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# NIGHTSHIFT

## Oxford's Music Magazine

Free every  
month.  
Issue 146  
September  
2007

Look out, there's a rap man coming!

# Mr Shaodow

Meet Oxford's bright new hip-hop star

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# NEWS

**Nightshift: PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU**  
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**TRUCK FESTIVAL** organiser Robin Bennett has spoken to Nightshift about the events that led to the cancellation of July's event when the festival site was left under a metre of water following the heaviest rains to hit the UK in 40 years.

Robin took the decision to postpone Truck Festival on the Friday afternoon, the day before it was due to take place, when a nearby brook burst its banks, deluging the field with water. Much of Steventon village was also flooded, including Robin's family home.

Despite the chaos and the devastating effect of the floods, the Truck organisers and a team of volunteers quickly moved to organise two nights of gigs up at Brookes University Union, featuring many of the acts due to play at the festival, including headliners Garth and Maud Hudson and The Brian Jonestown Massacre. Those gigs also acted as an emergency fundraiser for the festival which might otherwise have been financially ruined, cancellation insurance having been unaffordable.

Truck Festival now takes place over the weekend of the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> September with the vast majority of the original line-up set to play. With around 700 tickets returned there are expected to be some tickets now available for punters who missed out on the original dates.

Robin explained the events of the weekend:

"I think the people working in the festival field noticed the situation before we did in the office. We were convinced we could deal with it but suddenly the brook burst its banks, leaving much of the farm under a torrent of water, and it was instantly clear we had to postpone. It only took a few moments to decide on a new date. My parents didn't realise 'til a while later that their house was also under a foot of water.

"It was very hard work to organise the Brookes gigs at such short notice and special thanks to Toby Kidd for getting it together. It gave us all the chance to have some fun, and the farmer got to sell some pasta salads! It



was very surreal seeing people dancing in wellies to DJ Fresh at Brookes.

"Ninety percent or more of the original line-up will be playing on the new dates, and we have also added some more favourites including Foals and Forward, Russia. We don't yet know the long-term financial implications of the postponement. Needless to say, it's hard to organise two events for the price of one and we may well lose money, which will in effect put us back to square one. Keep an eye on [www.thisistruck.com](http://www.thisistruck.com) for ticket news; there is likely to be an extra ticket issue in September once we have counted all the returns and band members. If you read this in time, we are also having a BBQ at The Star on Rectory Road from 12 noon on Bank Holiday Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> August, where we will also be selling tickets. As for where Truck goes from here, as R Crumb put it, Keep On Trucking. There is too much enthusiasm and passion to stop because of a bit of water."

*Details of any available Truck tickets are online at [www.thisistruck.com](http://www.thisistruck.com). A benefit gig for the festival, featuring Mules and Emmy The Great, takes place at the Port Mahon on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> September.*

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**THE CARLING ACADEMY** is looking for experienced sound engineers and lighting engineers. Anyone interested in working should email the new venue's technical manager Spike at [spike@oxford-academy.co.uk](mailto:spike@oxford-academy.co.uk) with info about themselves, or call him on 07752 887737.

**JONQUIL** release their new album, 'Lions', on 1<sup>st</sup> October on Try Harder Records, the follow-up to last year's critically acclaimed debut 'Sunny Casinos'. The experimental folk/electro/pop troupe launch the new album with a special concert at the Jacqueline Du Pre Building on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> September where they will be performing two sets. Thereafter Jonquil head off on a national tour with labelmates Youthmovies and Adam Gnade. Visit [www.myspace.com/jonquiluk](http://www.myspace.com/jonquiluk) for full tour dates and tracks.

**THIS YEAR'S WALLINGFORD BUNKFEST** has been cancelled, due to a shortfall in grant funding and the after effects of the flooding the town suffered in July. The annual three-day festival, which features live acts, ceilidhs and music workshops across various venues in the town, was due to run over the weekend of Friday 31<sup>st</sup> August – Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> September but organisers announced its cancellation at the beginning of August. Full refunds are being issued, while a benefit gig was being organised for Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> September.

**RECENT NIGHTSHIFT COVER STARS** The Joff Winks Band will be giving away a free copy of their debut album, 'Songs for Days', to the first 50 punters at their gig at the Wheatsheaf on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> of September.

**STUDIO 45** launched their new purpose-built recording studio in Cowley last month and celebrated by presenting a cheque for £3,400 to ROSY, a charity providing respite care for children in Oxfordshire. The money was raised at a benefit gig earlier this featuring many of the soul, r'n'b and hip hop acts championed by Studio 45. Plans are now in place to organise a full live music festival next year in the grounds of Cornbury Park, whose owner Lady Rotherwick, is a patron of ROSY. Acts interested in playing can call Studio 45 events organiser Cheryl Lee Foulsham on 01865 774806, or visit [www.studio45.org.uk](http://www.studio45.org.uk) for more details.

**THIS YEAR'S OXJAM** gets underway later this autumn and local organiser Kevin Jenkins is looking for venues, promoters and bands keen to take part. Last year's Oxfam-organised Oxjam featured over 2,000

events nationally and raised over £1million for Oxfam. For details of how to take part, email Kevin at [info@oxjamoxford.co.uk](mailto:info@oxjamoxford.co.uk) or visit [www.myspace.com/oxjamoxford](http://www.myspace.com/oxjamoxford). Alternatively, bands can submit demos to 21 The Paddox, Banbury Road, Oxford, OX2 7PN.

**A PAIR OF EXTREMELY RARE** guitars were stolen from a local musician at the end of July from his house in Stratfield Street. The guitars are a Rickenbacker 360 12 left-handed 12-string in Sunburst finish, modelled on George Harrison's guitar; also a Gibson Les Paul 'Black Beauty' left-hand 1974 model. The guitars were stolen from the musician's house while it was undergoing building work and it is likely that although they are almost irreplaceable, the thief may well be unaware of their value. Anyone with any info should call PC France at the Police Enquiry Centre on 0845 8 505 505.

**DON'T FORGET TO TUNE IN** to The Download every Saturday night between 6-7pm on BBC Radio Oxford 95.2fm. The local music show plays the best new Oxfordshire releases as well as featuring interviews with local acts and a regular demo vote. The show is available to listen to online all week at [bbc.co.uk/oxford](http://bbc.co.uk/oxford).

**NIGHTSHIFT** was saddened to learn, as we went to press, of the death of **SUE KING** at the end of August. Sue was the first landlady of the Hobgoblin on the Plain, which later became The Pub Oxford. From the very start Sue was a great supporter of live music and was instrumental in helping Mac set up the Point venue upstairs in the pub, which became legendary for, amongst other things, hosting the first UK gigs by The Strokes and White Stripes. Our best wishes to Sue's partner Colin and all her family and friends.

## OXFORD ACADEMY RE-OPENS

**KATE NASH** is among the latest crop of star names added to the schedule for the new-look Oxford Academy which re-opens this month after a four-month, £2million refurbishment.

Recent chart topper Kate appears at the Academy's new 1,020-capacity main hall, which will become Oxford's largest regular gig venue, on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> October. Last month Editors became the first band to sell out the new Academy, quickly followed by local heroes Supergrass and Madchester legends Happy Mondays. The Academy's upstairs Zodiac venue will have a flexible capacity of up to 436, with the venue's total combined capacity up to 1,350 – up from its previous maximum of 750. Additionally a smaller Academy Bar venue, with a capacity of 220, can be utilised for local and unsigned bands.

The Oxford Academy is officially scheduled to open on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> September, but as Nightshift went to press the line-up for that night was unconfirmed. The first confirmed date at the venue is Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> September, when New Young Pony Club headline. Other shows lined up this month include Young Knives, Gallows, The Holloways, The Enemy and Ska Cubano. October will see gigs by Alabama 3, The Thrills, Decemberists, The Cribs, Foals, Fightstar, Seth Lakeman, Super Furry Animals and Youthmovies amongst others, while highlights of November include The Twang, Porcupine Tree, Digitalism, The Cardiacs, Black Rebel Motorcycle Club and Calvin Harris. Full gig listings for the Academy are online at [www.oxford-academy.co.uk](http://www.oxford-academy.co.uk), along with booking information.

Academy Music Group spokesperson Louise Kovaks told Nightshift, "Oxford's getting a fantastic new venue, whereby our increased capacity will bring larger and more high profile shows to the city such as Editors, The Twang, The Coral and Kate Nash and the varying formats of Carling Academy Oxford will allow us to showcase new artists and emerging talent. This is a £2 million development that will provide the facilities for these artists to play in a professionally equipped venue and we're looking forward to a bumper opening week, with a mixture of club nights and bands including local heroes Supergrass and the Young Knives".

Louise also offered one lucky Nightshift reader the chance to see every single gig at the new Oxford Academy in September and October for free! This fantastic prize could be yours if you can correctly answer the following question:

**Which band became the first act to sell out a gig at the new Oxford Academy?**

*Answers on a postcard (no email entries) to: Oxford Academy Competition, Nightshift Magazine, PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU. Deadline for entries is the 15<sup>th</sup> September. Please include your address and daytime phone number. Multiple entries will be fed to Pertwee the Nightshift cat.*



## DR SHOTOVER: Hit The North

Bloody hell. I knew there were a few of you old-school Goths out there, but I never expected such a HUGE response to July's column. The Nightshift office was bombarded, nay OVERBOMBED with mail from enthusiasts in bands called things like Cloistershadow, Sexy Vampire and (bless) Black Tulle Box. Not to mention a French tribute act called Les Soeurs du Merci. Well, I have no personal beef (or boeuf) with what these people do in the privacy of their own batcaves, as long as they don't frighten the horses (or eat them)... In fact a bit of gloomy Gothic skullduggery would probably come as a welcome relief from all that Eurodisco in the charts, not to mention "Cheggers Plays Pop"... (What do you mean it isn't the early 80s any more? Shut your ugly face and buy a round, you insolent puppy! I'll tell YOU what year it is, thank you very much...). Anyway, where was I? Ah yes, we've decided to move the East Indies Club to the North. To Stoke-on-Trent, actually. Apparently, due to some council cock-up, the smoking ban hasn't been enforced yet, and local wags are already renaming the city "Smoke-on-Trent" – marvellous! Hopefully there are still a few Goth bands up there too - Leeds isn't that far, is it? I bet you can't wait to hear my version of "Severina" rendered in a Potteries accent...

**Next month: Semo-lee-na**



*The French Andrew Eldritch (real name Didier Gaullouise).*

A Quiet Word With

# Mr Shaodow

**THIS MONTH MR SHAODOW** releases his debut single, 'Look Out, There's A Black Man Coming'. Potent, witty and insanely catchy, it's easily the best rap song to come out of Oxford, the equal to the best of hip hop coming from the UK or beyond. The crying shame is that the song even needed to be written. 'Look Out, There's A Black Man Coming' deals with the everyday, low-level racism experienced by young black men: being searched in nightclubs, followed round shops by suspicious security guards or people crossing the street at the sight of black skin.

The single deals with racism in the best way possible – by mocking its utter ridiculousness. While the underlying message is deadly serious, you can laugh out loud as Shaodow hits the main hookline: "Look out, there's a black man coming / People in wheelchairs get up and start running" over solid, minimalist beats and a rinky-dink electronic melody.

**MR SHAODOW IS THE** performance name of Elliott Haslam, a south London-born 20-year old currently studying law and business at Brookes University. Although he only starting rapping a couple of years ago he has an assured, easy flow to his delivery, sometimes smooth and languorous, at other times rapid-fire and hectoring. Moving to Oxford to study he quickly started organising hip hop nights in local venues, seeking out likeminded spirits in a rock-dominated scene.

Nightshift chanced upon one of Shaodow's first local gigs, stunned by the way he had the crowd – mostly first-timers – clinging to his every line and singing along to set closer 'The British Are Coming', a celebration of UK hip hop and a rallying cry to rappers to retain their own identity. Add in some genuinely funny, self-effacing between-song banter and the odd demonstration of kung fu moves and you've got a natural-born entertainer. Back in May Shaodow opened the Oxford Punt with a performance at Borders.

**MR SHAODOW'S WORLD OF** rap is far removed from the dominant US-led commercial style. Out go gangs, guns and bling; in come incisive personal politics, tales of dead-end jobs and the odd love song. Local gig-goers have quickly taken to Shaodow and his reputation is spreading the best way – by word of mouth.

Not that it's all been plain sailing. On the eve of the new single's release



Shaodow found the video – a knockabout interpretation of the song's lyrics mixed up with some kung fu display – refused airplay on rap station Channel U because it was deemed "violent and racist with offensive lyrics". Oh the irony.

## NIGHTSHIFT TALKED TO MR

Shaodow as he prepared to launch 'Look Out...' and asked him first about the origins of his oft-mispronounced stage name.

"Well the name Shaodow (pronounced Sha ow dough) is part Shaolin, part Shadow, so already kung fu is a part of my music. I'm a big believer in following your dreams and ambitions: what's the point in being blessed with life if you're not gonna live it? Kung fu has always been my passion. I've trained since I was 15 in a variety of styles..

"I found a website giving the chance to train out in China with the Shaolin monks when I was 16. I decided then and there that I would go. Problem was I was still in college so I put the dream on the back burner. When my gap year came along I realised I'd need something called money to get to China. My plan of walking there was ruined so I began working in a call centre. To be honest that period was so tough; there were times when I really believed I wouldn't have enough money to go. If it wasn't for my own perseverance as well as the amazing support from my girl and my family I might have given up.

"Eventually I made enough money, booked my place and my flight and was off. At one point it did occur to me that I had just sent money to a kung fu school on a large hill that no-one had ever heard of. I figured I'd get there and some people would turn up to laugh at me for a bit and then send me home. But the trip was everything and more: I found a type

of peace that I'd never experienced before and because I went on my own I got to learn so much more about myself; it was also the place that I began developing my rapping style, I wrote my very first song, 'Back 2 Da Drawing Board' out there.

"Back in the UK I also wrote 'Timf I\$ Mon£y', which was a song about my experiences in that call centre, but also about how people sometimes get so caught up working to live that they end up living to work. My new dream is to now get a music video on TV and in some ways it's even harder."

## IS THERE A PLACE WHERE

Elliott Haslam ends and Mr Shaodow begins?

"The way I see it Elliott and Shaodow are the same person, both parts of one whole. Rappers have a big enough ego and I've noticed that some adopt their own artist name after a while. It seems to me you'll end up forgetting who you really are. Being Mr Shaodow – yeah, that's great, people like my music, they cheer for me, they tell me that I should be famous etc, and it's all too easy to get lost in that and believe all the hype but at the same time being Elliott Haslam reminds me that I have a mother and father and a life full of stress away from music. Ultimately it reminds me that I'm just human and I'm not as great as everyone thinks I am. It's this mentality that keeps me pushing forward to improve my lyrics and the quality of entertainment that I'm providing; the moment you think you're the best is the moment you stop trying to be better."

## ELLIOT GREW UP IN LONDON

and came to Oxford to study; what have been the main differences between the two cities for him as

regards doing his music?

"Hmm first off, stress levels. London will always have a place in my heart but Oxford is wonderful: less people, more peace. The problem with London is everybody and their mum is a rapper; it doesn't matter how good you are, there are so many, good and horribly wack, clamouring for the same thing that nobody gets the chances they deserve. Now I'm starting to make a name for myself in Oxford I'd hope to begin performing in London and the wider area."

With regard to 'Look Out There's A Black Man Coming' what differences are there between the two in your experience of racism or the way you're perceived?

"I hope nobody takes offence but I have to be truthful, when I first arrived in Oxford I thought I was the only black person in the city. London is a lot more diverse. In London I'll carry myself and act in a completely different way to how I would in Oxford; for one thing I'm more relaxed here. But some of the habits, such as wearing my hood up, followed me and for a while I'd feel the strange looks and apprehension people would have towards me as if they expected me to rob them.

"In a way it was my fault as well because of the vibes I was giving off but really there isn't anything wrong with wearing a hood; it made me reflect on some of the stereotypes we have forced upon us. On top of that on my birthday I got into a fight with some guy because he called me the N word. If you listen to my songs it's easy to tell that I don't swear in them let alone use that word, therefore I don't expect to be called it.

"Look Out There's A Black Man Coming' sounds controversial but in fact it's just a reminder to people, including myself, that the colour of your skin doesn't automatically dictate the way that you are going to behave, whether you're white, black, Asian or blue. Big shout out to the Smurfs! Unfortunately some people still don't understand that."

How do you feel that, after all this time, you still need to write a song like 'Look Out...?'

"I see this is a difficult subject but one that I welcome because the song is meant to induce conversation. The days where a person would openly cuss you about your skin colour are almost gone. It's now replaced by little snide comments and a lot of confusion often defended by 'I can't be racist, I have friends who are \*insert skin colour\*'. It's really difficult because as a young black man

I feel I have to go the extra mile: if I don't open my mouth and show I have a brain in my head I feel as if people will think otherwise. 'Look Out There's A Black Man Coming' wasn't written to accuse; at best it was written to make people think and have conversations like this. It pokes fun at the issue because what else can you do? Disliking somebody or fearing them because of their skin colour is such a ridiculous thing. It's similar with sexism and it's disgusting that some people feel the need to belittle and treat women as objects."

#### HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT

Channel U banning the video for being racist?

"It was a big blow to me and has really made things more difficult. I won't say anything defamatory but if you watch Channel U it's easy to see the calibre and content of music that they play. I did follow up the matter and they admitted that the song was relevant to events today but they didn't feel that their audience would understand the level of satire. It hurts me especially because when I tried to do something positive it is rejected in favour of the same old same old. The video for 'Look Out There's A Black Man Coming' is on [www.myspace.com/mrshadow](http://www.myspace.com/mrshadow). I invite anyone reading this to have a look for themselves and see if they draw the same conclusion"

You've said before that you don't listen to a great amount of rap. What are your main musical inspirations?

"Surprisingly I'm not that influenced by music, apart from the fact that I disliked a lot of what I heard, so I started making what I liked to listen to. Mostly it's God, life, my experience and the people around me. To me hip hop and music in general is an art and I just want people to hear what I can do. I don't just do hip hop, I try to take influences from a variety of musical backgrounds, so you might hear me do a rock or a classical or a jazz track or one with one bongo drum and me screaming.

"I like to think that the music I have so far is as original as it's going to get. It's also another reason why I don't listen to much hip hop generally: a rapper begins to rap and sound like the people that he/she listens to. I'd like to hope that people will find it a lot more difficult to pin point my rap influences. There are multiple reasons why I avoid sampling; one is because everyone does it and there is always something nice about hearing something truly original. Another is because if the song became a hit, the makers of the original would be knocking on my door looking for their money.

"I have a few collaborations with Oxford artists in the pipeline that I am very excited about and I'm putting together a new CD that is completely different to what has been done before; it's so amazing and secret that I haven't even told myself the full plan yet. Ha ha ha!"

#### APART FROM 'LOOK OUT...'

the real scene-stealer in Shadown's set is 'The British Are Coming' the rabble-rousing, singalong call to all British rappers to celebrate their own roots and not just try and copy the big American stars.

"When it comes to hip hop people are genuinely not interested unless you are American. Most hip hop on our airways comes from the USA and I really believe that rappers over there get a lot of support. The scene here is still growing; if you consider that a few years ago British rappers were rapping with fake American accents you'll see the problem. 'The British Are Coming' really examines the issue and goes into more depth about it. If I could change anything it'd be the level of support that artists with talent are given in this country; there are so many talented people that end up giving up because nobody seems to care. I would advise everyone to actively support these chaps, go to hip hop shows in Oxford. Especially if I'm performing. And buy a CD off a poor artist. Especially if it's me."

**CURRENTLY MR SHAADOW'S** time is divided between his music and studying law. His ambition is to move on to law school after finishing his degree. Given the choice, would he prefer to be successful rapper or successful lawyer? Or could he combine the two in court?

"Well, rapping is my passion and I'm sure we'd all prefer to be doing what we love. Unfortunately life doesn't work out that way so I also have law, which I genuinely enjoy. Don't get me wrong, I'm going to keep fighting for my music but at the end of the day I'm going to have to make a choice. I still think it's important to chase your dream but recognise that things may not work out. I'd like to be a solicitor. When I was younger I would tell people that I wanted to go into soliciting, I now understand the looks of horror.

If Mr Shadown was a cartoon super hero, what would his special power be and who would he fight?

"Ha ha! Join Mr Shadown in his never ending fight against wack rappers. I'd have a cape, a talking mic as a side kick and for some reason I can breath fire and at the end of every episode I'd break into a cheesy final thought that rhymed. Like in episode 14 where I fight the evil rapping policemen: 'Those PCs were trippin' so we squashed their bugs / Come on now kids, don't do drugs!'. Actually that's an idea, I might copyright that..."

**'Look Out There's A Black Man Coming' is out now on Elements Bound. Visit [www.myspace.com/mrshadow](http://www.myspace.com/mrshadow) to hear new tracks and watch the video. Mr Shadown plays at Bayard's School in Barton on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> September as part of Oxford Urban Artz Festival.**



## September

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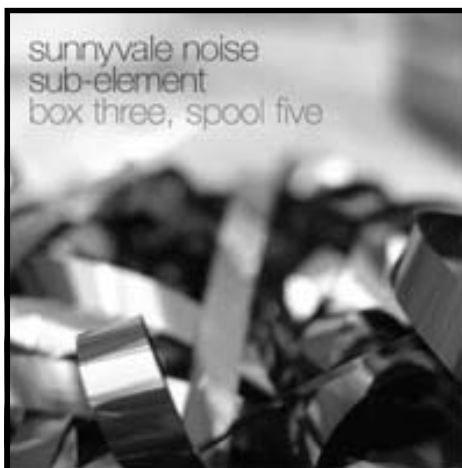
## SUNNYVALE NOISE SUB-ELEMENT

### 'Box Three, Spool Five'

(Field)

It seems hard to believe that this is Sunnyvale's debut album, such a fixture have they become on the local scene over the past six years, both as instigators of the annual Audioscope festival and purveyors of a finely-honed malicious musical damage that was best described in these pages as the sound of Kraftwerk being remixed by Shellac.

Sunnyvale's sonic assault and battery is best experienced live where volume and the harsher extremes of frequency expose the sharpest edges. On CD the brutality is restrained and their innate sense of melody – oh yes, it's true – comes to the surface. Much of 'Box Three, Spool Five' sounds familiar, since a good deal of it has been released before on the band's myriad EPs, not least long-term favourite 'I Love You Every Time You Smile', which must now surely



have been put out by every underground record label in the country in some format.

Not that that should detract from a band who are inspired primarily by the possibilities of post-rock but never sink into the tired post-Mogwai dirges of a million other instrumental bands. Instead the feeling of restlessness pervades almost every track, whether it's the

furtive funky bassline following the metronomic electro beats of twitchy album opener 'Godzilla vs. Kathleen Hanna', or the deceptively alert ramble that is 'Talking To John About Punk Rock' towards the CD's end. There's a sharp focus and tight grasp of dynamics at play too, moments of frantic busyness rising out of passages of almost atonal ambience. The best songs here are those we've heard before, the metallic clanging machine rock of 'Girl Thief'; the buzzing, throbbing drum and bass smack of 'Techno Self-Harm' and of course 'I Love You...' wherein a sparse, metallic guitar line tip-toes over a hissing drum machine like a robot ballet dancer negotiating a nest of vipers. Sunnyvale only fail to satisfy when they leave the drum machine on random play for 'Sputnik Was The Start Of All This Peculiar Weather', but even here, as with much of the album, the near-future industrial atmosphere provides a neatly simmering backdrop to humankind's slow decay and self destruction. Which isn't something you'd ever find yourself saying about Keane.

**Victoria Waterfield**

## FOALS

### 'Mathletics'

(Transgressive)

Foals' musically academic playfulness is sometimes a bit like listening to *savant* scientists mocking less brainy types with complex mathematical equations: all those poly-rhythms and jagged tangents. Which would make them arch irritants if the end result wasn't so bloody great and made you want to dance like a spasming speed freak.

And that's the real big difference between Foals and the likes of Hella and Battles – with Foals you always feel like you've stumbled into a

precocious kids' end of term disco rather than an interminable lecture on jazz structures. The band's infectious live energy rubs off on this new, limited-edition single, uptight but oddly free-flowing in the same way post-punk funkateers like Rip Rig & Panic and Kissing The Pink once were. And chanting. You just don't get enough chanting in pop music these days. Not since Spandau Ballet lost the plot anyway.

**Dale Kattack**

## NINESTONE COWBOY

### 'Jesus Doesn't Like Me'

(Own Label)

If Ninestone Cowboy was a real person, you wouldn't want to get stuck chatting to him at a party. By the end of the conversation you'd be downing neat arsenic, convinced it wasn't worth carrying on with life. Because you'd probably get mown down by a train on your way home anyway, just like his friend Matthew in this new single. We know of course that former-Candyskins guitarist Mark Cope - aka Ninestone Cowboy - really isn't as down on life as his songs would suggest, but when your attempt at a love song centres on a suicide bomber on a tube train (the superb 'Closer' from his last EP), you know you're not going to

get a quick chorus of 'Bring Me Sunshine' anytime soon.

Mark always denies that his band name is taken from the old ATL? song of the same name but they share a similar through-a-glass-darkly attitude to lyrical observation as well as a luxuriantly grungey lo-fi sound that could be the meeting point between a pub-addled Teenage Fanclub and Guided By Voices. Sweetly depressing stuff and about one millionth as self-pitying as the title might have you believe. Even as you read this Ninestone Cowboy has probably just invested his life savings in a new-build house on a Gloucestershire flood plain. Enough inspiration for a full album, surely?

**Dale Kattack**



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## DAVID K FRAMPTON

### 'Rock'

(Eyeless)

Sometimes we worry about David K Frampton; at other times we worry about ourselves. David, much like fellow local doom-mongers Umair Chaudhry and Daniel Clarke, is extremely prolific, offering up a new slice of aural nastiness every couple of months, each one seeming intent on surpassing the horror of the last. We worry about him because the logical conclusion to such an escalation is simply a recording of him cutting off all his limbs in meticulous order until he decapitates himself. And we worry for ourselves because, like a swollen river, such carnage could burst its banks and flood our homes.

But then we remember that it's always the bible-reading James Blunt-listening types who go out and slaughter crowds of innocent passers-by and all David here is doing is a little mental blood-letting. Which isn't to say that this album wouldn't cause nightmares in children and more delicate souls, because it damn well would, mixing up body parts of Throbbing Gristle's more atonal industrial excursions, Cabaret Voltaire's electro-primitivism and Wolf Eyes' dissonant rage. It sounds like David simply turned up every knob to eleven and recorded everything as loud as possible in order to overload the recording equipment, clanging electronics and sheet metal guitars swamping the electronic beats as voices from some forgotten corner of hell mutter darkly or simply shout until the needle goes into the red. It's pretty unrelenting stuff, even the quieter, more subtly

textured moments are filled with dread, but it's exactly the sort of musical carpet bombing Radio 2 should be forced to pump out at breakfast time. That'd learn everyone.

Victoria Waterfield

## WITCHES

### 'Heart of Stone'

(Within The Woods)

As stated in last month's cover story, Witches have produced a fine debut in 'Heart of Stone'. On first listening you are immediately sucked in and taken on a twisting journey. Tumbling lightly over delicious melodic pop, edgier darker moments, almost annoyingly unforgettable riffs and moody rock-outs, all pointing towards something special.

One thing is for certain, trying to make any points of reference is difficult. And that's for a really good reason. Just when you thought it was impossible Witches have gone and created a unique sound, even as a few glimpses of Radiohead, Sparklehorse and The National creep in, and very occasionally Dave Griffiths reminds me of Ray Davies. Every song is individual yet they all sit comfortably together. 'Until Your Death' couldn't be anything but the opening track. Its grooving layers building slowly, melting into the next song. The title track is a straightforward 3/4 song with a country lilt. The darker but irresistible 'Taking Myself Home Again' is followed by the lovely uplifting 'Glowing Sky', which has one of catchiest riffs



on the album, thanks to Benek Chylinski on trumpet. 'At Night I Dream Of Black Dogs' is a personal favourite – the first minute sounding like Eeyore's theme song (if he had one). All told it's a landscape of bell-like vs. growling guitars, eerie drum patterns, trumpets, glockenspiel, unusual time signatures, with sweetly vulnerable vocals reflecting the troubled lyrics.

'Heart of Stone' is an incredibly grown up album but without losing its fresh-faced innocence; it's complicated and yet so simple. Sometimes you get a group of people together, they all do their own thing, yet when it all comes together the whole is so much bigger than the parts. It could be accidental; it could have all been intricately worked out, but it doesn't matter. The end result is the same – a wonderfully produced album full of textures and subtleties, which will hopefully see Witches off to a brilliant start indeed.

Katy Jerome

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# GIG GUIDE

## SATURDAY 1<sup>st</sup>

**THIS CITY + DATA.SELECT.PARTY:** The **Cellar** – Double bill of post-punk thrills tonight with Brighton's uptight and angular This City moving on up after the acclaim accorded their recent Bloc Party remix, making out with some urgent disco-rock. London's Data.Select.Party return to town with their Gang Of Four-inspired punk-funk racket. **THE HEARTWEAR PROCESS:** The **X, Cowley** – Dark'n'doomy rocking in a Nick Cave vein from Reading's Heartwear Process. **QUICKFIX presents TOY #1 + DESERT STORM + MISSING LEG** **COMPARTMENT:** The **Port Mahon** – Local bands showcase from the Quickfix crew, with a headline set from grunge-rockers Toy #1 **CITY LIGHTS JUST BURN + THE YOUNGS PLAN + RED PAPER DRAGON**

### Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup>

## **RUSSIAN CIRCLES / SUNNYVALE NOISE SUB-ELEMENT:**

### **The Wheatsheaf**

You want some serious riffage? Russian Circles have got some serious riffage. Hailing from Chicago, the trio, formed by guitarist Mike Sullivan and bassist Colin DeKuiper, share a similar taste for heavyweight instrumental soundscaping as neighbours Pelican as well as Isis. They're over in the UK now for a tour with Tool, having previously supported Minus The Bear and have a tendency to blow headline bands out of the water. Unlike myriad post-rock types they do seriously rock out rather than try and show everyone how clever they can be. Nuclear bombast mixes with sweet, post-storm pockets of calm, their expansive, sometimes proggy, sound exacerbated by the use of sampling and loop pedals. It's an epic, sprawling journey, and one you'll be powerless to resist joining. Support tonight comes from local electro-rock destroyers Sunnyvale, launching their new album and blending sheet metal guitar noise with harsh electronics in a sound reminiscent of Kraftwerk being remixed by Shellac. Not a night for pussies, then.

## **SEPTEMBER**

**+ FEE FI FO FUM:** The **Wheatsheaf** – Spiky post-hardcore and math-rock in the style of Q & Not U from headliners City Lights Just Burn, plus jittery indie-pop from The Youngs Plan, doomy post-rock from Devon's RPD and Oxes/Hella-inspired math-rocking from local newcomers FFFF. **AN EVENING WITH THE RATPACK:** **Fat Lil's, Witney** – Tribute to Sinatra, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr and chums. **CANALFEST:** The **Rock Of Gibraltar, Enslow** – All-day live music festival with Redox, The Pete Fryer Band and more. **SKITTLE ALLEY LIVE:** **King's Head & Bell, Abingdon** – Acoustic sets from Les Clochards, Adam Matthews, Urban Idol and Yorkshire Luke.

**MELTING POT with TEMPLE + THE HEYS:** The **Jericho Tavern**

### **SUNDAY 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**MONKEY SWALLOWS THE UNIVERSE + POCKETBOOKS + IT HUGS BACK:** The **Port Mahon** – A night of twee musical pleasure from the Swiss Concrete crowd with Sheffield's Monkey Swallows The Universe coming on all dainty and doe-eyed with their winsome semi-acoustic pop, fresh from supporting kindred spirits The Long Blondes and Camera Obscura. Pocketbooks go the full twee mile, resurrecting the sounds of Heavenly and The Field Mice, while Kent's It Hugs Back (aw, how cute...) make out like a hazy 60s-styled acid-folk party.

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

**POWERCUT with THE ANYDAYS + BAREFOOTIM:** The **Jericho Tavern** – Carbon-neutral live music club night with chirpy 60s-styled pop people The Anydays headlining.

### **MONDAY 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**ERASURE:** The **New Theatre** – Synth-pop hitmakers Andy Bell and Vince Clarke promote new album 'Light At The End Of The World' as well as digging into their extensive catalogue of hits, including 'Sometimes', 'Ship Of Fools' and 'Always', fresh from touring with Debbie Harry and Cyndi Lauper in the States.

**RICHIE MILTON & THE LOWDOWN:** The **Bullingdon** – Swampy blues-rock with a heavy Stax soul influence from the British guitarist and his nebulous backing band. **RATFACE + RUS SUBSTANCE:** The **Port Mahon** – Punk-hip hop soundclash cabaret from Nottingham's Ratface.

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

**SERFS + SMEAR CAMPAIGN + LEX, LEE, DAVID & TOBY:** The **Port Mahon** – Acoustic psychedelic jamming from The Serfs,

improvised drones from Smear Campaign and Sunn0)))-inspired drone-metal from Lex and co.

**JAZZ CLUB with THE HUGH TURNER**

**BAND:** The **Bullingdon**

**SHUSH OPEN MIC SESSION:** The **X, Cowley**

**OPEN MIC SESSION:** **Far From The Madding Crowd**

### **WEDNESDAY 5<sup>th</sup>**

**RUSSIAN CIRCLES:** The **Wheatsheaf** – Isis-style instrumental rock from current Tool tour support – *see main preview*

**LAMBORGHINI CRYSTAL + PATEL**

**PRETEL + DIVINE COILS:** **Port Mahon** – Experimental trance and drones from New Yorkers Lamborghini Crystal, featuring ex-Skaters people JC Peavey and James Ferraro.

**OPEN MIC SESSION:** **Folly Bridge Inn**

**OPEN MIC SESSION:** **Temple Bar**

### **THURSDAY 6<sup>th</sup>**

**SAVAGE HENRY:** The **Wheatsheaf** – First night of a new Rocket Club with local heavy rockers Savage Henry.

**THE BLACK LIPS + BROTHER**

**FRANCISCO + THE CORVIDS:** The

**Cellar** – Rough'n'raw r'n'b out of Atlanta, Georgia with the Black Lips over in the UK to promote new album, 'Good Bad, Not Evil', mixing up early punk and 60s garage rock with hook-laden Beatles pop. Support from South Coast psych-rockers Brother Francisco and krautrocking local stars Corvids.

**DAN AUSTIN + DUDLEY THOMPSON:**

The **X, Cowley** – Grinning Spider night with angel-voiced songsmith Dan Austin headlining.

**HARRY ANGEL + THE FOURTH**

**CHAMBER + VON BRAUN:** The

**Hobgoblin, Bicester** – Gothic fuzz-pop and incendiary grunge noise from Harry Angel at tonight's Bicester rock night.

**OPEN MIC SESSION:** The **Half Moon**

**SKYLARKIN:** The **Brickworks**

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

**KLUB KAKOFANNEY with MARY'S GARDEN + LITTLE FISH + AND ALL**

**THESE ARMS:** The **Wheatsheaf** – Return to live action for Mary's Garden and their darkly exotic gothic-tinged Euro-rock. Current hottest new band in town and recent Nightshift demo of the monthers Little Fish hit the raw, bluesy garage-rock trail again.

**SCRIPT + AGENTS OF JANE:** The **X, Cowley** – Eclectic, dark-minded rock from Script.

**STORNOWAY + SEVEN YEARS ON:** The **Jericho Tavern** – Currently amongst the main contenders for best unsigned band in Oxford, Stornoway continue to seduce all-comers with their sweet-natured, celtic-tinged pop; perhaps one of the last chances to catch them in such intimate surroundings. Support comes from Swindon's Seven Years On.

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



**RESERVOIR CATS: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Hard-rocking blues.

**RED HOT BLUES & BOOZE FESTIVAL: Didcot Labour Club** – Didcot Blues Club's first weekend festival with sets from The Peacetakers, Bullfrogs, Blues Factory and more, plus open mic sessions.

**BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon** – Weekly soul, funk and disco club night.

**ATTACK OF THE....: Mangos** – Gabba, breakcore and mashup mayhem with Alan Titmarsh, Oozat, DJ Bread, Hellboy and Christ, Someone's Dead.

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

**END OF THE SUMMER ALL DAYER: The Port Mahon (12pm)** – End of the summer? What bloody summer? Oh well, never mind, sunshine isn't conducive to standing in hot, sweaty gig venues watching noisy young things cutting a rug, so to speak. Which is

*Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>*

## **RICHARD HAWLEY: The New Theatre**

It's heartening, if a little surprising, that Richard Hawley is headlining a venue of this size. The man's rise and rise has been slow and steady, his reputation built on a succession of gently wonderful albums, but you always feel he's been more of a critics' favourite than a commercial success. Well, it's good news anyway, because he more than deserves it. Not that you'd have imagined back in the late-90s that the pissed-up guitarist from The Longpigs would become a Radio 2 favourite and Mercury Prize nominee. It's Hawley's odd juxtaposition of earthy humour and low-life tales on the one hand and his gorgeous Bobby Darin-like croon and warm, dreamy romanticism on the other that makes his songs special. Each of his albums, 'Lowledges', 'Coles Corner' and the new one, 'Lady's Bridge' are named after his hometown Sheffield landmarks, but the downbeat lovelorn nature of his laments is universal. So much so that everyone from Radiohead and Coldplay to Nancy Sinatra and REM are declared fans, while he's played guitar for All Saints and Gwen Stefani. It was Jarvis Cocker who first recognised Hawley's talent (he played on Pulp's 'This Is Hardcore') and the intelligent, romantic documentation of life is shared by both. Good to see that Hawley is now a star in his own right.



what we get here, with a quality line-up of local bands including Harry Angel, The Quarterfinals, Ivy's Itch, The Black Hats, King Furnace, Baby Gravy, The Dirty Royals, Tristan & The Troubadours and 100 Bullets Back, as well as out-of-town guests Brother Francisco and the mighty Sweeney.

**URBAN ARTZ FESTIVAL: Bayard's School, Barton (12-5pm)** – First Urban Artz session, aiming to showcase the best local urban music, art and film. Live music comes from the cream of Oxford's rappers, Zuby, Mr Shadown, Inspekt'A'Rhyme and Don JoJo as well as street dance from Messy Jam, plus fashion, video and art displays – *see main interview feature on Mr Shadown*

**COO COO CLUB with THE NUBILES + MEPHISTO GRANDE: The Jericho Tavern** – The recently reformed former local stars return to town after their star turn at the Zodiac's closing party, reprising the jerky, funk-up post-punk noise that they made their own back in the early-90s before it became *de rigueur* for every indie band around. Satanic gospel-blues rocking from Mephisto Grande in support.

**WITTSTOCK FUNDRAISER: The X, Cowley** – With live sets from Quadrophobe, Alphabet Backwards and Jeremy Hughes.

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

**BLUE WHISKEY: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Rock covers.

**RED HOT BLUES & BOOZE FESTIVAL: Didcot Labour Club**

**TWIZZ TWANGLE: Chester Arms** – Madcap anti-pop from the enduring local musical eccentric.

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

**RICHARD HAWLEY: The New Theatre** – Sonorous slice of northern city life from the one-time Longpigs and Pulp guitarist – *see main preview*

**MIDASUNO: The Bullingdon** – Frantic but melodic hardcore from Merthyr Tydfil's hard-gigging Midasuno, all set to release their debut album, 'Songs In The Key Of Fuck', on Sugarshack.

**ROCK ALL-DAYER: The Hobgoblin, Bicester** – Ten hours of heavy rock, punk, blues, grunge and indie at the Hobgoblin with sets from Frowser, King Furnace, Beard of Zeuss, Mephisto Grande, Andensum, Reservoir Cats, Fatally Yours, Diatribe and Reign Upon Us.

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

**MEMO GONZALEZ & THE**

**BLUESCASTERS: The Bullingdon** – 300lb of Tex-Mex dynamite is how Memo Gonzalez describes himself, and with over 1,000 gigs under his (ample) belt his reputation isn't in doubt. The Dallas-based singer covers classic Texan roadhouse blues as well as swing and r'n'b, and a lively show is always guaranteed.

**ELIZA CARTHY & THE RATCATCHERS: Nettlebed Folk Club** – Princess Royal of the English folk revival gathers her supergroup together again – featuring Spiers and Boden amongst others – for another feast of adventurous fiddling and songs about death.

### **TUESDAY 11<sup>th</sup>**

**JAZZ CLUB with THE HOWARD**



*Thursday 20<sup>th</sup>*

## **NEW YOUNG PONY CLUB: The Oxford Academy**

At time of going to press, tonight's gig is the first confirmed date at the new Oxford Academy, although Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> is planned as the official opening night. No matter, it's a quality start for the new venue. Although included on NME's New Rave tour earlier this year, London's New Young Pony Club are nothing of the sort. Like fellow tour-mates CSS, they mix up synth-pop and disco with jerky post-punk, marking them out closer in spirit to the likes of Tom Tom Club, New Order, Grace Jones and in particular ESG (oh, and you could maybe add in Salt'n'Pepa, Miss Kittin and even Peaches into that sweet little mix). Initially the cool name to drop in trendy Hoxton circles after their early clutch of singles that managed to balance cool and aloof with cartoonish playfulness, NYPC seem to have been vindicated by their Mercury Prize nomination for debut album 'Fantastic Playroom'.

**PEACOCK QUARTET: The Bullingdon**  
**SHUSH OPEN MIC SESSION: The X, Cowley**

**OPEN MIC SESSION: Far From The Madding Crowd**

### **WEDNESDAY 12<sup>th</sup>**

**THE ALISON BENTLEY QUARTET: The X, Cowley** – Live jazz with Alison Bentley plus Ewan Baird on sax.

**REDOX: The Bullingdon** – Album launch gig for the enduring local swamp-rock and festival funkers.

**OPEN MIC SESSION: Folly Bridge Inn**

**OPEN MIC SESSION: Temple Bar**

### **THURSDAY 13<sup>th</sup>**

**ROLO TOMASSI + MEPHISTO GRANDE + CLANKY ROBO GOB JOBS: The Cellar** – There's a storm a-coming and its name is Rolo Tomassi. They're loud; they're fast. No, that won't do. They're really fucking loud and really, really, really, fucking fast and they sound like The Locust on a fizzy pop frenzy and they are fronted by the Devil's own daughter. Seriously, we are not making this up. See them, fear them, love them. Love and fear Mephisto Grande too for they are the sound of Captain Beefheart being eaten by werewolves. Love and laugh at Clanky Robo Gob Jobs. He shouts! He screams! He's got an bloody synthesizer! What's not to like?



*Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup>*

## THE YOUNG KNIVES

*Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup>*

## SUPERGRASS

### The Oxford Academy

What better way to welcome into being the new Oxford Academy venue than with a weekend of gigs by two of Oxford's most successful bands? The occasion will be a particular triumph for The Young Knives on Saturday night as they play their biggest hometown gig ever, and this fresh on the back of their Mercury Prize nomination for 'Voices Of Animals And Men'. Henry, House and Ollie have spent much of the summer recording a new album, 'Terra Firma', up in Glasgow, which will see the light of day in November. Tonight's gig gives Oxford fans a first chance to hear the new songs ahead of the band's full UK tour in November.

Supergrass too are set to release a new album later this year, following on from 2006's 'Road To Rouen'. Although they do play Oxford reasonably regularly, each gig is a treat simply because the 'Grass are one of the best pop bands of the past decade, with an armoury of hits that would be the envy of any band. It's easy to forget that it's not that long ago that Oxford gig-goers couldn't even dream of having a venue of this size in town, never mind local stars to fill it. Plenty of reasons to rejoice, then.

**TAMARIND SUN + SONS OF ALBION:** **The X, Cowley** – Wistful acoustic pop from Thame's Tamarind Sun, fronted by three Anglo-Mexican sisters.

**HANGMAN'S JOE + THE DYING ANIMALS:** **The Port Mahon** – Thrashy heavy rock from Hangman's Joe, plus punk noise from Dying Animals.

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**DESERT STORM:** **The Wheatsheaf** – Growly stoner metal.  
**OPEN MIC SESSION:** **The Half Moon**  
**SKYLARKIN:** **The Brickworks**

### FRIDAY 14<sup>th</sup>

**GAMMY LEG PRODUCTIONS with FOXES! + ANTON BARBEAU + TANDARA MANDARA:** **The X, Cowley** – Local oddball jangle-popsters Foxes! kick up a surprisingly sweet party sound inspired by the likes of Ooberman and Talulah Gosh at tonight's Gammy Leg Productions club, while honorary Oxfordian Californian Anton Barbeau keeps the spirits of Syd Barrett and Robyn Hitchcock alive as he promotes his 423<sup>rd</sup> album, 'The Automatic Door' with local songstress Su Jordan. Balkan folk trio Tandara Mandara open proceedings.

**QUICKFIX presents VERBAL KINK + JALOPY + MONDO CADA:** **The Wheatsheaf** – Witney's grunge rockers Verbal Kink hit the comeback trail at tonight's Quickfix club. At The Drive-In and McLusky-inspired hardcore from Jalopy and extreme grungecore noise from Mondo Cada in support.

**THE JACKS + SUPERDEADLYNINJABEES + THE BRIGHTS:** **The Jericho Tavern** – Lightweight acoustic pop from Newcastle's Jacks, plus funk rock from Superdeadlyninjabees. Pick of the night is Essex's jangle-pop hopefuls The Brights.

**OXFORD FOLK CLUB:** **The Port Mahon REDOX + THE PETE FRYER BAND:** **The Magdalen**

**CHEAP THRILLS:** **Fat Lil's, Witney**  
**BACKROOM BOOGIE:** **The Bullingdon**

### SATURDAY 15<sup>th</sup>

**WITCHES + THE WORKHOUSE + FLIES ARE SPIES FROM HELL:** **The Wheatsheaf** – Album launch gig for Witches' debut, 'Heart Of Stone', providing a warm, exotic mix of alt.country, glitchy pop, folk and lysergic rock. Shoegazey dreamers The Workhouse provide top-drawer support along with complex electro-rockers FASFH.

**MELTING POT with THE COLOURS + THE SWAMIS + BENEVA + ZOE BICAT:** **The Jericho Tavern** – Anthemic, emotive indie rocking from Reading's Colours at tonight's Melting Pot.

**ATTACK OF THE...:** **The Coven** – Two floors of breakcore, gabba and mashup with live bands and DJs, featuring Shitmat, Chevron, Randomoidz, Oozat, Sinister Tek, The Walk Off, Cutting Pink With Knives and DJ Fluffywuffy.

### SUNDAY 16<sup>th</sup>

**COMMUNITY NOISE ALL-DAYER:** **The Port Mahon** – Permanent Vacation present a full day of experimental and leftfield live music, including eight-piece Glenn Branca-inspired big band Action Beat, drone-rock duo Traktors, Swans and Suicide-influenced experimenters Elapse-O, post-rock newcomers Twat Trot Tra La, sinister ambience from Divine Coils, Sonic Youth-styled heavyweights You're Smiling Now But We'll All

Turn Into Demons and one-man synth'n'theremin band Euhedral.  
**ELECTRIC JAM:** **The X, Cowley**  
**MONDAY 17<sup>th</sup>**

**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

*Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> – Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup>*

## TRUCK FESTIVAL: Hill Farm, Steventon

July's floods were devastating for so many people, none more so than Truck which had to be cancelled at the last minute when the festival field was under a metre of water, while organisers Robin and Joe Bennett also found their family home flooded. A superhuman effort on all the organisers' parts meant many of the bands due to play were able to perform over two nights at Brookes, but it's heartening that most of the original line-up is still able to return to Steventon for this re-arranged festival. In particular it'll be great to see former-Band legend Garth Hudson, with his wife Maud, who are flying back to the UK specially. Other highlights include Saturday night headliners Idlewild (*pictured*), unpredictable psych-rockers The Brian Jonestown Massacre, dark-minded indie troupers iLiketains and sublime narcotic drone-rockers Early Years. This being the tenth Truck there's an air of nostalgia about it, with a heavier emphasis on the sort of local bands who made the festival's name in the first place. Obviously hosts Goldrush will be taking their place on the main stage, while Nought, who headlined the first ever Truck, are always a welcome blast of noise. Foals are a great addition to the bill from the original line-up and they're joined by Youthmovies, The Rock Of Travolta, Winnebago Deal, Mules and A Silent Film amongst other Oxford luminaries. Meanwhile Truck regulars like Piney Gir and Buck 65 make their usual appearances. Let's hope the sun shines and Truck can remind us just why it's the best little festival in the country.



**JONQUIL: Jacqueline Du Pre Building** – Launching their second album in style at the JDP concert hall, Jonquil continue to be a mesmerising and esoteric proposition, moving more into folk territory but touching on sea shanties, experimental pop, and ambient soundtracks, always with a sweeping sense of melody at their core.

**BEN'S BROTHER: The Jericho Tavern** – AOR soul-rock balladry from the London band that make The Feeling sound like Napalm Death.

**THE CHRIS WHILE BAND: Nettlebed Folk Club** – Traditional English folk from the northern singer.

## **TUESDAY 18<sup>th</sup>**

**MULES + EMMY THE GREAT + LADYBIRD: The Port Mahon** – Truck Festival benefit with new wave/gypsy dance/punk crossover starlets Mules. Anti-folk songbird Emmy the Great supports alongside sweet-natured indie popsters Ladybird.

**JAZZ CLUB with THE COLINS OF PARADISE: The Bullingdon** – Special guest appearance at the Bully's jazz club for recent Oxford Punt stars COP, mixing funk, drum&bass and prog into their jazz sound.

**SHUSH OPEN MIC SESSION: The X, Cowley**

**OPEN MIC SESSION: Far From The Madding Crowd**

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

**THE JOFF WINKS BAND: The Wheatsheaf** – Dreamy, lysergic jazz-tinged rock in the vein of Steely Dan and Hatfield & The North from Joff and chums, celebrating the release of their debut album by giving away a free copy to the first 50 punters.

**GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES with BEELZEBOZO + INDIGO MOSS + SEFTON: The X, Cowley** – One-off venue change for the monthly GTI club, tonight featuring local heavyweights Beelzebozo.

**OPEN MIC SESSION: Folly Bridge Inn**

**OPEN MIC SESSION: Temple Bar**

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

**NEW YOUNG PONY CLUB: The Oxford Academy** – Synth-pop and new wave disco from the Mercury Prize nominees, launching the new Oxford Academy in sleek electro style - *see main preview*

**TITUS + MONEYTREE + EDUARD SOUNDINGBLOCK: The Cellar** – Maths-rocking from Titus at tonight's Big Hair club, featuring ex-members of Meanwhile, Back In Communist Russia, Theo and Diego Garcia. Former-Suitable Case For Treatment chaps Eduard Sounding Block support.

**CAINE: The X, Cowley** – Proggy heavyweight rockers.

**THE JONES RADIO: The Port Mahon** – Gothic post-punk noise.

**SEAGULL STRANGE: The Jericho**

**Tavern** – Epic, gothic-tinged indie rocking from Shifty Disco signings. **OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon**

**SKYLARKIN: The Brickworks**

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

**RX BANDITS: The Oxford Academy** – Lively mix of ska, punk, rock and reggae from Californian Drive Thru signing RX Bandits, promoting their fifth album, 'And The Battle Begun', mixing up influences as disparate as Bad Brains, Fugazi and Toots & The Maytals.

**EASY TIGER + SPACE HEROES OF THE PEOPLE: The X, Cowley** – Grinning Spider night with southern fried blues and rock supergroup Easy Tiger, plus synth-popping, krautrocking experimentalists Space Heroes in support.

**OXFORD FOLK CLUB: The Port Mahon**

**BIG ARM + TOY DRUM + PORT ERIN: The Jericho Tavern** – One-time Happy Mondays bassist and Sean Ryder's brother, Paul, brings his new band to town, keeping it funky with his new northern soul sound. Bath's emotive indie-funkers Port Erin support.

**BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon**

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

**TRUCK FESTIVAL: Hill Farm, Steventon** – Rescheduled summer festival featuring sets from Idlewild and much more besides - *see main preview*

**THE YOUNG KNIVES: The Oxford Academy** – The local Mercury-nominated heroes try out Oxford's new mega-venue - *see main preview*

**THE FALL OF TROY + DAUGHTERS: The Zodiac** – Epic, proggy post-hardcore rocking from the young Washington State trio who try to find that meeting point between Rush and King Crimson on the one hand and At The Drive-In and Blood Brothers on the other. Alternately melodic and poppy, virulently noisy and experimental, they're plugging their acclaimed new album 'Manipulator', although their next project is apparently a concept album about a ghost ship featuring each band member as a character in an ongoing story. Not yer straight-ahead emo chimps, then.

**ZATORGUS +**

**SUPERDEADLYNINJABEES + NEIL NAYER: The Port Mahon**

**DJ COOL + MR CEE + SID G: The X, Cowley** – Soul, disco, reggae and r'n'b. **TRIBUTE TO QUEEN: Fat Lil's, Witney**

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

**TRUCK FESTIVAL: Hill Farm, Steventon** – Garth and Maud Hudson headline the second day of the rearranged Truck - *see main preview*

**SUPERGRASS: The Oxford Academy** – Gaz, Danny, Mickey and Bobsie showcase some new songs in front of a hometown crowd at the new Academy - *see main preview*

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*Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup>*

**GALLOWES /  
POISON THE WELL /  
LETHAL BIZZLE /  
BLACKHOLE: The  
Zodiac @ The Academy**

Take heart, children, the death of emo may yet be here and its name is Gallows. They come from Watford, Kerrang! recently declared them “the future of punk rock” and they rock like bastards. Formed a mere two years ago their ascent has been rapid and explosive with the acclaim afforded debut album, ‘Orchestra Of Wolves’, almost as rabid as the band’s furious live shows. They’re a rage-filled racket, furious, frantic hardcore guitars fronted by a wiry, heavily-tattooed, ginger-haired sociopath called Frank Carter. Songs about date rape and family violence abound and no quarter is given in their savage attack. Nice one. Incredible to think that Florida’s hardcore giants Poison The Well are supporting but that’s tonight’s superlative bill for you: their melodic, eloquent take on hardcore broke new territory with ‘Opposite Of December’ and they could probably fill the venue on their own. Sometime Gallows collaborator and former More Fire Crew MC Lethal Bizzle continues his crossover from grime star to indie favourite having recorded with everyone from The Rakes to Pete Doherty, while his sampling of The Clash and his quickfire lyrical delivery fits in with tonight’s punk bill. Hertfordshire metallers Blackhole complete the bill.

**DOES IT OFFEND YOU, YEAH? + WE SMOKE FAGS: The Zodiac** – Synth-punk shouting and electro squelches from hip new London trendies Does It Offend You, Yeah? Electro-heavy new wavers We Smoke Fags (not inside the venue these days, you don’t) crunch up various parts of Bis, Jilted John and Cabaret Voltaire into a primitive but appealing racket.

**RIP THE JOINT: The Port Mahon** – Nine-piece slide-led blues, rock and boogie band.

**MONDAY 24<sup>th</sup>**

**AIR TRAFFIC: The Oxford Academy** – There is a place where Stereophonics and Coldplay somehow meet. It is place you

thought no-one would ever want to go. You were wrong. It’s where Air Traffic were born. Actually they were born in Bournemouth but it’s their spiritual home. Geezer rock rubs up against anthemic ballads. EMI went mad for it and signed them. And now their debut album, ‘Fractured Life’, is out and plenty of other people will similarly fall for its gruff piano-led charms. There’s no accounting for taste.

**INME: The Zodiac** – Angry post-grunge metal from the enduring cult rockers, all set to release new album, ‘Daydream Anonymous’.

**THE ROBIN BIBI BAND: The Bullingdon** – Best known as a session musician for BB King and Robert Plant, blues guitarist Robin Bibi’s own material is more traditionally blues based, ranging from heavier Steve Vai-influenced rocking to mellower Albert King-styled songs.

**MARTIN CATHY & DAVE SWARBRICK: Nettlebed Folk Club** – Two of the grand old men of English folk team up again for a night of traditional songs.

**TUESDAY 25<sup>th</sup>**

**THE HOLLOWAYS + THE WOMBATS: The Oxford Academy** – In theory Holloways are an appalling idea – Libertines-inspired indie-punk with more than just a hint of Chas & Dave about it. But come on, you love that ‘Generator’ song, don’t you? Sometimes you have to put your hand up and admit to these things. Liverpool’s Wombats return to town in support, Kaiser Chiefs-styled indie rock tales of goats with drug habits and the like.

**GALLOWES + POISON THE WELL + LETHAL BIZZLE + BLACKHOLE: The Zodiac** – Watford’s punk crew head an impressive bill – *see main preview*

**JAZZ CLUB with THE HOWARD PEACOCK QUARTET: The Bullingdon SABRE PULSE + USK + CALIS: The Cellar** – Gameboy gabba techno from Aberdeen’s Sabre Pulse, Japan’s USK and Sweden’s Calis as the Chiptone Alliance tour hits Oxford.

**SHUSH OPEN MIC SESSION: The X, Cowley**

**OPEN MIC SESSION: Far From The Madding Crowd**

**WEDNESDAY 26<sup>th</sup>**

**FUTURE OF THE LEFT + MEET ME IN St. LOUIS: The Wheatheaf** – Predictably ace hardcore noise from Cardiff’s Future Of The Left, formed from the ashes of McLusky and Jarcrew, cranking out more wittily misanthropic tales of south Wales lowlife in wonderfully frenetic and belligerent style somewhere betwixt Fugazi and Big Black, while Surrey’s Meet Me In St Louis bring the high-wired math-rock and hardcore pop to the party.

**MADINA LAKE + ENVY ON THE COAST + HALIFAX + MYAMERICAN HEART:**

**The Oxford Academy** – Anthemic grungy punk-pop from Chicago’s Madina Lake, fronted by twins Nathan and Matthew Leone, back headlining at the Academy after support slots with Paramore and Gym Class Heroes.

**LUKE SMITH + FINNISTON + HELEN LAWSON: The Port Mahon** – Swiss Concrete again provide a night of understated quality, headed by wry jazz-pop singer and

pianist Luke Smith. He’s joined by Glasgow’s folky jangle-popsters Finniston and sultry, bucolic laptop pop lady Helen Lawson.

**JAZZ JAM: The X, Cowley** – Jam along with the X’s in-house jazz band, led by Paul Jefferies.

**OPEN MIC SESSION: Folly Bridge Inn**

**OPEN MIC SESSION: Temple Bar**

**THURSDAY 27<sup>th</sup>**

**THE ENEMY: The Oxford Academy** – Coventry’s The Enemy find themselves in surprisingly rarefied territory after their debut album ‘We’ll Live & Die In These Towns’ hit the top spot in the album charts earlier this year. Tour support to the Manics probably helped them along the way, although their sounds is closer to (okay not so much close as sitting on top of) The Jam. Here be more tales of humdrum crap town existence, as if the world really needed reminding just how shit its life is.

*Saturday 29<sup>th</sup>*

**iLIKETRAINS + HER  
NAME IS CALLA +  
THE WINCHELL  
RIOTS: The Zodiac @  
The Academy**

Leeds’ iLikeTrains must be one of the most unusual bands in the UK at the moment, and not just because they tend to dress in vintage British Rail uniforms and spell their name with an annoying grammatical glitch, but because while their indie counterparts are getting rich quick singing about going to McDonald’s or fighting at taxi ranks, iLikeTrains are making ten-minute epics documenting everything from the assassination of British Prime Minister Spencer Perceval, to the Beeching Report to chess champion Bobby Fischer. All of which are conveyed by way of funereal epics that marry goth, shoegazing and new wave. They’ve been coming to Oxford regularly over the last couple of years and this is their biggest show to date. With any luck, slow and steady wins the race. Support comes from the even more epic Her Name Is Calla, mixing up prog expansiveness with dark, post-rock soundscaping. Former Fell City Girl chaps The Winchell Riots open the show.



**SKA CUBANA + THE NINE-TON PEANUT SMUGGLERS: The Zodiac** – Ska Cubano make a welcome return to town to show those who missed out last time just how to party. Thing is, everyone who went last time will doubtless snap up the tickets straight away, so don't leave it too late. As their name suggests, Ska Cubano mix up Cuban mambo with upbeat ska, calypso and rocksteady, the band brought together from Santiago de Cuba by way of east London and Kingston by Top Cats band leader Natty Bo. Natty leads proceeding from the front, along with Beny Billy, the pair of them masters at whipping a crowd into a frenzy. It's like the musical history of the entire Caribbean condensed into one two-hour pressure cooker show. If you can have more fun with your clothes on anywhere else, you can probably have your money back. DJ Derek continues the party into the wee small hours with his regular Skylarkin' set of classic ska, reggae and soul.

**LITTLE FISH + SUBTERRANEANS + HANGMAN CHARLIE + SIDEWINDERS: The X, Cowley** – Selectasound night with fast-rising local garage blues rock duo Little Fish headlining. Plymouth's reggae and blues-tinged rockers Subterraneans support.

**ELECTROLYTES + NOT MY DAY + LOCAL FUNDRAISER: The Jericho Tavern** – Shoegazey dream pop from local singer-songwriter and current Mary Chain guitarist Mark Crozer and drummer Loz Colbert's new project Electrolytes, drifting elegantly in somewhere between Spacemen 3 and the Mary Chain themselves, plus bluesy rock from Not My Day.

**DJ MARKY: The Coven** – Brazilian drum&bass pioneer Marky plays a two-hour DJ set plus sets from Johnny Bravo, Gomez and Mars.

**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon SKYLARKIN: The Brickworks**

### FRIDAY 28<sup>th</sup>

**REUBEN + KILL KENADA: The Oxford Academy** – Surrey's post-grunge rockers Reuben – former Next Big Things on the UK underground scene – return to town to plug new album 'In Nothing We Trust', with support from Bognor's fiery Fugazi and At The Drive In-inspired noisemakers Kill Kenada.

**REPUBLICA featuring ANDY WHITBY + KUTSKI: The Zodiac** – Hard house and trance club night.

**OXFORD ARTS FESTIVAL: Various Venues** – No definitive line-up information as we went to press but the second OAF takes place across seven local venues over the weekend, featuring local bands, artists, photographers and more. Events take place at the Cellar, Jam Factory, Border, Old Fire Station, Port Mahon, Wheatsheaf, the X and Oxford

and Cherwell college. Bands playing include The Epstain, Keyboard Choir, Borderville, Headcount, The Joff Winks band, King Furnace, Eduard Soundingblock, Stornoway and Half Rabbits. A full programme is out in due course.

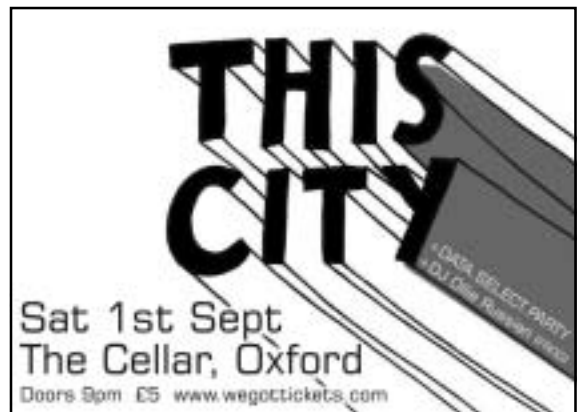
**OXFORD FOLK CLUB: The Port Mahon**  
**LIGHTBOX + MARTIN'S GHOST + TAMARIND SUN: The Jericho Tavern**  
**BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon** – Funky, soul and disco with Aidan Larkin.  
**ROB TOGNONI: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Live blues.

### SATURDAY 29<sup>th</sup>

**ILIKETRAINS + HER NAME IS CALLA + THE WINCHELL RIOTS: The Zodiac** – Leeds' gothsters bring their tales of 18<sup>th</sup> Century Prime Ministers and railways to town again – *see main preview*.  
**THE QUARTER FINALS + BIG BAD CITY: The Bullingdon** – Heavyweight new wave rocking from The Quarterfinals, plus funk-rock support from Big Bad City. Followed by Moneyspinners club night.  
**THE INFLATABLES: The X, Cowley** – Classic ska, reggae and soul covers.  
**COO COO CLUB with NINE STONE COWBOY: The Jericho Tavern** – Mark Cope and crew launch their new single, 'Jesus Doesn't Like Me', nestling, in caustically lachrymose fashion, somewhere between Teenage Fanclub and Guided By Voices. Top drinking music.  
**THE MESSENGERS: Chester Arms** – Alt.country from debutantes The Messengers.  
**THE AROUSERS + THE FOLLEYS + THE MINUTES: Stocks Bar, Abingdon** – Skittle Alley club night with garage rockers The Arousers headlining.  
**THE KING EARLE BOOGIE BAND: Fat Lil's, Witney**

### SUNDAY 30<sup>th</sup>

**THE DEPARTURE: The Zodiac** – Back in action having seemingly disappeared from view after racing out of the traps back in 2004 when they supported The Killers on tour, Northampton's Departure carry on where they left off, pillaging early-80s alternative rock and synth-pop, nicking ideas from Duran Duran and The Cure as well as more current influences like Interpol and The Faint.  
**COO COO CLUB with PRINZHORN DANCE SCHOOL: The Jericho Tavern** – Atonal, arrhythmic, jerky and nervy drone/sludge-rock from Brighton duo recently signed to James Murphy's DFA label and coming on like a cross between very early Fall and The Nightingales at their most antagonistic. A perverse pleasure then, but a pleasure nonetheless.  
**ELECTRIC JAM: The X, Cowley**



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# LIVE

## DEAD MEADOW / YOUTHMOVIES

### The Cellar

Keeping up with Youthmovies has never been easy, even if they have at least shortened their name to a more manageable moniker. Their fingers have to move swiftly simply to keep up with their restless imaginations. So even before you've had time to scribble King Crimson into your notepad, they're dashing your comparisons on the rocks of some sweetly pleading indie pop soul. In an age when intelligence in any art form is treated with suspicion by the marketing execs, Youthmovies' carefree abandonment of rules and regulations remains refreshing, forever tumbling into something new, like an academic prodigy with attention deficit disorder. Tonight's set features almost all new material, from their new album due for release early next year on *Drowned In Sound*. The mathsy, angular blasts remain but now share sound space with brass-led prog, reminiscent of Van Der Graaf Generator or even early-70s jazz-metallers Black Widow, dappled psychedelia and even incongruous moments of almost emo-ish angst rock, which perhaps show up the band's weakest point - the vocals. Tonight's highlight is penultimate number 'Something For The Ghosts', a wigged-out psychedelic space-rock electro-pulse that turns on a sixpence and goes off to play at being XTC halfway through. Occasionally frustrating, more often spectacular, Youthmovies are rarely anything other than intriguing.

By stark contrast, Washington DC's Dead Meadow like to find a groove and mine it until they hit magma, never straying from the one truth path of stoned-out riffage. Like Youthmovies there's a heavy late-60s/early-70s thing going on but here it's the bluesy rocking of Cream or proto-metal chugging of early UFO over more esoteric prog. Wah-wah invades everything, driving the narcotic blizzard that rages unabated for nearly an hour and half, tripped-out snatches of Spacemen 3 counter-pointing the old-fashioned, gas-pumping southern-fried feel of the lighter numbers. In the end it's all a bit too single-minded - a sprinkling of Youthmovies' restlessness wouldn't go amiss - but, like thick fog, sometimes it's comforting to lose yourself in the blinding endlessness of it.

*Dale Kattack*

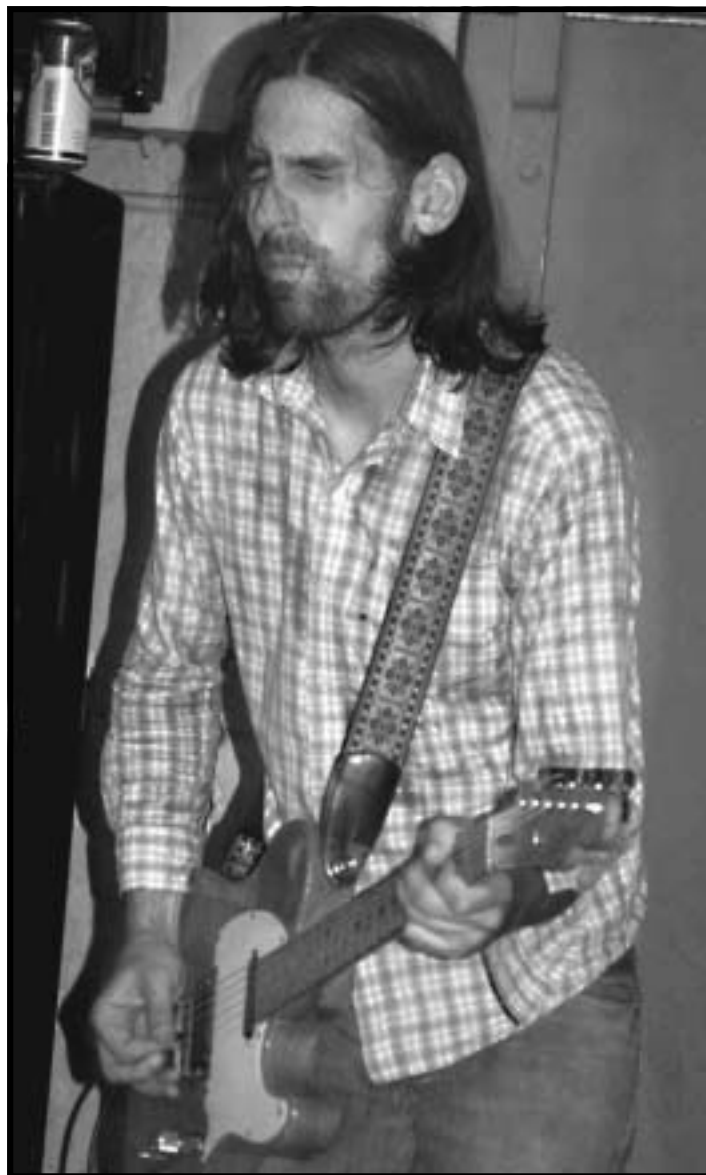
## BEELZEBOZO/EDUARD SOUNDING BLOCK

### The X

It didn't take them long. Sutable Case For Treatment's beautifully-named guitar tag team of Pete Bastard and Jimmy Evil have come back with a twelve-legged behemoth of a band. Cramming in everything from Pelican and Fantomas to a couple of passages that sound for all the world like Youthmovies if they'd grown up listening to Carcass, they're truly monstrous. Special mention, too, to the keyboards, which lift and augment the guitar pyrotechnics with choppy, angular chords. Sure, there are signs that it's only their third show: some of the changes can sound forced, and sometimes the vocals add little to the overall effect, but there's every sign they'll easily eclipse the memory of their former outfit (some achievement in its own right). In the future, there will be B-movies along the lines of *Godzilla vs. Eduard Sounding Block*. I know who my money's on.

Beelzebozo are just about able to follow that by relying on some inventive guitar work, which at its best chugs along like 'Meantime'-era Helmet, and when their vocalist really lets fly, there's something pleasingly redolent of Kyuss about the whole affair. Alas, the set begins to plod by the mid-section, with little dynamism and few sparks of genuine inventiveness to suggest they're doing more than aping their idols. Just as we're starting to feel bad for decrying the lack of originality in a straightforward old-school rock band (after all, not every band needs to reinvent the power chord), Beelzebozo launch into a couple of charmless covers, lending them the air of a novelty band formed by some off-duty bouncers. It's a shame, as they've got it in them to dig out some of the outré and downright daring inspiration of, well, Eduard Sounding Block, to pluck a name at random.

*Stuart Fowkes*



Dead Meadow photo by RIPH Images

## ZATORGUS/RAGGASSAURUS/NEIL NAYER/MARIANA MAGNAVITA

### The X

"When you play a gig, dress as if you are going to see your bank manager," was once good advice. Now your bank manager might live in the Seychelles or Azores. Looking at the acts at The X tonight one feels an unfamiliar landscape is passing but with some clear landmarks. Mariana Magnavita opens proceedings with 'London London', a song of exile from Brazil, followed by originals like 'Cancer Moon' and 'Gypsy Girl'. A work in progress is 'Smuggler's Land', which, with sapphire eyes and turquoise seas, evokes the samba world of Baden Powell. Neil Nayer carries on this theme of changing landscapes with several songs about his journey to Africa, including 'Street Children', but ends with a comment of the strange juxtapositions of modern times through Kenny Rogers' 'The Gambler'.

Raggasaurus and Zatorgus then show how the landscape has shifted in terms of the transition from rhythm and blues to beats. In Raggasaurus' case a young English band behind Tunisian vocalist Khaled show great rhythmic versatility in a set which includes sounds and beats that defy the scale of band in delivery. Neat brass riffs, poly-rhythmic drums, accented solos and driving vocals create a *tour de force*. By contrast Zatorgus riff by understatement, with is a blend of psychedelic sounds with featured guitar and vocals in an oblique King Crimson-meets-Radiohead style.

Overall the landscape is a blend of nylon-acoustic lounge and electric dance in the world music vein across the divide of rhythm and blues to beats. What it shows is the paradox that unusual juxtapositions can manifest what the DNA of business plans cannot: the coded fusion of music across cultures has now created a new milieu where the world is local-global.

*Peter Galpin*

## KRS-ONE

### The Coven

Rising South London hip hop stars Lowkey and Logic kick things off nicely tonight, sparring off each other with precision and style. Also known as New World Order ('better run for the border') their DJ Snips rocks hard and their take on international politics is as sharp as it is sobering.

For the initiated, finding KRS-One at The Coven is akin to Metallica playing the Port Mahon. Bounding onstage to a hero's welcome from the (interestingly 95% white) audience he radiates energy and true professionalism. He's unquestionably one of the key figures of hip hop, a position held since the mid-80s days of Boogie Down Productions, his duo with the late Scott La Rock, the coolest social warrior ever to walk the earth. Since then he has remained prolific and influential, though never sharing the limelight or success of more recent artists. This is partly deliberate, as a guardian of what he calls 'real hip hop' he rejects all the trappings of wealth and commercial success in favour of consciousness-raising and education; in fact he was last in town speaking at the

Oxford Union. This stance has led to numerous beefs with other rappers, though most acknowledge his status.

His simple approach extends to his music, and the backing tracks are always understated to the point of being disappointing, but no-one's complaining tonight. Running through material from the whole breadth of his career, from 1987's 'Criminal Minded' to the recent 'Hip Hop Lives', he exudes passion and honesty, a refreshing counterpoint to some of today's so-called stars. Yet there's always been something of a contradiction in his stance: he founded the Stop the Violence movement in 1988, but has defended his later comment that "we cheered when 9/11 happened", and some of his lyrics would get him kicked out of a Quaker meeting. One thing he's never been is boring, and you could cut the excitement in The Coven with a knife, a club too often ignored but perfect for a show like this. KRS-One; Knowledge Reigns Supreme Over Nearly Everyone. I wouldn't argue with that.

**Art Lagun**

## FLIES ARE SPIES FROM HELL /

### P.Y.E / HREDA

### The Cellar

Is it just me, or doesn't it seem like not another week goes by when a new post rock band emerges in this town? In any case, Oxford's most recent birthing, Hreda, can rest easy, as they quickly ascend to near the top of the pile. Eschewing bass completely, the twin guitars entwined brilliantly to create a sound not too dissimilar from those old punk stalwarts At The Drive-In, albeit without the caterwauling and gesticulation. Precise and dynamic, their awesomeness only serves to emphasise their embryonic status. Spectacular.

Ah, reunion gigs: officially the New Black. Aping the recent spate of reformations, P.Y.E embody the old adage that the magic is still there, if only a tad diluted. Cliché aside, the now absolutely rammed venue laps it up and even this gentle soul recognises a few of the older (and far better) gems. But that could just be the nostalgia talking. When reality hits, we realise that although P.Y.E have

spent two years away, you can't help but think that they should have just continued gigging – it may have spurred them to outdo the raft of more superior bands that have formed in their wake.

One of which is Flies Are Spies From Hell, who give it 100% tonight in an effort to make the dwindling crowd realise that the departees have made one huge mistake. Cascading keyboard motifs are spewed forth at Rachmaninoff levels of breakneck pace, while set closer 'You Are Making Me Nervous; You've Got To Stop This' climaxes in a tornado of hair and dagger-like stabbing guitar. Lacking the crowd-pulling ability of reminiscence, they are nevertheless the better band. And above all, you get the impression that these guys are having an incredible amount of fun with this post rock lark, at a time when seriousness is the order of the day. All we need now is that ATD-I reformation and we're sorted.

**Matt Bayliss**

## The Wheatsheaf

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Doors 8pm / £4

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**DESERT STORM + DJ'S RAMONE / SPARKY / SMELT 616 / MR MASSACRE**

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## the port mahon

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4<sup>th</sup> Permanent Vacation presents The Serfs / Smear Campaign / Lex, lee, David & Toby  
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100 Bullets Back / The Sweeny plus very special mystery guest: The Bosh  
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All-Dayer  
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## A SILENT FILM

### Ultimate Picture Palace

If there was ever a band whose EP *had* to be launched in a cinema, then it's A Silent Film. Quite aside from the name, they're an act whose music is wedded to visual spectacle. And so it's the Ultimate Picture Palace, be-rigged in fairy lights and exuding shabby charm, that sees the launch of 'The Lamplight'. It's a wonderful, unusual setting that allows for the kind of

audience-intimacy that you're never going to get at your bog-standard pub venue. It also provides a fitting canvas for the band's arthouse screen-shows. Backed by projected images from a flipped-through scrapbook – an assemblage of musical scores, photos, lyrics, anatomy theatre, nostalgia – and surrounded by synchronised TV sets, they are as exciting visually as they

are musically.

From the sucker-punch of the opener, with its three drummers and frenetic energy, A Silent Film announce themselves as very much a finished product. They manage to be both visceral cavalry charge and subtle-textured, with guitars cutting serrated edges into lush piano parts. At times poppy – almost lightweight – at times plumbing murkier depths, they never lose sight of themselves. One of the more understated numbers – a lovely, lost-at-sea song, all dreamy-drunk and quavery shimmer – particularly stands out tonight, a personal touch in their general expansive range.

As all band members flick-flack from instrument to instrument, Rob's reverberated vocals layer up on top of each other. Whilst this makes the lyrics difficult to decipher, it also allows them to become part of an aural collage that chimes with the visual effects, and these elements are never far divorced from each other. There are times when the band's tendency to see themselves as a composition misfires – Rob's posing between two giant mug shots of himself is striking, yes, but also seems somewhat megalomaniac. But then, cinema is all about spectacle.

Assured, complex and intelligent, this is a band that seems poised on the brink of greatness. Damn, they've already got a Glastonbury slot under their belts. There's a famous George Jean Nathan quote that claims wishing for movies to be articulate is about as sensible as wishing for drama to be silent. Offering articulate drama, A Silent Film prove that it needn't be an either/or.

*Emily Gray*



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# JONQUIL + GREAT ESKIMO HOAX + MEPHISTO GRANDE

## The Cellar

You've got to love duos. With the Oxford scene lacking somewhat in that department, it's always great to see Mephisto Grande conveying the jocular fun of the minimal set-up. Ex-Suitable Case For Treatment members Liam Ings-Reeves and Pete Ward carry across much of their previous band's metal heaviness and perverted folk inflections into a refreshing mix of ambience, twisted brooding Casio keys and blues hollering. As ever, Liam's voice is deathly and fantastically guttural, and his trim suede shoes furiously pacing a sweaty venue floor is always a brilliant sight to behold.

Next we have a case of a band's idea to tune ratio going tediously out of balance. Birmingham trio Great Eskimo Hoax are obviously brimming full of catchy riff schemes and keyboard hooks, but laid down and strung in the most coherent way they are not. Their innocuous math-y mélange resembles a pleasant enough, chilled-out Foals, and isn't bad *per se*. For a trio, there are too many superfluous instruments knocking around, too many fleeting ideas that don't cement themselves in the ear. However appealing parts of their songs may be, GEH will have to try harder to stand away from the many homogenous math/post rock influenced bands

that fill so many support slots of late.

With not that much room for them in this review, and with many already written in this magazine under their belt, let's just say Jonquil are performing the best they ever have. A set replete in glorious new numbers with a line-up that seems to have stuck wonderfully. 'Summer Sun', which featured on Wire Magazine's 'Tapper' CD last month, is the gig's highlight. An epiphany for Hugo and his cohorts, a euphoric experience of the crowd, from the look of their faces. All together now: "And all the towns we build..!"

*Pascal Ansell*

## ROSE MELBERG / GREGORY WEBSTER / ROBIN ALLENDER / ANTON BARBEAU

### The Port Mahon

Californian singer-songwriter and honorary Oxfordian Anton Barbeau is as mad as his hair, and thank heavens for that. He shares the stage at this Swiss Concrete club night with his guitar and the equally charismatic Su Jordan on backing vocals. Anton is the consummate cult figure as the pair rip through catchy psychedelic pop songs, including set highlight 'You Can Move A Mountain' with its Beatles-y chorus.

Bristol lad Robin Allender may have a tender voice in the vein of Gary Lightbody and Joe Pernice, but it really is only accompaniment to the real show stealer here – his ability with an electric guitar. Mellow, soothing and technically dazzling, Robin wows a packed audience, whose deathly silence gives due credit to the sets wonderful ambience.

Next up another cult hero: Gregory Webster, former frontman of Razorcuts and later Sportique and Carousel. Although I'm unfamiliar with Greg's previous incarnations I'm surprised by his singing: the image before me and the voice I hear just don't seem to marry. I can imagine with a full band his fey singing would be perfectly balanced, and many here who are fans of his past work are happy indeed, but it isn't until Rose Melberg joins him for the last few numbers that I become enamoured of it all: then it's lovely stuff.

Rose, of course, is the reason why so many people are here tonight. Now resident in Canada, but originally from Sacramento, California, she's come a long way from her early crunchy guitar punk days with Tiger Trap and then later The Softies. One thing remains, though – Rose's honest, velvet-smooth voice. Transparent and almost childlike, similar in many ways to The Cardigans' Nina Persson or Katherine Williams, every word is light and airy as the breeze outside, but hits heavily where it counts. Alongside her backing singer, Rose guides us through a heart-warming set that leaves the audience wanting much, much more.

*Katy Jerome*

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*Every Tuesday - Shush Open Mic* – Come Sing / Play / Listen. 8pm FREE; All Welcome

*Sat 1<sup>st</sup> Exposure at The X presents The Heartwear Process / support* 8:30pm £4

*Sun 2<sup>nd</sup> Electric Jam* - Come jam with The X Men play/sing/listen. All welcome. 8pm FREE

*Thu 6<sup>th</sup> Grinning Spider Acoustic presents Dan Austin / Chris Thompson / supports* 8.30pm £4

*Fri 7<sup>th</sup> Script / Agents of Jane* 8.30pm £3

*Sat 8<sup>th</sup> Wittstock Fund Raiser. Acts TBC* 8.30pm £4

*Wed 12<sup>th</sup> Jazz At The X Presents Alison Bentley Quartet with Ewan Baird on Sax* 8.30pm £5

*Thu 13<sup>th</sup> Tamarind Sun / Sons of Albion* 8.30pm £4

*Fri 14<sup>th</sup> Gammy Leg presents Tandara Mandara / Anton Barbeau / Foxes!* 8.30 £4

*Sun 16<sup>th</sup> Electric Jam.* 8pm FREE

*Wed 19<sup>th</sup> Gappy Tooth Industries present Beelzebozo / support* 8.30pm

*Thu 20<sup>th</sup> Caine / support* 8.30pm £4

*Fri 21<sup>st</sup> Grinning Spider presents Space Heroes of The People / Easy Tiger / Dead Letter Society* 8.30pm £4

*Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> DJ Cool Mr. Cee & DJ Sid G playing the best in old skool soul, disco, reggae and r'n'b.* 8.30pm £3

*Wed 26<sup>th</sup> Jazz At The X Presents A Jazz Jam. Come and jam with the house band, lead by Paul Jefferies* 8.30pm FREE

*Thu 27<sup>th</sup> SelectaSound presents Little Fish / The Subterraneans / Hangman Charlie / The Sidewinders* 8.30 £4

*Fri 28<sup>th</sup> Live At The X presents TBA* 8.30pm £4

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# DEMOS

*Please read the conditions below before submitting a demo, or we won't review it.*

## DEMO OF THE MONTH

### 50ft PANDA

It's all about the riffs, say 50ft Panda, and they're not wrong. We counted seventy twelve hundred and eleven big old bastard riffs during the course of this demo, some of which had been stolen from the back of Led Zeppelin's tour van back in 1972 and one of which Tony Iommi dropped down the back of the sofa when very, very stoned one afternoon. The rest are simply riffs 50ft Panda thought might be handy for banging nails into concrete walls or pinning the neighbours to the floor of a Saturday night. Frenetic but not frantic, intricate but not overly precious, heavy but not messily so, drummer Chris Hutchinson and guitarist Tom Waters are a whole heap of simple, bulldozing fun. There may be talk of bands like Lightning Bolt, Melvins and Kyuss in their accompanying letter, but really this is vintage hard rock from a land before time. Stick Robert Plant or Ozzy in front of this racket and the likes of Mojo would go mad for it. Not that they need a vocalist; the guitar does the talking and it speaks loud enough for ten. Or should that be eleven?

super unleaded. FFFF also have a drummer called Max Camp, which we like to think is a button Pet Shop Boys might have on their mixing desk.

### HEROIN ANGEL

Abingdon's Heroin Angel include their MySpace address on their demo but when we take a look, it's some heavy-duty American hip hop and some pictures of a stripper. Which isn't quite what we were expecting. But then we weren't quite expecting the malevolent electro hardcore contained on this CD. After some moody atmospherics we're grabbed by the hair and screamed at to keep up as Heroin Angel utilise giant chugging guitar riffs to bludgeon a six-minute path of destruction through the Nightshift office, pausing once in a while for some oddly cheesy female pop vocals. It's all a bit OTT and epic but hard not to get carried away by, especially since you always feel the guttural chap up front will probably bite your facial features off if you even think about looking away. They lose it a bit on 'Twilight', coming on like a bunch of overly-serious hippies trying to copy the intro to 'Stairway To Heaven' but the dark and doomy 'She', with its nasty, almost subliminal vocal whispers, steers them back on course. Goths, eh, you just gotta love 'em.

### FEE FI FO FUM

Wobbly, skewiff instrumental jazz-core guitar noodling and mangling from a Thame-based duo whose primary influences would appear to be Hella and Oxes but whose opening track, 'Logan's Run', actually sounds a lot more like 80s weirdoes Stump, albeit without lyrics about fat Americans and chips. Oh, and then there's the middle bit of 'A Donkey Punch Fallacy' that is nothing more and nothing less than Status Quo's rockaboogie with a knowing lo-fi twinkle in its eye. Fee Fi Fo Fum explain that there are a good few mistakes left uncorrected on the demo, but they didn't want to be "perfectionist wankers" by re-doing them. We reckon they secretly are perfectionists, a bit like Les Dawson when he used to play duff notes on the piano when really he was a virtuoso. Whatever, we didn't notice anything amiss, though given the lurching, chugging nature of the music, we just assumed it was all part of the plan to make music that could soundtrack a malfunctioning android trying to walk home from the pub after eight pints of

### THE BLITZ CARTEL

More tonsil torture, this time from Blitz Cartel, a band whose grasp of tunes and timing, in fact any kind of musicality, is so loose that they might as well simply be a recording of a closing time punch-up. Not that that's such a terrible thing when they're bulldozing through the rudimentary thrash of 'I'm Feeling Fine' like a bunch of yobs who just got dumped off the bill of a Conflict gig for lacking finesse, but when they try and do anything a bit different (for which read slowing things down a bit) the cracks open up, showing why the vocalist really should stick to shouting and screaming and why the drummer might consider a career in... well, anything other than percussion. 'Jojo' sounds like it's trying to be something that perhaps once resembled funk, or maybe reggae, but is now just a tattered bundle of rags on a squat floor, but by the end they've relented and gone back to shouting and hitting everything very fast, which again bares only a passing resemblance to what you might call music, but at least sounds like it's enjoying itself. More snakebite, anyone?

## DEADBEAT CAVALIER

This is a bit more like it in the punk stakes – a twelve-song demo from Deadbeat Cavalier clocking in at a mere 27 minutes, each three-chords-and-the-truth protest anthem segueing neatly, if noisily, into the next to the point that tracks become almost indistinguishable from one another. Not that such trivialities matter since it's the band's mission to shout at you until you take to the streets and overthrow the fascist dictatorship we currently live under. With song titles like 'Controlled Apathy', 'Evolution or Revolution' and 'Toffshop', Deadbeat Cavalier know which side of the class war their bread is buttered and are here to rally an army of angry street urchins with some simple, rabble-rousing protest punk that tends to make Sham 69 sound like Emerson Lake and Palmer. But we like it. Because it reminds us that once upon a time music really did try to change the world and wasn't just there to sell cars and coffee (something the band tackle with yobbish charm on 'Artists Against The Music Industry'). The fact that Deadbeat Cavalier sound like they belong to an era when there was a Socialist Worker paper seller on every street corner and Maggie was there to be lynched just makes us think that maybe we need bands like this more than ever.

## MY OWN CONSPIRACY

Perhaps we could employ Deadbeat Cavalier to shout at this lot for a few days and maybe kick a bit of rock and roll life into them (as if Deadbeat cavalier would ever do anything as conformist as be employed...). My Own Conspiracy describe themselves as "Old skool influences... modern sound", and in a manner they do reflect modern society's resigned collapse into a pizza-addled torpor: chugging, single-gear heavy rock that really needs to match its huff and puff with just a dash of invention, subtlety or anything reflecting life. Thud, thud, thud, shout, shout, shout they go, trying to match Metallica's thrash pomp in the same way a 30-stone man might try to catch up with a bus as it pulls away from the stop. "If you want peace, you must be prepared for war", they declare on 'Bitter End'. And by the same token, if you want to send demos like this for review, you must be prepared to be kicked from pillar to post. Come on, fifty squat thrusts now! Make a fucking effort!

## DR SLAGGLEBERRY

Not sure why Dr Slaggleberry sent this CD in for review since it's obviously a work in progress. Four instrumental tracks of

urgently funky heavy rock that are barely distinguishable from each other. The letter claims none of the tracks has a title yet and they're still looking for a vocalist and it shows. While they've left their old ska-funk-metal leanings mostly behind them and started to embrace more angular math-rock tendencies, this demo does sound like it's waiting around for Anthony Kiedis or Robert Plant to phone their vocal lines in. To their credit the band are tight and know how to keep things compact, but what you really want to do is sit them down and make them listen to Sunn0))) for 24 hours solid until their little ears bleed and brain matter seeps out of their noses.

## TREV WILLIAMS

More lachrymose acoustic balladeering from Faringdon's prolific songsmith, still showing no sign of morphing into Iggy Pop any time soon. Here Trev just about keeps the lid on the self-pity over three tracks, the first of which, 'Don't You Know Me', might be his most accomplished vocal showing yet, for all the song's basic old-fashioned nature. Less successful is 'Hide & Seek' where Trev goes all timorous and sounds like a shaky old man about to expire, even as he tells us to fight the (possibly metaphorical) bomb.

## THE DEMO DUMPER

## TAGBAE

Ah yes, the sweet, soporific sound of slowly decomposing self pity in a cellophane bag. Add a brick and watch it drown. It's the only fun you'll get with Tagbae, a name which in itself sounds like a tramp coughing up a bit of dead lung tissue. Humdrum is far too exciting a word to describe this whining heap of distilled musical puke. Listening to these four songs is like dying slowly inside as they send you into a depression-induced coma and suddenly you know how a lobster must feel as the water in the pan gradually reaches boiling point. And like lobsters on a hob, we start to scream. In an ocean of troughs, the low point comes with 'Soak Up The Positives' (the only positive we could soak up being that the demo does eventually come to an end) wherein singer Andrew Douglas asks, amid a chorus of 'Woah woah woahs' (or should that be "Woe woe woes"?). "Where is my family at?". Andy, mate, they left home while you were upstairs having another cry. They said they couldn't stand the relentless misery. It was bringing them all down. Even the budgee They've asked that you don't try and contact them. Or write any more songs.

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

**IMPORTANT:** no review without a contact address and phone number (no email or mobile-only). No more than four tracks on a demo. If you can't handle criticism, please don't send us your demo. Nightshift accepts no responsibility for deflated egos.



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