cahir O'Doherty's side project, Fighting With Wire.

TANGENTS with TANGO

SIEMPRE, GILAD ATZMON &

STEVE ARGUELLES: Wesley Memorial Church – Radical tango re-workings from a host of European jazz and electronic artists, including acclaimed tango ensemble Tango Siempre, including specially-commissioned new works by Goldfrapp's Will Gregory.

DOG + SIX NATION STATE + THE

CORVIDS: The Wheatsheaf – Local bands night, including post-hardcore noiseniks The Corvids.

KING B: The Exeter Hall, Cowley – Claire Johnson sings the blues.

THE RIVER + CLONE RADIO + JONES' RADIO: The City Tavern – Local bands night.

FUTURE FUNK FOUNDATION:

The Bullingdon – Funk club night

SUNDAY 21st

SALSANEROS: The Cellar

ACOUSTIC SONG SESSION: The Exeter Hall, Cowley (3-7pm)

MONDAY 22nd

THE SHINS: Brookes University Union – Psychedelic-tinged Americana from New Mexico's Shins, back in action after acclaimed album, 'Chutes Too Narrow', following in the footsteps of Guided By Voices and Modest Mouse with their wide-angled, harmony-laden indie rock.

EVERY TIME I DIE + IT DIES TODAY + PROTEST THE HERO: The Zodiac – Urgent, simplistic, raging metal of the old school from Buffalo's Every Time I Die, frequent visitors to the Zodiac in recent times. Taking a cue from Pantera, Dillinger Escape Plan and AC/DC and, with most recent album, 'Gutter Phenomenon', stripping much of the complex math-rock baggage back for a leaner, hardcore approach. Ontario's Protest The Hero support, influenced by Rage Against the Machine and promoting debut album, 'Kezia'.

THE LONGCUT: The Zodiac – Eclectic Mancunian rockers, switching between vocal-led Stone Roses-inspired baggy pop and instrumental locked grooves in the vein of Loop and Stereolab, tonight promoting new album 'a Call And Response' on Deltasonic.

NEVER THE BRIDE: The Bullingdon – Blues-rock favourites featuring asbestos-lunged front-

The Charisma Bar

Upstairs @ The City Tavern
8 Market Street, off Cornmarket, Oxford Tel: 01865 248388
Email: citytavernox@yahoo.co.uk

LOCAL ACOUSTIC & LOCAL ROCK NIGHT

Friday 5th & Wednesday 31st May
Oxfor's best acoustic talent on the 5th ... & fresh new rocking bands on the 31st.
Doors open 8.30 pm, £4.00 entry fee

OXFORD PUNT

Wednesday 10th May
JOFF WINKS + SHIRLEY + SOW
Doors open 8pm, £4.00 entry fee.

OLD SKOOL FUNKY MOTOWN NIGHT

Friday 12th May
Doors open 8.30 pm, FREE ENTRY.

OXFORD ARTS FESTIVAL

Friday 26th, Saturday 27th & Sunday 28th May
26th: **BHASKAR + MOOCHER + RIVER** (tbc)
27th: tbc
28th: **AMBERSTATE + others** tbc

Delicious Music + Up 'N' Coming Entertainment

Saturday 6th: **SLEEPLESS + THE SILKROOM + THE LICKITY SPLITS**
Saturday 13th: **FOXES + TRANSMISSION + THE G's**
Saturday 20th: **RIVER + CLONE RADIO + JONES' RADIO**
Saturday 27th: **Oxford Arts Festival**
Doors open 8.30pm, £4.00 entry fee.

Delicious Music Eclectic Jam Night

Every Tuesday, doors open 9pm, £5.00 entry fee.

Jazz Night

Oxford University Jazz Society live here every Thursday.
Doors open 8pm, small fee occasionally when guest musicians are playing.

WANT TO PLAY HERE?? Just drop in a demo to the City Tavern marked FAO Charis with your band name & number on.

**RECORDS
& CD FAIR**
OXFORD TOWNHALL
**FIRST SATURDAY
OF EVERY MONTH**
**ROCK-POP-DANCE-GOLDEN OLDIES-INDIE-
SOUL-TECHNO-HIP-HOP-JAZZ-LATIN-REGGAE-
DRUM&BASS-GARAGE—R&B-DISCO-1950s-
2000s. Brand new back catalogue CDs £4 - £7
each. Brand new chart CDs £5 - £10 each**

woman Nikki Lambourn, likened to Tina Turner and Janis Joplin and rated as Britain's best female blues singer by Roger Daltrey; power-rock backing from the band in the style of Heart.

HANGMAN JOE: The Port Mahon

TWAT DADDIES + THE SILKROOM: The Corridor

TUESDAY 23rd

BOKILLBOY + THE AUTOMATIC + FORWARD RUSSIA + THE LONG BLONDES:

Brookes University Union – NME-sponsored package tour showcasing four up and coming Brit bands, with East London's jerky rockers Boy Kill Boy headlining and trying to find a meeting point between Duran Duran's soft rock pomp and Supergrass' punky fizz. Soon-to-be-massive The Automatic follow in the footsteps of Kaiser Chiefs in the anthemic guitar pop stakes, while Sheffield's Long Blondes keep it bouncy and slightly sultry. Stars of the show, though, are bound to be Leeds' new wavers Forward Russia, crazed lyricists and noisemongers of pleasingly spiky disposition.

Friday 19th

SLEATER-KINNEY: The Zodiac

"If you want to be entertained, go away". So screameth Sleater-Kinney's Carrie Brownstein on the band's most recent album, 'The Woods', but while it's true to an extent that Portland, Oregon's finest have always been as much about the message as the sound, Sleater-Kinney are highly entertaining. Born out of the early-90s riot grrl movement, the band could almost be considered a supergroup of sorts – singer-guitarist Brownstein was in queercore band Excuse 17, while co-frontwoman Corin Tucker was part of Bratmobile. Drummer Janet Weiss, meanwhile came from underground starlets Quasi. Together they've never let go of their militantly independent ethics and strong feminist politics and lyrics, which have increasingly become less observational and more allegorical. From their eponymous debut, through stand-out long players like 'Dig Me Out' and 'The Hot Rock', they've barely compromised an inch, while always remaining highly melodic, mixing punk's urgency and cut and thrust, with a deft pop touch. Vocally Corin and Carrie bring to mind X-Ray Spex's Poly Styrene or B52s' Kate Pierson, although they're closer musically to early REM and especially Fugazi, whose righteous DIY ethic they match. 'The Woods' is Sleater-Kinney's most experimental, and heaviest, outing to date and, though not always for the faint-hearted, you will be entertained.



LIAM FROST & THE SHOWDOWN FAMILY:

The Zodiac – Manchester's great new pop hope, singer-songwriter Liam Frost leans towards the Bright Eyes side of reclusive, emotionally-involved balladry, but with expansive backing band The Showdown Family, his sound moves into chamber pop territory.

JAZZ CLUB with THE TOM GREY QUINTET:

The Bullingdon

JOHNNY'S SEXUAL KITCHEN: The Port

Mahon – Goodtime jazz, blues and funk-tinged rock from the reformed local stalwarts.

THE SOCIAL: The Cellar – Joy Div and Bunnymen-influenced indie rockers.

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Exeter Hall, Cowley

DELICIOUS MUSIC OPEN MIC & JAM SESSION: The City Tavern

DELICIOUS MUSIC JAZZ, BLUES AND FOLK NIGHT: Bar Milano, Pizza Express – With The Bewley Brothers.

WEDNESDAY 24th

NEW MODEL ARMY: The Zodiac – Clog-stomping rock militancy from the 80s cult stars with the scariest fanclub around. Anthemic, politically-charged folk-punk that'll have you manning the barricades and lynching middle aged men in suits before closing time, while combing your hair into impossibly tight ponytails.

THE RESEARCH + DARTZ!: The Zodiac – Wakefield's sweetly shambolic indie losers The Research shamble back into town, managing to make a crappy old Casio keyboard and an out-of-tune recorder go a long way, while recalling the spirit of indie pop circa-1986.

VOLCANO! + SECONDSMILE + MOLIA

FALLS + ITCH: The Wheatsheaf – More esoteric rock thrills from Vacuous Pop, with headliners Volcano, from Chicago, mixing up complex and bizarre arrangements with a ferocious, chaotic dynamic.

ALAMOS + SOULS: The Bullingdon – Hardcore-tinged indie rock from Scotland's Alamos, leaning towards the Fugazi and Pixies side of things, plus feedback-fuelled rock from Souls.

ANGELA HARRIS: The Port Mahon – Acoustic singer-songwriters night.

FOLK SESSION: The Exeter Hall, Cowley

PHONIK SESSIONS: The Cellar – Live funk jam.

THURSDAY 25th

MORRISSEY: The New Theatre – God of glum, gallows humour celebrates a number 1 album and a new romantic outlook on life – *see main preview*

RODRIGO Y GABRIELLA: The Zodiac – Mexican-born and bred, now Dublin-resident Latin guitar duo, taking a making a neat twist on their traditional jazz and folk sound with forays into heavy metal, including covers of Led Zep and Metallica.

UNITING THE ELEMENTS: The Bullingdon – Strident Eurorocking from the ever-touring German band.

JAZZ NIGHT: The City Tavern

ACOUSTIC SHOWCASE with CHRIS THOMPSON + SOPHIE POLHILL + PHIL THURMAN: The Exeter Hall, Cowley

SUMMER HOLIDAYS + ASHER DUST: The Cellar – Electro-pop, trip hop and ambient rap from Summer Holidays, plus local hip hop and electro maverick AJ in his Asher Dust guise.

SKYLARKIN: The Brickworks

SABOTAGE: The Zodiac

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon

FRIDAY 26th

THURSDAY: The Zodiac – New Jersey's emo poster boys make their first trip to the UK for almost two years to promote new album, 'A City By The Light Divided' – produced by Dave Fridman and a slight departure from their previous



Saturday 20th

THE DECEMBERISTS: The Zodiac

The current vogue in music may be for tales of cashpoint machines, visits to burger bars and watching girls in nightclubs, but Portland, Oregon's Decemberists are rather less prosaic in their songwriting. Creative writing graduate Colin Meloy's lyrics deal with pirates, Spanish child monarchs, soldiers fighting in the trenches of WW1, sailors' widows and depressed fiction writers, all delivered in baroque style over a soundtrack that marries antiquated instrumentation (hurdy gurdy, accordion, upright bass) with modern electronics. So, they're a quaint, bookish bunch, The Decemberists, but they've also got one of the most fanatical cult followings in rock. When all their equipment was stolen after a gig last year their fans quickly raised £8,000 to replace it all. Their reward is the band's new album, 'Picaresque', their most accomplished and opulent to date and the first to get a proper UK release. Tonight's show is one of only two British gigs around their All Tomorrow's Parties appearance and thus a rare chance to glimpse a band that's at once out of step with modern pop culture but with enormous commercial appeal. Here is where Robyn Hitchcock's arcane vision and The Go-Betweens' joyous pop spirit meets 80s college rock and 60s folk revivalism. They make a great team.

efforts, 'Full Collapse' and 'War All The Time', veering closer to the likes of The Cure, Sonic Youth and even Supergrass at times.

GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES with MARY'S GARDEN + HARLETTE + RACHEL

PANTECHNICAN: The Zodiac – Billowing gothic Euro-rock from Mary's Garden, plus frothy gothic grunge from Harlette.

ACOUSTIC NIGHT: The Victoria, Jericho

XMAS LIGHTS + BLOOD ROSES + SOW:

The Wheatsheaf – First night of the Oxford Arts Festival, presenting a triple bill of local heavyweight talents.

KING FURNACE + BROTHER FRANCISCO + WINGBACK + INACUN: The Corner Room –

Chili Peppers-style rocking from King Furnace

HARRY ANGEL + PHYAL + BLACK SKIES

BURN: The Exeter Hall, Cowley – Gothic grunge rock from Harry Angel, plus punky metal from Phyal.

OXFORD PUNT 2006

Wednesday 10th May

One night, six venues, nineteen acts

The best showcase of new Oxford music of the year

Borders

6.00pm Ally Craig

6.40pm Rebecca Mosley

The Purple Turtle

8pm Mark Crozer

8.45pm Dusty Sound

System

9.30pm Where I'm Calling
From

The Wheatsheaf

8.15pm Harlette

9pm And No Star

9.45pm Asher Dust

10.30pm Deguello

Jongleurs

7.30pm Witches

8.15pm Xmas Lights

9pm Keyboard Choir

The City Tavern

8.30pm Shirley

9.30pm Sow

10.30pm The Joff Winks
Band

The Cellar

9pm Zuby

10pm 100 Bullets Back

11pm Jaberwok

12am Nailbomb Cults

Every act plays for 30 minutes.

Admission to each venue is a bargain £4, except Borders, which is free!

Want to see everything?

Get an all-venue Punt Pass.

Only 100 available. £7 each (plus booking fee) from Polar Bear Records on Cowley Road or online from oxfordmusic.net

THE OXFORD PUNT 2006:

BORDERS

As is traditional now, we get gently into the swing of the Punt at our favourite book and CD store, Borders, who have long been friends of live music. In previous years Richard Walters, KTB and Laima Bite have opened the Punt here and this year we find another highly individual singer-songwriter starting things off. **ALLY CRAIG** is a regular performer at the Exeter Hall's gig nights and it was at one of these, a tribute night to the late, great John Peel, that we first encountered a young man with a caustic and whimsical lyrical style and one of the most unique guitar-playing styles we've ever seen. Plus he sang an absolutely cracking version of 'Shipbuilding'. Partway between Jeff Buckley and Robert Wyatt, Ally should provide an unforgettable start to this year's Punt. And he'll be sticking around too to play as part of **REBECCA MOSLEY**'s band. Rebecca's sparse, melancholic updating of traditional folk, played on acoustic guitar and cello, exudes campfire warmth, owing as much to Bob Dylan's rootsy blues-folk as it does to the likes of Jefferson Airplane. Her latest CD is this month's Nightshift Demo Of The Month and wider critical and commercial acclaim is sure to follow.

Ally Craig: 6pm – Rebecca Mosley: 6.40pm



DEGÜELLO

THIS YEAR'S OXFORD PUNT represents the great depth of the county. The Punt has been running since 1997 when it was for the then upcoming Radio 1 Sound City festival. Each year has provided a perfect snapshot of where Oxford is at musically, amazing how the quality of music on show has remained so high. Not just us being partisan when we say that Oxford is the best city in the UK when it comes to producing exciting new bands, previous line-ups shows that every local band to have broken onto the national or international scene has played The Punt early on. Goldrush, Dive Dive, Winnebago Deal, KTB, The Yong Kru, amongst previous stars of the event, while dozens of other acts provide unforgettable highlights along the way.

This year's Punt is bound to throw up some new local stars, different styles of music on show – from country-soul, jazz, pop to thrash metal, industrial hardcore, punk and acoustic. A little odd bit of psychedelia and gabba along the way – there is hope for everyone. On these pages you'll learn all about the different acts you need to get out there and see what's new and exciting. There's a prize for anyone who manages to see every act. You'll need a stout pair of running shoes if you want to try.



1. Borders
2. Jongleurs
3. The City Tavern

JONGLEURS

After a sedate start at Borders, we can crank up the volume lever a bit at Jongleurs. Oxford's premier comedy club enjoys its part-time job as a live music venue and has hosted some of the Punt's most celebrated sets – notably Sexy Breakfast's awesome 2003 show, as well as last year's opinion-polarising gig by The Evenings. Echoing those esoteric moments are **WITCHES**, the band formed by former-Eeeblee frontman Dave Griffith. As sweetly melodic and understated as his old combo, Witches branch out into different musical styles, somehow managing to touch bases with Nought, Nick Drake, The Velvet Underground and Belle and Sebastian in the time it takes them to cast their pop spell over you, which is going some by any standards. Witches may have their more *outré* moments but **XMAS LIGHTS** will have you crying for your mum and despairing at the futility of human existence if they have their way. Formed by the refugees from assorted Oxford metal acts, and bolstered by the arrival of local ambient industrial *dirigemeister* Umair Chaudhry, they've emerged as one of the finest heavy-duty noise bands Oxford has produced, as much inspired by Swans and Trans Am as they are by the lords of dark metal. Live, they're a scream. Literally. An indisputably eclectic bill at Jongleurs is rounded off by **THE KEYBOARD CHOIR**, an expansive collective of synth players, orchestrated by a bloke with a big computer and an evil glint in his eye. A baroque amalgamation of experimental electro, cutting edge synth-pop and gothic atmospherics, and completely different to anything else you'll see or here this year.

Witches: 7.30pm – Xmas Lights: 8.15pm – Keyboard Choir: 9pm



100 BULLETS BACK

THE CELLAR

The Cellar is where the Punt not so much winds down as reaches a crescendo. Nestled beneath the city center, dark corners, unique atmosphere and long, long rocking history make it a supreme rock and roll venue. As a live music and club venue that has really rediscovered its glory days in recent years. No doubt it's packed well before the final act takes the stage and you simply have to see young local rapper **ZUBY**, a raised Oxford University student who was educated at an American school in the Middle East, who brings his easy rapping style that leans towards the American way of things with hints of Jay-Z amongst his braggadocio and gangsta clichés you might expect. Instead Zuby raps about the stuff in his life and even already sounds like an accomplished wordsmith with a bright future ahead of him. **100 BULLETS BACK** is a new addition to Nightshift's heart since they play that most wonderful of things: synth-pop. And if that isn't just the best, they stick on loads of cool new wave bits too, which kind of makes them a cross between The Pet Shop Boys and Ferdinand. And that's a prospect only a fool couldn't salivate at. Since it'll now be getting very late, if you're wanting to dance and there's no-one better in Oxford at making your feet move than **JABERWOCK**, a vintage, distilled from the essences of The James Taylor Quartet, Isaac Hayes and The Red Hot Chili Peppers. Forget your sense of cool and just get on down. And then it's time for that crescendo: introducing **THE CITY TAVERN** – aka Mr Will Ross – purveyor of no-holds-barred insane gabba mash-up madness and true to our roots. So sure the final act on Punt night is one that you will not be able to talk over however lively you're being. **BPM**, feel that bass inside your rib cage and frug yourself into a bloody pulp. It's gonna be a hell of a night. **Zuby: 9pm – 100 Bullets Back: 10pm – Jaberwok: 11pm – Nailbomb Cults: 12am**

WHO, WHAT AND WHERE

h and diversity of music in
was introduced as a taster
subsequent Punt has
y and it's really quite
o high in all that time. It's
qual of virtually any other
nds. A quick look back at
ken through into the
on in their careers:
ives and Fell City Girl are
acts have provided

s, and with so many
z-funk, hip hop and synth-
c folk, not forgetting the
hopefully something here
erent acts on show, now all
g in Oxfordshire. As ever
You'll need a Punt Pass and

NAILBOMB CULTS



THE PURPLE TURTLE

(in conjunction with Beard Museum)

The catacomb-like Purple Turtle is one of our very favourite places to get lost in underneath Oxford's streets. Make your way to the very end of its labyrinthine bar and you'll discover a great little music venue, one occupied every other Sunday by the very wonderful Beard Museum, a live music club that celebrates the best in chilled-out, melodic rock and pop and where the only rule is that people with beards get in free. A perfect setting for **MARK CROZER**, one of Oxford's most underrated singer-songwriters with a cloud-gazing style of laid-back psychedelic pop, where the broody melancholy of Mark's gothic folkiness is given turbulent wings by echoes of The Velvet Underground and even The Jesus and Mary Chain. **DUSTY SOUND SYSTEM**, meanwhile, bring a little country soul to the Punt. Formed by Goldrush frontman Robin Bennett with various members of The Warlocks and Brian Jonestown Massacre while recording in California, Dusty captures the naïve charm of home-made underground country, rooted in traditional bluegrass and Dylan's protest anthems. **WHERE I'M CALLING FROM**'s more abrasive take on folk-tinged guitar pop finds them veering into full-on new wave rock at times, charismatic young singer Ben Osborn's world-weary, lispy voice recalling The Only Ones' Peter Perrett or Belle and Sebastian's Stuart Murdoch, while musically they're as close to Nick Drake or Fleetwood Mac as they are to The Cure and Joy Division. What's most certain is that they are one of the most promising young bands to emerge in Oxford in the last year.

Mark Crozer: 8pm – Dusty Sound System: 8.45pm – Where I'm Calling From: 9.30pm



THE CITY TAVERN

Situated upstairs from the City Tavern, behind the Covered Market, the recently-relaunched Charisma Bar is one of Oxford music scene's hidden treasures. At last year's Punt fans queued round the block to be able to see Fell City Girl here, a gig that will go down in Punt folklore. This year finds a rich, mixed bill starting with **SHIRLEY**, almost certainly the cheeriest band on this year's Punt bill. Imagine The Housemartins recast as a Spanish surf-pop band and you're getting the gist of a band that has slowly but surely been building one of the most loyal followings in town. Untainted by angst or any predilection towards complex math-rock structures, Shirley simply play sweet bubblegum guitar pop that should raise a smile on the most cynical of faces. But don't smile for too long or else **SOW** will bludgeon your teeth down your throat with their magnificently heavy riffs and savage vocal roar. Inspired the likes of Pantera and Meshugga, theirs is one of the heaviest sounds in Oxford and one not to be messed with. Don't worry though, **THE JOFF WINKS BAND** are on hand to let you down gently after that storm. Fronted by superb songwriter Joff himself, they mix up Steely Dan's poppier side with Supergrass' more reflective moments, riding a current of nonchalant 60s folk-rock. Radio 1 have already been playing their single and bigger and better things can only be a few gig away, so catch them while you can.

Shirley: 8.30m – Sow: 9.30 – The Joff Winks Band: 10.30pm

4. The Wheatsheaf
5. The Purple Turtle
6. The Cellar

THE WHEATSHEAF

The Wheatsheaf is now *the* place in Oxford to discover the best in rising underground acts and the terminally leftfield, whether it's future Top 40 stars like Hot Chip, or crazed ambient metal-bashers like KK Null. So obviously it's a great place to unearth a new local gem tonight. Goth-grunge-punk-pop wildcats **HARLETTE** would make a good start, a mighty lo-fi storm of teenage bile and boredom funnelled through X-Ray Spex's bouncetastic punk racket with a side order of Siouxsie and the Banshees' gothic thunder. A rather more complex proposition are **AND NO STAR**, named after part of a Sonic Youth album title and exploring the jazzier side of post-rock's fractured landscape. Following in the footsteps of local favourites Youth Movie Soundtrack Strategies and The Edmund Fitzgerald, And No Star are further evidence of one of the things Oxford does so well – making intelligent music that's equally viscerally exciting. Oxford is also pretty adept at creating musical mavericks and **ASHER DUST** is a man playing in a league of his own. From soul to rap, electro to dub, Asher Dust recounts tales of life on Oxford's clubbing scene and the city's nocturnal hours with a style and humour that's highly individual and as imaginative as it is low rent. West Oxfordshire's **DEGÜELLO**, meanwhile, stand well beyond the walls of hardcore rock, a malevolent, maverick presence in the guitar-wielding noisy lowlife bastards stakes. Using volume and effects as instruments in themselves and seemingly intent on creating the soundtrack to the next World War, you'll learn to worship Degüello even as they pummel your brain to gravy.

Harlette: 8.15pm – And No Star: 9pm – Asher Dust: 9.45 – Degüello: 10.30pm

ZUBY



enmarket Street, its low
d roll hang-out as well
the Cellar will be jam-
BY, a UK-born, Saudi-
h doubtless explains
others, but free of the
en at a tender 19 years,
BACK are a band close
st brilliant enough,
Shop Boys and Franz
e indeed, you'll be
K, funk of the finest
hili Peppers. Time to
NAILBOMB CULTS
commitment to making
feeling. Count those
f a night.

THE PUNT - IN THEIR OWN WORDS

This year's Punt stars tell us what the event means to them and who they're most looking forward to seeing.



REBECCA MOSLEY

I'm really looking forward to playing the Punt, particularly looking forward to hearing Ally Craig (as ever) and also Sow. What does playing the Punt mean to me? It means I get to do a gig in a Bookshop...which is not something you do every day. I really enjoyed the Punt last year, highlights for me were Fell City Girl and The Half Rabbits in the City Tavern, and Laima in Borders. I think it's a great event, and makes me realise how lucky we are to live in a city where there is so much music going on.

Rebecca Mosley

I have to admit, I've never been to The Punt before, so it's incredibly exciting for me that we're playing this year! Reading about The Punt always reminds me of how awesome the Oxford music scene is, so to being on the line up also makes me feel fairly special... I'm looking forward to the rest of the line-up at the Wheatsheaf, and hope to catch some other bands including Nailbomb Cults later on in the evening.

Staz, Harlette

Well, playing the Punt this year is all about playing to people who actually want to listen. I don't know if it's got something to do with all the nice green fields round here or the general ruralness but Oxford audiences are way better than other big smoke type places that we've played. Homegrown affairs are always the most fun. I'm looking forward to catching up with Where I'm Calling From; we've been on the same bill before and I really enjoyed them last time.

Joff Winks

Finding out we were selected to play at the Oxford Punt sent an excited shiver through the Shirley camp. We all see it as a great honour to play alongside Oxford's finest and feel great that all the hard work at gigs and practice sessions has been recognised. We're looking forward to running the Shirley vibration past some new faces. We'll certainly enjoy the sets of the other bands playing at The City Arms. As for venturing to other venues, I'm not sure we'll be allowed.

Usually our manager gives us an intensive post-gig analysis, but perhaps more leniency will be shown on this occasion.

Shirley

We are really excited to have been invited to play. It was great fun last year watching The Big Speakers at The Cellar and mixing with all the other Oxford bands. It really is the best night of the Oxford music calendar to celebrate the diversity of Oxford music over a beer or three. The Thursday's holiday is already booked!"

100 Bullets Back

Playing the Punt means I get to show off my Asher Dust project to a wider audience. The Punt is an established, credible showcase for new music talent in Oxford, and at the very least you know that people are coming because they want to see and hear good music. I'm really looking forward to all the acts I'm sharing the bill with on the night and I've heard good things about Zuby, but really, really looking forward to seeing Nailbomb Cults live - I'm expecting musical carnage!

AJ, Asher Dust

For me, playing the Punt means a chance to play in a hilarious novelty venue - a bookshop. It also means I can delight in the fact that Punt sounds a bit rude. Maybe I'll get to play Truck too. Or Duckfest. Or start my own festival called The Shank. I'm looking forward to seeing The Keyboard Choir - I met James many years ago when his old band played with my old band... we've both come a long way since then.

Ally Craig

I really can't wait for the Punt, its diversity reflects what makes the Oxford music scene so special, the fact that gig-goers are so keen to experience new stuff. I'm looking forward most to hopefully catching Xmas Lights as everything I've heard from them has been pants-shittingly good. I'm looking forward to *playing* the Punt because it will make a refreshing change to play a bill with real variety, not just 25 other gabber-noise laptopers in a basement in Brighton or somewhere. I also hope to better my record time for fastest clearing of a dance floor by using the brown note to make a room full of indie-kids soil themselves. Maybe.

Will, Nailbomb Cults

We've all played the Punt in various different bands before, so we are looking forward to playing to a load of different people this time, who wouldn't usually get to see a band like us. It'll be interesting to see how people will react! We'll probably scare the shit out of everyone! In the past some amazing things have happened to bands after playing the Punt - like Winnebago Deal, when they played back in 2002 were amazing! Not long after they were blazing a trail all over the place, so that was pretty cool, getting to see that. This year I will definitely check out our fellow metal mates Xmas Lights and Nailbomb Cults - we've never seen them before but they have a cool name.

Aynz, Sow

I don't recall attending the Punt solely as a punter, having played it twice with The Evenings and twice with Sexy Breakfast. I'm excited about bringing a relatively new project that I set up to a much wider audience. My best memories of the Punt include The Evenings' Jam Factory gig, with the dancers, and confetti and all. Such a great vibe. Other sets that spring to mind include Film Noir at the Purple Turtle last year, one of the most overlooked bands in Oxford; Patrick has a great voice. Suitable Case For Treatment at the Wheatsheaf a couple of years ago was pretty incredible.

Seb, The Keyboard Choir

"This is our first Punt, as both performers and as gig goers, although we've known about the festival for quite some time and realise its importance to up-and-coming acts in the Oxford area. It means a lot to us to be playing with all the other great acts on the bill. As far as other acts are concerned, we can't rate Rebecca Mosley and Ally Craig highly enough. Also really looking forward to seeing Asher Dust and it's great to see such a diverse range of acts on this year's line-up."

AndNoStar

I'm relatively new on the Oxford music scene but from what I know it sounds like the Punt is *the* Oxford live music event of the year to play at! So being invited to perform in it this year really means a lot to me, especially at this early point in my music career. I love the buzz of being on stage and I hope that I can reach new people and maybe broaden their perspectives on rap music. It's time to put Oxford on the hip-hop map.

Zuby

One of the reasons we're starting out in Oxford, and not some dark and horrible place like London, is because of the fantastic, vibrant live music scene, which I believe is one of the best in the world. The Punt is especially important, and playing the Punt this year makes us feel as if we're really starting to move forward with all our new ideas.

Dave, Witches

After being known as a member of Goldrush for so long it will be really fun to play at the Punt in a new band. I've missed it for the past few years so it will be interesting to see what Oxford is up to. If memory serves, I did play the Punt in my Whispering Bob days, an alarming number of years ago, and some members of Radiohead were at the gig. That's about all I remember! I look forward to seeing Harlette as I had the pleasure of recording their first demo.

Robin, Dusty Sound System



DUSTY SOUNDSYSTEM



Thursday 25th

MORRISSEY:

The New Theatre

What's left to say about Morrissey that hasn't been ruminated on by starry-eyed indie kids and highbrow arts academics a million times before? Well, how about the fact that this show, Moz's first visit to Oxford since he played at this same venue with The Smiths back in 1985, sold out in less than two hours; this for a man considered creatively and commercially dead only two years ago. Morrissey's popularity hasn't been this high for years. His cult has never died of course; there will always be a legion of grown men and women whose disaffected youth was soundtracked by The Smiths and recently they've been joined by a new generation of kids who've rediscovered pop's greatest lyricist of the past 20 years, either directly or via his influence on a thousand other bands. 2004's 'You Are The Quarry' signalled the great man's comeback, cemented by his appearance at last year's Carling Festivals and new album, 'Ringleader Of The Tormentors', will see his vindication complete. Often criticised for being miserable and for mythologising working class violence, Morrissey is never less than mordantly humorous, while commenting on subjects few other songwriters could start to cover. And while he, as a person, remains an enigma, he remains a true champion for outsiders across the musical spectrum.

NINE STONE COWBOY + THE GULLIVERS + EARNEST COX: *The City Tavern* – Elaborate drunk rock from Mark Cope's NSC, plus punky indie rock from The Gullivers and shiny guitar pop from Earnest Cox.

BABY GRAVY + THE WALK OFF + 20/20 VISION + LEXXIS: *The Bullingdon* – Oddball jazz-punk noise from Baby Gravy, plus digital hardcore mayhem from The Walk Off.

SATURDAY 27th

THE DREW ATKINS BAND + THE IDEA: *The Exeter Hall, Cowley* – 60s-inspired indie rock in a Bob Dylan and Neil Young vein. Punky pub rock from The Idea.

BLACKBUD: *The Zodiac* – Melodic 70s style rock from the new Independent signings who've recently supported Kaiser Chiefs and Elbow.

CHICKS WITH DECKS + THE FAMILY MACHINE + BORDERVILLE + THE

QUARTER FINALS: *The Cellar* – Second night

of the Oxford Arts Festival with local DJ crew CWD spinning new wave and indie sounds, plus live music from country-indie rockers The Family Machine.

THE DIRTY ROYALS + THE SCHLA LA LAS + HARLETTE + BETHANY WEIMERS: *The Wheatsheaf* – The recently-renamed Samurai Seven return in their new guise, with support from Piney Gir's bubblegum pop girl band and gothic grungers Harlette.

BIG SPEAKERS + CONFIDENTIAL COLLECTIVE + 100 BULLETS BACK: *The Corner Room* – Local hip hop collective Big Speakers show off their tight rap arrangements, while Confidential Collective provide the funky party tunes and 100 Bullets Back mix up new wave and synth-pop.

PEEPSHOW PADDY + THE BROTHERS + DIRTY SCI-FI + CAUSTIC ACOUSTIC: *The Bullingdon*

THE SPIRALIST + AERIAL: *The Jericho Tavern* – Eclectic trip hop and jazz-funk sounds from The Spiralist.

THE EPSTEIN + STORNOWAY + ANOTHER LOST LEADER + FOXES! *The Port Mahon* – Country rocking in a Flying Burrito Brothers vein from The Epstein.

THE KATE GARRETT BAND + FATALLY YOURS: *The City Tavern*

THE HEARTWEAR PROCESS + THE GULLIVERS + VITAL SIGNS: *The Mill, Banbury* – I Am Giant presents a night of live rock.

MARK BOSLEY: *The Magic Café (1pm)*

SUNDAY 28th

STEELEYE SPAN: *The New Theatre* – English folk veterans reprise classic faves from their 30-year career.

JOSH ROUSE + STRAY DON'T SLEEP: *The Zodiac* – Nashville's country-folk star returns to the scene of last summer's sold-out gig to promote new album, 'Subtitulo'. Despite hailing from Nashville (and titling his previous album 'Nashville'), Rouse has little in common with the Stetson and rhinestone brigade, being closer in sound and spirit to Ryan Adams or Carol King. He's also a bit of an anglophile indie kid at heart too, with nods to The Cure and The Smiths in his languid, melancholy acoustic country pop. Finally, after six albums, and much critical acclaim, the man looks like he's getting the wider audience he's long deserved.

LISA FITZGIBBON + EYELASH: *The Bullingdon* – Bluesy electric folk rock from the locally-based Aussie songstress.

BEARD MUSEUM with LAMPLIGHT + LOZ COLBURN: *The Purple Turtle*
AMBERSTATE: *The City Tavern*
ACOUSTIC SONG SESSION: *The Exeter Hall, Cowley (3-7pm)*

ELECTRIC JAM: *The Exeter Hall, Cowley*

MONDAY 29th

ROB TOGNONI: *The Bullingdon* – Driving blues-rock from the Tasmanian guitarist and his power trio band.

THE BRIAN JONESTOWN MASSACRE: *The Zodiac* – Ant Newcombe's nebulous New York psychedelic rockers hit town, more notorious now than at any time in their 10-year career after Newcombe's showing in *Dig!*

TUESDAY 30th

MARK EITZEL: *The Port Mahon* – American Music Club frontman plays a low-key solo show, viewing life through the bottom of a glass darkly – see main preview

JAZZ CLUB with ALVIN ROY: *The Bullingdon*

DREW ATKINS: *The Wheatsheaf*
OPEN MIC SESSION: *The Exeter Hall, Cowley*
DELICIOUS MUSIC OPEN MIC AND JAM NIGHT: *The City Tavern*
ODA + SATSANGI: *The Cellar*
DELICIOUS MUSIC JAZZ, BLUES AND FOLK NIGHT: *Bar Milano, Pizza Express*
WEDNESDAY 31st

BLOOD RED SHOES + FOALS + TIRED IRIE: *The Wheatsheaf* – Oxfordbands.com presents former Cat On Form people making a fearsome old racket in their new incarnation as Blood Red Shoes, while local post-rock starlets Foals mess with the time sequences and song structures. Try Harder labelmates Tired Irie, meanwhile, make an angular assault on the dark side of new wave pop.
ACOUSTIC ROCK NIGHT: *The City Tavern*
FOLK SESSION: *The Exeter Hall, Cowley*

Tuesday 30th

MARK EITZEL / CHRIS REES / RICHARD WALTERS: The Port Mahon

Pour yourselves a large one and prepare to see the world through the bottom of your empty glass as the undisputed king of whisky-ruined melancholy makes his first ever appearance in Oxford. As the founder and leader of American Music Club, Mark Eitzel practically invented the genre quickly dubbed sadcore. In the process he became a major inspiration for Radiohead and Coldplay who, along with REM, are long-time admirers of his work. Although born in California, Eitzel spent much of his early life living around the world as part of a military family. He dabbled with born-again Christianity before hitting the bottle with rather more vigour and this probably accounts for the rootless despair at the heart of his songs. Tonight's show is a solo performance from Mark so the sumptuous arrangements of his most recent solo album, 'Candy Ass', will be absent, making way for his more stark voice-and-guitar style. It's not a heap of unrestrained misery, though. He's a romantic at heart and darkly humorous, as well as a personable performer. But you'll probably be weeping into your shot glass before the end of the night. Joining Mark at tonight's gig are Welsh singer Christopher Rees, taking inspiration from Bob Mould and Tindersticks, as well as local melancholic folk-pop star Richard Walters.



Nightshift listings are free. Deadline for inclusion in the gig guide is the 20th of each month - no exceptions. Call 01865 372255 (10am-6pm) or email listings to Nightshift@oxfordmusic.net. This gig guide is copyright of Nightshift Magazine and may not be reproduced without permission.

LIVE

BATTLES

The Zodiac

Every so often, you'll walk away from a gig half-jokingly considering going home and burning all your records, such is the impact of what you've just seen. Tonight is a case in point, as Battles, in the face of all the hype surrounding them as the new poster boys of whichever label is being applied to them this week, are phenomenal.

Their success lies in taking everything that makes experimental and leftfield music great, and doing their best to cram it all into each and every track. Crucially, they actually make it work. What could be an attention-deficit, stop-start maelstrom of elements shoehorned together into a piecemeal and wilfully-confusing whole is actually an incredible confluence of sounds, stitched together by metronomic, richly-expressive drumming.

The technical ability on display is nothing short of mesmerising: both Tyondai Braxton and Ian Williams hammer on guitar riffs with one hand at the same time as playing completely different keyboard melodies with the other. Yet Battles never descend into look-at-me, left-hand-Wakeman, right-hand-Malmsteen ostentatiousness – each micro-solo is a tiny part of the ebb-and-flow, evolving nature of the whole, barely a note surplus to requirement.

As well as drawing on obvious reference points such as Williams' former outfit Don Caballero, with their chiming arpeggios, there are moments reminiscent of Neu! at their most euphoric, and even the quiet menace of Cabaret Voltaire creeps in. Truculent and complex as Battles' sound might be, they translate an incredible ardour and enthusiasm across to the audience. What could, in other hands, be an exigent, impenetrable listen,



Battles photo: Richard Hounslow

is transformed by these players into a thrilling, agile display of musical pyrotechnics that practically invents its own genre from scratch. We might not have hover cars and food in pill form yet, but at least we can listen the kind of music they probably thought would be coming out of the twenty-first century a hundred years ago.

Stuart Fowkes

The Cellar

The Jericho Tavern

The Corner Room

The Bullington Arms

The X

The Wheatsheaf

The Port Mahon

ART'S FEST

26th & 27th May 2006

Combining Oxford's Arts

Wristbands: £7 Per Day or £10 For The Weekend

www.oxfordmusic.net www.wegotickets.com

SALSA CELTICA

The Zodiac

Salsa Celtic, as their name suggests, bring together Latin and Celtic rhythms. They are not a fusion band; if they were they'd perhaps call themselves Saltica. They describe their music as a hybrid that intermixes the two styles rather than melds them.

The encounter between Latin song, cumbias and rumbas and Celtic rhythms did not stem from any commercial attempt at niche marketing but emerged organically out of local musicians and Latin émigrés jamming in Edinburgh pubs and bars in the 90s. Now the band have their third CD out and will be regulars at this summer's festivals, including Wychwood.

With a strong brass section, Latin percussion and all the smooth vocals in Spanish the gig is more salsa than celtica. When the band is in full voice laying down a rumba it is actually hard to hear whether the fiddle, bagpipes and banjo are laying

down, say, a Scottish reel played as well.

In salsa mode the band's range is not limited to high-energy exuberance or smooth ballads. I love the slow lilting melancholy of 'Esperanza', which I'm told is about the emotions of migrants far from home.

When they are given the space, we hear some great playing of the Scottish traditional instruments. There is a wonderful solo banjo intro to 'Cumbia Celtica' and my favourite, a long, wild semi-improvised bagpipe passage; if Jimmy Hendrix had played the pipes he'd have sounded like this.

What this gig is most about though, is Latin energy and communicating this to the audience. There is Latin-dancing going on and the Zodiac crowd clearly appreciate that Salsa Celtica have given them a good time.

Colin May

OXFORD FOLK FESTIVAL

Town Hall and Various Venues

This is a breakthrough year for the Oxford Folk Festival. This year the event escapes much more from the confines of the Town Hall and the Holywell Music Room into the streets, and people come not only from Oxford itself, but also from all parts of the country. There is a buzz and a festival spirit that had been missing previously.

The festival takes over and entertains Commarket for an hour on Saturday morning with a fantastic and colourful parade led by its own marching band, Melomania, with two other marching bands, morris dancers, mummers and a unicorn. There is a variety of entertainment from breakneck jigs to traditional belly dancing in the new Oxford Castle and there are more fringe events. A Breton music session goes down particularly well with a Sunday morning pint in Far From The Maddening Crowd.

For the first time there is a sell-out gig. It's appropriate it's for headliners Bellowhead, the 11-piece folk big band that made its debut at the first festival, two years ago, and whose leaders Jon Boden and John Spiers did their apprenticeship in Oxford folk clubs. The band do the festival proud with a magnificent, vital, yet disciplined performance. I doubt whether their brass and fiddle mix of traditional songs with all sorts of music has ever been as exciting and musically satisfying.

The festival also needs the other headliners not just to turn up but also to really perform. Waterson: Cathy certainly did. Drawing on their deep experience of the English tradition, they are simultaneously relaxed and energetic, and surprise me with Norma Waterson's dramatic version of Tom Waits' 'Strange Weather'. Flook show why

they recently won a BBC Radio 2 Folk Music Award, and Andy Irvine also lives up to his billing, both with his fine guitar and bouzouki playing and singing, especially of Woody Guthrie's 'The Ballad of Tom Joad'.

There is also plenty for aspiring songwriters to admire in the craft of Steve Ashley, and of Bill Craddock. The fiddle and cello duo of Pete Cooper and Richard Bolton is a delight. Also I like the singing of Rachel Unthank and the Winterset and the musical inventiveness of the instrumental group Horses Bawl, and the jokes made by both. These two groups are new to me and leave me wanting more.

Local acts also enhance their reputation, including Magpie Lane and the unaccompanied singing duo of Sue Brown and Lorraine Brown, the ten-strong teenage folk rockers of Fairport-influenced wRants and the 13-piece Oxford Village Band, despite not being able to quite fit onto the second stage and needing to improve their presentation. The closing concert is the sort of rare opportunity that can make a festival; a chance to hear the haunting sound of traditional epic Icelandic poems chanted in the original language. I didn't know what to expect but it's great. Rather like the festival itself.

Colin May



DREW ATKINS and band

Gigs in May

Thur 11th

Sat 27th

Tue 30th

Port Mahon, St Clements

Exeter Hall, Cowley Rd

The Wheatsheaf, High St

'2 minute pop songs with a classic British sound'

WANTED!

F*CKING GOOD LEAD
SINGER FOR A F*CKING
GOOD OXFORD BAND.

Style and influences are
irrelevant.

Passion and creativity are not.

Call Steve on 07887 770 182



avidrecords

4 GLOUCESTER STREET, OXFORD

TEL: 01865 200411

MASSIVE COLLECTION OF NEW AND RECENT

VINYL AND CD TO SUIT EVERY TASTE IN MUSIC

mobile (Paul) 07990 601107

email: paul@avidrecords-uk.com

Exeter Hall Pub

Corner Cowley / Marsh Road

01865 776431

www.thex.co.uk

Live Music in May

Every Tuesday Open Mic 8.30pm FREE

Every Wednesday Folk Session 8.30pm FREE

Every Sunday Unplugged Acoustic Song Session
3pm-7pm FREE

Mon 1st Denise Marie / Rebecca Mosley / Glenda Huish / Maria Ilett / Laima Bite 8pm £3
Thu 4th Acoustic Showcase with Galliarde / Anthony Whitehead & more 8.30pm FREE
Fri 5th Wittstock Fund Raiser - Barry & The Beachcombers / Opaque / Sue Jordan, 7.30pm £4
Sat 6th Alex Ward & The Deadends / The New Moon / Mark Bosley Band 8.30pm £3
Sun 7th At Risk / Fatally Yours 8.30pm FREE
Thu 11th Pete Bearder & more 8.30pm FREE
Fri 12th Denise Marie & The Oxford Allstars 8.30pm £3
Sat 13th Rami / Tandara Mandara 8.30pm £3
Sun 14th Electric Jam with "The X Men" Come and jam with the house band, all welcome. 8.00pm FREE
Thu 18th Acoustic Showcase with Matt Beesley & more 8.30pm FREE
Fri 19th Jaberwok / Mini Max Orchestra 8.30pm £3
Sat 20th King B 8.30pm £3
Thu 25th Acoustic Showcase with Chris Thompson / Sophie Polhill / Phil Thurman & more 8.30pm FREE
Sat 27th The Idea / Drew Atkins Band 8.30pm FREE
Sun 28th Electric Jam with "The X Men" 8pm FREE



MOGWAI

Brookes University

When they dropped ‘Young Team’ on us almost a decade ago, Mogwai exposed more people to post-rock than ever before. Suddenly, guitar music without vocals – sprawling, meandering songs equally referencing shoegazing and Krautrock – became the norm. Like with most musical genres that ‘go overground,’ what was once a new and refreshing sound became quickly and relentlessly copied, until post-rock morphed into a derisive term synonymous with unoriginality and torpidity.

Mogwai stuck to their guns, and their musical style. Tonight’s set includes songs from all periods in their career so far, and there is an impressive consistency of excellence on display. This is not a band who have become lazy or scuppered themselves by becoming limited within a sound that they themselves helped to define. The magic in what Mogwai do is in its simplicity – songs build and recede on skeletal chord structures, with guitar lines shaping the emotional punch. There seems to be exactly the right amount of sound being created, the songs overwhelming and devastating the crowd in their ability to grow from a single pretty guitar line into an intense and layered monolith of noise. This show isn’t a studied exercise in manipulating the quiet/loud aesthetic, however. What sets Mogwai apart from so many competitors is their skill in twisting a very few notes into a deeply affecting melody. This really is emotional music (that emotional power strangely *lessened* by the introduction of unneeded vocals to a couple of more recent songs in tonight’s set) which takes the listener hurtling from a blissed-out state of reflection into a pit of violent anger. Of course, the incredible volumes often used do nothing to lessen the effect.

Tonight’s closing epic, ‘My Father My King’, is the epitome of what makes this band great. It’s long (twenty minutes plus), it travels from twinkling simplicity into a dark heart of thunderous, chest-shaking noise, guitar squall and bass rumble. It leaves the crowd gaping-mouthed and overawed. Any doubts about Mogwai still cutting it after ten years, still having the ability to make post-rock more than a sideswipe term for shallow also-ran music, are comprehensively destroyed. Here’s to the next ten years...

Simon Minter

SECRET MACHINES

The Zodiac

New York’s Secret Machines famously state their aim to make music that connects with the cosmos. Their sound is suitably huge, and when you’re listening to something on a cosmic scale it shouldn’t come as any surprise that disparate strands of music suddenly seem so much closer together in the grand scale of things.

Hence tonight, the incessant, motorik grooves of Krautrock happily marry free-flowing West Coast folk-pop melodies; glacial prog-rock monoliths warm and melt under devotional harmonies; they’re equally robotic and rootsy with no awkward compromise on either score. Brothers Brandon and Benjamin Curtis, along with Josh Garza – a human powerhouse behind his supersize-me drum kit – have created music that genuinely reflects the turbulence, peace and vastness of space. Appropriately enough there’s even an elongated passage of freeform noodling towards the end of the main set that sounds uncannily like Vangelis’ soundtrack to the astronomy series *Cosmos*. Elsewhere Secret Machines draw inspiration from Neu! The Byrds, Neil Young, Pink Floyd and even Gary Numan and instead of a Frankenstein’s monster, create something utterly beautiful. In an age when bands seem intent on detailing the minutiae of everyday drudgery, everything from mobile phones to going to McDonalds’, Secret Machines stare up at the bigger picture. Listening tonight is like the musical equivalent of David Attenborough’s *Planet Earth* – simply wondering at the easy majesty of eagles and dolphins.

Tonight’s set is split equally between poppier numbers from new album ‘Ten Silver Drops’ and 2004’s stunning ‘Now Here Is Nowhere’. It’s impossible to extract particular highlights from what is a simply awesome set, but of the former, the languorous, doe-eyed ‘All At Once (It’s Not Important)’ gently scars the soul, while of the latter, ‘First Wave Intact’ simply blows every other rock band on the planet away. Ladies and gentlemen, we are floating in space.

Dale Kattack

DIVE DIVE / FRANK TURNER

The Wheatsheaf

As frontman with erstwhile UK emo poster boys Million Dead, Frank Turner knows a bit about punk rock. In fact he’s titled his debut solo CD ‘The Campfire Punkrock EP’, replete as it is with songs like ‘Thatcher Fucked The Kids’. Tonight’s set is sadly short of political bile, leaning much more towards whimsical love songs and wistful loser anthems. At his best – ‘Nashville Tennessee’ – he’s not far off Billy Bragg’s heartbroken minstrel, but more often he’s tripping over Chris T-T’s coattails.

Dive Dive’s two-night residency at the Wheatsheaf over the Easter weekend finds them playing to a packed and stiflingly hot house on the Saturday, followed by a more relaxed and considerably cooler gig on the Sunday. Obviously a band like Dive Dive are in their element in a small, sweaty venue, where the crowd threatens to spill onto the stage and the band feel like they’re going to burst out of the cramped surroundings any minute. But it’s to their credit that both nights find Dive Dive giving it everything. In their case everything means blistering recent singles like ‘Name and Number’, plus an unexpected outing for ‘Senôr Nachos’, a song that’s more than ten years old but still sounds as fresh as a cheetah on heat.

Dive Dive, tonight even more hirsute than we’ve seen them before, notably guitarist Ben who looks like a Motörhead roadie, and bassist Tarrant, resembling a refugee from The Mars Volta, have been around so long it’s easy to forget what a great band they are. Familiarity can breed, if not contempt then at least apathy, but that’s impossible here. They’re the masters of frenzied pop joy, with ‘5-5-5 For Film Stars’ sounding like a pop song caught off balance and out of control, managing to mix Shellac’s metallic brittleness with Green Day’s anthemic pop, while ‘Idiot’s Parade’, with Jamie playing solo and acoustic, displays the depth of songwriting talent in the band.

Increasingly imitated on the local scene, Dive Dive have never been bettered. On tonight’s evidence, it’s unlikely they ever will be.

Sue Foreman

May Listings

- @/Mon 01 **TEDDY THOMPSON** GREENACRE Fri 19/0
 + SOL SEPPY SKULLTHRASH + THE HERO STORY + LEXXIS
 Tue 02 **KILLING JOKE** THE DECEMBERISTS Sat 20/0
 @Sun 07 **MYSTERY JETS** + HOWLING BELLS
 + THE SPINTO BAND **BRIGADE** Sat 20/0
 /Sun 07 **MOTHERSHIP RIGA** + FIGHTING WITH WIRE
 THE OXFORD IMPROVISERS **GOOD SHOES** Sun 21/0
 Mon 08 **UGLY DUCKLING** EVERY TIME I DIE Mon 22/0
 + GIANT PANDA + IT DIES TODAY + PROTEST THE HERO
 Tue 09 **RICK WITTER & THE DUKES** THE LONGCUT Mon 22/0
 + EXIST + CANED CITIZENS
 @/Tue 09 **MOHAIR** LIAM FROST & THE SLOWOWN FAMILY
 + BAT FOR LASHES Tue 23/0
 @Thu 11 **FELL CITY GIRL** NEW MODEL ARMY Wed 24/0
 + THE HALF RABBITS
 @/Fri 12 **TOWERS OF LONDON** THE RESEARCH Wed 24/0
 Sat 13 **THE BROTHERS** RODRIGO Y GABRIELA Thu 25/0
 @/Sat 13 **ABSENTEE** NOKIA ROCK UP & PLAY Thu 25/0
 Sun 14 **SHACK** THURSDAY Fri 26/0
 + JIM NOIR + THE ZICO CHAIN + AMERICAN EYES
 @Mon 15 **STILL REMAINS** MARY'S GARDEN Fri 26/0
 + SINAI BEACH + DEMIRICIOUS + HARLETTE + RACHEL PANTECHNICAN
 @/Mon 15 **HOT CHIP** BURLESK Sat 28
 @Tue 16 **BAKA BEYOND** CARTE BLANCHE + TRASHY PRESENT
 EMBRACING THE SPIRIT OF THE FOREST
 /@Tue 16 **BREAKS CO-OP** BLACKBUD Sat 28/0
 @Thu 18 **KULA SHAKER** JOSH ROUSE Sun 28/0
 + STRAYS DONT SLEEP
 Thu 18/0 **ADEM** THE BRIAN JONESTOWN MASSACRE
 Fri 19 **SLEATER KINNEY** Mon 29/0

Clubs & Events

- Mon 01 May: May Day Roots & Culture Jam
 Tue 02 May: Hammer & Tongue Poetry Slam
 Fri 05 May: Smokescreen: Deep Dubby House Night
 Fri 12 May: Slide with Freeform Five
 Fri 19 May: We Love Reggae presents David Rodigan (Kiss FM)
 Thu 25 May: DJ Derek Reggae Ska & Dancehall
 Fri 26 May: Source Drum N Bass

Some gigs open to ages 14+ or 16+
 Box office hours Mon-Sat 1-6pm
www.myspace.com/oxfordzodiac
www.thezodiac.co.uk

MAX ROMEO

The Zodiac

The British reggae scene has certainly had its ups and downs. Its loyal following across all communities took a bit of a knock in 1988, when a large part of its fanbase suddenly started jumping about with bandanas round their head shouting 'ACEEEEEID!' at all and sundry. Despite the eventual re-orientation of the dance scene into multiple successful strands, reggae in its pure form never really regained its former pride of place. Yet recently things have evolved again and classic reggae, like classic rock, has found a new audience, more interested in timeless songs and production than digital wizardry.

Max Romeo, looking great for 60, has hit the road partly to make a few bob for his upcoming wedding. He leads his band through a gritty but soulful selection of his considerable songbook, thankfully avoiding the reggae custom of overdoing the audience participation thing. 'War Ina Babylon' still has the power to make the spine tingle and remains his career apex, its associated album being one of Lee Perry's finest productions. 'Chase The Devil', best known as the basis for The Prodigy's 'Out of Space', also shines out. The only expected tune missing is 'Wet Dream', his only UK Top Ten hit, but no-one's complaining.

Romeo's themes have moved over time between the political and the spiritual: it's difficult to conceive how risky it was to get involved in Jamaican politics in the 70s, but he not only stuck his neck out to help Michael Manley's PNP gain power in '72 but then released 'No Joshua No', an open letter to the new PM urging him, "You must forward and start anew".

Though he leans more towards the devotional side of his heritage tonight, it all works together perfectly. Roots reggae has often suffered in a live format, the sheer power of modern PA systems taking away some of the subtly of the genre, in fact few reggae artists have conquered the stage as completely as, say, Aswad in their mid-80s heyday. But Max Romeo's uplifting trip through his 40 years in the business, topped off with a sweet arrangement of 'Redemption Song', lifts everyone here to a higher place.

Art Lagun

THE SWAMIS / LOS DIABLOS / STORNOWAY

The Exeter Hall

If "unassuming" to you means "tedious and forgettable", skip a paragraph now. Go on, there's plenty for you later. The rest of us can discuss Stornoway, who are quiet, likable and unabloodyssuming enough to make Belle & Sebastian look like Count Grishnackh, proffering AOR melodicism and Snow Patrol-style vocals that just skirt *nasally whining* to arrive at *disarmingly lovely*. Unsurprisingly they're sometimes overly polite, especially in nods towards castrated reggae rhythms, but high points delight, such as a tune allegedly written in a *boulangerie* that sounds like a fascinating cross between 10cc and The Proclaimers. They could do with letting go a bit, and dropping the worst jazz break ever, but Stornoway are exploring some interesting corners of the overstuffed acoustic rock foyer.

With Mark "Evenings" Wilden on drums and brother James on guitar, Los Diablos' sound is straightforward, but the material's certainly unpredictable. Mixing irreverent covers with originals and a hefty dash of 6th form revue silliness means they'll be anathema to many, but if you like a bit of harmless cabaret, this duo deliver the goods. Highlights bookend the set, with a helium thrash through 'Wuthering Heights' and Jacques Brel's 'The Girls & The Dogs'. The ambience may be more Roy Walker than Scott Walker, but the playing is neat, showing sides to Mark's vocals hidden in The Evenings' maelstrom. Perhaps they're selling their songs short with this jocular presentation, but considering one is a Barenaked Ladies romp about a Chevy Chase lookalike, they probably don't care.

Clever billing for rock trio The Swamis, who sound absolutely *enormous* after these acoustic prologues. And fair play too, because they're as tight and powerful as you could wish, powering down a mid-80s rock furrow with much dexterity. If you liked it you could "buy a CD from the man in the Led Zep T-shirt", which pretty much sums up The Swamis. They clearly inhabit a cosy world where nothing changes much, where mates dance like drunken uncles at a wedding, heads are nodded at provincial bars and "rock" is spelt with an A and a W. Good world for Scrabble.

David Murphy

the port mahon

Live Music in May

Monday 1st John Otway (6am)
Wednesday 3rd Kaned Citizens
Thursday 4th Port Mayhem Psychedelic Special with
Redox + Strange Aurora + Barnabas
Friday 5th Oxford Folk Club
Tuesday 9th Simon Davies + Jane Griffiths & Colin
Fletcher + Maeve Bayton
Thursday 11th Drew Atkins + support
Friday 12th Oxford Folk Club
Saturday 13th Caroline Martin
Sunday 14th Melodic Oxford" - Baby Gravy + Sleeps
in Oysters + The Silkroom + Amberstate
Monday 15th Barzin + Witches + Wait for Conistan
+ Deptford Mice
Wednesday 17th Tom Hingley
Thursday 18th The Law of Us
Friday 19th Oxford Folk Club
Tuesday 22nd Hangman Joe
Wednesday 23rd Johnny's Sexual Kitchen
Thursday 24th Angela Harris + others
Friday 26th Oxford Folk Club
Saturday 27th Oxford Arts Festival

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

82 St Clements, Oxford. Tel: 01865 202067

The Wheatsheaf

129 High St, Oxford, OX1 4DF - 01865 721156

LIVE MUSIC MAY 06

Wednesday 3rd - Vacuous Pop Presents...

PERSIL + TBC Doors 8pm / £5

Friday 5th - Klub Kaktus Presents...

SUITABLE CASE FOR TREATMENT
JUNKIE BRUSH + RAGGASAUROS + THE NEW MOON

Doors 8pm / £4

Saturday 6th - Vacuous Pop Presents...

MAGIC MARKERS + YOUNG PEOPLE
THIS IS YOUR CAPTAIN SPEAKING + WHIPS OF MERCY

Doors 8pm / £6

Wednesday 10th **THE PUNT** Doors 7:30pm / £4 or Free with Punt Pass

Friday 12th - Quickfix Presents...

THE DELTA FREQUENCY + THE \$HIT
THE WISE AND DJ THUNDERCAT

Doors 8pm / £4.50

Saturday 13th - Grinning Spider Presents - TBC

Doors 8pm / £4

Wednesday 17th - Vacuous Pop Presents...

THE PAPERCHASE + JENIFEREVER + ILL EASE
SCARECROWS

Doors 8pm / £6

Saturday 20th

DOG + SIX NATION STATE + THE CORVIDS

Doors 8pm / £4

Wednesday 24th - Vacuous Pop Presents...

VOLCANO! + SECONDSMILE + MOLIA FALLS + ITCH

Doors 8pm / £5

Friday 26th & Saturday 27th

OXFORD ARTS FESTIVAL

Wednesday 31st

BLOOD RED SHOES + FOALS + TIRED IRIE

Doors 8pm / £5

more

mbiproductions@gmail.com

GUILLEMOTS

The Zodiac

There's a strange, eerie sound enveloping us as Fyfe Dangerfield takes to the stage on his own. Perhaps it's actually a sample of a guillemot in distress. It dies down and Fyfe lets the emotion drip forth in his first song, sung à capella. The rest of the band take to the stage, albeit an interesting route - through the back of the room making their way through the crowd of people banging pots and pans, playing whistles, and yelling. Guillemots let it be known from the start they are going to take us on a journey.

The real fun begins with 'Through The Window Pane', a sharp, jeering mixture of sound effects, horns and clatter. It's a bit of a free-for-all but sets the tone for what's to come. Guillemots straddle jazz, pop, indie and, sometimes, pure self-indulgent noisiness. They may tinge upon Supergrass, Deacon Blue, Keane or even Coldplay but they aren't going to let anyone get too comfortable for too long. 'Love Song #43' is self-contained mayhem with a wailing banshee guitar effect throughout the song. And that is a consistent theme throughout the set. I sometimes have the yearning to hear some good 'ole guitar strumming. 'Go Away' has that promise and, is the best song of the night. And we can't forget Oxford's very own Greig Stewart on drums helping keep it all together. Although it seems a million miles from his time with Suitable Case For Treatment, the same quirkiness is undeniable. Guillemots take what could be straightforward pop tunes, stick them in a blender and then throw them against the wall. It may not be to everyone's tastes, but if they were to smooth out all the edges it just wouldn't be the same.

Katy Jerome

OK GO

The Zodiac

After briefly bothering the charts back in 2003 with 'Get Over It', Chicago's OK Go sunk back into cult status, another quirky American college rock band whose geeky sense of humour was either endearing or excruciating, depending on your point of view. With the video to new single 'A Million Ways', made for £10 in the band's backyard and featuring a precision-perfect dance routine by the quartet, now the most downloaded video of all time, they're back on the commercial map and tonight's gig is sold out.

Sharing a fair few traits, as well as management, with They Might Be Giant, doesn't bode well, but tonight's show finds OK Go in oddly serious and understated mood. They're far from the wacky self-conscious eccentrics you might expect, despite the wide collared jackets, kipper ties and flock wallpaper backdrop. Instead, like a camper Dandy Warhols (and ain't that saying something) they're as happy to head off on extended middle-eights and bass-led breakdowns as they are to pump up the almost glummy stadium pop. Cabaret funk makes way for downbeat homages to The Cure and Pixies, though they're at their brightest when they're hitting on the big show tunes, all sunshine melodies and close harmony singing. In the end we're not sure whether to be pleased or frustrated by OK Go's lack of craziness. But maybe if the occasional hair-brained video draws more widespread attention to a band capable of taking up The Cars' soft-edged new wave pop torch, hopefully OK Go won't be sinking back into the shadows again too quickly.

Ian Chesterton

HUNDRED REASONS / 65DAYSOFASTATIC

The Zodiac

A band of 65Daysofstatic's calibre playing the Zodiac twice inside of a month is a rare treat. And the burning question: can they pull a repeat of last months' blinder? They answer with a resounding 'yes'. Taking the post rock formula and tuning it on its head, the once obvious comparisons with granddaddies Mogwai fall by the wayside. 65Days prefer the pure crystallisation of both rock and dance music over a token nod to each (In fact, the stale dance fraternity could take several leaves out of their book). Alternately eerie and chaotic, without ever becoming shambolic, the addition of thundering drum&bass beats and occasional keyboards into the proverbial blender without sounding like a directionless jumble is no mean feat. 65Days are a sight to behold and everything your perfect post rock band should be.

Tracing the rise and subsequent record label-related turbulence of Surrey's Hundred Reasons, it's pleasing to see they are on form, if a little formulaic, this evening. Their set is gleaned mostly from recent release 'Kill Your Own'; an album with which you feel like you could sing every chorus (and certainly the crowd oblige) without ever hearing them before. By the end of the encore, one can confidently assume that the Surrey is a magical place, where mammoth riffs are king, power chords rule heaven and hooks can be purchased for a dime a dozen. Surprising then that their brief moments of sheer brilliance are more often than not forfeited for middling emo histrionics. Which is a shame really as they are an undoubtedly tight and polished machine, much like an amped-up, depression-free Rival Schools. So, while inspiring plenty of pogoing and not at all painful to the ear, Hundred Reasons offer very little new to an already over-trodden path.

Matt Bayliss

THE GOLDEN WOK

**Finest Chinese Cuisine
Take-Away**

170 Cowley Road

(Opposite Tesco)

01865 248158

Home Delivery Available

10% Student Discount

on collection only

For 50p 5 May, 7.45pm
Hollywood Music Room

Get 20th May, 7.30pm
Worship Memorial Church

Trio - Jazz from Poland

Tangents - new directions in tango

'Melodic and melancholy beauty' Irish Times

1930's Buenos Aires to new jazz - with new music by Will Gregory (Goldfrapp)

Booking 0870 750 0655 / ocmavents.org

Thursdays, 5.45pm Modern Art Oxford

E3 / E2 conc. under 10s free

4 May John Etheridge and Dylan Fowler

'One of the best guitarists in the world' Pat Metheny (of John Etheridge)

18 May Rajan Spolia

A truly unique 'voice' on guitar incorporating jazz, blues and Indian classical music

Booking 01865 813800

OCM@MAO

Vinyl Frontier

**Second hand and
collectable records and CDs**

ROCK · INDIE · DANCE · SOUL · JAZZ · CLASSICAL etc.

records and CDs bought, sold and exchanged

101a Cowley Road, Oxford

(near corner of Rectory Road)

tel: 01865 201204 Mon-Sat 11-6pm

FLASH HARRY ENTERPRISES

P.A. HIRE

3 OR 5K BOSE SYSTEM

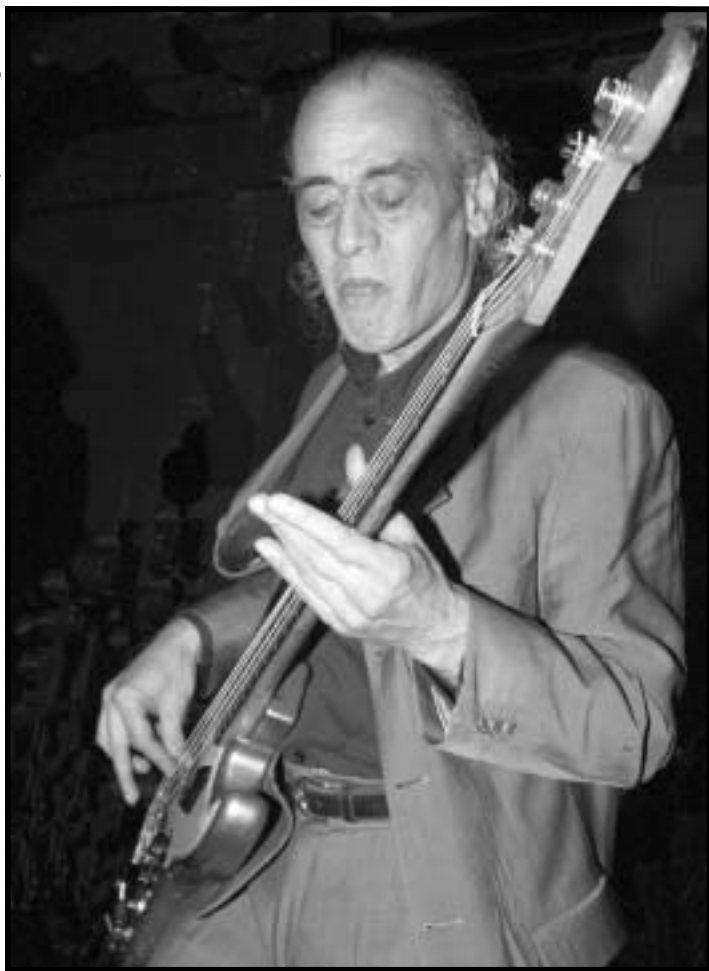
32 CHANNEL DESK & FOLDBACK

COMPACT AND POTENT

1K SYSTEM ALSO AVAILABLE

ENTERTAINMENT LIVE BANDS

MOBILE: 07702 211792
or 01865 361521



THE BLOCKHEADS

The Bullingdon

It is hard to write the words The Blockheads without putting ‘Ian Dury and’ before them. With The Blockheads as his backing band Dury found a place in the nation’s heart with his keen wit, that unmistakable voice and his acute dissection of English life.

Without The Blockheads driving his songs with their superb musicianship it is possible that Ian Dury might have remained as little more than a footnote in musical history. After all, his other bands Kilburn and The Highroads, and Ian Dury and The Music Students are not exactly the most celebrated of his musical adventures.

The songs Dury created with The Blockheads were classics, and so tonight, although Dury is no longer with us, it is something of an honour to hear his songs once again.

The band may well look their years, but as they launch into the full-on rock of ‘Blockheads’, it is clear that the songs haven’t aged since they were originally written. Vocalist and guitarist Jankel and bass player Norman Watt-Roy tear into these songs with such vigour that it is easy to forget that some of them are nearly thirty years old; their musicianship and obvious love for these tunes acting like a sonic preservative. Vocalist Derek Hussey meanwhile provides a peculiar focal point; firing out Dury’s lyrics in a familiar cockerney style, whilst simultaneously achieving the look of Lester Bangs and Don Van Vliet’s love child.

There are occasional low points during the set though, notably during The Blockhead’s own material. Played alongside the pervy reggae of ‘You’re More Than Fair’, or the genius pop of ‘Reasons To Be Cheerful (Pt III)’ and ‘Hit Me With Your Rhythm Stick’, it struggles to really impose itself.

This is really nit picking however, because The Blockheads deliver a masterful show. If nothing else, it is gratifying to see the band keeping these songs and Dury’s words alive.

Sam Shepherd

MILE HIGH YOUNG TEAM / DREW ATKINS

The Exeter Hall

In a music scene over-populated by singer-songwriters of a vaguely folk persuasion, it’s always going to be hard to stand out. While for tonight at least he’s backed by a full band, Drew Atkins does well to avoid simply falling into that bucket marked Third-Rate Bob Dylan Wannabes. A bit too intense in his delivery to suit his style of music, his welding of Dylan’s bluesier side and Neil Young’s more carefree rock excursions make for a pleasant if unchallenging truck stop bar band feel.

Debut gigs can be a minefield, with all the hard work done in practice falling apart in front of a crowd as nerves take over. Still, Mile High Young Team are hardly gig virgins, formed as they are by various former members of Bridge, Numbertine and Sun Circus, plus Evenings main man Mark Wilden on drums. Bridge singer Colin MacKinnon orchestrates an expansive, seven-piece band but it’s singer Emily Aldworth Davis who’s the focal point of this band and she, initially at least, seems terrified. Tall and elegant and dressed in what appears to be a Laura Ashley dress suit, she nervously clicks off every bar. Her neat, clipped vocals only add to the appearance of a very English lady, but Colin, who resembles a young Van Morrison and barks with celtic soul bravado, is a striking counterpoint. In fact at times you want to shove him back a few inches from the mic to stop his voice drowning out everything within a five mile radius, not least poor Emily.

Mile High Young Team are a studious, ill-fitting collective; half of them are wearing glasses and neat collared shirts abound and this look is reflected in the music – carefully constructed chamber pop, an underlying air of portent lent by Caroline Taylor’s cello. She’s a flurry of fingers and manic concentration, but adds that element of *frisson* that stops MHYT from spiralling into student revue band territory. The songs are strong, notably ‘The Bering Straits’ and ‘Distance Between Them’, both from the band’s recent debut EP, and the fluid dynamics that find them shifting from clinical pop to bluegrass-tinged folk keep the band’s options open at each turn. More confidence and some microphone control and we’ll have a better idea how all these bits of the jigsaw fit together.

John Leeson

KK NULL Vs Z’EV / THE EVENINGS / THE DIVINE COILS

The Wheatsheaf

The Divine Coils are a side project of Holiday Stabbings, a band for whom dissonance is everything and three-minute pop songs are an alien concept. Tonight the band take up almost the entire floor space of the Wheatsheaf, punters confined to the margins or tucked behind speaker stacks, craning to get a glimpse of the hatchet job Divine Coils are inflicting on their instruments. Samplers, effects pedals and cymbals litter the floor and from this mess comes an ambience that’s both desolate and exotic. Drones, feedback and unearthly wailing curl and mingle in the warm venue air, the resulting fusion creating a nightmarish serenity that should be soundtracking the closing scene of *Apocalypse Now*.

Recently reduced to a four-piece after the loss of keyboard player Stuart Fowkes, The Evenings, are now completely dominated by their rhythm section, two bassists plus drummer Mark Wilden, and so the band have re-set their foundations once again. In the process they’ve lost none of their studiously primal charm. Pulverising bass throbs underpin swirling Numan-esque synth, the elaborate but insistent drum patterns forming a shifting but hypnotic undertow. At times tonight The Evenings’ set is like a condensed history of krautrock as they move through Neu!’s sparkling synth patterns and grooves, to Kraftwerk’s glistening electronics, but restless shape-shifters that they are, The Evenings are always their own creature, and one that few other bands could keep up with.

A shame then that tonight’s star attraction fail to live up to the supports. Pioneers in their musical fields and with histories going back twenty years, Japan’s KK Null and America’s Z’ev bring together industrial dissonance, Oriental mediaeval beats, Gamelan and electronic hardcore noise into what should be an exhilarating ride, and initially at least is – the glitchy staccato sounding like a set of faulty signals that should precipitate a fatal collision, but the bloody racket that ensues, that grabs your throat and tries to assimilate your mind gradually loses its grip and both players fail to take it to any higher level. Ultimately it’s nothing more than white noise, the aural equivalent of televisual snow.

Victoria Waterfield

NURU KANE AND BAYE FALL

GNAWA

Zodiac

This is an all-acoustic gig played mainly with traditional African instruments that generate electric excitement. Nuru Kane is a presence. Tall and handsome, wearing the exotic patchwork clothes of a follower of the Senegalese Islamist Baye Fall religion, he creates a buzz just by stepping onto the stage. But the atmosphere, as it turns out, is as much a creation of the whole band as of the charismatic Nuru.

The mix is very influenced by desert blues – think the late Ali Farka Toure – and the repetitive spiritual medicinal trance sounds of Gnawa from Morocco. Hence the strap line for the tour: Crossing the Sahara: Dakar to Marrakech, even though the music was really fermented in Paris, where Nuru Kane has long been resident, and the current CD partially recorded in the Scottish borders.

With music with a direct line to Sufi spiritualism being wheeled out to entertain a revved up Zodiac crowd there's plenty for the

musicologist and moralist to dissect. More intriguing, though, is some jazzy Parisian acoustic guitar riffs thrown in by Thierry Fournel, or the multi-layered web weaved from his oud, the interweaving rhythmic hand clapping, the beat of iron castanets, and the call and response chanting. The whole is underpinned by the bass sound of Nuru's three stringed guimbri, the lead instrument in Gnawa music. The overall sound is dense, certainly more so than on several of the CD's tracks. When all five band members harmonise, there is a really rich vocal sound. Nuru Kane's best instrument is his voice, yet he's happy to share the lead vocals with Kabir Tab.

With Gnawa based on repetition, the problem is how to end songs before boredom sets in for anyone not actually in a trance. But the band shape the songs to bring them to what seemed a natural end before interest and involvement trickled away.

Colin May

THEE MORE SHALLOWS / POLARIS / THE WORKHOUSE

The Port Mahon

The Workhouse are the ninth wonder of the world. They're better than sex, drugs or rock and roll. The fact that four guys crammed into the smallest of venues can tool out such intricate, layered, wide-screen sonics, with the crowd practically amongst them and devoted fans' noses on their frets, is no small wonder in itself. The band's new album, 'Fly Over', is an embarrassment of riches, the Rolls Royce of melodic post-rock, every bar a clip-art bible for TV theme-tune and sound-bed directors. Tonight, 'Last of the Big Songs', is an atom-mulching bolero; the climax of 'Shaking Hands' is Jeremy Clarkson breaking every speed limit through France, while 'Peacon' remains quite simply the soundtrack to your soul being slowly removed out of the top of your head.

To follow that is going to take some class and musicianship and Polaris, from Leeds, have both, but in two separate entities. Decade-old veterans of the LS6 scene, and staffed by members of Quack Quack and Bilge Pump, they are

overly drummer-centric, with a percussionist so in love with his tiny jazz set up he's doing everything but having full sex with it. So you have lovely ponderous music and vocals being tap-danced on by someone who wishes he could play the underside of the kit too. I tune out at the point it becomes like Ginger Baker jamming over Sigur Ros.

San Franciscans, Thee More Shallows are the new masters of the psyche-a-delicate. With Granddaddy dissolved, Mercury Rev and Wayne Coyne gone to the Hall of Fame, TSM are someone new to fall in love with. Showcasing new EP, 'Monkey Vs Shark', they give us that unique California alt-rock feeling of a heartbreak just after it stops really hurting, with all its outsider grandeur of fireflies under endless desert skies, and phosphorous mellotron hugging Dee Kesler's frayed evocative vocals. Thee More Shallows play big, simple songs from the end of the world, in the corner of your town.

Paul Carrera



May

Every Monday

THE FAMOUS MONDAY NIGHT BLUES

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

1st **SHARRIE WILLIAMS** (USA)

8th **THE MICK PINI BAND** (UK)

15th **GREGG WRIGHT** (USA)

22nd **NEVER THE BRIDE** (UK)

29th **ROB TOGNOTI** (Australia)

Every Tuesday

THE OXFORD JAZZ CLUB

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

2nd **THE TOM GREY QUINTET**

9th **PADDY MILNER**

16th **THE TOM GREY QUINTET**

23rd **THE TOM GREY QUINTET**

30th **ALVIN ROY**

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.

Plus

Wed 3rd **LIVE STAND UP COMEDY** 8.30pm-12am £6.50

Sat 6th **SIMPLE** with MAISON + Resident DJs 9-2am

Wed 10th **TRUCKFIGHTERS + SEXTODECIMO + OBIAT + GUNNBUNNY** 8-12 £5

Thu 11th **EXIT 10** (followed by Bullseye)

Sat 13th **REGGAE NIGHT** 9pm-2am

Thu 18th **JESTER + THE RUINS** (followed by Bullseye)

Sat 20th **FUTURE FUNK FOUNDATION** 9pm-2am

Wed 24th OBSU Rock Society presents **ALAMOS + SOULS** + more

Thu 25th **UNITING THE ELEMENTS** (followed by Bullseye)

Fri 26th **LIVE BANDS** 6-9pm (followed by Backroom Boogie)

Sun 28th **LISA FITZGIBBON + EYELASH**

Wed 31st **SLIPPERY STAGE PRESENTS** (live bands tbc)

Saturday 24th June

Roadrunner presents

THE BEAT

Tickets on sale now, £12.50, from the venue.

APPLETREE STUDIOS
24 TRACK DIGITAL / 16 TRACK ANALOGUE

* HIGH QUALITY / LOW RATES
* FULLY STOCKED WITH ALL THE LATEST GEAR
* GOOD LINKS WITH RECORD COMPANIES
* ESTABLISHED FOR 14 YEARS
* GREAT LOCATION

* GOOD SIZED LIVE ROOM, CONTROL ROOM AND VOCAL BOOTH
* DIGITAL EDITING, MASTERING AND DUPLICATION FACILITIES

FOR THE NEW COLOUR BROCHURE SHOWING ALL THE LATEST GEAR
AND RECENT REVIEWS OR TO MAKE A BOOKING RING PHIL ON:

01844 237916
www.appletreestudios.com

Warehouse Studios

24 Track HD Digital Recording
Full Production & Rehearsal Studios

Oxford 01865-736411
www.warehousestudios.com

*** Special Local Band Rates ***

DUNGEON studios

CONTACT RICH HAINES TEL: 07790193260
RHAINESSTUDIO@BTOPENWORLD.COM

MUSIC PRODUCTION AND PROMOTION

STUDIO 45

Specialists in Developing Artists Sound, Image & Marketing

One-on-one artist development, performance, songwriting services, vocal coaching, music production, professional demos, image defining, photo-shoots, graphic design, PR and marketing, CD duplication.

For a FREE consultation, please contact the office:
01865 774806
www.studio45.org.uk

The COLDROOM Studios

PRICES START FROM £5 AN HOUR ALL THE KIDS ARE DONE IT!

WWW.COLDROOMSTUDIOS.CO.UK
07974 710740 01865 864008

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

REBECCA MOSLEY

As frequent visitors to Oxford's many open mic sessions we more often than not come away utterly depressed by the inanity of it all. The sheer, blinding lack of imagination. All those boys who want to be Bob Dylan; all those girls consumed by maudlin neurosis and backed by gratuitous cellos that in some way, they believe, make their mithering seem so much more deep and meaningful. Still, once in a while there's a gem to be unearthed and Rebecca Mosley is rightfully making her presence felt locally and beyond. A softly shrill, wistful yet silky folk-pop siren whose occasional lapses into Dylan-inspired bluesiness are more than compensated for by songs like 'Queues', the seven-minute stand-out track on this new demo. Stark and rooted in traditional English folk music, in much the same vein as Waterson: Carthy, expansive and lonely, it exudes a campfire warmth, while evoking the spirit, if not sound, of prime Jefferson Airplane. Elsewhere Rebecca can warble or soar but always reigns herself in before she flaps into Alanis Morissette territory.

JONNY RACE

And talking of boys with acoustic guitars, here's Jonny Race, recently relocated to Oxford from Hull. Initially we were going to stick the unsuspecting sap in the dumper on the basis of this demo's opening number – the wretched 'Where Do We Go?', with its moon-in-June rhyming style and cod-philosophical musings on "this crumbling planet" and lost love as a metaphor for spinning in space. Where do we go? Anywhere but bloody here, that's where. Maybe a small, dark room with no stereo in it. But then he gets better and spoils our cruel fun. There's the lilting seaside shanty 'Down Came The Heavens', which makes way for the sweet, suffocating 'Our Love Will Survive', with its frail piano lead, and finally the softly drizzling 'Dream', all of which mark Jonny out as a bloke who feels a bit sorry for himself and is perhaps in need of the love of a good woman who'll snap him out of his torpor and make him get a tough manual factory job and stop him day dreaming about flaxen-haired maidens and cabins by the sea, but also as a singer and songwriter of some talent. Curses, foiled again!

ROBOT FRIEND

Just the band's name gave us such high hopes – here, surely, is retro-futurist synth-pop of

the finest vintage. And they play a Goldfrapp cover in their live set. This is gonna be great, even if their MySpace blog does dwell worryingly on a love for eating pig-based products. Such a shame then that Robot Friend are little more than a common-or-garden indie guitar band. The first track here, 'Cave Painting', is guitar pop of the uptight, jerky new wave variety with a hint of grunge blather, but by 'Pretty Boy' they're tilting too far into listless, over-egged rock anthem territory and shouting a lot. Even after they throw themselves headlong into pretty generic indie thrash, there's enough lust for life apparent to inspire a small degree of hope for future improvement. Stay off the bacon sandwiches and gammon, boys and stick to a strict diet of cheap speed and vodka. It'll do wonders for your music, though chances are you won't live much past your second demo.

THE PARK RACE

This month's demo pile does seem to lean heavily towards anthemic power-pop and The Park Race are no exception. 'Hey Mister' borrows its personality from Pearl Jam and its clothes from The Gin Blossoms and sets off to wow the girls on the dancefloor. Short and sweet it draws a few admiring glances but having spilt a pint down itself with the acoustic, heartfelt 'Gonna Build A City', everyone starts to wonder why bands do such things to themselves. Or us for that matter. There's the merest hint of something a bit more exotic in the Spanish-sounding acoustic guitar but the lyrics are all about cups of tea and in the end it's all a bit too James Blunt. And so, embarrassed and slightly damp, The Park Race head home to a soundtrack of sub-Bryan Adams drive-time soft rocking that's easily, and best, forgotten and to the safety of their bedroom where they drunkenly decide to make electro-tinged hip hop, only mainly inspired by Queen's stranger moments. Salvation at the death, then.

KATIE MADDOCKS

Katie Maddocks states that she's influenced by "the good bits of Sheryl Crow". Which we can only deduce are the bits that are left when her vocal chords have been wrenched out with a pair of garden shears. But it isn't so terrible. The first couple of numbers, 'Silver Taxi Cab' and 'Long Tall Sally's' are a bit too sickly sweet in a 60s folk-pop kind of way – the more whimsical side of Joni Mitchell or Carol King – and will probably end up on the soundtrack to the fifth Bridget Jones sequel, but the piano-led 'Black Eyes' is much better and far darker – sombre and with the vocals almost whispered; it's got all the substance, feeling and atmosphere that the first two songs lacked. Stay miserable, Katie – happy is for losers!

THE SILKROOM

Previously reviewed in these pages a year ago and promising better things to come with their arty, if emotional take on grunge, The Silkroom return a little older but still prone to bouts of navel gazing and sensitive rocking. Like the musical equivalent of a new learner driver kangarooing across a busy junction, starting to panic and losing all clutch control in a sweaty flush, The Silkroom do that stop-start jaggedy post-hardcore thing, but without any apparent bite or bile, and lacking the pin-tight melodic edge of Dive Dive (their most obvious influence). And thus they chug awkwardly along, with little evidence of last year's promise, until they seem to lose any remaining vestige of spirit and resort to jazzy post-rock noodling, while the singer appears to have a rather nasty throat infection.

NATIONAL SCHOOL

Educational establishment-related pop music here from a Headington-based duo, one girl, one boy, who rely solely on drums and organ to teach the world to sing. Citing such disparate eccentrics as Devo, Daniel Johnston and Charles Trenet as inspiration, National School do come across as a bit too self-consciously weird and wacky, the organ switching from harpsichord to Toytown setting, the drums bashed out simply and unsubtly while the bloke shouts like an angry busker. Like a cross between a Tudor ballroom dance, a John Otway-hosted pub riot and an end-of-the-pier White Stripes, it's the sort of thing John Peel would probably have latched onto, even if only out of sympathy – listen to them too long and National School do start to get a bit bloody annoying, but in a musical age of terminal mediocrity, we'll give them the benefit of any doubt.

KOHOUTEK

Well, here are Kohoutek to inject a bit of soul into this month's demo pile. Fronted by Mark Cobb, who seems to sing in about half a dozen local bands (okay, three, but a bit of exaggeration makes everything seem that much more exciting, doesn't it and, believe us, demo listening sessions seriously need a bit of excitement), Kohoutek remind us of those bands from around the mid-80s who trod a fine line between indie credibility and Smash Hits-endorsed teeny pop vacuousness. Bands like The Blow Monkeys and Curiosity Killed The Cat who could be trawling round the student union circuit and playing Red Wedge benefit gigs one week, being mobbed by hordes of very young ladies the next. Mostly it's down to Mark's semi-operatic soul acrobatics (not a million miles off Rick Astley, it has to be said), but also to the wandering sax lead on songs like 'Mas Or Manos' and 'Sasquatch'. Decent enough, all things considered, and where there's an early-80s revival, a mid-80s revival can't be far behind, eh, although things do tend to meander when they're

meant to be dreamy and Mark's voice maybe deserves a bigger backing, or more imaginative arrangements to work on.

27B/6

Named after one of the many bureaucratic forms that need filling out in Terry Gilliam's film *Brazil*, 27B/6 are overly-SERIOUS young men dressed in grey shirts with steely gazes and a militant detachment from a society in moral and social decline. We know this because they told us so in their letter. Well apart from the bits about grey shirts and steely gazes, but we just filled in the gaps to paint a fuller picture of just how SERIOUS this band are. So SERIOUS in fact that their primary influences are Joy Division and The Manic Street Preachers. That's one hell of a lot of angst to let out. And once you've got beyond just how SERIOUS it all is, and sweep under the carpet all the po-faced silliness of the whole affair, they're not too bad: Joy Div's dark, militaristic drive gets caught in Pink Floyd's lysergic fug and a miserable time is had by all. Long before grunge and emo came along, fretful and misunderstood young men used to make their frustrations known in this manner all over the shop, and it's probably still preferable to much of the whining that passes for alternative music these days. Strange but true fact: when this demo started it was sunny, by the time it ended it was pouring with rain. That's how SERIOUS this band is.

THE DEMO DUMPER

THE DIVINITY SCHOOL

More power popping action, this time courtesy of Wallingford's The Divinity School, a band for whom musical evolution stopped, perhaps isolated in a remote limestone cave system disguised as a spit and sawdust market town pub, back in 1975. Here, in the wake of prog and before the advent of punk, rock went back to basics and merrily chugged along on a handful of chords and a romantic notion of riding motorbikes down open highways. Opening track, 'Straw Hat', is rumbling and pretty basic but deceptively melodic in a vaguely Eddie & the Hotrods kind of way, but too soon they're turning into a bad Deep Purple tribute band on 'The Door', lamenting "bed-jumping women" in a decidedly half-hearted fashion. We came so close to forgiving even this though, but they had to go and ruin it all with an overwrought power ballad called 'Give Me Strength', which sounds worryingly like Harry Chapin's 'Cats In The Cradle', as performed by the remedial class of Talentless High. Give us strength, indeed.

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?

ROTATOR REHEARSAL STUDIOS

good location
drum kits available to hire
Prices start from just £22 for 3 hours

For bookings and enquiries please phone

01865 205600



Interzone House
74-77 Magdalen Rd
Oxford OX4 1RE

THE COURTYARD STUDIO

PROTOOLS HD2, MTA 980 CONSOLE 32/24/24, OTARI MTR90 MK2 24 TRACK TAPE MACHINE, 2 TRACKING ROOMS, SUPERB CONTROL ROOM WITH GOOD SELECTION OF MICS & OUTBOARD GEAR, + MIDI FACILITIES (INC LOGIC AUDIO, AKAI S1000, OLD SKOOL ROLAND ETC.)

Residential facilities included.

www.courtyardrecordingstudio.com
PHONE PIPPA FOR DETAILS
ON 01235 845800

shonk studios

Recording Studios
Protocols on a Mac
Rates for Local Bands
Large Live Room

We Have Moved Back Into Oxford
74 - 77 Magdalen Road

Phone - 01865 203922

info@theshonk.com

www.theshonk.com

TURAN AUDIO LTD

CD Mastering & Duplication



www.turanaudio.co.uk

01865 716466

tim@turanaudio.co.uk

24/7

RECORDING & REHEARSAL STUDIOS

• On the Cowley Road • Best rates in Oxford
• 2 Chill out areas • Call now for your free new brochure
• Drum Kit & Guitar Amps provided FREE

THE BEST BANDS GO 24/7

01865 435981 07768 410080 robin@247studios.co.uk

Available from Polar Bear and BBC Oxford (Oxford),
Windjammer Music (Didcot), Dawson's (Abingdon), Rapture (Witney),
Record Savings (Banbury). £5 in aid of BBC children in need

The DOWNLOAD sessions

1. Belarus - I Feel
2. Charlotte James - Games
3. The Epstein - Leave Yr Light On
4. Joff Winks Band - Share My Blues
5. Rebecca Mosley - Power In Paper
6. Los Diablos - Joan of Arc
7. Emily Rolt - Whispers In Her Mind
8. KTB - Bluebird
9. Allu Craid - Lower Standard
10. Richard Walters - The End Of The World Song

Listen on Radio Oxford 95.2fm Saturday's between 6-7pm
or online anytime: www.bbc.co.uk/oxford

BBC RADIO OXFORD 95.2 FM