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NIGHTSHIFT

Oxford's Music Magazine

Free every
month.
Issue 136
November
2006

FOALS

Welcome to their art rock disco - *interview inside*

Plus - News, reviews and
six pages of local gigs

Foals photo by Sam Shepherd

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NEWS

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HELLO AND WELCOME to November's Nightshift. After last month's bumper issue, we thought this month would be a doddle, but what with assorted internet problems, cancelled gigs and a near miss with floodwater it's a wonder it's here at all. Suffice to say, the sooner humanity abandons modern technology and returns to potato printing and carrier pigeons the sooner we shall start feeling at home in the world. Preferably a world where it never rains and singers never lose their voices. Is that really too much to ask?

Last month's feature on the closure of regional venues has provoked quite a reaction and it's good to hear from people who are making the effort to start promoting live music around the county. Hopefully music fans out there will support them as much as they can.

Have a great gigging month - six pages of gigs this month; surely there's something in there for everyone.

Ronan Munro

THE YOUNG KNIVES re-release 'The Decision' on October 30th on Transgressive Records. The song was originally released as part of a split-EP with Smilex back in 2004 and was voted song of the year by Nightshift writers. It was re-released by Transgressive last year and is taken from the band's hit album, 'Voices Of Animals And Men'. The Young Knives played two sold-out gigs at the Zodiac in October as part of their UK tour, the first local band to sell out two nights at the venue in a month since Radiohead in 1995.

FURTHER TO LAST MONTH'S feature on the loss of live music venues around Oxfordshire, Didcot Labour Club are hosting a regular blues night, The Red Hot Blues Club, on the third Friday of each month. This month's gig features The Tomcats. Any blues acts looking for a gig can contact Annie Birchall on 01235 210840 or by email at RedHotBlues@ntlworld.com. Meanwhile live music is set to take off at Witney's Palace Nightclub after the recent closure of the Pit venue. Witney rockers Greenacre play an acoustic show at the Palace on Thursday 23rd November with support from Vestibule and Laura Lost.



GET CAPE, WEAR CAPE, FLY returns to Oxford in the New year after selling out the Zodiac in October. The one-man electro-folk star plays at Brookes University Union on Saturday 27th January. Ticket are on sale now, priced £9, from the Union box office - 01865 484750.

THE HALF RABBITS, Trademark and Youth Movie Soundtrack Strategies are all included on a new compilation album in aid of The Medical Foundation For The Victims Of Torture this month. 'Fifty Minutes', released on Exercise 1 Records, features 50 tracks, including contributions from Piney Gir, Jeremy Warmesley, Grand Mal and Emmy The Great. It is available online now at www.exercise1.net/ 50minutes, priced £8.

AS EVER, keep tuning into The Download every week on BBC Radio Oxford 95.2fm. The weekly local music show, broadcast every Saturday at 6pm and available to listen to all week online at bbc.co.uk/oxford features an hour of local releases, interviews with touring bands, a gig and club guide and a local demo vote.

HUNDRED REASONS and White Rose Movement have both re-scheduled gigs in Oxford, while planned local dates by Plan B (pictured), Imogen Heap and Toyah have all been cancelled with no new dates announced. Emo rockers Hundred Reasons were forced to call off their UK tour when singer Colin Doran developed nodes on his vocal chords and was advised to stop singing for three months. The band return to the Zodiac on Thursday 18th January and all tickets remain valid. Synth-pop act White Rose Movement play the Zodiac on Monday 27th November after postponing their September date due to illness.

Meanwhile Imogen cancelled two of her UK tour dates, including her show at the New Theatre, after she lost her voice. No reason has been given for the cancellation of dates by rapper Plan B at Brookes University Union or the Hitmakers Tour featuring Toyah, ABC and Howard Jones at the New Theatre. No Oxford date is included in Plan B's rescheduled tour in February.



Vashti Bunyan makes a rare visit to Oxford on Saturday 9th December, when she headlines a gig at the Zodiac. In the 1960s the enigmatic folk singer was part of the Oxford music and arts scene along with Jennifer Lewis and Angela Strange, from whom she borrowed her first guitar. The Zodiac show will see the trio reunited for the first time since that decade. Vashti, backed by a full band, will be performing songs from her two albums, separated by 35 years. Now a staple of TV ads after years of being regarded as a lost cult artist, Vashti is joined on the night by local favourites Goldrush (in collaboration with local electronic musician Pedro), The Epstein and KTB. Tickets are on sale now, priced £7 from the Zodiac box office on 01865 420042.

VENUE PHONE NUMBERS

The Zodiac: 01865 420042
The Bullingdon: 01865 244516
The Wheatsheaf: 01865 721156
The X: 01865 776431
The Cellar: 01865 244761
The New Theatre: 0870 606 3500
Black Horse: 01865 373154
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A Quiet Word With

FOALS

HIPPIES AND SOCIAL

worker types never tire of reminding us we should be nice to young bands and encourage their most hapless musical endeavours. Because at least they're trying and not out smashing up bus shelters, drinking WKD and wearing – *gasp* – hooded tops. Well to hell with that airy-fairy lefty do-gooding. We wouldn't encourage cute ickle puppies to crap on the pavement, so why should we clap and smile when teenagers do the musical equivalent to our precious ears? Especially when there are young bands like Foals around who are capable of making musicians twice their age look like Neanderthal novices.

THE HIPPIES AND SOCIAL

worker types would probably hate Foals anyway, however benevolent they tried to seem. Because you'd need the wrong sort of drugs to dance at their disco. The one where the funk comes at you from half a dozen different directions and the rhythms have you tripping over your feet even as you take to the dancefloor. Foals want to make you dance. But they go about it in strange, awkward ways. Inevitably you give up trying to move with any kind of grace or dignity and simply stare boggle-eyed at the frantic techno-funk-rock lurching out of its cocoon in front of you.

FOUR YEARS AGO

Nightshift stood, in a state of slight awe, at the Zodiac, watching a bunch of young teenagers going under the band name of Elizabeth rescuing post-rock and grunge from the abyss with a set of malevolently melodic noise that recalled the best bits of Sonic Youth and The God Machine. Elizabeth were fronted by singer and guitarist Yannis Philippakis, then aged 15, and featuring Jack Bevan on drums.

Soon after being tipped as one of the bands to watch in 2003, Elizabeth mutated into The Edmund Fitzgerald, taking a slight but significant change in musical direction into angular math-rock,



Photo by Sam Shepherd

finding kinship with the likes of Youthmovie Soundtrack Strategies, with whom they released a split single on Vacuous Pop Records.

The Edmund Fitzgerald quickly earned themselves a reputation as one of the most exciting and innovative guitar bands in Oxford and beyond. Yannis' restless creativity, however, was always seeking new directions and the band folded.

Foals were born when Yannis and Jack teamed up with Youthmovies' guitarist Andrew Mears, plus friends Walter and Jimmy, formerly of local band Face Meets Grill. A single, 'Try This On Your Piano' was released in April of this year on Try Harder, soon after which Andrew left the band to be replaced by Edwin on guitar

(apparently invited to join "as a joke that he still hasn't got").

Jimmy's arrival was the spur for a radical change of musical tactics. The music suddenly veered into far funkier territory. The groove became king, complex poly-rhythms battling with furious funk basslines and uptight treble-heavy guitar play. In Yannis' words, "Losing sleep over time signatures gave way to losing sleep at techno nights, talking about how to create something really alien with guitars and Korgs". Last month's Nightshift review of Foals' Wheatsheaf gig found a band who played like "a counselling group for musicians unable to find anyone able to keep up with them", five virtuoso performers locked in battle.

At the end of October Foals were invited to join Transgressive Record's North England Roadshow, playing alongside The Young Knives and Mystery Jets. Nightshift talked to Yannis as the band prepared to head off on tour.

FOALS' SOUND HAS changed quite radically in the last few months.

"One member leaving and another joining allows boundaries to be lifted in what is a simple and natural progression. There seems to be a silent distrust of accessibility or anything dance orientated within certain 'scenes', like you've killed someone when you mention techno and pop. For us it has been really good creatively to get away from this elitist back-slapping where you are automatically embraced because you have the 'right' affiliations... we like what we like, cool or not. We've expanded and mixed up our reference points to the point where we hope never to be lumbered with a certain tag and stagnate. We all like dance music, from minimal techno to electro, and the new Foals is primarily a response to those influences, not just musically but ideologically – a dance aesthetic underlies everything now. It's so rewarding to see kids dig the music and dance to it."

The Edmund Fitzgerald was very highly rated in Oxford, what prompted the band to split and what lessons learned there have carried through to Foals?

"We were really young when we played in The Ed Fitz. We never really looked at it beyond having fun, so its demise was inevitable when other pressures mounted. The music was getting more tech and more self-indulgent, and there wasn't very much else we could do with it. As fun as it was, the issue of actually communicating something to an audience was barely addressed, but now we're addressing it. We've carried across a focus on precision and a belief in the importance of discipline and musicianship, but we've also tried to temper musical egos through

compromise. It's more about group satisfaction in the end result, one that is sparser and yet more considered, rather than self-applauding displays of ego."

Foals' declared intention is to create the future of pop music. The music you make is often deceptively simple and certainly danceable. Can you envisage Foals breaking through into the commercial mainstream making people change their perceptions of what pop music is?

"Yeah, that was a joke! We were just trying to rile certain egos. We have, shall we say, an antagonistic relationship with 'pop' – we're interested in where it can go from here. Hot Chip are a great example of a band who have managed to take the good things from pop and meld it with something really different. In essence, we like the idea of music having a functional quality, where there is a balance between the compulsion to dance and some sort of intellectual engagement, which goes a bit deeper. What happens commercially is anyone's guess; our focus is just to have a good time and be the best that we can be. Obviously we'd love to change the public's preconceptions, but it's not what we're about."

THERE'S NO DOUBT THAT FOALS' new musical direction has made them a more accesible prospect. Previously the beauty was in the detail - it was easier to admire the band's musicianship than lose yourself in the music itself. Much of the complexity remains intact but is now underpinned by a desire to make The Kids dance - albeit in a less than straightforward fashion. Composer Steve Reich appears to be a major influence on the band, particularly rhythmically, but also bands like The Pop Group and Shriekback. How important is rhythm and the way that Foals use and manipulate it? "We all love Steve Reich, but his aspiration of making intelligent music beautiful is more important to us than his actual technique. We want to make beautiful dance music where you can hear and feel the connections between the instruments. Our influences are more like Q And Not U, the DFA, and stuff on labels like Kitsune and Kompakt, alongside our tour mix tapes: Haddaway, Nelly Furtado, Devo etc. Fundamentally we want to make kids dance, so the rhythm has got to be strong in that respect, but we also want to satisfy ourselves and people listening at home." Has rock music reached a creative dead-end, or can it be saved?

"Rock is pretty much impossible to define now; it's so fragmented. If some aspects of it are tired, other aspects are fresh and exciting. Invariably people who say it's dead are looking in the wrong place. There's no way we'd contribute to any sort of statements like that. The real challenge is how bands will move forward rather than simply regress into pastiche."

Live there's a tangible air of restlessness about the band. Is that what spurs you

on? Is there musical conflict within the band?

"Practising can build up creative tension, sure, and it can be a restless struggle, but when we play live it's more cathartic, like a fight that has been waiting to happen. We spend a lot of time together, often just sitting and waiting around, so the live show acts as a release – and it's where we feel most at home. We really like playing parties where we get to hang out with everyone; it makes it all worthwhile."

SINCE THE LINE-UP CHANGE, things have moved fast for Foals. Word-of-mouth recommendations have found their gigs increasingly busy and now record companies are getting interested. The band are currently talking to a major label. Unsurprising considering it's at an early stage, Yannis isn't too forthcoming with details of any possible deal. When we put the question to him his only answer is, "You can't prove that! That's a goddamn lie! Who's the shnook?"

Ah, we couldn't possibly say! Suffice to say it's the proverbial 'source close to the band'. Doubtless the truth will out in the not too distant future, possibly even as Foals sail off into the sunset aboard Mr Sony's luxury yacht, while discovering an as-yet uncharted post-hardcore sea shanty edge to their musical sword.

OXFORD HAS LONG BEEN A fertile breeding ground for bands of a more esoteric nature like Foals. How have they found the local scene especially having, quite literally, grown up in it. "Certain scenes are really cliquy, but Oxford is warm and welcoming, particularly with magazines like yourself supporting young bands like us. Youth Movies, The Young Knives, And No Star and Twat Trot Tra La La are all bands we like and know well."

If you could dispel any misconceptions about Foals that you've encountered, what would it be?

"That it's difficult. That it's 'math'. That it's 'new rave'. That we're in pain. That Edwin knows how to play keyboards. That because we are geeks we don't know how to dance. That only Campari is good enough. That our only friends are girls. That we have kids and run marathons for fun. That Walter is actually someone else who killed Walter along time ago and is wearing his face. That there is another Jimmy. That Yannis is the Caucasian heir to Prince. That Jack is a Beaker. That we are afrobeat...."

Thing is, with Foals, you never know whether one, some or all of those things are actually true. Musically and personally enigmatic, impossible to pigeonhole but full to the brim with potential; potential that is now, hopefully being realised. As Arctic Monkeys might have said: bet they'll look good on the dancefloor.

Check out www.myspace.com/foals for gig dates and news.


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HIERONYMUS

'Save The Day'

(Cold Chapel)

Storm clouds gather and the office stereo trembles in the face of the oncoming march of Satan's rock and roll foot soldiers. Sorry, got a bit carried away there for a moment. I get a bit edgy around *nice stuff*. Hieronymus are nice – we'd just forgotten as much since it's been about twenty-two hundred years since they last released an album. Still, never mind, they're always welcome round here for a cup of tea and a slice of Madeira cake, what with lovely manners like they've got.

'Save The Day' is the follow-up to 2002's 'Alone In This Tree' and shows a band who have, almost incredibly, managed to mellow even more with age. Singer Katherine Hieronymus has a dreamy, limpid voice, not unlike Karen Carpenter, that sprinkles itself,



sugar-like over the band's sweet, languid pop, possessed with MOR spirit but with a sleek melodic bent that stops it cowering like a shrinking violet into the wallpaper. At their best Hieronymus gild their pretty pop with a

country twang – Jonathan Chaltrey's quavering guitar on album opener 'Sad' calls to mind Chris Isaac – or drift into more ghostly territory, as on the *Twin Peaks*-styled 'Forgive'. They're not prone to showing their teeth much, nor sinking into melancholy, preferring a winning smile, as on the gentle-natured 'Sarah's Song'. 'Mount Olympus', meanwhile, is close to a direct steal from Fleetwood Mac's 'Dreams'.

There's a tendency towards being too languid at times, though: 'Windy In The Cellar' is as close as they get to upbeat and towards the end of the album they're sleepwalking into jazz lounge territory ('Bloody Heart') or worse, The Corrs ('Don't Ever Change'). Given the understated stylishness of 'Save The Day', Hieronymus never resort to showboating, allowing the songs to state their case simply. Mostly they do just that; perhaps sometimes they could do so a bit more forcibly.

Dale Kattack

OXFORD

IMPROVISING

ORCHESTRA

'Accession - A Piece Of Europe'

(Oxford Improvisers)

Some years ago when I was living in a shared house my so-called best friend in the next room would regularly wake me in the mornings playing his improvised jazz albums, which he kept in a box on the landing. After months of torment my cat slunk out of the room and heroically pushed the entire box of cassettes



down the stairs. But to this day I've been extremely wary of anything bearing the title *Improvised*. Still, Oxford Improvisers have gone from strength to strength over the past couple of years, inviting assorted international luminaries to town as well as promoting regular improv nights.

This album was recorded by the Oxford Improvising Orchestra – a 19-strong collective, including renowned pianist and composer Pat Thomas as well as Dubwiser's Malcolm Atkins, who composed the music – at the Jacqueline du Pre Building last November, the original 95-minute performance here whittled down to 35 minutes.

Divided into seven separate pieces, each displays mastery of tone, texture and technique and with an emphasis on space: busy piano flourishes make way for spooked strings, barely-there woodwind chirps and abstract electronic hums and buzzes. Contemporary classical music is an alien world to me, I'll confess; peasant that I am I like a good tune, or a groove, something solid to hold onto. I always get the impression with improv virtuosos that they sit around and cackle secretively about plebs who don't understand, like wicked French waiters laughing at hapless English tourists' attempts to decipher a complex menu.

So there you have it: I'm a thicko and a peasant and I'm going to go and listen to my Lily Allen album now. Nothing too difficult there to comprehend.

Dale Kattack

HARRY ANGEL

'You Are Your Own Disease'

(Own label)

More sweet'n'scouring gothic fizzbomb rock from Harry Angel, the follow-up to last year's excellent 'Death Valley Of The Dolls' single. Three songs here follow a set formula of careering grunge guitars topped off by singer Chris Beard's fantastically false American accent and bassist Hayley Phillips' occasional Kim Gordon-like interjections.

The best thing about Harry Angel is how they always sound like they're in an amphetamine-fuelled rush to get to the end of every song so they can sit quietly in the corner grinding their teeth and watching, bug-eyed, for aliens or CIA agents while the melodies can only hang on for dear life, their knuckles whitening as everything heads towards an inevitable fireball of grunge distortion and feedback. However hard they try they just can't slow it down, even relatively. When they attempt it, as on 'Last Riot', you're always waiting for the froth to come pouring out again, and they never disappoint.

If there's any small disappointment to be had it's that Harry Angel, like so many bands, never quite achieve the molten ferocity of their live sound on CD. Still, Butch Vig don't come cheap; time to start saving those pennies for next time.

Ian Chesterton

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Stornoway + Sean & Julia
Lally + Laima Bite | 16 th The Yarns + support |
| 3 rd Oxford Folk Club | 17 th Oxford Folk Club |
| 4 th Kill Kenada + Caretaker +
Twat Trot Tra La | 18 th Los Campesinos +
Popular Workshop + Baby
Gravy + Through Snowy
Static |
| 5 th Twat Daddies | 19 th The Reverse + La Frange
+ Ape Has Killed Ape! + Ash
Verjee |
| 6 th ISAN + Tomcats in Tokyo | 20 th The End Game +
Showdown City |
| 7 th Amandine (Fat Cat
Records) + The Low Lows +
These Monsters | 24 th Oxford Folk Club |
| 8 th Oxford Improvisers
present Son et Lumiere | 26 th Pindrop Performance
presents Thomas Traux +
National School + Peter
Buckly Hill (5.30pm - followed
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| 9 th Divine Coils + Shaggy
Parasols + guests | 28 th Swiss Concrete presents
Balor Knights + Plans and
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GIG GUIDE

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WEDNESDAY 1st

NEIMO + POP KLUB ARSENAL + WHERE I'M CALLING FROM + JULIUS: The Port Mahon

– Swiss Concrete's first gig of the month brings two of Paris' upcoming pop starlets to the cosy confines of the Port. Neimo mix up Strokes-y new wave influences with punk and synth-pop, while Pop Klub Arsenal opt for a more Smiths-inspired style of indie rocking. Wispy local indie popstrels WICF provide support along with Julius.

FOLK SESSION: The X, Cowley – Weekly trad folk session.

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Marlborough House – All-comers night with £50 prize.

HIT & RUN: The Cellar – Hip hop and drum&bass club night.

Thursday 2nd

THE PHOTOPHONIC EXPERIMENT:

The Zodiac

Oxford Contemporary Music host a musically challenging meeting of disparate minds in the form of the Photophonic Experiment tour. The show brings together Pram, Blissbody and Project Dark. Pram have long been one of the most unusual and original bands in the UK, Domino Record stalwarts, for whom they have released seven albums of exotic leftfield pop, blending astro-jazz, loungecore, sci-fi soundtracks and Victoriana with lysergic, childlike lyrics. Blissbody is the work of Mark Anderson, responsible for the acclaimed Power Plant installation at Oxford's Botanic gardens last year. His array of lights, video and occasional pyrotechnics complement invented instruments, like the Million Volt Spark-o-phone, which are linked to natural phenomenon such as fire, plant life and lightning. Kirsten Reynolds' Project Dark, meanwhile, utilises scores of custom-sculptured 7" singles, made from hair, glass or circular saws amongst other things and was a big favourite of John Peel. Together they combine experimental leaning should make for one of the most bizarre and innovative gigs of the year.



NOVEMBER

THURSDAY 2nd

PHOTOPHONIC EXPERIMENT: The Zodiac (upstairs) – Multi-media experimental soundclash – *see main preview*

MY ALAMO: The Zodiac (downstairs) – Hotly-tipped young Midlands-based rockers in a Foo Fighters / QOTSA vein, currently recording their debut album with Joe Gibbs who has produced Funeral For A Friend and Jane's Addiction.

SABOTAGE: The Zodiac – Weekly rock club night playing the latest metal, hardcore and alternative sounds.

PORT MAYHEM with STORNOWAY + SEAN & JULIA LALLY + LAIMA BITE: The Port Mahon – Delicate Belle & Sebastian-influenced jangle pop from Stornoway, Uilleann pipe music from Sean and Julia, plus gorgeously melancholic folk-pop from Laima.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY JAZZ NIGHT: The Music Market

OBI GOT LUDO + WAIT FOR CONISTON + MOLECK: The Cellar – Metallic hardcore and post-rock from Newcastle's Obu Got Ludo, mixing it up somewhere between Battles and At The Drive-In, plus jazzy math-rock from Wait For Coniston and post-rock experimentalism from Moleck.

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon

CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre

FRIDAY 3rd

HARRY ANGEL + BORDERVILLE + ANDNOSTAR: The Zodiac (downstairs) – Fizzbomb gothic grunge-pop from Harry Angel, plus intricate rock of a more theatrical bent from Borderville and instrumental post-rocking from AndNoStar.

LAB4: The Zodiac (upstairs) – Local hard house duo's final Oxford gig – *see main preview*

KLUB KAKOFANNEY with BARRY & THE BEACHCOMBERS + KANED CITIZEN + HOLIDAY IN VIETNAM + REVEREND MOONSHINE + FILM NOIR: The X – Klub Kakofanney mark their first club night at the newly-refurbished X with a bumper bill featuring Witney punk wackoes Barry & The Beachcombers, melodic soft rocking from Kaned Citizen and Smiths-inspired indie types Film Noir.

OXFORD FOLK CLUB: The Port Mahon SEXTODECIMO + SONS OF THUNDER + BEARD OF ZEUSS + JECANO: The Wheatsheaf – A night of ultra-heavy noise. Headliners Sextodecimo create a dense black hole of ultra-hardcore stoner metal and are possibly the most extreme local live band. Stoner-metallers Beard Of Zeuss join the supporting cast.

ACOUSTIC NIGHT: The Victoria, Jericho

HANGMAN'S JOE + THE UNMASKED +

KT&KY: The Music Market – Local bands night with grunge rockers Hangman's Joe headlining.

THE DUGOUT: The Cellar – Soul, jazz and rare groove with a DJ set from Fingathing.

LES CLOCHARDS: The Flowing Well, Sunningwell

BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon

SATURDAY 4th

THE GUILLEMOTS: Brookes University Union – Warped, ethereal jazz-tinged pop – *see main preview*

TAPES'N'TAPES: The Zodiac – Excellent, off-kilter countrified indie rocking from Minneapolis' Tapes'n'Tapes, coming in somewhere between Talking Heads, Violent Femmes and Pixies and now signed to XL, alongside White Stripes.

REDOX + OPAQUE: The X – Swamp rock and festival funk from Redox.

ANDY ABRAHAM: The New Theatre – X-Factor runner-up to Shane Ward. Imagine, being not as good as Shane Ward. How can he sleep at night?

KILL KENADA + CARETAKER + TWAT TROT TRA LA: The Port Mahon – Menacing melodic hardcore from Bognor's Kill Kenada with support from arty hardcore stalwarts Caretaker and local experimental rockers Twat Trot Tra La.

PHYAL + DIRTY SCI-FI + NUMBERNINE + HYBRID4M: The Wheatsheaf – Grinning Spider club night with punk-metallers Phyal headlining, plus Doors-y rockers Dirty Sci-Fi.

SIMPLE: The Bullingdon – Funky house with Rennie Pilgrim.

SKITTLE ALLEY ACOUSTIC NIGHT with LES CLOCHARDS: King's Head & Bell,

Abingdon

DESTA*NATION: The Cellar – Reggae, roots and jungle night featuring a live set from local reggae favourites Mackating.

FULL METAL WAISTCOAT: The Music Market – Delicious Music local bands night.

JUDY'S FARM: Somerset House, Marston Road

FALLEN ANGELS: The Chester Arms – Country rock.

SUNDAY 5th

WITCHES + SHADY BAND: The Port Mahon – extravagant countrified indie rock with a glitchy electro soul from Witches, taking in influences from Calexico and Sparklehorse to Nought and The Velvet Underground.

DAVID ESSEX: The New Theatre – Enduring pop idol, once a teen pin-up, now more of an object of gentle desire for ladies of a certain age, but with a decent catalogue of top hits behind him, including the timeless 'Silver Dream Machine'. He recorded with St Etienne last year so there's still life in the old boy yet.

DOGS: The Zodiac – Absolutely wretched south London indie shambling from a band who seem to



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Friday 3rd

LAB 4: The Zodiac

And so it's goodbye from them. After twelve years together local trance and hard house duo Lab 4 are calling it a day and bowing out with a series of gigs building up to the end of the year. Tonight will be their final Oxford show, at a venue that Les and Adam have packed out many times. They're no strangers to much larger arenas however, regularly filling Brixton Academy or performing to 15,000 ravers in Australia or Japan. In fact, after Radiohead and Supergrass, Lab 4 are probably Oxford's most successful musical export, releasing half a dozen studio albums as well as numerous live recordings and countless 12" singles. Troubles with new album, 'None Of Us Are Saints', including legal problems over a cover version, pre-empted the decision to split, but the band will at least be able to go out on a high. Local fans will be familiar with the band's high-energy blend of electro-trance and ultra-heavy house, positioning the duo close to the likes of Messiah and Banco De Gaia, although harder-edged industrial acts like Ministry are equally close at times. Newcomers may be surprised to discover a side of Oxford music that they never knew existed. Such has been Lab 4's global success it's been easy to forget that it all started out above a tea shop in Abingdon.

have traded in ripping off the Strokes for a new line in ripping off Razorlight. Does their musical ambition know no bounds?

TWAT DADDIES: The Port Mahon – Shamolic local rockers.

ELECTRIC JAM: The X, Cowley – All-comers jam session in in-house band The X Men.

ELECTRIC OPEN JAM: The Music Market
MONDAY 6th

THE JOHN O'LEARY BAND: The Bullingdon – Blues harpist and vocalist with over 40 years experience behind him, initially inspired by Alexis Korner's harpist Cyril Davies, before discovering Muddy Waters, Howling Wolf and John Lee Hooker and now playing everything from blues and boogie to swing and rock'n'roll.

THE OTHERS: The Zodiac – Former London fashionista faves and one-time holders of the not particularly coveted title of The New Libertines, despite actually being quite good, return with their new album as well as choice indie rock nuggets like 'Stan Bowles' and 'This Is For The Poor', with frontman Dominic Masters documenting the thrill of being on the dole and the like.

ISAN + TOMCATS IN TOKYO: The Port Mahon – Minimalist electronic melodies and sound manipulation from ISAN at tonight's Vacuous Pop promotion, joined by French kindred spirits Tomcats in Tokyo, creating reflective,

emotive analogue lullabies and hushed electronic beats.

CRAOBH RUA: Nettlebed Folk Club – Traditional Irish balladry and jigs and reels.

TUESDAY 7th

JAZZ CLUB with THE TOM GREY QUINTET:

The Bullingdon – Free live jazz from resident band and guests at the Bully's ever-popular weekly club night.

AMADINE + THE LOW LOWS + THESE MONSTERS: The Port Mahon – Timorous indie pop from Sweden's Fat Cat-signed hopefuls. New Yorkers The Low Lows provide hazy lo-fi support with a nod or two to Galaxie 500, while Leeds' These Monsters bring the sparse, sax-led post-rock.

SHUSH OPEN MIC SESSION: The X, Cowley
DELICIOUS MUSIC JAZZ NIGHT with EDDIE THOMPSON: Bar Milano, Pizza Express
ACOUSTIC OPEN MIC SESSION: The Hobgoblin, Bicester – All-comers music night with a free pint for all performers.

WEDNESDAY 8th

PAUL CARRACK: The New Theatre – Veteran singer and keyboard player who's been a member of Squeeze (replacing Jools Holland), Mike & The Mechanics and (briefly) Roxy Music.

SON ET LUMIERE: The Port Mahon – Oxford Improvisers present a night of music and visuals with Bruno Guastalla and Paul Meldey.

FOLK SESSION: The X, Cowley

EPOK: The Cellar – Live drum&bass.

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Marlborough House

THURSDAY 9th

THE FEELING: Brookes University Union – The creeping musical mildew that is The Feeling returns to haunt our fair city once again, perhaps offering a reminder to those sentient beings out there who haven't helped make this gig a sell-out already that 70s MOR rock was A Bad Thing first time round and perhaps shouldn't be repeated. EVER. Drive-Time mulch for Daily Mail readers who think Athlete are too *outré*. Seriously, this lot make Keane sound like The Birthday Party. If you are one of those people who've bought a ticket already, burn it. Burn it now. You will feel cleansed.

JEREMY WARMSLEY: The Zodiac – Introspective but lush folk-pop from the London-based Anglo-French singer-songwriter, last seen at the Zodiac supporting Regina Spektor in February. With a tendency towards unpredictable performance, either solo or with a band, using either traditional acoustic instruments or relying on laptop and toy instruments.

ALABAMA 3 ACOUSTIC: The Zodiac – Unplugged session from Brixton's Deep South acid gospel crew.

OKEANOS: Modern Art, Oxford (5.45pm) – Oxford Contemporary Music presents a warm-up gig from the seven-piece ensemble, mixing up traditional Japanese folk music and interpretations of contemporary compositions, utilising Japanese koto and sho alongside western strings and woodwind, ahead of their full performance at the Jacqueline du Pre Building on Saturday 18th.

SABOTAGE: The Zodiac

DIVINE COILS + SHAGGY PARASOLS: The Port Mahon – Ambient drones and dissonant soundscapes from experimentalists Divine Coils.

HEADCOUNT + MARY BENDY TOY + THE PLAUDITS + MARK BOSLEY: The Hobgoblin, Bicester – Top-notch local bands night up in Bicester tonight as punk-metal titans Headcount headline with support from weirdo industrial grungers Mary Bendy Toy, plus Jeremy Leggett's

new band The Plaudits and downbeat pop troubadour Mark Bosley.

GUILLERMO + DAVID CRONENBERG'S WIFE + FOXES!: The Cellar – Alt.rock triple bill.

BENJAMIN PROSSER & VICTORIA YEULET:

QI Club – Old time blues, country, folk, gospel and rockabilly from the sometime TV Personalities singer.

GRINNING SPIDER PRESENTS: The X, Cowley – Local bands club night.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY JAZZ NIGHT: The Music Market

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon

CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre

Saturday 4th

Guillemots: Brookes University Union

Modern pop music is no place for wilful eccentricity, improvisation or adventurousness, but that doesn't seem to have hurt Guillemots any, having achieved a top 20 album and a Mercury Prize nomination since their last visit to Oxford. The album, 'Through The Windowpane', is an expansive set-piece, melodically simple but orchestral and intricately arranged and giving full reign to frontman Fyfe Dangerfield's reedy but epic voice and dreamy, kaleidoscopic lyrics. In as much as Guillemots resemble any other band they're closest to Glaswegian mavericks The Blue Nile, possessing a similar sense of casually-constructed perfection, production technique and musical virtuosity never intruding too much on the songs in hand. That Guillemots managed to recruit drummer Greig Stewart into their ranks is testament to their musical superiority – the former Suitable Case For Treatment and Camp Blackfoot sticksman is one of the most accomplished and maverick percussionists around. Flying in the face of Kooks-style indie mediocrity, Guillemots prove you can have style *and* content; their upwardly mobile career trajectory suggests there are even enough folks out there to make such things commercially successful.





Sunday 12th

MOTÖRHEAD:

The New Theatre

Almost exactly a year to the day on from their last, triumphant visit to the New Theatre, Motörhead return to wreak more sonic mayhem, legendary frontman Lemmy unarguably the coolest 60-year-old on the planet, a picture of gaunt rock and roll indestructibility personified, unbowed by the decades of substance abuse and gruelling rock workload that he's endured. In an age when so-called rock stars are more likely to be spotted patronising art galleries or finishing the Times crossword than being fished unconscious out of swimming pools in the early hours, isn't it reassuring that Lemmy is still flying the flag for proper hedonistic behaviour? Motörhead wrote the blueprint for full-throttle heavy metal with 'Overkill' and 'Ace Of Spades', while 'No Sleep 'Til Hammersmith' remains one of the greatest live rock albums of all time. New album 'Kiss Of Death' proves that Lemmy isn't going to mellow out any time soon, still belting it out in his trademark growl about war, booze and more war. After twice collapsing on stage last year, it was reported that Lemmy was reducing his alcohol intake. What this actually amounted to was him mixing his traditional Jack Daniel's with a dash of coke. "If we moved in next door, your lawn would die", said Lemmy once in an attempt to explain the Motörhead phenomenon. Don't you just wish he was your dad?

FRIDAY 10th

SCOTT MATTHEWS: The Zodiac (*upstairs*) – Return to the Zodiac for the Wolverhampton-based singer-songwriter after September's sold-out show at the downstairs venue, armed with an intimate mix of rock, soul and funk, drawing inspiration from Led Zep, Jeff Buckley, Nick Drake and Robert Johnson.

THE ALIENS: The Zodiac (*downstairs*) – Former Beta Band chaps John McLean and Robin Jones team up with oddball singer Lone Pigeon to continue their journey into 60s acid-frazzled psychedelia, wobbly electronica and convoluted devotional dancefloor pop

GAMMY LEG PRODUCTIONS presents SCRIPT + SMALLTEASERS + DAN MORGAN: The Exeter Hall, Cowley – Eclectic indie, new wave and 60s-influenced pop from Script at tonight's inaugural night from the Gappy Tooth Industries crew. Support from bouncy indie popsters Smallteasers and country-tinged balladeer Dan Morgan.

BEVERLEY KNIGHT: The New Theatre – Bev – that's Bev Knight *MBE* to you, serf – continues to

lead the British soul, r'n'b and gospel line with a string of hit singles and albums to her credit as well as about fifty million awards and nominations to her name. Oh and she's a Christian Aid ambassador too as well as a spokesperson for the Terence Higgins Trust. Pretty decent Aretha Franklin and Sam Cooke-inspired soul music too, lest that side of her armoury is in any danger of being overshadowed.

BABY GRAVY + FAMILY MACHINE: The Wheatsheaf – Ace local teen popstrels mixing up lo-fi punk with lopsided jazz noise, plus handdog country-tinged rocking from Family Machine.
SHAKERVILLE: The Music Market
OXFORD FOLK CLUB: The Port Mahon
ACOUSTIC NIGHT: The Victoria, Jericho
BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon
THE PETE FRYER BAND: Magdalen Arms

SATURDAY 11th

SELECTASOUND presents CYBERSCRIBES + THEO + REBECCA MOSLEY + REDFORD: The Bullingdon – First of a hopefully regular series of live promotions from Selectasound Studios, tonight featuring Electro-acoustic band Cyberscribes, mixing up Western pop and African music, fronted by Kenyan vocalist Phoebe Minah. Support comes from Theo, playing live drums over guitar loops, plus excellent folk-pop songstress Rebecca Mosley.

SUNSHINE UNDERGROUND: The Zodiac – Upwardly mobile Leeds rockers, mixing frantically funky post-punk noise with squally funk rock in that place where The Killers and Radio 4 meet The Music.

BOOT-LED ZEPPELIN: The Zodiac – Led Zep tribute.

BUENA VISTA SOCIALIST CLUB + RAMI: The X, Cowley – Benefit gig for the Colombian Solidarity Campaign.

PROHIBITION SMOKERS CLUB + GEORGINA WONDER: The Port Mahon – Sleazy acoustic blues rock from PSC, the band made up of members of Smilex, Baby Gravy, Verbal Kink and The Walk Off.

CAMINUS + THE DIVINITY SCHOOL + PAWEL KUTERBA: The Music Market – Delicious Music local bands night, launching new local mag 'i'.

CONVERGENCE QUARTET with HARRIS EISENSTADT & TAYLOR HO BYNUM + VERYAN WESTON PIANO TRIO: Jacqueline du Pre Music Building – A rare chance to see two of the United States' top young jazz improvisers in action, alongside local improv luminaries. Trumpeter Taylor and drummer Harris team up with Oxford's finest, with support from leading UK jazz drummer Veryan Weston.

STORNOWAY + COTTON BLONDE + BEAR IN THE AIR: The Wheatsheaf – Jangly folk-pop from Stornoway.

ANOTHER LOST LEADER + THE SHAKES + A SILENT FILM + ZERO POINT FIELD: The Jericho Tavern – Local bands night with star-bound melodic rockers A Silent Film amongst others.

SUNDAY 12th

MOTORHEAD: The New Theatre – Lemmy & co. return for more metal magnificence – *see main preview*

JONQUIL + FUCK BUTTONS + THEO: The Port Mahon – Cinematic musical experimentation from the rather ace Jonquil, plus support.

ELECTRIC OPEN JAM: The Music Market
SAM POPE + ELISE DARCHIS: The X, Cowley

MONDAY 13th

BLUE BISHOPS: The Bullingdon – Hard-rocking blues in the style of Jimmy Hendrix, Muddy Waters and Peter Green from the European festival favourites, recently joined by former-Argent and Zombies bassist Jim Rodford.

JAZZ GROOVE: The Port Mahon
CHRIS WHILE & JULIE MATTHEWS: Nettled Folk Club – Longstanding leading lights of the UK folk and roots scene.

TUESDAY 14th

LUKE HAINES + COWBOY X: The Zodiac – English gentleman poet and musical maverick returns with his new solo album – *see main preview*
JAZZ CLUB with THE TOM GREY QUINTET: The Bullingdon

Tuesday 14th

LUKE HAINES: The Zodiac

Luke Haines is a man who has rarely compromised his art for commercial gain. From the critically-lauded but actually rather crap Auteurs, to the more lysergic Baader Meinhof to the divine and inspired Black Box Recorder, he's reflected a very English take on pop and soul. Long before Pete Doherty came on the scene, Haines drew inspiration from ideas of Arcadian idyll, while rubbing up cynical vitriol against romantic naivety in his lyrics. Like so many single-minded musical mavericks he sometimes missed the target (particularly with The Auteurs who were one of the most deathly dull live acts we've ever had the misfortune to witness) but, as with Black Box Recorder, when he got it right it worked like a dream. In his time Haines has been nominated twice for the Mercury Prize, appeared on Top Of The Pops, and been produced by Steve Albini and Richard X, while always remaining a strangely wraith-like presence on the fringes of popular music. More recently he's been involved in award-winning film scores and now returns with a new solo album, 'Off My Rocker At The Art School Bop', from which the majority of tonight's set will doubtless be drawn.



QUADROPHOBE + LAIMA BITE: The Port Mahon – Funky rock from Wantage's Quadrophobe, plus heartstring-tugging gothic folk-pop from Laima.
SHUSH OPEN MIC SESSION: The X, Cowley DELICIOUS MUSIC JAZZ NIGHT with BARNABAS: Bar Milano, Pizza Express
INTRUSION: The Cellar – Goth and industrial club night.
OPEN MIC NIGHT: Mangos

WEDNESDAY 15th

SOLVEIGSLETTAHJELL + ILMILIEKKI: Holywell Music Room – Norwegian singer Solveig demonstrates her sparse, experimental jazz style, while young Finnish jazz collective Ilmiliekki support.
SHAKIN' STEVENS: The New Theatre – The 80s hitmaker and Welsh Elvis impersonator returns after last year's gig at the same venue, rock'n'rolling along to hits like 'Green Door' and 'This Ol' House'.
FOLK SESSION: The X, Cowley
HER NAME IS CALLA: The Port Mahon – Broody Radiohead-inspired indie rocking from Leicester's HNIC.
OPEN MIC SESSION: Marlborough House

THURSDAY 16th

THE KEYBOARD CHOIR + RECEIVER + TYLER: The Zodiac – One of Oxford's most innovative and unusual acts, The Keyboard Choir create exotic synthesized soundscapes, taking in drones, glitchy electronica and gothic portent. A genuinely superlative spectacle.
100 BULLETS BACK + SCHMOOF + ALUMINIUM BABE: The Cellar – Electro-pop night – *see main preview*
STATUS QUO: The New Theatre – Ver Quo's annual two-date residence comes round again, the biggest-selling singles band of all time in the UK, still going strong after 40 years on the road.
DECIBEL: Modern Art, Oxford (5.45pm) – Musical and visual collective led by composer Ed Bennett, performing experimental compositions using electronics, video and traditional instruments.
SABOTAGE: The Zodiac
THE YARNS: The Port Mahon
TRUE RUMOUR: The X, Cowley – 80s-styled soulful pop.
OXFORD UNIVERSITY JAZZ NIGHT: The Music Market
OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon
CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre

FRIDAY 17th

DISCHARGE: The Zodiac (downstairs) – Gods of thrash bring the original noise – *see main preview*
FRESH OUT OF THE BOX: The Zodiac (upstairs) – House, breaks and beats club night featuring Toob and Hyper.
FORK + SHIRLEY + EMERALD SKY + THE RELATIONSHIPS: The X, Cowley – Launch gig for Fork's new EP in a prog-punk stylee. Support from cheery Beatles-esque rockers Shirley, Led Zep-style rocking from Emerald Sky and cool downbeat psychedelic pop from The Relationships.
TIRED IRIE + CHINESE FINGERTRAP + AND THEY WILL RIOT + QUILLER
MEMORANDUM: The Wheatsheaf – Leicester's Tired Irie – signed to Youthmovies' Try Harder label – explore the darker side of new wave and math-rock, while exuberant local hardcore battlers Chinese Fingertrap make a welcome return after a year out of action.
STATUS QUO: The New Theatre – Second night in residence for the legendary boogie boys.

THE GREEN ONIONS: The Music Market – UK Blues Brothers tribute band.
OXFORD FOLK CLUB: The Port Mahon ACOUSTIC NIGHT: The Victoria, Jericho
TOMCATS: Didcot Labour Club – Live blues.
BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon HQ: The Cellar – Drum&bass club night with Alix Perez and Sabre.
SMILEX + 20/20 VISION + ANN OF RAIN + CARP NOCTEM: The Courtyard, Bicester – All-action glam-rock loons Smilex headline an under-18s rock night at Bicester's Courtyard Youth Centre.

SATURDAY 18th

YOUTH MOVIES + BLOOD RED SHOES + ADAM GNADE: The Zodiac – Local post-rock heroes return to town after their recent national tour – *see main preview*
OKEANOS: Jacqueline du Pre Building – Seven-piece ensemble, mixing up traditional Japanese folk music and interpretations of contemporary compositions, utilising Japanese koto and sho alongside western strings and woodwind.
PAPER TIGER + GRUDEL BAY RIOTS + NORTHWOOD: The Wheatsheaf – Heavy rock mixed bill.
LOS CAMPESINOS + POPULAR WORKSHOP + BABY GRAVY + THROUGH SNOWY STATIC: The Port Mahon – Indie rocking in a Pavement and Mogwai-inspired vein from Cardiff's Los Campesinos, with support from discordant, demented hardcore merchants Popular Workshop and kooky lo-fi jazz-pop youngsters Baby Gravy.
THE G's + SILVERSIGHT + NATION: The X, Cowley – Local bands night with glam-pop hopefuls Nation.
THE DRUG SQUAD + WEDNESDAY'S CHILD + HOLIDAY IN VIETNAM + LES CLOCHARDS: The Music Market – Delicious Music local bands night with headliners The Drug Squad providing party-friendly ska-punk noise.
THUNDER: The New Theatre – Bluesy rocking and ballads from the 70s-styled soft rockers, taking musical coals to Newcastle as their Free and Bad Company-influenced pomp threatens to make it big Stateside.
OX4: The Bullingdon – Drum&bass club night.
SLIDE: Brookes University Union – The monthly house club night moves up Headington Hill for a one-off spectacular.

SUNDAY 19th

THE REVERSE + LA FRANGE + APE HAS KILLED APE + ASH VERGEE: The Port Mahon – Another mixed Swiss Concrete promotion, tonight featuring London's gently melancholic indie types The Reverse, drawing on Bright Eyes and Bob Dylan for inspiration. Brighton's angular, grungey new wavers La Frange support, alongside Ape Has Killed Ape, the new musical outing for former-Meanwhile, Back In Communist Russia duo Emily and Tim, mixing sensuous poetry and sparse monologues with minimalist electronic soundscapes.
TEMPLE + HI-FLYER: The Bullingdon – Local bands night.
ELECTRIC OPEN JAM: The Music Market
ELECTRIC JAM: The X, Cowley
MONDAY 20th
THE AYNSLEY LISTER BAND: The Bullingdon – Acclaimed young English blues guitarist in a Hendrix style.
GOMEZ: Brookes University Union – Seems an age since debut album 'Bring It On' won the Mercury Prize, but it was only 1998. Perhaps it's



Thursday 16th

SCHMOOF: The Cellar

While electronic music continues to expand and progress to ever more esoteric lands, it's worth remembering that the best synth-pop was – and remains – both simple and a bit silly. Two words which apply very definitely to London duo Schmoof, singer Sarah and keyboard player Lloyd. The former cavorts around the stage in PVC and stilettos like an Amazonian member of Legs & Co. while the latter does all the cool bleepy electro-disco stuff and plays a synth-guitar without the slightest hint of irony. After building a small cult following on the back of a kitsch cover of 'Sweet Child O' Mine (featured on an old Snakebite City compilation) the pair launched their own monthly synth-pop night, Warm Electro, in London. After a low-key debut album a couple of years back, 'Bedroom Disco' Schmoof release a new single, 'Chocolate Boyfriend' this month, dealing with every girl's dilemma – boyfriend or chocolate? Heck, why not both in one! In the tradition of bands like Vicious Pink, Erasure and Silicon Teens, Schmoof write and perform with tongues only slightly in cheek; the result is kooky, fun and utterly irresistible. Joining them on tonight's electro-pop bill are local synth-rockers 100 Bullets Back, plus 80-styled popsters Aluminium Babe.

because after the critical raving that heralded their arrival, subsequent albums have received a rather more lukewarm reception. Perhaps too it's the fact that they've been largely absent from the UK scene for a while, concentrating on making it in the States where they now reside. New album 'How We Operate' aims to re-state their claim to the UK indie throne, although their blend of rustic Americanised rock and fuzzy stoner pop is probably more at home on the other side of the pond.

THE END GAME + SHOWDOWN CITY: The Port Mahon

PETER KNIGHT, TOM LEARY & KEVIN DEMPSEY: Nettlebed Folk Club

TUESDAY 21st

GOOD SHOES + XEROX TEENS + THE MULES: The Zodiac – Jerky, jangly new wave indie rocking out of London Town, thankfully eschewing Libertines-styled crappiness in favour of more Jam and Buzzcocks-inspired noise. Local polka-punk starlets The Mules support.
JAZZ CLUB with THE TOM GREY QUINTET: The Bullingdon
ROBERT & THE ROBOTICS + THE UPSTREAM PROVIDERS: The Music Market – Psychedelic rock from touring German band Robert & The Robotics.



Friday 17th

DISCHARGE:

The Zodiac

Hard to believe that a bunch of shouty bastards from Stoke On Trent are one of the most influential bands on the planet but there you go – you could argue the toss with Discharge but they'd probably kill you and eat you for your troubles. From their Pistols-inspired origins in 1977, Tez, Bones, Rainy and Rat (proper names? How un-punk rock is *that*?) cranked up the distortion pedals, upped the tempo and near enough invented that which we now called hardcore and thrash. You can hear their legacy in Metallica, Anthrax, At The Gates, Sepultura and Soulfly (all of whom have covered Discharge tracks at some point) and they were one of the few bands to make the early crossover between punk and metal. The classic line-up of the band featured Kevin 'Cal' Morris on vocals, his guttural barking and screaming, coupled with bleak, minimalist lyrics being the acme of anarcho-punk protest. Couple that with the bludgeoning guitar noise and the monotone, politically uncompromising artwork of classic releases like 'Realities of War' and 'Why?' and it's no wonder they inspired a whole new wave of punk across the globe, from South America to Japan and Scandinavia. Now back to their original line-up, it's a chance for The Kids to see where it all began, while older listeners can revel in some particularly virulent nostalgia. And then go and set fire to McDonald's.

SHUSH OPEN MIC SESSION: The X, Cowley
DELICIOUS MUSIC JAZZ NIGHT with LOS HOMBRES: Bar Milano, Pizza Express – Latin jazz guitar duo.

WEDNESDAY 22nd

THE COLINS OF PARADISE + BEAVER FUEL + BETHANY WEIMERS: The Wheatsheaf – Sweet, spacey jazz-pop from Banbury's Colins of Paradise, plus lo-fi indie fuzz from Beaver Fuel.

FOLK SESSION: The X, Cowley
ABORT, RETRY, FAIL?: The Cellar – Electro-pop, no-wave and disco club night with live bands and DJs.

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Marlborough House

THURSDAY 23rd

MARCINA ARNOLD: Modern Art, Oxford (5.45pm) – Anglo-Scottish-South African singer, pianist and guitarist who covers all bases from jazz, reggae and folk to hip hop, blues and classical. A big hit at both the Edinburgh Festival and Cheltenham

Jazz Festival (where she played with Jason Yarde), Marcina has also collaborated with acts as diverse as Hugh Masakela and the English National Opera; tonight's intimate show, courtesy of Oxford Contemporary Music, displays her solo skills.

BROMHEADS JACKET + OXFAM

GLAMOUR MODELS: The Zodiac – After tour supporting Sheffield neighbours Arctic Monkeys, Bromheads Jacket are destined to be one of next year's big hits, especially with debut album, 'Dits For The Commuter Belt' due out soon and early singles, including the ace 'A Trip To The Golden Arches', already fetching £100 on ebay. Inspired, according to the band, by The Melvins and Steve Albini, their sound is closer to Sham 69 and John Cooper Clarke – frantic, scratchy punk with a lyrical attention to the humdrum details of life.

SABOTAGE: The Zodiac

THE ANYDAYS: The X, Cowley – 60s-inspired rockers.

COPY HAHO: The Port Mahon – Scottish alt.rockers in a Sonic Youth-meets-Blonde Redhead vein.

MISSING PIECES + BIRDS OF WALES +

CHANTELLE PIKE: The Cellar

CHRIS McMATH: QI Club – Quirky, melodic pop from the Patrick Moore's Glass Eye frontman.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY JAZZ NIGHT: The Music Market

GREENACRE (ACOUSTIC)+ VESTIBULE + LAURA LOST: The Palace Nightclub, Witney – Live music returns to Witney with local emo faves Greenacre playing an acoustic show with support from Pixies-influenced rockers Laura Lost.

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon

CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre

FRIDAY 24th

DAMO SUZUKI: The Wheatsheaf – The former-Can man returns – see main preview
GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES with THE RELATIONSHIPS + WILSON + REBECCA MOSLEY: The Zodiac – Sweetly melancholic suburban English psychedelic blues from The Relationships at tonight's GTI, plus support from local pop vets Wilson and ethereally gothic folk-pop from Rebecca Mosley.

MILE HIGH YOUNG TEAM: The X, Cowley – Return to live action for the expansive pop outfit, mixing up pure pop with folk and bluegrass-tinged rock.

BRAINTAX: The Cellar – Excellent Yorkshire-based rapper, the man behind Low Life Records for the past 14 years, out on tour to promote new album, 'Panorama', an apt title for a politically-charged run through subjects ranging from the Iraq war to racism and the legacy of Thatcherism, loaded with samples of speeches from everyone from George Galloway to the wicked witch Maggie herself. Taking in influences from middle eastern music as well as rock and American hip hop, it's as good a slice of Brit-hop as you'll find this year.

OXFORD FOLK CLUB: The Port Mahon

ACOUSTIC NIGHT: The Victoria, Jericho

BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon

REDOX: Magdalen Arms

SATURDAY 25th

THE NIGHTINGALES+REV TED CHIPPINGTON + ESKIMO DISCO + DEAD SPIES + POPPY & THE JEZZABELLES: The X, Cowley – Twenty years after being the Thatcher-baiting darlings of the UK pop underground, Robert Lloyd resurrects The Nightingales, misshapen Beefheart and Fall-influenced stars of the 80s indie

revival. Promoting new album 'Out Of Tree', Lloyd is now joined by former Raincoat Gina Birch as well as one-time Pram drummer Darren Garrett, mixing up repetitive grooves and garage punk with his trademark lyrical hectoring. One-time Vindaloo Records protégé Ted Chippington reawakens to add some light-hearted relief to proceedings while London synth-popsters Eskimo Disco join the fun.

Saturday 18th

YOUTHMOVIE SOUNDTRACK STRATEGIES:

The Zodiac

Like Lab 4 who bow out at the Zodiac this month, Youthmovies are another local act who have spent more time breaking their backs to achieve genuine success than trying to cultivate a hometown reputation. The last two years have seen them touring relentlessly around the UK, often missing out Oxford completely in favour of more far afield towns and cities. Tonight sees them back at the Zodiac though and ready to release a new single, with a full album recorded and set for release early next year. Pioneering a complex, cinematic brand of mostly instrumental rock, inspired by the likes of Do Make Say Think, Shellac and Sweep The Leg Johnny, tracks come with built-in bi-polar disorders that can veer from DC hardcore to arty, oceanic pop at the blink of an eye, or turn on a few well-placed handclaps. On the one-hand they are a thinking-person's band, appealing to curious musos and maths students, but equally they're a visceral live experience, full of dynamic energy and endless invention. In the process they've paved the way for like-minded local acts like Foals and AndNoStar. With The Young Knives now established in the UK's indie rock hierarchy and Fell City Girl sure to follow, Youthmovies' time has surely come.



MINUS THE BEAR + THIS ETAL + A SILENT FILM: The Zodiac – The Seattle rockers formed by producer Matt Bayles make their first visit to Oxford, plying a refreshing twist on melodic emo and math-rock, mixing wistful lyrical romanticism with wacky song titles and a sound that encompasses prog, abstract punk and art-rock along the way.

SILVERSIGHT + THE IDEA + THE PLAUDITS: The Wheatsheaf – Local bands night.

WITCHES + LIND OPTICAL + TIM

BENJAMIN: Magdalen College Auditorium – First of a new series of club nights bridging the gap between pop and modern classical music. Local electro-country rockers Witches headline, while new young composer Tim Benjamin opens the show. Esoteric soundcrafters Lind Optical provide the cross-over point, mixing up Beatles-y psych-pop with electronics and instrumental soundtracks.

THE SUMMITS + LIFE & SOUL + THE

INFLATABLES: Romanway Sports & Social Club

ROLLERCOASTER Vs CHICKS WITH

DECKS: The Cellar – New wave, indie, 80s, riot grrl and more.

90s NIGHT: The Bullingdon

SUNDAY 26th

KITCHEN MOTORS: The Zodiac (upstairs) – A label-cum-think tank out of Reykjavik that specialises in instigating musical collaborations between artists from different backgrounds.

Tonight's show features performances from Slowblow, Johan Joannson, Skuli Sverrisson and Kira Kira, supplemented by an elaborate light and visuals show, musically bringing together jazz, improv, classical, indie, electronic experimentation and techno utilising contemporary, archaic and futuristic instrumentation. Fans of The Kooks will doubtless poo themselves in confusion.

BRICKWORK LIZARDS + PARIS MOTEL +

CONSCRIPTS: The Zodiac (downstairs) – Eclectic world soul, funk and folk collective continue to charm their way to the top of the local pop pile.

PINDROP PERFORMANCE with THOMAS

TRUAX + NATIONAL SCHOOL + PETER

BUCKLEY HILL: The Port Mahon (5pm) – Hillbilly, anti-folk singer-cum-mad inventor

Thomas Truax brings his collection of strange musical instruments back to town after last month's sold-out show at the same venue, headlining this month's Pindrop Performance, with equally idiosyncratic support from organ-and-drums duo National School and acerbic singer-songwriter Peter Buckley Hill.

RUBBER DUCK: The Bullingdon

ELECTRIC OPEN JAM: The Music Market

MONDAY 27th

WHITE ROSE MOVEMENT + DIRTY SCI-FI:

The Zodiac – Re-arranged from last month after the singer lost his voice. Superlative electro-rocking from London's robotic collective, taking on Depeche Mode, Joy Division and Duran Duran along the way.

THE DERRIN NAUENDORF BAND: The

Bullingdon – Australian guitarist who migrated to England to make his living, ending up living and touring around Europe in an old post office van, producing and selling albums without the aid of a record label. Inspired as much by the 60s British folk revival as the likes of Bob Dylan, Tom Waits and Steve Earle. New album 'The Rattling Wheel' is out now.

JOHN SPIERS & JON BODEN: Nettlebed

Folk Club – Award-winning local duo, take time out from their Bellowhead big band project for their more traditional folk outing.

TUESDAY 28th

BALOR KNIGHTS + PLANS & APOLOGIES +

ROTARY TEN: The Port Mahon – Spazz-rock in an At The Drive-In / Graham Coxon vein from Sheffield's Balor Knights, plus spiky lo-fi alt-rock from Derby's Plans & Apologies and Smiths-meets-Icicle Works melodic indie from Rotary Ten.

RODRIGO Y GABRIELLA: Brookes

University Union – Mexican-born and bred, now Dublin-resident Latin guitar duo, taking a neat twist on their traditional jazz and folk sound with forays into heavy metal, including covers of Led Zep and Metallica.

JAZZ CLUB with THE TOM GREY QUINTET:

The Bullingdon

SHUSH OPEN MIC SESSION: The X, Cowley

DELICIOUS MUSIC JAZZ NIGHT with

CICILY LATTICE: Bar Milano, Pizza Express

OPEN MIC NIGHT: Mangos

WEDNESDAY 29th

FOLK SESSION: The X, Cowley

JOHNNY'S SEXUAL KITCHEN: The Port Mahon

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Marlborough House

THURSDAY 30th

EASY STAR ALL*STARS: The Zodiac – A

tribute band with a difference tonight as New York reggae collective Easy Star All*Stars, based around a core of director Michael Goldwasser, producer Victor Axelrod, plus Eric Smith and Lem Oppenheimer, perform two sets, one from each of their albums so far: 'Dub Side Of The Moon' and its recent follow-up, 'Radiodread'. Yes, it's a reggae reinterpretation of Pink Floyd's classic 'Dark Side Of The Moon' and Radiohead's magnum opus, 'OK Computer'. Includes free entry to DJ Derek's ska, reggae and soul session afterwards.

SABOTAGE: The Zodiac

OE FISCTER + RUBBER DUCK: The Port Mahon – Lo-fi jazz-tinged singer-songwriter.



Friday 24th

DAMO SUZUKI:

The Wheatsheaf

Legendary former-Can frontman Damo returns to town after his last brilliantly enigmatic showing in January. Damo's improvised shows, wherein he is joined by a different set of musicians at each gig (or sound carriers as he calls them), are the sort of affairs that make even the least musical onlooker want to go out and start a band. Last time out Damo was joined by James Sedwards from Nought, Loz Colbert from Ride and Dive Dive's Nigel Powell amongst other local luminaries. The band this time features Suitable Case For Treatment and Ivy's Itch guitarist Jimmy Hetherington, Fell City Girl drummer James Pamphlion, Jonquil's Hugo Manuel on keyboards and The Rock Of Travolta's Matt Spooner on bass, and it'll be fascinating to see how such a diverse group of players interacts with the singer whose freeform cycle of chants – akin to Captain Beefheart jamming it up with a sect of Gregorian monks – is a fantastically otherworldly spectacle. It's beyond doubt that Damo Suzuki is one of the most inspirational musicians of the last 40 years and that he remains a maverick oddball entity after all this time is some achievement.

THE MONROE TRANSFER + MESAPLEX + LITTLE COSMONAUT: The Cellar – Intricate

experimental noise and post-rock from The Monroe Transfer, plus electro-rocking from Mesaplex.

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon


CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford




Community Centre

OXFORD UNIVERSITY JAZZ NIGHT: The Music Market

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LIVE

SETH LAKEMAN

The Zodiac

It's too easy to hate Seth Lakeman: talented *and* good looking? Where's the justice in that? Even as the leading lights of the English folk revival continue to pull in bigger and bigger crowds, Seth threatens to become the movement's first genuine poster boy.

Like Pentangle in the 60s and The Pogues in the 80s, Seth Lakeman brings such a freshness and attitude to traditional folk music that it's hard to believe what you're hearing is essentially music that's hundreds of years old. The subject matter of songs like 'Lady Of The Sea', 'King And Country' and 'Setting Of The Sun' is exactly the same as it was in 17th Century – the English Civil War, ghosts and maidens. But this is 21st Century music with a rocket up its backside. Despite his protestations that his voice is bugged (leading to a purely instrumental encore) Lakeman is a

powerful, emotive singer and an incredible fiddle player, with a style of playing closer to Roy Williamson or even John Cale than, say, Dave Swarbrick, emphasising its droning, psychedelic capabilities. Nowhere more so than on tonight's set highlight, 'Kitty Jay', title track of his second, Mercury-nominated, album and a song that's as hypnotic and ghostly as its subject matter.

Backed by his minimalist but energetic band, Lakeman plays most of new album, 'Freedom Fields', a contender for album of the year, performers and packed crowd both as fervent as for any rock gig, an hour-long set crammed with more potential hits than most pop acts would manage in a lifetime. Seth Lakeman is a star very much in the ascendancy. He's already outgrowing venues this



photo: Richard Hounslow

size; next time round he'll be packing out the New Theatre, just like cohort Kate Ruby earlier this

month. Better start clearing some wall space now.

Dale Kattack

FELL CITY GIRL / THE ROCK OF TRAVOLTA

The Zodiac

In another time and another place Freddie Mercury and Brian May grew up in thrall to Godspeed You Black Emperor! and The Rock Of Travolta were born. Six years after their inception, temporary split and line-up reshuffle, they're still ablaze with symphonic rock and roll glory. A tumultuous blend of easy grace and nonchalant malevolence, they've got Flying Vs, synchronised handclaps, the most hardcore cello playing in Christendom and a studious pin-tight sense of mayhem about them. Cellist and keyboard player Jenny now gives the band a focus they maybe once lacked, leading the line with harsh electronic stabs or wildhearted string flourishes, while the grainy films of the band that form the backdrop portray a pale, sexy, knowing pastiche of The Velvet Underground. Every time we see The Rock Of Travolta we want to scream their name from the rooftops and grab passing strangers to make them understand. This band ROCKS! Period.

No less expansive, Fell City Girl,

playing to a sold-out Zodiac tonight, come with a wracked emotional core, courtesy of Phil McMinn's soaring voice and intimate lyrics, the band exuding a strangely uplifting sense of melancholy. Joe Gibbs' delicate Cocteau Twins-style guitar twinkle provides a base for songs to head skywards, half of tonight's set already sounding like a Greatest Hits tour: from the gorgeously hymnal 'You Are The Dead Kids', through new single 'February Snow' (currently being championed by Jonathan Ross on Radio 2) to 'Weaker Light', with the chorus, tonight sung entirely by the audience – that's the sort of thing that real rock stars are made from. Between songs Phil is shy and awkwardly at odds with the confident swagger of the music, like he can't quite figure out how he got to this point. Musically though Fell City Girl are already up in the stratosphere. Now they just need the rest of the world to catch up with them. It will.

Dale Kattack

BUGZ IN THE ATTIC / CONFIDENTIAL COLLECTIVE

The Zodiac

Local crew Confidential Collective reveal the mellower, more thoughtful side of their liquid funk sound, and warm things up perfectly tonight. A superb brass section, complex grooves and proper song structures show us that the broad church of drum&bass is as healthy as ever. Anyone who hasn't caught their full show yet should make amends as soon as possible. Bugz in the Attic have been knocking around for a decade and just released their first long-player, 'Back in the Doghouse', after hundreds of singles and remixes. Pioneers of the West London Broken Beat sound, they mix elements of disco, drum&bass, soul and hip-hop, with strong vocals, live percussion and a distinct nod towards 80s electro-funk. No-one could miss the George Clinton influence, not just in the music but also the way they've helped build their own empire of collaborators, from Tokyo to Detroit. Clearly used to playing much larger venues, they nevertheless throw themselves into their full live show, only just

managing to all squeeze on stage. As well as their own compositions we also get versions of remixes they've done for other people, such as 4 Hero's 'Hold it Down'. This is something I've never seen anyone try before and gives the gig a cabaret-style air of unpredictability. The recent resurgence of 80s-sounding beats and synth sounds is curious, to say the least. Until recently the accepted wisdom has been that the whole decade is best consigned to the dustbin of history, music-wise. It seems that twenty years is the point at which the history books get a re-write; note the goth revival as a case in point. Bugz in the Attic score by using technological advances to create a sound very much their own, acknowledging their influences but not worshipping at the altar. The new single, a cover of Yarborough and Peoples' 'Don't Stop the Music', is a fine example. They also manage to be a dance act with a very human face, and we need more of that.

Art Lagun

MESAPLEX / DARK PHASE / ROCKET FALLS

The Wheatsheaf

An unexpectedly gripping start to the night with synth rockers Rocket Falls, a relatively young band who push austere plain phrases to huge atmospheric boundaries, all set to the projection of a 1920s Soviet Russia film in the background. 'In The Heart of the Sea', a five-minute two-chord epic, is a supremely morose effort which echoes elements of Godspeed! and Redjetson. The effect is slowly intoxicating, the singer laidback enough to grab a pint midway through the set, leaving many too absorbed in the echo-laden guitars to even notice.

As with Rocket Falls, I like my music to be a journey where each part of the song is savoured and anticipated. The gloomy electro-pop Dark Phase could have made use of this notion but instead stand on the sidelines of nondescript poseur-rock and are near bloody awful. Carrying each step of a song with tedious predictability and loose

imagination, Dark Phase are as boring as old bossy English coppers.

From the cold and undeniably pretentious industrial slab that was Meanwhile, Back In Communist Russia comes Mesaplex, the "Depeche Mode of Cowley Road", according to the singer/guitarist. I'd say a fuzz-free 65 Days of Static with the rock/electro phrases set to pounding, hard-edged beats - but everyone's a winner. Mesaplex are superbly tight and hold your attention up to a point, but, as with 65 Days, everything is as if on a slightly altering loop, constantly reaching all too familiar peaks throughout. With a big muff bass and washy keys, the music is enjoyable enough and pushes the envelope to a point. But alas, Mesaplex lack the substance of a band performing truly memorable music, instead succeed only in replicating a tongue-in-cheek Krafwerk to mock-epic grandeur.

Pascal Ansell

THE TELESCOPES

The Wheatsheaf

I love The Telescopes: like it or not, their post-Creation output has always provoked a reaction. Their pieces stitched together from samples of bread-makers and other household appliances have always been underpinned by an emotional depth and sense of scale that makes me go weak at the knees.

And with early reviews suggesting that their latest mini-album is their best yet, hopes are high heading into tonight's show. Unfortunately, things go awry from the very moment they arrive: amongst (admittedly unsubstantiated) rumours of intra-band tension, only mainman Stephen Lawrie makes an appearance tonight. And launches straight into a forty-minute solo set of feedback that's about as much fun as sticking your head inside a jet engine.

Make no mistake - this is no worthwhile exploration into tonality, nor is it brutally confrontational enough to work as the kind of punch-in-the-face onslaught favoured by Merzbow,

KK Null *et al.* For all the synths, effects units and gadgets at Lawrie's disposal, it's a one-trick, single-tone morass of mid-range screeching - and if that sounds up your street, you were probably one of the three people left after the audience, support bands, soundman and doorman fled for their lives.

There's no progression, peaks and troughs, or development in the music. Just a forty minute VU-meter-in-the-red, Fisher Price My-First-Delay-Pedal teen angst session.

In twenty years together, the band rarely put a foot wrong, which makes this evening's aberration all the more upsetting. Here's hoping they rediscover their form (and their other members) before this fine old mess does some irremediable damage to their reputation.

I still love The Telescopes. But a Stephen Lawrie solo set? That jet engine is starting to look more and more appealing.

Stuart Fowkes

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PAOLO NUTINI

The Zodiac

Two songs into his set, Paolo Nutini stands swaying centre stage, hooked forward like a question mark, arms hugging himself as if he were wearing a straight jacket. Below him a capacity hall of mostly women and girls are singing to him, in heart warming unison, the Bob Marley-like refrains from 'Rewind' coaxing him, almost, to unfurl like a flower, from the shy cocoon he's built around himself with his songs.

With an American documentary crew filming his every move from the wings in Super 16, and the glow of a hundred camera phones held aloft and taking pictures, iconically replacing the cigarette lighters of the past, you have to marvel how the modern fast-track of Radio 2 exposure, internet sales and YouTube can, seemingly overnight, deposit such normally intimate performers outside the door of their own potential, on the unforgiving deserts of the wide-stage tour. Last year it was the rump of girl singer-songwriters,

this year it's a superb flurry of poster-boys with the voices of hardened blues singers: James Morrison, Ray LaMontagne and Paolo, each covering the demographic bases of gruff vocal maturity allied with laddish charm, teasing to be devoured.

The air is thick with hyped-up female screams and pheromones, and the 19-year-old Scot finally succumbs, opening out to give them his best, with the Al Green in his phrasing of 'Million Faces' and the Curtis Stigers-tinged 'Last request'. His naive learning curve still shows with the incongruous inclusion of Loving Spoonful's 'Daydream' and Gnarl's Barkley's 'Crazy', both meant for more effete voices, when his own work, from the album 'These Streets', is more than a match for these poppy upstarts from yore and now.

So is Paolo a star? Well, he is right now: two encores and all the girls he can handle point to it. The difficult second album starts here.

Paul Carrera

THE YOUNG KNIVES

The Zodiac

The last Oxford band to sell out two nights at the Zodiac were Radiohead. Admittedly they did it in consecutive nights but the fact that the Knives are able to bookend their latest UK tour with two gigs here shows how far they've come from the days of dropping crazy Throbbing Gristle covers into their set in front of a few dozen early converts at the Cellar.

That statement alone might bear out claims from some quarters that the band have lost some of their quirky edge since they scampered into the mainstream, but it's certainly more to do with the way the band have honed themselves into a professional gigging outfit over time. Almost constant touring has polished screwball anthems like 'The Decision', but it remains, at heart, one of the most misshapen hits of the year, a world away from hackneyed gruel like Jet, while Henry and House's onstage sparring remains as enigmatically daft as before.

The hysterical falsettos and jazz-flecked post-punk headrush melodies are what draws in the crowds of course, Pixies-style mania roughing up Blur's knowing

jukebox pop, but it's interesting to hear the Young Knives restlessly seeking out new sounds, particularly the acid folk edge that is increasingly creeping into the new songs. At times they've got as much in common with bands like Circulus as they have with XTC, although that feeling of searching for a lost or mythical sense of Englishness is common to themselves as well as those bands. Alongside the prevalent rustic imagery – morris dancers, the Whittlesea Straw Bear, etc. – The Young Knives now seem like the musical equivalent of David Lynch's surreal suburban exposés filtered through an Alan Bennett novel, the band's grammar school chic only accentuating the feeling.

While tracks like 'Another Hollow Line' tonight can sound like works in progress, 'Here Comes The Rumour Mill' and 'Weekends And Bleak Days' rouse the static but appreciative crowd and remind you exactly why The Young Knives have come this far: great pop songs are great pop songs, whatever clothes you dress them up in.

Victoria Waterfield

THE EPSTEIN / THE DRUG SQUAD / EMERALD SKY / ANTON BARBEAU

The X

So it's not all bad news on the live music venue front: tonight marks the re-opening of The X (as it shall now be known), once a downbeat but brilliant pub venue, now lavishly remodelled into a lush, shiny brilliant pub venue. With a big stage and new PA and stuff. While assorted marketing scum are turning great little venues into smiley, soulless eateries, X landlady Al has stuck her neck out and pledged the pub's future to music. Three cheers for her then, even if tonight she is too busy scurrying around making sure everything that is meant to be attached to walls actually is attached to walls to hear us.

As such tonight is more of a celebration party than a gig and it's not surprising that the bands take a bit of a back seat. Adopted American son Anton Barbeau doesn't fare too well faced with a packed, talkative crowd, coming across like a nervous groom trying to make a speech to a room of drunken in-laws, but since he's been praised heavily in these pages before we'll let it go. Instead The Drug Squad project themselves enough to supplement the party

properly. Now fronted by former-Underbelly and Mindsurfer growler James Greene, the band actually seem to have written a couple of new songs. If Anton was the nervous groom, The Drug Squad are the lairy uncles who make the kids laugh and encourage everyone else in the vicinity to drink more than is sensible. Half the set sounds like Madness. That's got to be good.

After hearing the first half of their set with our backs turned it's a surprise to discover that Emerald Sky are an all-girl trio, mainly because the singer sounds like Robert Plant and the whole thing sounds, sometimes brilliantly, like Led Zeppelin. The Epstein have come on more than most local bands in the last year. Where once was an easy Eagles tribute, now is a band with a clutch of masterful, understatedly powerful pop anthems to their name, notably the keening 'Leave a Light On'. Perhaps not a party band as such but a band that have certainly benefited from the X's patronage before its refit, and exactly the sort of band who will continue to flourish in its new guise.

John Leeson

PATRICK WOLF

The Zodiac

Before they have so much as begun their first song, Patrick Wolf and his band carve an arresting impression. With his co-conspirators – comprising a cellist, a violinist and a soprano singer who instructs the laptop – dressed in funereal Victoriana, Wolf's glittering club kid holographics sound a mischievously jarring off-note. It's a striking spectacle, both serious and gamesome, that provides the cue for a set of sonic alchemy in which chalk and cheese are but two ingredients amongst a whole apothecary's worth of stuff.

In addition to vocals, Wolf plays an array of instruments, swapping violin for ukulele for kantele in an impressive display of musical chameleonship. Best of all are the broodingly lush piano parts, at times reminiscent of Nick Cave, upon which he floats his yearning tales of loss and absence. To this add the snicker-snack of electronic beats which champ like novelty false teeth around oceanic swells of strings and you have a sound that far outdoes the customary dubbing of folktronica.

The standard of the set never wanes as it reels from the aerial shimmer of songs such as 'The Stars', which evokes its namesakes perfectly, to numbers informed by a more dance sensibility. 'Teignmouth', one of the highlights, twines an aching beautiful soprano part around stridulating beats whilst the vocal line glides and tumbles over the top. The effect is at once inward-looking and expansive, gloomy and



transcendent. This is music for the witching hour, haunted by nameless longing and lengthening shadows. There's a kind of supernatural about it that arises in no small part from the lyrics, whose windswept, unworldly imagery conjures an emotional landscape vividly bleak.

As a performer, Wolf commands great presence, occupying the stage and the songs with equally intense fervour. There is a stagy self-consciousness to him: you can sense him

observing his own effects as he struts and frets and twists his hair, his vocals too flirting with theatre as they drop to a stage-whisper. No doubt a little cheesy, this, but the awareness of it in no way detracts from his ability to beguile. Indeed, when the band return for an encore, teenagers swarm to join Wolf on stage as though he were the Pied Piper of Hamelin, ensorcelled by one of the most spellbinding performances Oxford has seen this year.

Emily Gray

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THE LONG BLONDES

The Zodiac

The Long Blondes don't assimilate the characteristics of their name. Lead singer Kate Jackson is a sassy short-bobbed brunette who definitely steals the limelight of this Sheffield five piece. The barely post-pubescent girlies in the

audience are squished against the stage with their brightly coloured berets askew, pencil skirts and skinny stripey scarves - it all makes sense when the band bound on stage. But is it all about the band's "look" (60s mod meets 40s

French underground resistance) or can the music stand on its own?

Well there's no doubt with songs like current single 'Weekend Without Makeup' and soon to be released 'Once And Never Again' that Kate and co. are carving a

strong, edgy pop niche for themselves. Taking in elements of late-70s and early-80s guitar pop their stake seems firmly ensconced in new wave ground. Of course if you happen to be 16 it's probably all new to you and sounding oh-so amazing.

However if you DID happen to be around when Blondie, The Passions, Bow Wow Wow, Missing Persons, The Darling Buds and Siouxsie were blowing you away with what were later to be iconic classics, it might be difficult for you to put The Long Blondes on any great pedestal. The rolling toms, pounding bass and Kate's cutting vocals (frequently hinting at Lene Lovich) often overpower anything clever the guitars may be trying to do. The songs all groove and Kate herself can't stop dancing, but one can't help but yearn for a bit more space to complement their catchy melodies.

The penultimate song tonight is the highlight for me. A bubbling synth line (certainly the first one I've heard tonight) with Kate lamenting, "Didn't take more than five days to disown her" with much more space, and a more produced and polished feel. A glimpse of the future, or just an anomaly? Only time will tell.

Katy Jerome

SECKOU KEITA QUARTET

Zodiac

British-based Senegalese kora player Seckou Keita takes to the stage dressed from top to toe in white. Very fitting as this striking-looking centuries-old traditional West African instrument, a cross between harp and lute, is said to have curative powers.

From the outset it is clear the quartet want the night to have the momentum of a gig rather than just be a concert. As a percussionist with Baka Beyond, Seckou knows how to make this happen, and from the third number energy starts to flow between the band and the modestly sized crowd. From then to the end a warm feeling of shared enjoyment suffuses the room. Many of us are dancing, absorbed in the rhythms without understanding a word of Seckou's sweet Mandinka vocals. Seckou is steeped in the kora tradition of southern Senegal but is not hidebound by it and much of the material is original. The line-up of the quartet, an upright bass and violin, joining African percussion and kora and for one number the first-ever double-necked kora, is

probably unique. The undefinable sound has lots of notes and embellishments from kora and violin laid over rock-solid rhythms from bass and African percussion, which hold everything together when the cascade of notes threatens to become too much.

Jazz is an influence but this is mainly ensemble playing and not the jazz quartet format of each instrument taking turns at solos. But the one solo from the brilliant Davide Mantovani's upright base is a highlight and more interplay between him and Seckou's kora would have been good. Also, I missed the mysterious sound of the riti, the West African fiddle, which features on the band's CD tracks.

It is said that kora players can be possessed by djinns, similar to blues players' pacts with the devil. Seckou Keita seems too nice to have any of the djinn in him. Maybe that is why his quartet, while thoroughly enjoyable entertaining and engaging, miss a touch the devil.

Colin May

SIKTH / DEAD MAN IN RENO / ARCHITECTS

The Zodiac

Walking straight into the start of Architects' set, the initial bombast seems to be oh-so terribly exciting, but what quickly becomes apparent is that this is merely an onslaught of plagiarism. They appear to have wholeheartedly nicked most of Metallica and Lamb Of God's riffs and taken them for a nice pleasant stroll in Boringville. It rocks, it rolls, it roars....it sucks.

Marginally less rubbish are Alabama quintet Dead Man In Reno (nice imagery guys, thanks) and this is mainly due to the phenomenal drumming skills of George Edmondson, who releases claymore-like explosions at every turn. Props also go out to vocalist Justin Sansom for both his mad-as-a-cut-snake delivery, equal parts Max Cavallera bellow and Chino Moreno screech, and the donning of a Mastodon t-shirt (whose new album is excellent, by the way).

But it is clear who the crowd are really here to see tonight and when the lisp-inducing Sikth take to the stage, the masses go predictably

spare. But down the back here, you can't help wonder if the sound tech isn't chanting the mantra 'they must sound as terrible as possible' over and over, as all the high-end dynamics, where Sikth make their mark, are comprehensively neutered. Never mind, here comes Mr Whitey-in-dreads to wail about someone wunning over his widdle bwunny wabbit or something, while the second vocalist thrusts his own head face-first into the festering toilet bowl of nu-metal. It is actually surprising that this takes a whole two songs to achieve. What's not surprising though, is that they lamentably keep the memory of that hopefully long-forgotten and ridiculous genre of music alive for a whole set. And while you could hardly argue with the technical chicanery on display (if it were discernible), they are clearly several battalions short of the fire-breathing hellsquad I was expecting. The UK's premiere metal band? God, don't make me Sikth.

Matt Bayliss

THOMAS TRUAX

Port Mahon

The Port Mahon is something of a promoter's dream – find an empty slot in their relentlessly busy schedule, and it's yours for free. There are sometimes complaints that there are just *too many* gigs in Oxford for even the most enthusiastic punter to get to – and whether you think that there are or not, you can't argue with the utopian dream of such minimal running costs.

For every successful, packed-out night at the Port there seem to be at least a couple of grim, nearly empty ones, but for a town that's hardly bereft of venues it's great to have one that can act as a testing ground for interesting sounds, ideas and experiments. How the bands performing feel is another matter – it often seems by chance that a gig at the Port is a busy one – but then again, it's not the Zodiac.

It's a room above a pub. How great, then, that a performance by a weirdo American with a collection of Heath Robinson-style home-made instruments can fill such a room to the point that the audience spills down the stairs in an enthusiastic, entranced throng. Great for those that got into the room – and that unfortunately didn't include me. But such is the lot of your roving (but lazy) correspondent, who didn't arrive early enough. So why am I writing this? Why are you not reading about the music that occurred this evening? Because it's important for you to know, if you didn't already, that good things happen regularly in this venue, and in this town. Cherish the Port. Other towns would kill for this kind of performance space.

Simon Minter

SMILEX/BILLY ENGLAND

The Wheatsheaf

As The Wheatsheaf braces itself to submit to the whims of new owners, Billy England's bullish drummer Liam Smith picks up on the feeling and begins to pound the audience into submission. As his kit starts to disintegrate around him, seemingly seeking solace by simply wilting under the blows, the rest of the band wrestle perfectly formed hardcore punk from their instruments. Elements of various US rock acts are present, not least Husker Dü, and Hot Snakes, but the vocal harmonies of Ben Capper and Smith draw on the likes of The La's and, almost unbelievably, The Beatles at times. Things falter mid-set when they slow the pace, but they soon return to what they do best: thrashing songs and the audience to within an inch of their lives.

Audience thrashing is something Smilex are also adept at and tonight is no

exception. Lee Smilex is on top form as he self-flagellates and mock-fellates his way around the venue whilst his band confine themselves to the stage. Tonight's set is full of new material that proves Smilex have come a long way over the last few years. There are changes in pace, moody intros and song writing that shows considerably more muscle than frontman Lee's scrawny frame. In between avoiding flying debris hurled by the feverish vocalist, it is plain to see that the band now have a bunch of songs that are every bit as deranged and entertaining as Lee's psychotic-dwarf-in-a-padded-cell act. That the best of these is the rampant punk blast of 'Flimsy Fickle Fashion (Fuck Off and Die)' is purely incidental; Smilex now have a show that impresses on all levels.

Sam Shepherd



Smilex photo by Sam Shepherd

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GET CAPE. WEAR CAPE. FLY

The Zodiac

Get Cape. Wear Cape. Fly (full stops preferred) is 20-year-old Sam Duckworth, whose three-year touring machine rumbles into Oxford again tonight, following the release of his debut album, 'The Chronicles of a Bohemian Teenager'. Tonight Sam and his guitar are joined by cornet and drums, and a laptop kicks in with basslines, strings and beats.

Words like nu-folk and folktronica have been used to attempt to describe the overall effect. To me, though, the lyrics stand out ahead of any instrumentation. Sam covers personal experiences (like his love-hate relationship with his hometown, Southend, in 'Lighthouse Keeper') and issues he feels strongly about; 'Get Cape. Wear Cape. Fly' decries the corporate exploitation of poor workers, and 'Glass Houses' introduces Sam's affiliation with the Love Music Hate Racism campaign. The music isn't dull in comparison, though; the instruments weave and layer, the melodies are catchy and the rhythms diverse. 'Call Me Ishmael' (apparently written after a party in Headington) is all funky and syncopated, while 'I-Spy' starts like 'Wonderwall' but ends up as a respectably modern folk-emo hybrid.

Sam's songwriting comes across as genuine and honest; the Fair Trade merchandise suggests his political/protest songs aren't just for effect. He neglects to mention that he's now on a major label (Atlantic) but does dedicate a song to BSM Records, who put his stuff out three years ago "when nobody else cared". He's an engaging character; he thanks the audience for selling out the gig, and



Get Cape. Wear Cape. Fly photo by Richard Hounslow

mentions his Oxford friends and thanks them for their support, saying that's more important to him than record sales. He does have limitations - he doesn't have enough songs for an encore, so invites the support acts Keith and Darts on stage

to cover 'Abracadabra' - but all the ingredients are there for him to develop into a well-loved, established act of importance to both impressionable teenagers and the music industry.

Kirsten Etheridge

BIG JOAN / SUNNYVALE NOISE SUB-ELEMENT / MONDO CADA

The Cellar

Mondo Cada's brand of hardcore grunge is so straight down the line they could get a job painting road markings, but that's where the thrill lies with them: heads down, no nonsense, just bowing to the great god Muhoney, at least until they really open up for the final number, a doomladen psychedelic squall of pure evil akin to Dinosaur Jr's wondrous 'Don't'.

Rampaging along a far more convoluted path come Sunnyvale, tonight playing as a duo but still breaching dull, worthy indie rock's solid defences with vicious electronic glitches, hammerlock grooves and sheet-metal guitar noise. They're like the musical equivalent of running across an unstable glacier whilst wearing stilettos and being pursued by hungry Siberian tigers. Or, the sound that The Terminator hears

when he gets tinnitus from too much future war. Sonic violence isn't a term we use lightly, but in this case it's wholly appropriate. Big Joan's name suggests a macho lesbian strip show but the Bristol no-wave revivalists perhaps aren't as confrontational as even that, introducing themselves with a bashed out dustbin, before settling into a bass-driven dirge that's lacking in real spontaneity. Singer Annette delivers her words down a crackling telephone line while the band get ugly in the company of Sonic Youth and PiL, but it all feels like an old trick that's been done better before (notably by Liars). It's engaging at times but you end up wondering how something intended to be so menacing can sound so comfortable.

Victoria Waterfield

THE MIGHTY ROARS / ALLY CRAIG

The X

In keeping with this being John Peel Day (well Part 2 anyway, the X having given the great man an extra day of celebration) things run late, the line up gets switched around and the sound seems a bit wonky at times. But once the music gets going these things are all overcome.

Ally Craig is his usual charming self, hitting us with a barrage of folk with attitude. This is what sets him apart from a lot of local singer-songwriters; he's got the edge that they are looking for. The most memorable moments of his set are one of the new numbers in which he performs vocals gymnastics and hits some great high notes, and the Ivor Cutler cover that closes his set. Ally makes 'Squeeze Bees' a highly emotional thing, especially so given the amount of sessions Cutler did for Peel.

The Mighty Roars are a different

prospect altogether, and very much a 'Peel band', seeing as they give not two hoots for musical fashion. Theirs is the simplicity and rock and roll spirit of the Ramones, with a glam rock brashness thrown in. The sense of wanting to put on show and give the audience something to look at as well as listen to manifests itself in singer Lara's starry leotard and pink boots, Martin's Flying V and, err... drummer David's wife-beater vest and tendency to clamber all over the drums. Of the songs, current single 'Whale' is ridiculously infectious; 'Bag It Up' even gets the cynics next to me moshing (while sitting down!), and the prog-punk epic, called something like 'Back, Crack, Sack' had to be seen to be believed. All in all, a fitting tribute to Peel.

Russell Barker

Dr SHOTOVER Gets Loved Up

Hey yeah baby, nice one, sorted... Wow, this New Rave is WICKED [doof doof doof doof]... sorry, man, can't hear you, I've got Vicks VapoRub in my ears... Huh? Wha...? Oh my GOD, what a terrible dream. I dreamed I was in a field (but *without* my shotgun), surrounded by spotty herberts dancing about like demented orang utans. (Did you know that the plural of "orang utan" in Malay is "orang orang utan"? Just thought you'd be interested... Oh, suit yourself). Yes, it's a sad day for civilisation when the late very unlamented fiendish din known as Rave returns... imaginatively entitled "New Rave". And the clothes, they're *just* as exciting this time round... yes, basically, a bunch of schoolkids wearing their PE kit... oh horrors, it's as if they're permanently ON games (or "on" something)... at least Sports Goth had a little style to it... Bring back Cabaret Voltaire, say I. Ker-IST, won't *someone* get me a drink? If New Rave gets to East Oxford, I shall make it my personal crusade to mobilise all right-thinking types to destroy it utterly - firebomb the bass, as it were. We call it

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Hydrochloric
Acceeiid.
And now
it's on your
turntable.
Oh dear.
What a
shame.
Next
month: Dr
S starts his
Xmas
shopping.



*Cabaret Voltaire: Meet the New Rave,
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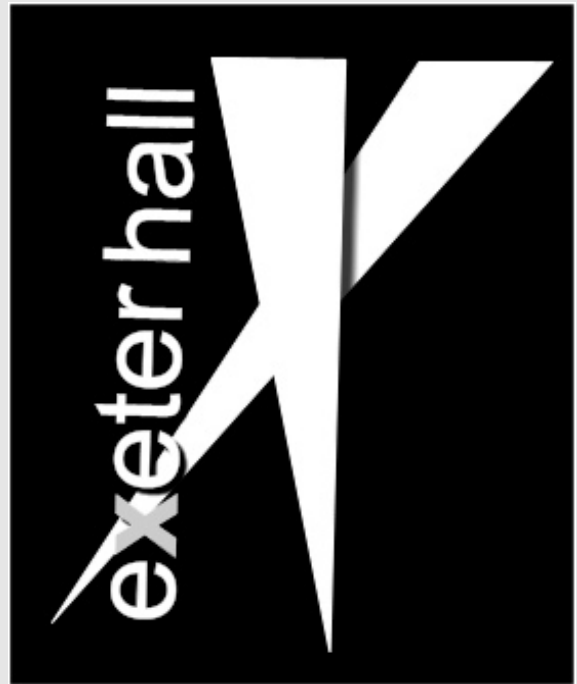
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DEMOS

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DEMO OF THE MONTH

ELLA CANAVAN

Having one of the most impenetrable websites we've come across does tend to bear out local duo Ella Canavan's description of themselves as an art-rock band, but really they're far darker and enthralling than even that description would suggest. Bobby Nicherelt's wracked vocals are spread-eagled forlornly over sparse songs played out on harshly-scraped violin, flute, piano and sullenly-strummed acoustic guitar, each infused with murderous intent and a harrowing atmosphere that makes the likes of Smog and Will Oldham sound like the Chuckle Brothers by comparison. Nick Cave's 'Murder Ballads' would be the closest cousin to this dark-folk walk in the woods, particularly the funereal 'How Knots Is Made' with multi-instrumentalist Joanne Lee joining Bobby on vocals in a style that recalls Cave's duets with Polly Harvey and Kylie Minogue. It's pretty desolate stuff, but executed in magnificent understated fashion. And this from two people who claim their main influences are Bruce Springsteen and Neil Young. God help us if they ever catch on to Michael Gira's gothic misanthropy.

MARK CROZER

In a particularly strong month for local demos, three or four here could have claimed top spot and local troubadour Mark Crozer is perhaps the closest contender. This two-song CD is part 'Hello trees, hello flowers' hippy 60s dream pop, part melancholy 80s alt-rock noise exploration, 'Never Slows Down' a swooning, lazy-day psychedelic pop dream, 'How Far Away Are You', a more ethereal affair, showcasing Mark's languid croon, only slightly tinged by its title which reminds us of that bit in *Phoenix Nights* with the dwarf Bolton Wanderers fans. Somehow in the space of ten minutes Mark manages to touch base with Jeff Buckley, Robert Pollard, My Bloody Valentine, The Jesus and Mary Chain, Purescence, The Smiths, Radiohead and Edwyn Collins. All of which would make for a pretty splendid record collection.

GAPTOOTH

Another unassuming gem, this time the work of former Truck Records studio engineer Hannah Wright, backed up by

Truck Festival regulars A Scholar & A Physician. Coy, girly robo-pop, full of ace bubbling synths and kitchen sink melodrama. Like a girl-fronted Pet Shop Boys crossed with a Cockney Dubstar, Gaptooth are simultaneously deadpan and spiky, recounting the humdrum with a cutesy yobbishness that could be long-lost girl-pop duo Shampoo being taken in hand by Ladytron. 'Plans and Friends and Records' is bolstered by some serious digital squelches and probably best of the lot here though the luxuriant synth swirl of 'Same Ghost Every Night' pushes it hard.

SUSPICION OF AFFRAY

More quality sounds, this time from the band formerly known as Near Life Experience. This demo comes marked as rough and unmixed, but who needs polish when you've got frontman Peter Bougourd roaring like an Uruk-hai with a sore throat and guitars either chugging along in unrefined thrash style or doing widdly Iron Maiden bits. As with the likes of Shadows Fall, Suspicion Of Affray owe as much to the likes of Judas Priest as they do various American thrash and hardcore giants, but there's always plenty going on, from the powerful blast beats to the chop'n'change dynamics, suggesting Dillinger Escape Plan are closer cousins. Great music for fighting to, if we were the fighting kind.

THIRTYTWO

Featuring former members of one-time local metal favourites Centre Negative, Thirty Two (which on our local take-away's menu is a king prawn bhuna) get quickly down to business. Their business being, for the most part, breakneck, barking thrash-core that pulls few punches and makes no concessions to commerciality or melody. Instead it tumbles down several mountains and steep flights of stairs in its eagerness to shout in your ear very loudly indeed, a bit like Whirlwind Heat arguing boisterously with The Locust at times. Utterly mindless but most enjoyable. By the third track they've either run out of energy or decided to take a more considered and convoluted path down the mountainside, aiming for Mogwai Central, all of which adds some depth and intricacy to their armoury but ain't quite as headbangingly fun.

SKY BABIES

Initially this demo promises plenty, with its effusive, old-fashioned power rocking in a Wildhearts vein; guitars go chug-a-chug,

manly backing vocals go “Wo-ah, wo-ah” and lyrics about girls and staying up all night and it all seems to be heading for a good old JD-and-punch-up session down the local rock fleapit. You can almost see the testosterone seeping out of the stereo. But then the beast is suddenly tamed and we’re plodding along in vile 80s MOR territory with the ghosts of Hall & Oates looking gleefully on. What kind of bloody effing crap is that all about, eh? They pick themselves up pretty sharpish for the final number but by then they’ve spoiled the party and we can’t help but think of the monstrosity that Motley Crue became after they lost their punk rock edge and all control of their bowels.

MULTI-COLOURED GREEN

Proffering a seven-track demo, Multi-Coloured Green would have been wise to exercise some editorial control over themselves and ditched the excess baggage, serving as it does only to expose their limitations. At their best they do a neat line in pretty authentic MC5 rip-offs – rough and ready garage rock with a tendency towards jazz rambling just as they’re building up a head of steam – or taking on Led Zep’s powerhouse blues riffage. Elsewhere though they simply ape White Stripes’ stripped-down blues-punk, or try to mimic Hendrix’s masterful fretplay. Often you can see what they’re trying to do but they’re too clumsy in the execution. Still, we’d easily forgive all that if they hadn’t gone and inexplicably turned into the Chili Peppers for the final number. What in tarnation were you thinking, fellas?

MORRIS AND WHEAT

More period-sounding pieces, this time from blues duo Steve Morris and Peter Wheat, exploring the roots of Delta and Chicago blues, mostly opting for the stripped-down, acoustic feel of the former, the rough-hewn vocals and earthy harp playing lending them a pretty authentic feel for the most part. When they stray from that path and try and rock it up a bit they’re less convincing, coming across too much like any other pub-based blues act. We’re not sure if all the songs here are covers (certainly ‘Sweet Home Chicago’ is) as we’re too young to remember anything before 1979, but should they ever remake *Oh Brother, Where Art Thou?* featuring three convicts escaping from Bullingdon prison to go on the run in deepest rural Oxfordshire, Morris and Wheat can almost certainly provide the soundtrack.

MICKEY FINN

Named after an illicit sleeping potion, Mickey Finn could doubtless send any music fan off to the land of nod. Not that they’re so bad or anything, more that they’re so innocuous they could walk into MI5’s headquarters and waltz out with a stack of top secret documents and box of individual ketchup sachets from the canteen while chanting “Allah is great!” and no-one would notice. The funky blues energy of the demo’s opener is quickly sapped by the pedestrian vocal delivery and after that they’re on cruise control, through hacked-out indie rock jangles to happy-go-lucky Sunday lunchtime pub-rock, finally coming to rest with a nonchalant blues-rock jam. And we defy anyone, including close relatives of the band, to remember a single thing about any of them the moment they’re over.

MACH SCHAU

Does anyone remember that thing called punk rock? Iconoclastic music of fury, desperation and guile? Perhaps we’re just too idealistic and we should lower our standards and let this pass. It describes itself as punk rock and it’s got noisy guitars in it. It sounds a bit like The Jam at times. Maybe it really *is* punk rock. Okay, it’s decent enough in a coffee table thrash kind of way, but the sound of revolution and statues tumbling? Probably not.

THE DEMO DUMPER

FREDERICK

“R’n’b, soul and urban singer and lyricist” Frederick tells us that, yes, he would sign a record deal, “But only for the right company” and that his “goal is to be world famous with my lyrics and vibe”, although we suspect his only real chance of such global fame is to wire himself with explosives and detonate himself on top of Buckingham Palace, because this mumbling, nondescript heap of soulless self-pity ain’t gonna do jack for him. Despite his attempts at being a sexy Barry White-style laydeez man (“Hey baby,” he begins), it’s more like listening to a karaoke Craig David as performed by a semi-comatose refugee from the chronic delusional ward. Or maybe Luther Vandross being suffocated under several high-tog duvets. Wallowing pathetically in a fug of hopefully unrequited lust, Frederick whines and wails like a cat in a bag, waiting to drown, and we’re only too happy to add a couple more bricks to the bag.

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

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14 LUKE HAINES + COWBOY X

16 THE KEYBOARD CHOIR + BORDERVILLE

17 DISCHARGE

18 YOUTHMOVIES + BLOOD RED SHOES + ADAM GNADE

20 BACKYARD BABIES + TOWERS OF LONDON

21 GOOD SHOES + XEROZ TEENS + THE MULES

23 BROMHEADS JACKET + THE OXFAM GLAMOUR MODELS

24 THE RELATIONSHIPS + WILSON + REBECCA MOSLEY

25 MINUS THE BEAR + THIS ET AL + SILENT FILM

26 KITCHEN MOTORS

✓ BRICKWORK LIZARDS + PARIS MOTEL

27 WHITE ROSE MOVEMENT + DIRTY SCI FI

30 EASY STAR ALL*STARS

DECEMBER

01 LITTLE MAN TATE

04 JOAN AS POLICEWOMAN

05 THE DAMNED

07 THE BLOOD ARM

09 VASHTI BUNYAN + GOLDRUSH + THE EPSTEIN

✓ PETER, BJORN AND JOHN + LAAKSO

10 MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN

14 SKINDRED

15 DARKEST HOUR + BETWEEN THE BURIED AND ME

✓ PLACE ABOVE + 20 20 VISION + THE JAYES

16 INEMO

✓ YOURSONG

24 CHRISTMAS EVE

31 NEW YEARS EVE

JANUARY

18 HUNDRED REASONS

19 THE VOYAGERS

✓ GREENACRE + THE FORGIVING + GEHENNA

20 ARCHITECTS + CHINESE FINGER TRAP

23 NORMA JEAN + HE IS LEGEND

30 CUTE IS WHAT WE AIM FOR

FEBRUARY

01 HELLOGOODBYE

ZODIAC CLUB NIGHTS

LAST ENTRY FOR CLUBS 2AM AT WEEKENDS! SEE WEBSITE FOR MORE CLUB INFO

THURSDAYS - SABOTAGE Rock Metal & Alternative

Thursday 30 - DJ DEREK Feelgood Ska Dancehall & Reggae from the Skylarkin' Crew + BAM BAM (Duck & Johnny Clash)

FRIDAYS - BOOGIE BASEMENT Soul, Motown, Funk & classic tunes from the Skylarkin' Crew

Friday 3rd - LAB 4 LIVE Last ever Oxford show. Plus Proteus, Sterling Moss, Grady G, Michael Boyce. Queen of Clubs presents

Friday 10th - SLIDE MATT BROWN (Sancho Panza) + Residents - Quality House

Friday 17th - FRESH OUT THE BOX TOOB & HYPER + Residents - House Breaks & Beats clubnight

Friday 24th - SOURCE DJ FRESH + JAY JAY, CHEMICAL & FU. HOSTED BY MANIKULAR, MANTMAST Drum'n' bass monthly

SATURDAYS - TRANSFORMATION Current & classic indie rock

Downstairs - TRASHY Indie punk glam rock & 80s

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WWW.THEZODIAC.CO.UK

TCTmusic