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# NIGHTSHIFT

## Oxford's Music Magazine

Free every  
month.  
Issue 166  
May  
2009



# PUNT 2009

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# NEWS

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**SMILEX, THE FAMILY MACHINE, WITCHES and THE BLACK HATS** have been confirmed for the **Riverside Stage** at this summer's **Cornbury Festival**. The two-day live music festival takes place over the weekend of **11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> July** in the picturesque grounds of **Cornbury Country Park**, near Charlbury. Other bands performing on the Riverside stage include Mano de Dios, The New Forbidden, King B, Dead Like Harry, Archangel, Billy Pure and The Elrics.

As announced in last month's Nightshift the main headliners for Cornbury will be **Scouting For Girls** (Saturday) and **Sugababes** (Sunday). They are joined by Sharleen Spiteri, The Pretenders, Joe Jackson, The Magic Numbers, Dodgy, Boy Least Likely To, The Damned, Teddy Thompson, I Am Kloot, The Peatbog Fairies, Eddi Reader, Stornoway and more.

**Tickets for Cornbury** are on sale now, priced £110 for adult camping tickets, or £65 for under-16s with under-5s and over-70s free. Day tickets are also available. Call the ticket line on **0871 472 0420** or visit **[www.cornburyfestival.co.uk](http://www.cornburyfestival.co.uk)** for full details.

**TRISTAN & THE TROUBADOURS and THE EPSTEIN** have been confirmed as headliners for this year's **Charlbury Riverside Festival**, which takes place over the weekend of **20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> June**. Witney's promising newcomers Tristan and the Troubadours top the Saturday bill and are joined by Thin Green Candles, Smilex, Winnebago Deal, Sextodecimo and Desert Storm,

amongst others, while country rock favourites The Epstein headline Sunday, on a bill that includes Two Fingers of Firewater, Billy Pure, Relay, The Bangalore Torpedoes and Man Make Fire. The weekend festival is free. Visit **[www.riversidefestival.com](http://www.riversidefestival.com)** for full line-up and news.

**CORNERSHOP** are the latest band to be added to the bill for the inaugural **Indie Guitar Music Festival**. The three-day live music festival takes place over the weekend of **24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> July** at Crown Farm, Ascott-Under-Wychwood in West Oxfordshire.

The indie hitmakers join a bill that includes **Starsailor, The Holloways, British Sea Power, Blakfish, Mungo Jerry, The Complete Stone Roses, Thea Gilmore** and **The King Blues**. Pigeon Detectives and Teddy Thompson will not now be appearing.

The Friday of the festival has been set aside as an unsigned bands day with local bands able to apply to perform at the 7,000-capacity event, with the chance of winning an Indie Guitar Company endorsement and recording time at the company's studio.

The festival is also offering a series of deals on tickets, including flexi-tickets, free prizes for ticket buyers and free kids' tickets. The flexi-tickets mean that fans can swap their wristbands with friends if they don't wish to attend every day of the festival. Additionally a random selection of the first 2,000 tickets sold will come complete with a unique Indie Festival limited edition guitar. Finally, the first 500



**SUPERGRASS AND ASH** have been confirmed as the headliners for this year's **Truck Festival**. Truck takes place at Hill Farm in Stevenston over the weekend of the **25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> July**.

Ash top the main stage bill on the Saturday night, along with former-Can legend **Damo Suzuki**. Supergrass' Sunday night headline set climaxes a special Oxford day, featuring a huge array of local bands, old and new. **The Candyskins** will join Supergrass on the main stage. Other acts confirmed so far include Red Light Company, Detroit Social Club, Yacht, As I Watch You From Afar, Pulled Apart By Horses, Calories, Errors, Chew Lips, Broken Records, Gary Louris and Mark Olson, plus former-Incredible String Band member Mike Heron.

A few remaining **Truck tickets** are on sale, priced **£70** from **[wegottickets.com](http://wegottickets.com)** or other outlets around Oxfordshire – visit **[www.thisistruck.com](http://www.thisistruck.com)** for full details.

Alternatively, fans can buy a Supertrucker ticket for £110 which includes entry to this month's **Wood Festival**. Wood, Truck's environmentally-conscious sister festival, which will be run entirely on renewable energy, takes place over the weekend of **15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> May** at Braziers Park, near Wallingford. Among the acts performing are Brakes, Meic Stephens, Dodgy and local favourites Jonquil and Stornoway. Weekend tickets are £55, with under-15s free.

Meanwhile, Truck teams up with local live music club **You! Me!**

**Dancing!** for a May bank holiday weekend of gigs around town, entitled Convoy. Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> sees Xcerts, Dusty & The Dreaming Spires, and Tired Irie at the Jericho Taver, while Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> at the same venue features The Joy Formidable and Dartz!. On Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> Rolo Tomassi play the O2 Academy, along with Gradients and Pulled Apart By Horses. Tickets for each gig are on sale now from **[wegottickets.com](http://wegottickets.com)**, with a weekend all-gigs ticket available for £15.

children will qualify for a free ticket with each adult ticket sold.

The festival will be hosted by Kiss FM's Justin Wilkes. Other attractions include an XFM indie

disco on the Saturday night and an artists' signing area as well as some 30 acts appearing across two stages. For full details, visit **[www.indieguitarfestival.com](http://www.indieguitarfestival.com)**.



**STORNOWAY** have been selected to play at the year's Glastonbury Festival. The local folk-rock stars were one of a handful of bands picked from thousands of entrants to the annual **Glastonbury Emerging Talent** competition, winning over a panel of judges that included festival organisers Michael and Emily Eavis as well as Radio 1's Huw Stephens. The band have also been picked to perform at the **Radio 1 Big Weekend** in Swindon over the weekend of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> May – the largest free festival in Europe – alongside Lily Allen, Dizzee Rascal and Franz Ferdinand. They will play on the BBC Introducing Stage on the Saturday night.

A busy summer of festivals continues for Stornoway when they headline the Saturday night of **Wood Festival** on **16<sup>th</sup> May**, as well as appearances at Wychwood, Cornbury and Winterwell festivals. The band will also be releasing their first nationally-distributed single on 8<sup>th</sup> June. Long-time favourite 'Zorbing' comes out on 7" vinyl and digital release, backed with 'On The Rocks'. Visit **[www.myspace.com/stornoway](http://www.myspace.com/stornoway)** for a full list of upcoming gigs.

# NEWS

## OXFORD GUITAR GALLERY

hosts a special concert by legendary bassist Doug Wimbish (*pictured*) and drummer Will Calhoun on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June at The North Wall Arts Centre in Summertown. As well as being bandmates in funk-metal pioneers Living Colour, the pair boast an incredible legacy, with Wimbish being part of Sugarhill Records' in-house band before playing with Madonna, Depeche Mode and Tackhead. Calhoun has drummed for BB King and Public Enemy amongst others. For more information and ticket details, call OGG on 01865 553777.



**BBC OXFORD INTRODUCING** has introduced a new tool that allows bands to upload their music directly to the show's producers. By registering on the BBC Oxford website acts can bypass the need for CDs or web links. To register and use the upload tool, visit [bbc.co.uk/music/introducing/uploader](http://bbc.co.uk/music/introducing/uploader).

And as ever, don't forget to tune into BBC Oxford Introducing every Saturday evening between 6-7pm at 95.2fm. The dedicated local music show features the best Oxford releases as well as interviews and studio sessions from local bands, demos and a clubbing and gigging guide. The show is also available to listen to online all week at [bbc.co.uk/oxford](http://bbc.co.uk/oxford).

**HORACE ANDY's** gig at the O2 Academy on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April has been put back to Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May. Tickets for the Jamaican reggae legend's rescheduled show are on sale now, priced £16, from [wegottickets.com](http://wegottickets.com) or the Academy box office. Tickets for the original date are still valid or refunds available from point of purchase.

## CHIPPING NORTON THEATRE

are seeking three local composers, musicians or bands to collaborate with a team of professional playwrights on a project exploring the relationship between music and writing. Play: A Festival Of Music In The Theatre will be performed at Chipping Norton Theatre as well as at Latitude Festival in the summer. Successful bands or musicians will have all costs covered as well as tickets for Latitude. All genres of music will be considered but musicians must be prepared to collaborate with the playwrights. Deadline for applications is Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May. Email [Katy@chippingnortontheatre.com](mailto:Katy@chippingnortontheatre.com) for full details.

**THIEVES** return to live action for the first time in two years with a special one-off show at the O2 Academy on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> August. The band, formed by brothers Hal and Sam Stokes, originally from south Oxfordshire, spent much of the last few years based in Los Angeles, touring the States on numerous occasions, before announcing a split in 2007. Tickets for the show are on sale now, priced £7, from [wegottickets.com](http://wegottickets.com).

## OXFORD CYCLE WORKSHOP

host their annual Cycle Oxford Festival on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May, including a special piece of music composed for 50-100 bicycle bells that will be played during a cycle



**BIG RED SKY RECORDS** releases four albums by Oxford acts over the next month. The label was set up by a collective of local musicians and will release new albums by **The Relationships**, **Les Clochards**, **My Friend Rachel** and **Grant** in May and June.

Martin Newton, who plays with both Grant and My Friend Rachel explained the idea behind the co-op label.

"In these days of home computers, recording software and social networking sites, it's easy for anyone with a bit of perseverance to record their own album – make up their own label name and put it out there. It's equally easy for great music to be ignored because there is just so much product out there.

"Big Red Sky was set up by a group of established musicians in Oxford with albums close to completion who decided it would be a good idea to pool their resources and knowledge to get maximum exposure.

"The first two Big Red Sky albums were due for release two years ago but only one of them, Grant's second album 'Apolaustic' was actually completed in time. Now the second of these albums, 'A Moment's Silence' by My Friend Rachel, is finally ready for release. In this time Grant has completed a further album, 'Skirr'. The following releases will be 'Space', by The Relationships, and 'Sweet Tableaux' by Les Clochards. All four of these albums will be released internationally, available from Amazon and for download through iTunes in the UK."

Grant, The Relationships and Les Clochards will play a special label launch night at the **Cellar** on **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June**, with Grant performing live for the first time in 10 years. My Friend Rachel are also hoping to perform, although they are currently preparing for a series of live dates in the USA later this year.

Big Red Sky are looking for more artists for their roster. For more information email [info@bigredsky.co.uk](mailto:info@bigredsky.co.uk) or visit [www.bigredsky.co.uk](http://www.bigredsky.co.uk).

treasure trail through Oxford, followed by a gig by Experimental Dental School at the Jericho Tavern in the evening. Experimental Dental School are also offering free downloads of their new album online at [www.experimental-dental.com/free](http://www.experimental-dental.com/free). Other events taking place on the day include a bicycle movie at the Ultimate Picture Palace and a fastest mechanic competition. To take part in the bike trail, email [mail@cycleoxford.com](mailto:mail@cycleoxford.com).

## BANDS FROM ABINGDON'S

**TWIN TOWNS**, Argentan in France, Sint-Niklaas in Belgium and the Vale of White Horse District's twin town, Colmar in France, join Abingdon bands for a live rock concert in the Abbey Grounds to celebrate Europe Day on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May, from 11am-6pm. Rock In The Park is organised by Abingdon Town Council and funded by the European Commission. Line-up information will be announced at [www.abingdon.gov.uk](http://www.abingdon.gov.uk).

**RESPONSE COLLECTIVE** had their music featured on the recent Red Dwarf comeback show. A special remix of the band's 'Tropical State' track was featured in episode 2 of the three-part 'Return To Earth' story, the first Red Dwarf stories for nine years. To hear the track and more by the band, visit [www.myspace.com/theresponsecollective](http://www.myspace.com/theresponsecollective).



**THE BLACK HORSE IN KIDLINGTON** is looking for bands to take part in a one-day mini-festival on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June. Blues, jazz, indie and acoustic acts interested should call Charlie on 01865 373154 / 07776 141 879.



# FAT LIL'S

LIVE MUSIC AND COMEDY CLUB

MAY	Event	Start	End
Fri 1 <sup>st</sup>	From The Jam – Russell Hastings	8.00	10.00
Sat 2 <sup>nd</sup>	THIN LIZZY EXPERIENCE	8.00	10.00
Wed 5 <sup>th</sup>	Open Decks (GGINYE) – Mix your favourite vinyl/cds on our decks	8.00	10.00
Thu 7 <sup>th</sup>	Dividing The Line + Proceed	8.00	10.00
Fri 8 <sup>th</sup>	Lost Chihuahua – Popular local cover band	8.00	10.00
Sat 9 <sup>th</sup>	ABSOLUTE BOWIE	8.00	10.00
Wed 13 <sup>th</sup>	Acoustic Lounge	8.00	10.00
Thu 14 <sup>th</sup>	Revolver Wilkey's Premier Rock Club Night	8.00	10.00
Fri 15 <sup>th</sup>	Larry Miller Band	8.00	10.00
Sat 16 <sup>th</sup>	Cloud Nine	8.00	10.00
Sun 17 <sup>th</sup>	Riverside Festival Warm-Up Show	8.00	10.00
Wed 20 <sup>th</sup>	Isy Suttie (Peep Show)	8.00	10.00
Thu 21 <sup>st</sup>	First Signs Of Frost + Support	8.00	10.00
Sat 23 <sup>rd</sup>	The Fury	8.00	10.00
Wed 27 <sup>th</sup>	Von Braun + June	8.00	10.00
Thu 28 <sup>th</sup>	The Empty Vessels	8.00	10.00
Fri 29 <sup>th</sup>	BON GIOVI	8.00	10.00
Sat 31 <sup>st</sup>	Big Blues Jam	8.00	10.00

[www.fatlil.co.uk](http://www.fatlil.co.uk) | Fat Lil's 64 Corn Street, Witney, OX28 6BS – Box Office 01993 703285 | WeGo Tickets



## DR SHOTOVER: World Of War-Dork

We here at the East Indies Club are rising to the challenges posed by the recession, I don't mind telling you. We now have a new drinking facility on the premises, in the space formerly occupied by our indoor Aunt Sally range; known as the Crunchy Bar, it sells only cheap measures of cooking sherry, past-its-sell-by-date barley wine, and – for the ladies – Bungey Taplow's Home-made Pear Cyder (but be warned – he cuts it with meths)... Meanwhile our weekly management committee



East Indies Club Online Gaming Committee

meetings have seen a few brainstorming sessions on the subject of potential fund-raising enterprises. Foggy Fairfax, who is related by marriage to Sir Low-Grade, presented us with a treatment for a new TV series. It features a humble-yet-warm-hearted detective bumbling round lots of picturesque Oxford locations, accompanied by a toff sidekick with a degree in Ancient Assyrian, arresting dodgy dons and exotic lady authors who have killed their chauffeurs etc. Foggy thought it would be a good pitch to potential sponsors if he called the eponymous hero "Inspector Randolph Hotel". We were all quite enthusiastic, though so far Foggy's attempts at contacting the bigwigs at Carlton have proved strangely unsuccessful... Last week one of our younger colleagues came up with an idea which at first a number of us found frankly too distastefully modern for words – the creation of a computer game. However, having retreated under an initial hail of beer glasses (with handles) and Mamma Mia commemorative plates, Young Pendlebury persevered with his presentation... and now, well, I have to say, I'm quite taken with the idea. Called "War-Dork", this massively multiplayer online role playing game involves one in a variety of gripping fantasy scenarios in an all-encompassing world – Spumefroth, The Kingdom of The Elves – where one may pursue epic adventures and romances from the safety of one's own squalid bedsitter, and one's online hero friends \*do not care at all\* that one is still in one's dressing gown at 4 o'clock in the afternoon with a three-day growth of stubble and a pizza box for a toilet... From now on, in fact, I no longer wish to be addressed as "Shotover" or "The Doctor"... please respect my online persona at all times and refer to me only as ... The Dwarf, GARG. See you in Spumefroth, Trollface! Cheers!

Next month: The Dwarf GARG addresses the nation on "My Favourite Fantasy Metal Bands".

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# WOOD

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# RELEASED

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## LES CLOCHARDS

### 'Sweet Tableaux'

*(Big Red Sky)*

Where the Mid West meets the Left Bank is the place Les Clochards inhabit, like a bunch of elegantly grizzled dilettantes, immersed in Bordeaux, Rimbaud and Johnny Cash.

Les Clochards' sweet magic is in mixing the warm homeliness of Parisian café folk with the earthiness of American country music – at the heart of which is the contrast between Ian Nixon's Cash-meets-Roy Orbison croon and Corinne Mateo's rich Gallic vocals. The two musical worlds aren't so far apart anyway and here they meld seamlessly, whether it's a prairie shimmer or a midnight stroll through an arty film noir set. The band's name is, of course, French for The Tramps, and the prevailing mood of the band's debut album is one of romantic regret through a red wine haze. There's a notable absence of bon vivre, even amid tales

of half-remembered parties, like 'Tango Borracho'.

Not that 'Sweet Tableaux' is unrelentingly melancholy. Opening number 'Pride Prevents Pt.1' comes with ebullient accordion, shimmering surf guitar and Ian Nixon's powerfully grizzled Orbison croon all making for a carefree swing, while 'Lavinia' is possessed with campfire singalong jollity, again with Karen Cleave's accordion flourish to the fore. But, like close Oxford comrades The Relationships, as well as The Would-Be-Goods (with whom they share guitarist Pete Momtchiloff) Les Clochards exude a well-mannered feeling of tight-lipped sorrow, an autumnal shadow on the soul left by years of small but life-affecting mistakes. This is most apparent on 'Démodé', co-written by The Relationships' Richard Ramage.

A bunch of local indie godfathers (between them they have histories that take in Talulah Gosh, The No and The Anyways) playing French jazz waltzes and country ballads might



seem contrived, but what Les Clochards manage is a fine balance of moods and a mature grasp of emotion that mean 'Sweet Tableaux' is one of the most subtly crafted and lyrically gripping albums by a local band you'll hear this year.

**Sue Foreman**

## NINE-STONE COWBOY

### 'Lack Of Hope & Glory'

*(Own Label)*

The defeatist title of Nine-Stone Cowboy's new single is typical of Mark Cope's through-a-glass-darkly lyrical outlook. There's always a faded, chipped grandiosity to his songs, which carousel with an old world charm, while leaking bile and regret from their rusted joints. And so for all its playful electro-pop bubble, 'Lack Of Hope & Glory' retains the feel of a lachrymose trudge that more fully complement's Mark's jaded narrative and odd little lyrical throwaways even as it attempts some kind of crescendo towards its conclusion. We're left with the refrain, "I'm not superman / I do the best that I can". The former Candyskins man still has a knack for a decent tune. One day his ship will come in. And with his luck, he'll be sat waiting at the airport.

**Dale Kattack**



## GRANT

### 'Skirr'

*(Big Red Sky)*

Possessed of a voice that could blow the roof off a cathedral, Grant Baldwin never seems to do anything by halves when it comes to his music. In the late-80s he fronted local rock faves No Joy In Mudville, but his solo recordings since those days have revealed far more expansive horizons and, like one of his heroes, Scott Walker, Grant's mission seems to be to drag sounds, images, words from the very depths of his soul, like an opera singer reaching right down to hit those final, resonant notes that will sweep everything before them.

Grant's voice totally dominates this album, and rightly so – it's a fantastic, booming beast of a voice with a languid opulence about it that adds extra gravity to songs that never shy away from OTT subject matter – the legend of Prometheus for example – or delve into almost Gregorian depths. Sometimes you feel he's simply plucking words or phrases from the air because they sound weighty, but he gets away with it each time because his voice makes even the most preposterous lines sound natural.

Behind Grant are Martin Newton (from Witches) and Pete Marler (formerly of Suitable Case For Treatment) and their swirling, cascading industrial doom, while taking a back seat for the most part, is perfect backdrop, exploding, when its needed, in thunderous moments of disquiet, billowing church organ crescendos, scouring metallic bass or simple, spidery guitar effects. It's goth, but not as we know it, Jim.

Occasionally songs wander aimlessly – notably 'Below The Salt' – and certainly some people will find Grant's voice overbearing. But, like the late, great Rheinallt H. Rowlands, he makes a virtue of his operatic, opulent nature and, at his best, can take your breath away.

**Dale Kattack**

## MODERN CLICHÉS

### 'You Got To Tell Me'

*(Crash)*

There are times when you can merely sit in rapt awe at the scope and ambition of a great song: Nick Cave's 'Tupelo' for example, or maybe 'Bernadette' by The Four Tops – songs that humble the listener with their absolute vastness and beauty. More often, you're left, immersed in ennui, pondering the point of it all – the smallness and lack of ambition of music that creeps from composition to pigeonhole without leaving a mark.

All of which, in the case of Modern Clichés, is a bit like breaking a butterfly on a wheel, but four listens in and we're no closer to feeling anything beyond the vague sense that someone not faraway enough is making a bit of a noise. Even the band describe themselves as retro – hardly a crime in rock music, but here merely indicating you've heard it all done better before.

Modern Clichés tick various boxes, from The Kinks through The Jam to The Libertines, oozing a polite, lightweight fuzzy form of indie-punk that's about ten times more pleasant than having to listen to The Kooks, but has all the depth of Lady Cassandra O'Brien.

**Victoria Waterfield**

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## MR SHAADOW & SMILEX

### 'Look Out, There's A Black Man Coming (Rock Mix)'

(Quickfix)

Aerosmith and Run DMC set the ball rolling; the whole thing reached a creative peak with the soundtrack to the 1993 movie *Judgement Night*, and nowadays the rock-rap crossover is so ubiquitous as to barely warrant comment, but nevertheless a team-up between Oxford's premier hip hop star and the local band that most plays on rock'n'roll's spirit and legacy makes an intriguing proposition.

Having met at a local Love Music, Hate Racism benefit last year, Smilex here add their gutsy garage-metal noise to Mr Shadow's instant classic dismissal of casual racism and the pair work well together – Shadow's quickfire style lends itself well to a rock soundtrack (see also his recent collaboration with Baby Gravy), although such a beefed-up soundtrack does detract somewhat from the lyrics: lyrics full of biting wit and righteous anger, which simply beg to be heard and digested in their entirety. Still, a worthwhile effort in aid of a worthwhile cause: what would be really interesting is to hear a completely original song composed by the two parties together.

Dale Kattack



## DUOTONE

### 'In The Evening'

## KATE GARRETT BAND

### 'King Of The Birds'

(Garrett-Brown)

Husband and wife team Kate Garrett and Barney Morse-Brown's decision to launch their own label to release their music is very much in the spirit of the folk scene from where their music springs.

Barney is a classically-trained cellist, and his Duotone project – essentially just himself plus guest trumpeter Jim Dvorak on the EP's title track – drags subtle influences from both classical and folk, sparse, cloistered moments of bucolic contemplation in the wistful vein of Nick

Drake, Barney's hushed, reedy vocals comfortable in their reverie, trumpet, cello and sparingly plucked acoustic guitar drifting together to make for a misty whole that feels like it could dissipate in a strong breeze.

Kate's songs are, remarkably, even more ethereal, although backed by a full band – including Barney – there's a solidity to them also. Kate is possessed of a supremely limpid voice, strong but neither strident nor shrill, a seductive lullaby croon that brings out the rich emotive depths of songs like 'King Of the Birds' (reminiscent of Heidi Berry's magical 'Northshore Train') and the stunning, reflective 'Four Winds'.

Both EPs are worth investigating, adding to an increasingly enviable local folk music tradition. Kate's, in particular, is a CD to treasure.

Dale Kattack



# The Wheatsheaf

Live Music in May

Fri 1 <sup>st</sup>	MOIETY + JUNKIE BRUSH + BEAVER FUEL	8pm/£5
Sat 2 <sup>nd</sup>	MY SHIKOME + ANNERO + DEATH VALLEY RIDERS	8pm/£5
Fri 8 <sup>th</sup>	THE SCARAMANGA SIX + FIXERS + MINOR COLES	8pm/£5
Sat 9 <sup>th</sup>	COLLISIONS & CONSEQUENCES + UTE + VANISHERS	8pm/£5
Wed 12 <sup>th</sup>	BLACK HATS + RESPONSE COLLECTIVE	
	MARY'S GARDEN + PHANTOM THEORY	8pm/£5
Fri 15 <sup>th</sup>	HEARTS IN PENCIL + VICTORIA & JACOB	
	DEAR LANDLORD	8pm/£4
Sat 16 <sup>th</sup>	BEARD OF ZEUSS + SEXTODECIMO + K-LACURA	8pm/£5
Tue 19 <sup>th</sup>	NOUGHT + TITUS + JOE ALLEN BAND + THE A TEAM	
	FRANCIS PUGH & THE WHISKY SINGERS	7pm/£5
Wed 21 <sup>st</sup>	PHANTOM THEORY + EXIT INTERNATIONAL	
	KAMIKAZE TEST PILOTS + ADRENOCHROME	8pm/£4
Fri 22 <sup>nd</sup>	CHALK + THE HALCYONS + THE GOG	8pm/£5
Sat 23 <sup>rd</sup>	THE BLACK HATS + MOTOR CITY SHUFFLE	
	AIDEN CANADAY	8pm/£5
Sat 24 <sup>th</sup>	DRUNKENSTEIN + THE WOOKIES + HELEN PEARSON	8pm/£4

Every Monday – Oxford Inns Comedy Club (8-11pm) Every Thursday – The Spin Jazz (8-11pm)  
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# EXPERIMENTAL DENTAL SCHOOL

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# GIG GUIDE

## FRIDAY 1<sup>st</sup>

### JOHN OTWAY & FRIENDS' MAY

**MORNING MADNESS: The Cricketer's Arms (6am)** – The clown prince of punk plays his traditional May Morning show, with all the old favourites - 'Headbutts', 'Really Free' etc. as well as onstage lunacy and self-harm. The man's current backing band features Barry Upton, who was in Eurovision winners Brotherhood of Man before going on to produce Cheeky Girls and Steps. What's not to love?

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

## NME RADAR TOUR:

### O2 Academy

The latest NME-branded package tour leans heavily towards the current predilection for retro electro-pop and, as seems standard with these things, the quality is variable, but it'll be interesting to get a first live glimpse of **LA ROUX** given all that most folks will know of them thus far is a couple of actually-really-rather-good singles. Although regularly portrayed as a solo artist, La Roux are actually a duo – singer Elly Jackson and her songwriting partner Ben Langmaid, who doesn't perform live. Jackson is a folk singer-turned-electro-disco diva with a hair-do straight out of an old Flock Of Seagulls video and a love for all things Eurythmics, Yazoo and Prince. The band's early single, 'Quicksand', was a complete steal of 'When Doves Cry', while more recent output, like 'In For The Kill', steers closer to the linear synth lines of Depeche Mode and Human League. While others, like Little Boots, glance back at the early-80s, La Roux are fully immersed in that self-consciously futuristic era. Joining La Roux are gloomy electro-rock duo **HEARTBREAK**, who sound like Depeche Mode as they might have sounded if they'd been formed by Queen fans, plus Essex's **MAGISTRATES** with a squeaky take on indie-fied electro-funk. Finally Teesside's **CHAPMAN FAMILY** offer a musical sidestep with a thrash-pop that sometimes sounds like Sonic Youth eating Kaiser Chiefs. Which some might suggest wasn't such a bad idea.



## MAY

### KLUB KAKOFANNEY with JUNKIE

### BRUSH + BEAVER FUEL + MOIETY +

**FILM NOIR: The Wheatsheaf** – Another mixed bag of sounds at the monthly Klub Kak, with melodic thrash-punkers Junkie Brush, potty-mouthed indie-noise merchants Beaver Fuel, ethereal acoustic pop trio Moiety and melancholic indie rockers Film Noir.

**FRANK TURNER: The Cellar** – Fourth and final night of the folk-punk troubadour's local residency, performing a set of new songs for his fanclub. The gig is already sold out but Frank returns for a headline show at the Academy in October. Tonight's gig is followed by Skylarkin, with classic soul, ska, reggae and rock'n'roll with DJs Count Skylarkin' and Indecision.

**ISAAC'S AIRCRAFT + WOLVES OF VIRGINIA + WINTER KINGS: The Jericho Tavern** – Lively piano-led rocking from Cambridge's Isaac's Aircraft, plus jangly indie pop from Wolves of Virginia.

**BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon** – Classic soul, funk and r'n'b every week.

**RUSSELL HASTINGS: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Current lead singer of From The Jam, alongside Mssrs Foxton and Butler, tonight going it alone.

**GET DOWN: The Brickworks** – Weekly funk, afrobeat and Latin session.

**BEN WALKER: The North Wall Arts Centre** – Local acoustic singer-songwriter and self-acclaimed Myspace sensation.

**REGGAE & DUB SESSION: East Oxford Community Centre**

### SATURDAY 2<sup>nd</sup>

### TOUPE + HARRY ANGEL + DRUNKENSTEIN + THIN GREEN

**CANDLES: The Bullingdon** – Moshka club night with a welcome return for mental but inventive funk rockers Toupe, with leanings towards Mr Bungle. Gothic fuzz-punk and atmospheric pop from Harry Angel in support alongside darkly funky horror show rockers Drunkenstein and electro-dabblers Thin Green Candles.

### LA ROUX + HEARTBREAK + MAGISTRATES + THE CHAPMAN

**FAMILY: O2 Academy** – The latest NME package tour hits town – see main preview  
**MY SHIKOME + ANNERO + DEATH VALLEY RIDERS: The Wheatsheaf** – Full-pelt thrash-metal noise from My Shikome, plus instrumental metal riffage from Death Valley Riders.

**XCERTS + DUSTY & THE DREAMING SPIRES + TIRED IRIE + UTE: The Jericho Tavern** – First show of the May bank holiday Convoy team-up between Truck and You! Me! Dancing! finds Aberdeen's dreamy, folk-inflected popsters Xcerts alongside alt.country types Dusty and Leicester's Foals-inspired post-punk disco rockers Tired Irie.

### TRANSFORMATION / TRASHY / ROOM

**101: O2 Academy** – Three clubs in one night with indie and electro at Transformation; trashy pop, 80s and glam at Trashy, plus hardcore, metal, punk and alt.rock at Room 101.

### I WISH I KNEW + BOOG + THE DJINN:

**Folly Bridge Inn** – Holland's shoegazey post-rockers I Wish I Knew play a short UK tour, bringing their atmospheric Explosions In The Sky-meets-Slowdive noise. Acoustic flamenco trio The Djinn support.

**DOG SHOW + GENERAL BOVINE & THE JUSTICE FORCE 5 + KEYBOARD CHOIR + DESERT STORM + PAGAN WANDERER LU: The Cellar** – Fidgety electro rhythms and rave energy from Dogshow, plus superhero-obsessed trash rockers General Bovine, ambient synth orchestrations from Keyboard Choir and riff-tastic stoner metal from Desert Storm.

**THE THIN LIZZY EXPERIENCE: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Tribute to the Irish rock legends.

**THE YOU WEREN'T THERE BAND: The Royal Sun, Begbroke** – 60s psychedelia, from Cream to The Creation.

### SUNDAY 3<sup>rd</sup>

**THE JOY FORMIDABLE + DARTZ! + CALORIES: The Jericho Tavern** – Convoy keeps on trucking with rising nu-gaze noisemakers The Joy Formidable, coming in somewhere between Ride and The Breeders, plus angular rocking from Dartz!, coming in where Q & Not U's post-punk spikiness meets Idlewild's anthemic melodies. Restless Americanised indie rocking from Calories.  
**EYE-CON: The Black Horse, Kidlington**  
**TREV WILLIAMS: King Alfred's Head, Wantage** – Emotive acoustic rocking from the local songsmith.

### MONDAY 4<sup>th</sup>

**ROLO TOMASSI + GRAMMATICS + PULLED APART BY HORSES: O2 Academy** – Will we ever tire of Rolo Tomassi's frequent visits to town? Never! From the first time we encountered them virtually demolishing the Port Mahon, through assorted subsequent local shows, they never fail to cause our collective heart to skip several beats in giddy excitement. Young, rather sweet looking and utterly ferocious, with nods to Mr Bungle, The Locust, Dillinger Escape Plan and Babes In Toyland, theirs is a breakneck switchback rid through the complexities of angular math-rock and pure distilled hardcore rage. See them, love them, fear them. Leeds' prog and jazz-tinged guitar manglers support, along with Fugazi-inspired noisemakers Pulled Apart By Horses.  
**THE MARCUS MALONE BAND: The Bullingdon** – The Detroit guitarist returns to the Famous Monday Blues, kicking out a hard-rocking form of blues and soul that borders on metal at times, having made his name on the UK and European blues circuit in recent years.



**ALL-DAYER: The Hobgoblin, Bicester** (12pm) – All-day live rock gig in aid of the Sophie Lancaster Foundation, featuring sets from 14Ten, Broken Wings, Reload The Radio, Modern Clichés and many more.

**REDTRACK + TRIPWIRES + MODERN CLICHÉS: The Jericho Tavern** – First Daisy Rogers club night in Oxford, presenting Clash and Libertines-styled indie-punk from Redtrack, spaced-out shoegaze and new wave rock from Tripwires and Jam-styled rocking from Modern Clichés.

**SHANTI TOWN + NEIL NYAR + ED POPE: Dawson's Street Garden** (4-9pm) – Psychedelic rock with dub and electro grooves from Shanti Town, plus acoustic folk-pop from the supports.

## TUESDAY 5<sup>th</sup>

**SUNSHINE UNDERGROUND + BOY CRISIS + EXIT CALM: O2 Academy** – Leeds' indie-funkers return to action with a tour ahead of their forthcoming second album, the follow-up to 2006's 'Raise The Alarm', and following on from a tour support to Happy Mondays. Brooklyn's much-hyped Boy Crisis support, mixing post-punk funk and electro-disco into a fun funktronic whole. Barnsley's expansive, moody rockers Exit Calm open the show.

**THE BALKY MULE + FREDERICK STANLEY STAR + PHIL MORRISSEY + THRASH BANDICOOT: The Wheatsheaf** – Former Bristol underground rock scene stalwart Sam Jones, now based in Australia, takes his solo project Balky Mule out on the road, having played in Flying Saucer Attack, Third Eye Foundation, Minotaur Shock and Movietone previously, now creating sweet-natured electro-acoustic folk-pop somewhere between Hood and Kevin Ayres.

**JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon** – Free weekly live jazz club with special guests The Howard Peacock Quintet.

**OPEN MIC SESSION: Mason's Arms, Headington Quarry**

**MIS-SHAPES: The Cellar** – Indie disco and live bands.

## WEDNESDAY 6<sup>th</sup>

**HEAVEN'S BASEMENT + DESERT STORM + THE CRUSHING: The Bullingdon** – Classic Rock magazine's 2006



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Best New Band winners continue to keep it classic and, indeed, rock, with a ballsy mix of Guns'n'Roses, Motley Crue and Tigertailz, while Oxford's own Desert Storm offer their fresh twist on 70s heaviness ahead of their Punt performance.

**McFLY: The New Theatre** – Blimey, five years on from their inception, McFly are approaching veteran status. Not only that, they've gone indie, forming their own label after leaving Universal last year. The band's last album, 'Radioactive', was given away with copies of The Daily Mail last summer, so don't expect any great radical shift towards industrial grindcore, but their tenure as the teenie-rockers' band of choice remains stable for now.

**CANTERBURY + ALL FORGOTTEN + FRANCESQUA: O2 Academy** – Screamo noise with a classic rock edge from Canterbury, out on tour in support of new single, 'Friends? We're More Like A Gang'. Surrey's fellow post-hardcore types All Forgotten co-headline. **PHAT SESSIONS: The Cellar**  
**JUNE THE BAND + GLORIA CYCLES + THE MARMADUKES: The Jericho Tavern**  
**OPEN DECKS SESSION: Fat Lil's, Witney** – New local DJs night.

## THURSDAY 7<sup>th</sup>

**ELEPHANTS + RIDING GIANTS: The Cellar** – Vacuum Pop night with Kent's polyrhythmic rockers Elephants back after supporting Oxford Collapse a couple of months back, plus Worcester's fidgety math-pop types Riding Giants.

**DIVIDING THE LINE + PROCEED: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Worcester's metalcore outfit Dividing The Line head out on tour.

**OXJAM: The Bullingdon** – Oxfam benefit gig.

**THE UNCHOSEN + DR SLAGGLEBERRY + RED BLOOD SKY: Chinnor Social Club** – Thame's monthly Live At The Pavilion club showcases the best local heavy rock with prog-tinged, riff-heavy melodic metallers The Unchosen joined by instrumental math-core demons Dr Slaggleberry.

**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre**

**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon**

## FRIDAY 8<sup>th</sup>

**HOLY FUCK + IT HUGS BACK: O2 Academy** – Superb electro-rocking noise from the Canadian synth-manglers – *see main preview*

**AMAZING BABY + TRISTAN & THE TROUBADOURS + SECRET RIVALS: O2 Academy** – Anthemic blend of electro, funk, prog and folk from Brooklyn's Amazing Baby, former college-mates with MGMT and Boy Crisis. Rising local starlets T&TT ply their expansive Velvet Underground-inspired pop in support.

**DAN REED + BETHANY WEIMERS + DANNY CHIVERS: The Bullingdon** – Oregon's funk-metal pioneer Dan Reed leaves his Network in the past and moves into more eastern music and electronic-inspired territory as he comes to town to promote new album 'Coming Up For Air'. Sweet-natured acoustic songstress Bethany Weimers supports.

**SCARAMANGA 6 + FIXERS + MINOR COLES: The Wheatsheaf** – Quickfix Records



Friday 8<sup>th</sup>

## HOLY FUCK: O2 Academy

Toronto's Holy Fuck defy every lazy dismissal thrown at electronic music, injecting it all with the spectacle and thrills of the best organic rock music, as displayed by the band's last visit to Oxford in October. In short Holy Fuck are simply fantastic. The fact that their name alone means they'll never bother the charts hasn't stopped their music cropping up on *Match Of The Day* and the like, a hypnotic, propulsive blend of vintage synth-pop, krautrock and techno-prog that draws in strands of Can, Neu!, Numan, Trans-Am and Suicide. They're a five-piece, including two drummers, but the core of the band are synth and effects wizards Brian Borcherdt and Graham Walsh, whose intention was to create the sounds of great electronic music live without use of laptops or loops. They succeed due to their fevered onstage antics, playing everything live, switching and swapping instruments as the drummer knocks out an incessant, towering motorik rhythm. It's a militant party groove, all gleaming synth lines and bass pulses. Imagine Neu! reinterpreting Justin Hayward's 'War Of The Worlds' at an 80s acid house rave, you start to understand the splendour of their live show.

night with Yorkshire's lopsided orchestral rockers Scaramanga 6 managing – successfully it must be said – to come on somewhere between Tony Christie and The Cardiacs with their offbeat, swaggering form of pop. Fixers feature members of Gunnbunny, Vultures and The Delta Frequency and mix up psychedelic pop and punk noise, while Minor Coles kick the evening off in languid and dreamy psych-pop style.

**THE SPOLKESTRA + TALC DEMONS + FRANCIE JONES + MARTHA ROSE: The Jericho Tavern** – Edinburgh's art-pop collective Spolkestra come to town with their multi-media show and an orchestral style of pop that takes in jazz, folk, classical and alt.rock, with influences from Broken Social Scene, Arcade Fire and Los Campesinos. Rami's Talc Demons bring their wordy acoustic blues-pop along in support.

**THE MIGHTY REDOX + THE PETE FRYER BAND + FILM NOIR + DES BARKUS: The Magdalen** – Monthly residency from the local swamp-blues and psychedelic barndance faves Mighty Redox, plus eccentric rocking from Pete Fryer, and indie noise from Film Noir.

**LOST CHIHUAHUA: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Rock covers.



*Friday 15<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 17<sup>th</sup>*

## WOOD FESTIVAL:

### Braziers Park

After the success of last year's inaugural event, Wood returns bigger and bolder but no less committed to its environmental ideals. Organised by the good folk at Truck, Wood provides three days of mostly acoustic music in the isolated, picturesque grounds of environmental education establishment Braziers Park, near Wallingford. The idea is to create a festival that does more than pay lip service to being carbon neutral, so as well as solar and pedal-powered stages, there will be organic food and compost toilets and assorted workshops showing ways to go greener. Performing live will be indie stars Brakes, Britpop survivors Dodgy, Folkstress Karine Polwart, award-winning folk duo Spiers and Boden, Sunderland's esoteric 80s-styled concept rockers The Week That Was, Welsh language pop pioneer Meic Stphens (a major influence on the likes of Super Furry Friends and Gorky's), life-affirming sunshine popsters Danny & The Champions of the World and a strong local supporting cast that includes Stornoway and Jonquil. Much more besides, with more acts to be announced, plus workshops that range from African drumming, songwriting and salsa to felt making and cycle repair, Wood is homely and extremely laid-back, but maybe offers a glimpse of the future for boutique festivals. If you missed last year, it's very different from most festivals you'll have been to before but get into the spirit of the weekend and it's simple fun a world away from the chaotic corporate overcrowding of the majors.

**BACKROOM BOOGIE:** *The Bullingdon*  
**BOSSAPHONIK:** *The Cellar* – Jazz dance, Afrobeat, Latin, Balkan beat and nu-jazz club night with live sounds from Afro-Caribbean fusion groovers Mankala.

**GET DOWN:** *The Brickworks*

**REGGAE & DUB SESSION:** East Oxford Community Centre

**VICARS OF TWIDDLEY + THE**

**AROUSERS + THEE CONFESSIONS:**

**Abingdon Utd FC** – A night of surf and swamp rocking with Dick Dale, Pyramids and Link Wray-inspired sounds.

### SATURDAY 9<sup>th</sup>

**BOOTLED ZEPPELIN:** *O2 Academy* – Tribute to the 70s rock titans.

**COLLISIONS & CONSEQUENCES + UTE + VANISHES:** *The Wheatsheaf* – Epic, yet intimate indie-pop-cum-math-rock from C&C, plus doomy, downbeat acoustic pop from Ute.  
**BORDERVILLE + FLIPRON + HEARTS IN PENCIL + MATT WINKWORTH:** *The*

**Jericho Tavern** – Inventive and theatrical vaudevillian rocking with nods to Bowie and Bauhaus from the mighty Borderville, plus whimsical psychedelia, horror show kitsch and folk-rocking from Glastonbury's organ-led Flipron, whose new album was produced by The Damned's Rat Scabies, plus eclectic indie rocking from Hearts In Pencil.

**ABSOLUTE BOWIE:** *Fat Lil's, Witney* – Tribute to the Thin White Duke.

**SIMPLE:** *The Bullingdon* – Funky house club night with guests Digitalism.

**TWO FINGERS OF FIREWATER:**

**Charlbury Memorial Hall** – Riverside Free Festival benefit gig with Guildford's rootsy Americana rockers.

**ROCK IN THE PARK:** *Abbey Grounds, Abingdon (11am-6pm)* – International cast of rock and pop from Abingdon and its French and Belgian twin towns.

**TRANSFORMATION / TRASHY / ROOM**

**101: O2 Academy**

**ROBERT POST:** *The Jolly Postboy, Cowley*

**CHUNGA CHUNGA:** *The Cellar* – Dubstep, techno, bassline and electro club night.

### SUNDAY 10<sup>th</sup>

**LITTLE FEAT:** *O2 Academy* – The 70s rock, blues and country heroes – formed by members of Zappa's Mothers Of Invention back in '69 – keep on keeping on, the surviving members augmented by a couple of newcomers. Founder member Lowell George may have succumbed to the rock'n'roll lifestyle back in 1979, prompting the band's initial split, but Bill Payne and co. reformed a decade later, still mixing jazz fusion into their original rootsy sound and counting The Rolling Stones and Led Zep amongst their legion of fans.

**LISA HANNIGAN:** *O2 Academy* – The Irish singer and actress who spent six years as part of Damien Rice's band, as well as working with Snow Patrol's Gary Lightbody, goes solo and releases a new album, 'The Sea Sew', full of hushed, personal acoustic folk-pop.

**THE BIG COLOURS BIG BAND:** *The*

**Bullingdon** – Live big band jazz.

**EXPERIMENTAL DENTAL SCHOOL +**

**DUSTY & THE DREAMING SPIRES:** *The*

**Jericho Tavern** – An eclectic blend of minimalist garage rock, punky blues, electronica, spaced-out psychedelic folk-pop and Syd Barrett-like whimsy from Portland, Oregon's Experimental Dental School headlining tonight's Special Cycle Oxford Festival, which tops off a day of bike and music-related activities. Alt.country melancholy from Dusty & The Dreaming Spires in support.

**OPEN MIC SESSION:** *The Fleur de Lys, Dorchester-On-Thames*

**TREV WILLIAMS:** *The Living Room*

### MONDAY 11<sup>th</sup>

**BLUE BISHOPS:** *The Bullingdon* – Rocking blues, classic 60s-style rock and r'n'b from the circuit regulars at tonight's Famous Monday Blues club.

### TUESDAY 12<sup>th</sup>

**I CALL SHOTGUN + THE RUSKINS + RIOT PARK:** *O2 Academy* – Electro-indie rocking from Leeds' I Call Shotgun, plus hip hop inclined rocking from London's Ruskings and Banbury's stadium popsters Riot Park.

**JAZZ CLUB:** *The Bullingdon* – Keyboard-led jazz from The Howard Peacock Quintet.

**YOUVES + BRONTIDE + GRADIENTS:**

**The Jericho Tavern** – Taught, wiry hardcore-cum-math-rock from former-Mirror Mirror chaps Youves, plus lightweight instrumental math-pop from Brontide.

**KO COMPUTER:** *Baby Simple* – Open laptop session for local electronic artists.

**INTRUSION:** *The Cellar* – Goth, industrial, dark wave and 80s.

### WEDNESDAY 13<sup>th</sup>

**THE OXFORD PUNT** – The annual showcase of unsigned local talent – *see main feature*

**MATT KILFORD + BETHANY WEIMERS:**

**Borders (6pm)**

**WINCHELL RIOTS + BEAVER FUEL + FROM HERE WE RUN + PISTOL KIXX:**

**The Purple Turtle**

**BLACK HATS + RESPONSE**

**COLLECTIVE + MARY'S GARDEN +**

**PHANTOM THEORY:** *The Wheatsheaf*

**DIAL F FOR FRANKENSTEIN + DESERT**

**STORM + DR SLAGGLEBERRY +**

**HEARTS IN PENCIL:** *Thirst Lodge*

**ORIGINAL RABBIT FOOT SPASM BAND**

**+ SPIRAL 25 + FROM LIGHT TO SOUND**

**+ WE AERONAUTS:** *The Cellar*

*Friday 15<sup>th</sup>*

## GALLOWES:

### O2 Academy

Beyond all the furious excitement and hype surrounding Gallows frontman Frank Carter's onstage tattooing experiences and his frequent offstage antics, Gallows are easily one of the best punk bands the UK has produced in recent times. The band's last visit to Oxford, in 2007, was a riotous celebration of fury and noise with Carter preaching from the stage, hanging from the rafters and even turning up on the bar at the back of the venue, the band armed with an old-fashioned unifying attitude that took hardcore back to its pre-rock star days. Noise-wise they come from all points Refused, Minor Threat, Black Flag and even Conflict, and for all the mayhem inherent in their show, they mostly steer clear of macho posturing. Gallows are back on tour this spring to coincide with the release of their second album, 'Grey Britain', which features guest appearances from the likes of Cancer Bats, Rolo Tomassi and Biffy Clyro and finds them in typically grim, defiant mood. Thereafter they head off on the Vans Warped Tour all summer and with Carter proclaiming that the band won't last beyond five years, maybe this will be the last chance to catch them.



**ENJOY DESTROY + THE CRAVE + SEROTONIN + THE SEX SHOP**  
**BOYS: The Bullingdon** – Basingstoke's melodic grunge rockers Enjoy Destroy head off on tour.  
**VULTURES + BANG BANG BANG + THE NEW DEVICES: The Jericho Tavern**  
**ACOUSTIC LOUNGE: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Open mic session.

### THURSDAY 14<sup>th</sup>

**A SILENT FILM + CAT MATADOR: The Bullingdon** – Elegantly crafted, epic rocking from A Silent Film, plus moody new wave noise from Cat Matador.  
**ECLECTRICITY: The Cellar** – The electro-house club night celebrates its third birthday with a special DJ set by Diplo, who's recently reworked MIA and Metronomy.  
**REVOLVER: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Alt.rock, punk and metal club night.  
**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre**  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon**

### FRIDAY 15<sup>th</sup>

**WOOD FESTIVAL: Braziers Park** – First day of the environmentally-friendly live music festival – *see main preview*  
**GALLOWS + EVERY TIME I DIE + HEXES: O2 Academy** – Hertfordshire's punk rocking riot squad return with their second album – *see main preview*  
**SLIDE: O2 Academy** – House and electro club night with Berlin DJ and production duo M.A.N.D.Y.  
**THIS CITY + BADDIES + THE SCARLETTS + THE KEYZ: The Bullingdon** – Brighton's boisterous punk-pop-disco noisemakers keep the energy levels high, mashing up Biffy Clyro, The Automatic and At The Drive-In into a furious and fun old froth. Devo-ish robo-rocking support from Baddies, plus local ska-punk hopefuls The Scarletts and punk indie rockers The Keyz.  
**NORTHERN PORTRAIT + HEARTS IN PENCIL + VICTORIA & JACOB: The Wheatsheaf** – More indie splendour from Swiss Concrete, tonight presenting Copenhagen's Northern Portraits, with a romantic pop heart inspired by The Smiths and Gene; local rockers Hearts In Pencil, and fuzzy, ethereal laptop pop duo Victoria and Jacob, mixing glitchy beats and twinkling electro-pop with Bjork and Joanna Newsom-inspired quirkiness.  
**THE LARRY MILLER BAND: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Rocking blues from the UK guitarist.  
**HENRY'S PHONOGRAPH + DIRTY ROTTEN SCOUNDRELS + MERCURY RIVER + OOLITES: The Jericho Tavern** – Lo-fi indie-punk noise from Dorset's Henry's Phonograph.  
**BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon**  
**GET DOWN: The Brickworks**  
**REGGAE & DUB SESSION: East Oxford Community Centre**  
**FREE RANGE: The Cellar** – Dubstep and drum&bass.

### SATURDAY 16<sup>th</sup>

**WOOD FESTIVAL: Braziers Park** – Second day of the festival – *see main preview*  
**BEARD OF ZEUSS + SEXTODECIMO + K-LACURA: The Wheatsheaf** – Heavyweight stoner metal from Beard Of Zeuss, plus simply awesome stoner-core noise from Sextodecimo, back in action after an extended hiatus, capable of destroying large buildings as they stretch the boundaries of metal and hardcore to breaking point. Heavyweight rocking in a Killswitch vein from K-Lacura.  
**JOHN BARROWMAN: The New Theatre** – Captain Jack Harkness returns from his time travelling adventures to show off the singing skills that first made his name on the West End theatre scene, tonight plugging his new album, 'Music Music Music', and singing from a repertoire that stretches from Grease and The Lion King to The Producers.  
**HORACE ANDY: O2 Academy** – Rearranged gig from last month for the Jamaican legend, the pioneering reggae singer whose career has spanned forty years and almost as many albums. From his early roots work and recording at Studio 1, Andy has helped initiate dancehall as well as recording early dub with Mad Professor. Along the way he's worked with luminaries such as Dennis Brown, Jah Shaka and most recently Sly & Robbie, as well as singing with Massive Attack, which helped return him to mainstream success. His most successful period was back in the mid-70s when he worked with producer Bunny Lee, including his timeless classic 'Skylarking'. He remains as prolific today as he ever was, but it's for his massively influential falsetto voice that he's most recognisable.  
**POLISH FERTILISER with SING SING PENELOPE + BAABA JACASZEK: O2 Academy** – The Polish music boutique festival comes to Oxford courtesy of Oxford Contemporary Music, featuring electro-acoustic modern jazz ensemble Sing Sing Penelope, sound manipulator Baaba Jaszczek, plus a selection of short films.  
**TRANSFORMATION / TRASHY / ROOM 101: O2 Academy**  
**CLOUD NINE: Fat Lil's, Witney**  
**OUT TO GRAZE WARM-UP GIG: The Cellar** – Slide, Bassmentality and Simple club DJs come together to plug their upcoming two-day festival in June. As well as resident DJs, there's a live set from Arabic-dub starlets Raggasaurus.

### SUNDAY 17<sup>th</sup>

**WOOD FESTIVAL: Braziers Park** – Final day of the green music festival – *see main preview*  
**METRIC: O2 Academy** – The New York / Toronto-based electro-pop outfit return to band action after singer Emily Haines' solo project, and with their first album in four years, 'Fantasies', a follow-up to 2005's 'Live It Out'. Playful indie-pop and seductively sweet synth-pop all round. Hurray!

We are currently seeking a young, original and ambitious artist or band to manage. If this sounds like you then please send a CD or myspace link to:  
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*Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup>*

## PATRICK WOLF:

### O2 Academy

An odd, self-consciously eccentric character with a vivid, otherworldly way with a lyric, a rakish figure with a razor wit and prone to recording albums in isolated Cornish shacks using Finnish kantele and ukulele, Patrick Wolf tends to stand out from the pack. Which is probably why, having asked his fans to help pay upfront for his forthcoming album, to pay for recording costs, he ended up getting Tilda Swinton calling him up. And thus she's ended up narrating four tracks on 'Battles', Wolf's forthcoming new opus. This of course following on from Marianne Faithfull's contribution to its predecessor, 'Magic Position'. Folktronica doesn't quite do justice to Wolf's pastoral hymns, cut through with analogue sounds and electronic beats as they are. His yearning, doomed lyrics and wonderfully limpid voice posit him closer to Nick Cave or John Cale, while comparisons to Morrissey are hard to refute. Still very much an underground cult concern, Wolf is a talented multi-instrumentalist – from violin to piano – but it's his voice and lyrics that really grab you, always searching for eternal childhood and a sense of belonging. Whether he'll ever belong anywhere near the pop mainstream is anyone's guess, but his talent fully deserves wider recognition.

**BLACK HATS + THIN GREEN CANDLES + WHEN ALCOHOL MATTERS + 1,000 MILE +**

**HIGHWAY + BILLY PURE + KING B: Fat Lil's. Witney** – Special Charlbury Riverside Festival warm-up show with local new wave faves The Black Hats and more.

**PHIL FREIZINGER & SUE SMITH + HEADINGTON HILLBILLIES + THE NEW MOON: The Magdalen** – Acoustic night with Mighty Redox pair Phil and Sue, plus guests. **THE TWILIGHT SAD: The Bullingdon** – Epic melancholy from Glasgow's Twilight Sad, preparing to support Mogwai on tour in the US, and brewing up a potent wall of noise that mixes Tindersticks, Glasvegas and Mogwai themselves.

### MONDAY 18<sup>th</sup>

**SOFT PACK + TITUS ANDRONICUS: O2 Academy** – Double bill of rising US indie starlets, with San Diego's Soft Pack (who previously went under the much better names

The Muslims) going in for a classic stripped-down amalgam of all things Velvet Underground, Modern Lovers and Strokes, while artfully ramshackle New Jersey rockers Titus Andronicus mix up folky punk with scratchy indie noise, somewhere between The Clash and The Hold Steady.

**NEVER THE BRIDE: The Bullingdon** – Famous Monday Blues regulars NTB return, award-winning vocalist Nikki Lambourn's Tina Turner and Janis Joplin-inspired singing fronting the Heart-like power-rocking of her backing band.

### TUESDAY 19<sup>th</sup>

**NOUGHT + TITUS + THE JOE ALLEN BAND + THE A TRAIN + FRANCIS PUGH & THE WHISKY SINGERS: The Wheatsheaf** – Great mixed bag of noise with innovative pressure cooker instrumental noise from the mighty Nought, plus delicately-textured post-rock from Titus, featuring various members of Theo, Meanwhile, Back In Communist Russia and Diego Garcia. Taught emotive acoustic rocking from Joe Allen, plus whisky-fuelled songs from Francis Pugh.

**JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon** – Free weekly live jazz club with guest Ben Cummins.

**ALCHEMY: The Cellar** – Heavy rock club night with live bands.

**OPEN MIC SESSION: Mason's Arms, Headington Quarry**

### WEDNESDAY 20<sup>th</sup>

**PHANTOM THEORY + EXIT INTERNATIONAL + KAMIKAZE TEST PILOTS + ANDRENOCHROME: The Wheatsheaf** – Great night of hardcore noise with local two-piece riffmongers Phantom Theory cranking out an ambitious blend of classic rock and hardcore scuzz. Excellent demented hellbastard metal-into-flesh hardcore from Exit International, mixing up Big Black, Jesus Lizard and Girls Vs Boys. New local industrial noise merchants Andrenochrome open the show.

**TEMPER TRAP: O2 Academy** – Currently being hyped as the best new band out of Australia, Melbourne's Temper Trap head out on their first full UK headline tour, plying their anthemic indie rock noise.

**PHAT SESSIONS: The Cellar**

### THURSDAY 21<sup>st</sup>

**NEIL HALSTEAD & LACH: O2 Academy** – The former Slowdive and Mojave 3 frontman-turned-heavily-bearded folkster heads out on a solo tour in support of his 'Oh Mighty Engine' album, wistful bucolic psychedelia rubbing gently against rootsy folk and country. New York singer-songwriter Lach brings his Dylan-esque acoustic folk along in support.

**SMALL MACHINE + MOIETY: The Bullingdon** – Moshka club night with grungy metallers Small Machine and ethereal acoustic popstrels Moiety. **MAYBESHEWILL + AS I WATCH FROM AFAR + FLIES ARE SPIES FROM HELL + WILD DOGS: The Cellar** – Co-headline tour from Leicester's alternately atmospheric and dynamic instrumental rockers Maybeshewill and Ireland's epic, Mogwai-inspired instrumentalists As I Watch From Afar.

**FIRST SIGNS OF FROST: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Melodic post-hardcore from Glassjaw-styled rockers First Signs of Frost. **CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre** **OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon**

### FRIDAY 22<sup>nd</sup>

**ATTACK! ATTACK! + SAVE YOUR BREATH + HK:UK + MIDNIGHT DRIVE: O2 Academy** – Pop-punk and melodic post-hardcore noise package tour.

**MY LATEST NOVEL + WITCHES + MOTION IN COLOUR: O2 Academy** – Glasgow's Bella Union-signed melancholic folk-rockers, who have previously supported Smog and Low. Superb support from exotic local dark rocking heroes Witches, plus emotive acoustic pop from Motion In Colour **CHALK + THE HALCYONS + GOG: The Wheatsheaf** – Oasis-y indie rocking from Chalk, plus alternately bubbling electro-pop and soft-centred melodic rocking from The Halcyons.

**THE NOMINEES + OUTRAZE + SIXTY WATT BAYONET + CAMIONETTES: The Jericho Tavern** – Grungy indie rocking from The Nominees, plus Oasis-y rocking from Banbury's Outraze and arty indie noise from Reading's 60 Watt Bayonets.

**BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon GET DOWN: The Brickworks** **REGGAE & DUB SESSION: East Oxford Community Centre** **THE FOLLYS: The Blue Boar, Wantage** – Rough-hewn r'n'b and 70s proto punk.

### SATURDAY 23<sup>rd</sup>

**BLACK HATS + MOTOR CITY SHUFFLE + AIDEN CANADAY: The Wheatsheaf** – Album launch gig for the local new wave rock favourites, mixing Jam-like pop vim with Young Knives-style spikiness – *see main Introducing feature*

**SCOTT MATTHEWS + JAMES SUMMERFIELD: O2 Academy** – Gentle-natured acoustic folk-pop in the vein of Jeff Buckley and John Martyn, interspersed with bursts of Sonic Youth-inspired noise and feedback from the Ivor Novello-winning songsmith, out on the road to promote new album, 'Elsewhere'.

**TEN BEARS + FUNERAL SUITS: The Cellar** – Fuzzy electro-rock crunch and sunshine pop jollity from Manchester's Ten Bears, most recently heard soundtracking Channel 4's Orange Unsigned show. Dublin's electro-indie troupe Funeral Suits open the bill after supporting Franz Ferdinand recently.

**TRANSFORMATION / TRASHY / ROOM 101: O2 Academy** **THE FURY: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Rock covers.

### SUNDAY 24<sup>th</sup>

**MR HUDSON: O2 Academy** – Re-arranged from last month. The Streets meets Cole Porter meets Sting in Mr Hudson's strangely timeless amalgam of hip hop, soul, lounge jazz and show tunes that has earned him support slots with The Police and Amy Winehouse. **FAJITA EATERS: The Black Horse, Kidlington**



**NIGHTSHIFT** presents the

# OXFORD PUNT

## Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May

### 1 Night, 5 Venues, 18 Acts

*Quite simply the best showcase of unsigned local music of the year*

#### Borders

**6.15 Matt Kilford**

[www.myspace.com/matthewkilford](http://www.myspace.com/matthewkilford)

**7.00 Bethany Weimers**

[www.myspace.com/bethanyweimers](http://www.myspace.com/bethanyweimers)

#### Purple Turtle

**7.45 Pistol Kixx**

[www.myspace.com/pistolkixx](http://www.myspace.com/pistolkixx)

**8.30 From Here We Run**

[www.myspace.com/fromherewerun](http://www.myspace.com/fromherewerun)

**9.15 Beaver Fuel**

[www.myspace.com/beaverfuel](http://www.myspace.com/beaverfuel)

**10.00 Winchell Riots**

[www.myspace.com/thewinchellriots](http://www.myspace.com/thewinchellriots)

#### Thirst Lodge

**8.30 Hearts In Pencil**

[www.myspace.com/heartsinpencilmusic](http://www.myspace.com/heartsinpencilmusic)

**9.30 Dr Slaggleberry**

[www.myspace.com/drslaggleberry](http://www.myspace.com/drslaggleberry)

**10.30 Desert Storm**

[www.myspace.com/experiencethestorm](http://www.myspace.com/experiencethestorm)

**11.30 Dial F For Frankenstein**

[www.myspace.com/dialfforfrankenstein](http://www.myspace.com/dialfforfrankenstein)

#### Wheatsheaf

**8.15 Phantom Theory**

[www.myspace.com/phantomtheorymusic](http://www.myspace.com/phantomtheorymusic)

**9.00 Mary's Garden**

[www.myspace.com/marysgarden](http://www.myspace.com/marysgarden)

**9.45 Response Collective**

[www.myspace.com/theresponsecollective](http://www.myspace.com/theresponsecollective)

**10.30 Black Hats**

[www.myspace.com/blackhatshome](http://www.myspace.com/blackhatshome)

#### Cellar

**9.00 We Aeronauts**

[www.myspace.com/weaeronauts](http://www.myspace.com/weaeronauts)

**10.00 From Light To Sound**

[www.myspace.com/fromlighttosound](http://www.myspace.com/fromlighttosound)

**11.00 Spiral 25**

[www.myspace.com/thespiral25](http://www.myspace.com/thespiral25)

**12.00 Original Rabbit Foot Spasm Band**

[www.myspace.com/theoriginalrabbitfootspasmband](http://www.myspace.com/theoriginalrabbitfootspasmband)

## WANT TO SEE EVERYTHING?

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Only 100 available. £7 each (plus booking fee) from Videosyncratic on Cowley Road, or online from [oxfordmusic.net](http://oxfordmusic.net)

# THE OXFORD PUNT 2008:



From Here,  
We Run!

## BORDERS

As is traditional, we kick off this year's Oxford Punt in the charming surroundings of Borders. Here, as well as starting your musical journey of discovery, you can learn sumfink while you're about it. Depending on where they put the performers, you can immerse yourself in foreign language dictionaries, medical encyclopaedias or religious tomes, although we don't recommend reading the medical stuff too much – one year we spent the entire Punt convinced we were suffering from acute liver failure and gout. Several hours drinking in various local venues later, we were informed by a proper doctor that this was exactly what we had. But anyway, this year's opening act, **MATT KILFORD** is a considerably more pleasant proposition, his airy, intimate acoustic songs stripped to the bare necessities and coming on somewhere between Ryan Adams and Damien Rice – melancholic but warm and personable and a world away from the maudlin self-pity you sometimes get with acoustic singer-songwriters. Or journoes who've spent too long reading medical encyclopaedias.

**BETHANY WEIMERS** should soothe the most fevered of brows with her darkly beatific folk-pop, with songs that are both haunting and catchy, offering a fresh twist to traditional English folk music.

[www.myspace.com/matthewkildford](http://www.myspace.com/matthewkildford)

[www.myspace.com/bethanyweimers](http://www.myspace.com/bethanyweimers)

## THE PURPLE TURTLE

With its post-industrial arched gig room and austere brickwork, set at the end of long, winding corridors, the Purple Turtle has all the necessary ambience for a great gig venue, and it's where the Punt really starts to get into its swing. And just in case you needed a short, sharp attack on the senses to get you going, first up are **PISTOL KIXX**, a band who look like a cross between Hanoi Rocks and The Wurzels and positively ooze the spirit of punk rock from every whisky-sozzled pore. Heck, they've even got a singer going under the name Sober Dave, who we suspect enjoys a small tippie or ten when he and his band aren't thrashing the unholy spirits of Motorhead, Motley Crue and New York Dolls to within an inch of their lives. Admirable behaviour. Hopefully they won't corrupt **FROM HERE, WE RUN!** too much, because here's a (very) young band whose sweet-natured, ethereal gothic math-pop got them a well-deserved Demo Of The Month in last month's Nightshift. They can make a right old racket when it's needed but mostly they're cute, graceful and packed with potential.

If we're talking potential, then **BEAVER FUEL** doubtless have the potential to offend the greatest number of people tonight. 'I Want To Live In Your Buttrack' is their crowd-pleasing favourite, but we're equally fond of 'Fuck Off, I've Got Tourettes'. But if you're of a sensitive disposition, maybe just concentrate on Beaver Fuel's rambunctious punk-tinged indie-rock and... no, on second thought, if you're of a nervous disposition, maybe you should just have stayed in Borders. But don't, whatever you do, miss **WINCHELL RIOTS**. Formed from the ashes of the much-loved Fell City Girl, whose gig at the Market Tavern a few years back is rightly considered an historic Punt moment, they make pop music as big and awe-inspiring as the ocean and as delicate as petals. Like a collision between Muse and Sigur Ros. Irresistible.

[www.myspace.com/pistolkixx](http://www.myspace.com/pistolkixx)

[www.myspace.com/fromherewerun](http://www.myspace.com/fromherewerun)

[www.myspace.com/beaverfuel](http://www.myspace.com/beaverfuel)

[www.myspace.com/thewinchellriots](http://www.myspace.com/thewinchellriots)



Desert Storm

Johnny Moto



1 - Borders

2 - The Purple Turtle

3 - The Cellar

## THIRST LODGE

Tucked away behind the back of the Westgate Centre on St Ebbe's, Thirst Lodge is a little off the beaten track for most gig-goers but it's a miniature gem of a venue waiting to be discovered. Last year saw it rammed to the rafters for a legendary Little Fish Punt set and this year there's a whole heavyweight host of bands set to tear it up. Witney-based teenagers **HEARTS IN PENCIL** are already being tipped by local promoters and reviewers as a band to watch for their intense, rough-hewn indie-punk sound with an esoteric, atmospheric arty-rock edge that means you can never get too comfortable. Sitting comfortably isn't something you could ever accuse Chinnor's **DR SLAGGLEBERRY** of either, as they rampage through the outer reaches of math-core-jazz-metal noise, purely instrumental and hidden by masks and hoods, they're enigmatic but musically ferocious and a must-see for fans of Mr Bungle, The Locust and Rolo Tomassi amongst others. You want riffs? **DESERT STORM** have got riffs. They've carved them out of granite and girders and they use them for knocking down large buildings and passing dinosaurs. Think Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin, but think again as they paint from a pleasingly wide palette that takes them on psychedelic excursions and into folkie pockets of calm before laying down their big ol' stoner grooves once more and crushing all before them. Which leaves **DIAL F FOR FRANKENSTEIN** free to douse any survivors in high-octane grunge-pop petrol and light the fuse. Like Dive Dive's sharp-elbowed precision-punk mixed up with Radiohead's most rockingest outings, Dial F are full of subtlety and complexity but make a most pleasing racket.

[www.myspace.com/heartsinpencilmusic](http://www.myspace.com/heartsinpencilmusic)

[www.myspace.com/drslaggleberry](http://www.myspace.com/drslaggleberry)

[www.myspace.com/experiencethestorm](http://www.myspace.com/experiencethestorm)

[www.myspace.com/dialfforfrankenstein](http://www.myspace.com/dialfforfrankenstein)

# WHO, WHAT AND WHERE

Bethany Weimers



## THE WHEATSHEAF

If our house fell down and we had to live somewhere else, we'd probably choose the Wheatsheaf; that's how at home we always feel in what may be the quintessential Oxford gig venue. Tonight's Punt bill reflects the eclectic nature of the place, starting with two-piece beats'n'riffs outfit **PHANTOM THEORY**, a band who have stripped down to the bare bones (guitar, drums, shouting, er, that's it) but sound like there's so much more going on, stretching their sound from full-throttle hardcore and grunge to classic 70s hard rock and out into spacier territory. They sound BIG. And in the words of Professor Peach, we like 'em big. **MARY'S GARDEN**'s sound is similarly expansive but from comes from a darker, more ethereal place, a billowing gothic form of Euro-rock with Laima Bite's fantastically strident vocals swamped in an ocean of effected guitar noise. It's music to drown in. **RESPONSE COLLECTIVE** fly the flag for electronic music at this year's Punt, a cinematic melee of samples, loops, hip hop beats and turntablism that makes for a dreamy, ambient soundscape. For pure, unrefined hook-laden guitar pop, there's **BLACK HATS** to head things off. Mix up The Jam's singalong mod-punk anthems with Young Knives' spiky indie noise and you've got a sharp-elbowed power trio whose reputation has been growing steadily in Oxford over the last couple of years.

[www.myspace.com/phantomtheorymusic](http://www.myspace.com/phantomtheorymusic)

[www.myspace.com/marysgarden](http://www.myspace.com/marysgarden)

[www.myspace.com/theresponsecollective](http://www.myspace.com/theresponsecollective)

[www.myspace.com/blackhatshome](http://www.myspace.com/blackhatshome)



4 - The Wheatsheaf

turtle 5 - Thirst Lodge



Original Rabbit Foot Spasm Band

## THE CELLAR

Here is where the Punt party comes to its climax – because we're not going to let you down gently. Okay, maybe we'll tease you slightly with **WE AERONAUTS**, who are a gentle sort of band, although often grandiose in their intent, delicate folk-pop songs blossoming into celebratory anthems by way of marching snares and trumpets and a massed chorus of voices that makes them Oxford's answer to Arcade Fire at times, and natural successors to Belle & Sebastian's romantic pop vision at others. Lovely. **FROM LIGHT TO SOUND** are something of a local supergroup, made up as they are of members of The Workhouse, The Evenings, Sunnyvale Noise Sub-Element and The Thumb Quintet, plus a refugee from Intentions of an Asteroid, and elements of all those bands' eclectic sounds come together here in an instrumental whole that's part post-rock, part krautrock, part ambient, leftfield space-rock, but with a pedigree second to none. **SPIRAL 25** take you on a more intense trip altogether. The band's slow-motion narcotic groove-rock has already drawn favourable comparisons to Spacemen 3 and The Doors and they mine a deep, dark seam of lysergic noise that - as their name suggests - spirals ever inward, taking your head with it, til you're dizzy with the thrill of it all. And lest you start to think the Punt is all about rock music and guitars, we've saved the best party music to last: **THE ORIGINAL RABBIT FOOT SPASM BAND** describe themselves as kings of chav-jazz, and they kick out the bestest, drunkenest old-time jazz riot you'll hear this side of a Prohibition-era rave-up. Here are classics by Count Basie, Fats Waller and Louis Armstrong as they're meant to be heard – not lounged-out by jobbing jazzmen but treated with the dirt they deserve. And after a long night's Punting, dirt and dancing is exactly what you need to send you off into the wee small hours.

[www.myspace.com/weaeronauts](http://www.myspace.com/weaeronauts)

[www.myspace.com/fromlighttosound](http://www.myspace.com/fromlighttosound)

[www.myspace.com/thespiral25](http://www.myspace.com/thespiral25)

[www.myspace.com/theoriginalrabbitfootspasmband](http://www.myspace.com/theoriginalrabbitfootspasmband)

Pistol Kixx



Johnny Moto



*The Complete Summer Weekend*

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AVA LEIGH I AM KLOOT COUTE DIOMBOULOU AMY LAVERE 3 DAFT MONKEYS  
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## **MONDAY 25<sup>th</sup>**

**FAMILY STYLE: The Bullingdon** – Proper family blues band out of Milan, now recognised as Italy's premier blues act, taking in a little bit of soul, swing and whisky-soaked balladeering along the way.

**EXAMPLE + FLAMBOYANT BELLA: O2 Academy** – The latest Wonky Pop tour kicks off tonight with Hertfordshire's unrelentingly jaunty electro folk-pop teens Flamboyant Bella following up their frankly brilliant single 'Absolutely Wankered' with the cutesy Kate Nash-like 'Abbi'. Electro-rap chap Example joins them, fresh from supporting Calvin Harris on tour.

**FLASHGUNS: The Jericho Tavern**

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

**WE THE KINGS + HEY MONDAY + OUT OF SIGHT: O2 Academy** – Florida's Jimmy Eatworld-like power-pop faves head out on tour.  
**FANFARLO + JEREMY WARMSLEY: O2 Academy** – Elegantly expansive folk-pop in the vein of Arcade Fire from London's Anglo-Swedish troupe Fanfarlo, set to release their debut album, 'Reservoir', this month after a string of singles on Moshi Moshi, Fandango and Fortuna Pop.

**JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon** – With Alvin Roy & Reeds Unlimited.

**THE POST-WAR YEARS: The Jericho Tavern** – Ambient indie-electro dance.

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

**INVISIBLE VEGAS: O2 Academy** – Local old-fashioned roadhouse rockers.

**ACOUSTIC LOUNGE: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Open mic session.

**FREE RANGE: The Cellar**

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

**VON BRAUN + JUNE + EMPTY VESSELS: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Post-rock and dark-minded new wave rocking from Von Braun, plus indie rocking from June.

**THE DIRTY ROYALS: The Jericho Tavern** – Great gentle summer pop from the former-Samurai Seven crew.

**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre**

**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon**

**ECLECTRICITY: The Cellar**

## **FRIDAY 29<sup>th</sup>**

**MELTING POT with ALIGHT + DIRTY TRICKS + THE STOWAWAYS: The Bullingdon** – Reliably mixed bag of new bands

at tonight's Melting Pot.

**RORY ELLIS + THE BRICKWORK**

**LIZARDS: The Wheatsheaf** – Australian blues singer Ellis headlines with eclectic 40s jazz, hip hop, world music and blues collective Brickwork Lizards in support.

**THE SHUDDERS + THE SCHOLARS + MAN POINTS + GEOFF BAKER: The Jericho Tavern** – Rustic pop noise from The Shudders, calling at various points between The Beautiful South and Travelling Wilburys.

**BON GIOVI: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Tribute to the soft rock stars.

**BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon GET DOWN: The Brickworks**

**REGGAE & DUB SESSION: East Oxford Community Centre**

**HQ: The Cellar** – Drum&bass club night.

## **SATURDAY 30<sup>th</sup>**

**MOSTLY AUTUMN: O2 Academy** – 70s-style prog and folk-rock, inspired by Genesis and Pink Floyd.

**GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES with DRUNKENSTEIN + THE WOOKIES + HELEN PEARSON: The Wheatsheaf** – Another eclectic bill from GTI with local gothic funk-rockers Drunkenstein, jazz and prog-tinged indie types The Wookies and fuzzy felt folkster Helen Pearson.

**HOWARD ELIOT PAYNE: The Bullingdon** – Rootsy, bluesy rock'n'roll from the Liverpoolian singer-songwriter.

**JOAN OF ARC + LOVE OF EVERYTHING + THIS TOWN NEEDS GUNS +**

**ELEPHANTS: The Cellar** – Esoteric acoustic wanderings– *see main preview*

**MISTY'S BIG ADVENTURE: Jericho Tavern** – Grandmaster Gareth and his motley gang of artful feelgood popsters return to town, replete with a man in a giant cape made of rubber gloves.

**TRANSFORMATION / TRASHY / ROOM 101: O2 Academy**

**MARK BOSLEY: Stocks Bar, Crown & Thistle, Abingdon** – Skittle Alley bands night, featuring the local gothic folk troubadour and more.

## **SUNDAY 31<sup>st</sup>**

**BIG BLUES JAM: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Open session for local blues musicians.

**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Fleur de Lys, Dorchester-On-Thames**

**OPEN MIC SESSION: Red Lion, Kidlington**

**OFF THE RADAR UNPLUGGED: The Eight Bells, Eaton**



## **Saturday 30<sup>th</sup>**

### **JOAN OF ARC / LOVE OF EVERYTHING / THIS TOWN NEEDS GUNS: The Cellar**

Chicago's Tim Kinsella is one of those restless, contrary characters whose influence will always be in inverse proportion to their mainstream popularity. In the late-80s Tim and his brother Mike formed Cap'n Jazz, one of the bands that pretty much invented emo. He was 12 at the time. Since 1995, with some time off to form the similarly inspirational Owls, Kinsella has trodden an individualistic and convoluted musical path under the guise Joan Of Arc, a band centred around himself and featuring a rotating cast of players, including brother Mike and cousin Nate at various points. Even by the standards of experimental underground pop, Joan Of Arc have the ability to test patience, with albums of jarring instrumental music ('The Gap') or seemingly random guitar duos composed by ex-members who were drawn out of a hat to partner each other. Even at their most conventional, Kinsella's oblique lyricism, odd time signatures and generally wayward approach makes the stark, spacious songs – mostly acoustic based with electronic and sampled additions – music to try and get to grips with as much as enjoy. But you have to love anyone who releases an album titled 'Live In Chicago 1999' that wasn't live, but simply called that because the band lived in Chicago in 1999. Joining Kinsella on tonight's typically inspired Vacuous Pop bill are fellow Chicago-based acoustic popsters Love Of Everything, plus Oxford's own Owls-inspired math-pop favourites This Town Needs Guns and Kent's tropical-flavoured indie types Elephants.

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



# Guitar Music Festival 2009



## Line Up

24th, 25th & 26th July

Visit the website for more information... & to buy Tickets

### Friday 24th July 2009

Main Stage	Time	Big Top	Time
Unsigned Act	2.40 pm	Unsigned Act	2.00 pm
Unsigned Act	4.00 pm	Unsigned Act	3.20 pm
Unsigned Act	5.20 pm	Unsigned Act	4.40 pm
Unsigned Act	7.20 pm	Unsigned Act	6.40 pm
A Whole Lotta DC	9.30 pm	Zion	8.00pm

### Saturday 25th July 2009

Main Stage	Time	Big Top	Time
The Universal. (Formerly The Shagnessy Band)	12.30 pm	The Outlaws Of Tombstone	11.15 am
The Complete Stone Roses	2.45 pm	Twenty Twenty	12.15 pm
The Holloways	4.30 pm	New Rising	1.45 pm
Starsailor	6.30 pm	Joe Allen Band	3.30 pm
A Big Name To Be Announced	9.30 pm	Blakfish	5.30 pm
		British Sea Power	8.00 pm
		Indie Music Night	11.00 pm

### Sunday 26th July 2009

Main Stage	Time	Big Top	Time
Deborah Bonham Band	11.40 am	Thea Gilmore	12.40 pm
The Le Brocks	1.30 pm	Andy McKee	2.30 pm
The King Blues	3.15 pm	Maggie Louie	4.15 pm
Cornershop	5.05 pm	Diana Jones	5.55 pm
Mungo Jerry	6.45 pm	Paul Carrack	8.00 pm
A Big Name To Be Announced	9.30 pm		

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## **STORNOWAY / THE JOE ALLEN BAND / AIDEN CANADAY**

### **The Cellar**

Aiden Canaday gives a good impression of a man who's only up there singing because he fell on to the stage accidentally while trying to get to the bar to buy his eighth pint and felt too embarrassed to walk away. Behind him his band is a sparse and untidy combination of acoustic guitar, violin and occasional melodica. And yet despite the shambolic nature of it, it's a charming set Aiden performs: his unruly mop of hair and battered trilby reflecting his sweetly rough-hewn voice that carries more soul than any Brit-schooled starlet ever could. We only catch three songs but it's enough to make us want more.

By contrast Joe Allen is a picture of almost psychotic, nervous concentration, which similarly reflects the music: serious and emotive with songs that rest on a razor's edge before Angharad Jenkins' violin bursts into life, cutting through the tension like a cutlass. Joe's softer, solo songs are lean and bluesy, contrasting with the potent aggression of the full band numbers, the rapt concentration of the music leavened by Joe and particularly Angharad's personable, lighthearted

banter. It's like a strange hybrid of Thom Yorke and Seth Lakeman and you wish you could hear more through the crowd's incessant chatter. Stick them on in the Holywell Music Room before rapt crowd and they'd really fly. They're something special.

If you're looking for a reason why Stornoway are both critically loved and one of the most popular bands in Oxford, it's not difficult: simply they write great, simple, often beautiful songs. Songs that small children, grannies and the most discerning of gig regulars can melt into. Songs like 'On The Rocks' and 'Here Comes The Blackout' that can make the hairs on your arms stand on end and send you off into a dreamier parallel universe. Regular comparisons to the likes of Waterboys or Belle & Sebastian are all relevant but offer merely a glimpse of the expansively romantic folksy pop Stornoway conjure. Brian Briggs' voice is a warm, welcoming and fantastically rich burr around which guitars, organ and banjo shimmer and swell. At times tonight you imagine this is what Fleet Foxes might have sounded like had they grown up in the



isolation of the Hebrides; at others, such as on 'Fault Lines', Stornoway sound like angelic cousins to The Pogues. They're simultaneously rousing and soothing and such is the strength of their musical cannon, they can even dump old favourites like 'Zorbing' tonight and still pack the set with unstinting quality.

Increasingly attracting attention beyond Oxford, including slots at this summer's Glastonbury and Radio 1 Big Weekender, Stornoway, who have beguiled and frustrated us in varying measures over the past two years, now sound like the most perfect pop band in town.

**Dale Kattack**

## **THE WAILERS / DUBWISER**

### **O2 Academy**

Euphoria – chemical or otherwise – at the O2 Academy: maybe it's the unseasonably good weather, maybe it's anticipating the greatest reggae band of all time running through one of the greatest albums of all time as Bob Marley's 'Exodus' is played in full, tonight, by the current incarnation of the reggae messiah's own band.

Local outfit Dubwiser slice into drum&bass sound, a heavy rhythm over pronounced, rising skank, the joyous fast-pace roots of Toots & The Maytals, pitching between sharp violin and rich percussion. There's a pause to shout out to the Cowley Road and Blackbird Leys contingents before a drop into magnificent 'Zion Blood', loaded lyrics and a slower, weightier bass that splits unexpectedly into an acid-fusion keyboard mash, dotted with dubstep reverb. There's range to the set, from slow-burning beats that

lean back on skank-guitar suppression to rise into faster, sometime rave movement, with the odd vocal rock'n'roll chorus and a massive percussive arsenal.

Keeping with the local theme, Count Skylarkin himself introduces The Wailers, to a scene-shaking welcome. It's the landmark album that the near-capacity crowd have come to hear but the band – minus frontman Elan – coast a medley-opener, all Burning Spear passion trumpets and trombone, one playing off the other with jazz-emotive energy. The medley drops, Elan bounds onstage – humble idealism packed inside a beige hood – and the set recoils into 'Natural Mystic'; earthy female vocals dig a harmony, the brass line languid-dropped-out over accent drums. The bliss evaporates by 'Exodus' itself, discordant trumpet juxtaposing antagonistic

rhythmic clap-percussion – as on the album, hitting a beautiful quasi-Biblical sphere, bleeding worldliness, exploding into a gospel-spiritual sing-along. Via the soft organ breaks of the effortlessly feel-good 'Three Little Birds', 'Exodus' is a born set-list: closer 'One Love/People Get Ready' nudges collective crowd euphoria with a humble, timeless keyboard intro, uplifting chorus transcending another crowd moment. If 'One Love' wasn't enough, the band return for a once-in-a-lifetime encore: reworkings of 'Redemption Song' and 'No Woman, No Cry' peak immense emotional (and chemical) highs, tactfully interspersed with Elan's righteous solo efforts.

Dubwiser identified Marley's spirit as early as the support set. The spacious, awesome moment created by 'Exodus's live retelling invokes as much as it evokes, moving the rastas and the rockers. A packed Academy coasts back onto the Cowley Road: it may have taken the old masters to convince us, but bring on the reggae renaissance.

**Liz Dodd**

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## JOSH PYKE

### O2 Academy

Although currently one of his country's biggest artists, Josh Pyke is little known outside his native Australia. So the two-thirds full Academy proves when he arrives in town to promote his new (as yet unreleased in the UK) album 'Chimney's Afire'.

Tonight's hour-long set features tracks both old (from his slow burning, but affecting, 2007 debut album 'Memories and Dust', and songs from previously released EPs) and new songs and, although clearly expecting people to react exclusively to his older material, Pyke seems surprised by a rousing reception for his new stuff. Pyke is in fine form, regardless of the age of his songs. He sings in bruised, yet melodious tones, rasping intimate confessions. He's not dissimilar to Eliot Smith; delicate folk-pop melodies hide darker, more painful lyrical content. His solo performance doesn't allow for some of the pretty melodies that adorn his records, however the stripped-down approach reaps other benefits. More attention is drawn to his lyrics and to his solid guitar work.

For a singer of such personal songs, Pyke's stage persona is surprisingly brusque and upfront. He is at ease and chatty with the audience, and has a light, fun sense of humour. It's his first time in the UK for almost 18 months, but he doesn't seem to be ill at ease with his audience; the only trouble he has is not remembering which songs are officially out over here yet. This is quickly overcome when it transpires that a section of the crowd know all his material anyway. Although his performance can be off-puttingly tentative, he delivers an emotionally-charged, intelligent and engaging set. It's more like Evan Dando's curio of a solo album, 'Baby, I'm Bored', than Eliot Smith's seminal songwriting master class of 'Either/Or', but either way, it's an impressive performance by a major talent.

*James Benefield*

## WINNEBAGO DEAL /

### BUICK MCKANE /

### BITCHES

#### The Cellar

Somebody drove a steamroller full of lorries down Commarket tonight, crunching down Frewin Court and roughly offloading a few tons of sledgehammers and Marshall stacks down the Cellar's staircase. It's thug rock all the way, with three two-pieces totalling six people, collectively creating the focussed noise and slam of six hundred. A fine post-April Fool's joke with a reliably solid set of punch-in-the-face-punchlines. Bitches get better and better – buzzing, chunky bass guitar riffs being architecturally guided into No Wave kid's corner by some deceptively complex drumming. Somebody should make this band famous, they're too busy creating greatness to do it themselves.

Buick McKane sound like they think they are already famous, but unfortunately I think they sound too much like they're famous as Blink 182 knockoffs. They're admirably hefty in their music and arrangement, giving it some Big Black-go-metal chunker widdling, but repeatedly kick their own shins with the singer's vocal style: emo whiney crap. Go instrumental, lads!

Alternatively, go more Winnebago Deal, cut the crap and release the hounds like everybody knows you should. WD are *relentless*, and singularly blood-streaked in their dedication to reinventing the Stooges by way of the Ramones. This isn't a band who exist on the same plane as the recent crop of dictionary-wielding, self-knowing, self-effacing studs. They're either way above or way below; it depends on how sturdy your constitution is that will be the decider. Sometimes it's good to cut loose, and tonight's aural equivalent of a misguided punch-up in Cowley Centre is just the ticket.

*Simon Minter*

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## FOXES! / THE HOT TODDIES

### The Cellar

The Hot Toddies are an all-girl summer fun band, all the way from Oakland, California. Because of this, as they inform us early on, a lot of their songs are written about the beach. While not something us Brits can relate to much, it doesn't stop us basking in their glow. Things start fairly slowly and the first few songs are despatched with little passion, their icy cool coming across as a little disinterested. On 'HTML' though, they slow things down and begin to loosen up a little, with the aid of the catchiest chorus ever built around the world wide web. With people swaying along the night is theirs for the taking and they seize the opportunity with both hands with their beach songs, 'Rocker Girl' and 'Pirate'. 'Seattle' is the set highlight though, with the filthy lyrics coming from such sweet-sounding mouths providing a delicious juxtaposition.

Foxes! are a different proposition to what they were when they were based in Oxford. A replacement bass/keyboard player and a guitarist on loan from Restlesslist have given them a much more ferocious sound, the extra players leaving them to experiment and expand songs. 'It's Ridiculous, Adam' starts nursery-rhyme-like and then descends into computer gaming electro music, like an infectious pulse. Old song 'Welcome To The Jivin'' follows and where the recorded version had a fairly insipid chorus, live it launches into the chorus in a torrent of guitar and a frantic ending. It has to be said, it suits Foxes! much better and probably surprises a fair few people, myself included. 'Albania' is a sweet newie from their next single, and it's followed by long-time favourite 'Art Girl', which is at turns jagged, twee, ecstatic and wiggled out. 'Oh Rosie' is somewhere between a polka and one of those great sea shanties style tunes The Coral used to make before they blanded out. The set finishes with great new song, 'Who Killed Rob?' before the band are called back for an encore of the euphoric '6 O'Clock'.

*Russell Barker*

### VENUE PHONE NUMBERS

O2Academy: 0844 477 2000 (ticketweb)

The Bullingdon: 01865 244516

The Wheatsheaf: 01865 790380

The Cellar: 01865 244761

The New Theatre: 0844 847 1585

The Jericho Tavern: 01865 311775

The Purple Turtle: 01865 247086

East Oxford Community Centre:  
01865 792168

Isis Tavern: 01865 243854



## **HARRY ANGEL / WE ROCK LIKE GIRLS DON'T / DESERT STORM / HARLEQUINN**

### **The Wheatsheaf**

That we should even be thinking Banbury's all-girl rock band Harlequinn are an oddity is disappointing, but the fact is that such bands are all too rare. Oxford has had its successes with all-female groups, with Death By Crimpers, Beaker, and Harlette all enjoying success before they imploded. Harlequinn remind us of the oft-maligned Caliber in that they are heading down a very straight-ahead rock path, which suits them, but it all feels a little bit safe. This is probably best witnessed in their slightly dodgy cover of 'Billy Jean', where they sidestep the solo cleverly, but fail to stamp their authority on the song. A bit more attitude and an urge to tear things up should find them making huge steps forward.

No such problems with Desert Storm, as they fill the stage with attitude - attitude and fucking great riffs. This is consummate stoner rock, and everything Desert Storm do tonight is locked into a groove so deep it probably has no bottom. Iommi-strength riffs stomp all over the audience as a nod-fest slowly evolves into a moshpit. 'Cosmic Drips' oozes class and might well be one of the finest songs written by an Oxford band in the last few years. If there's a better metal band in Oxford at the moment, then we haven't heard them.

We Rock Like Girls Don't do exactly what you expect two girls to do when they have a band name like that. They do indeed rock. As you'd expect from a two-piece the sonic palette is somewhat limited but when it's limited to jet-propelled garage blues it doesn't really matter. PJ Harvey would do well to catch this band and remember that this is the kind of thing she did best.

Harry Angel are back after what seems like an extremely long lay off. Resurrected on Good Friday, it's good to have them back. If anything they've edged away from the full-on gothic rock sound they once had, and embraced a few more dynamics. At times it's bordering on post-rock but then they remember that rock was pretty damn good before it went past the post and kick into the simple things that get the adrenalin rushing. The changes in tone and pace have added to their arsenal and it shouldn't be too long before we're heralding this second coming as something incredible.

*Sam Shepherd*

## **SIX DAY RIOT / GIDEON CONN**

### **The Bullingdon**

If you took The Ting Tings, threw in a handful of extra band members, made them acoustic and took them to a carnival, the end result would be Six Day Riot. The Bully's stage is busting at the seams with band members and a plethora of instruments. This creates a set filled with variety, as they continually dip in and out of styles. Juxtaposing the Ting Ting-esque 'Every Third Sunday' against 'Breakdown', which would fit neatly on a Catatonia album, were it not for the addition of a squeeze box, before offering the samba driven 'Run For Your Life', the reason for their acclaim as one of the most innovative new bands around quickly becomes apparent. Tamara Schlesinger's vocals ooze sweetness whilst simultaneously adding something sultry to the mix. While their Myspace page lists 'hair flicks', 'head bops' and 'hip swings' under the band's instruments section, it seems that this is perhaps less tongue-in-cheek that first expected. Like a fairground ride, the set is far shorter than wished for, though at least with Six Day Riot we're able to ride the waltzers and the merry-go-round in one fell swoop.

Gideon Conn is the Picasso of

music. Fusing elements which range from the surreal to the strange, he is almost so abstract that you are forced to tilt your head to one side, in the vain hope it will create some clarity. There is then, a subtle irony that Gideon is spotted sketching away at an image of Six Day Riot as they perform. His creations sound something like Emimen and OMC going head-to-head in a mash-up in a comedy bar. Rap meets retro, producing songs crammed with an abundance of lyrics and atypical melodies. His band exemplify the minimalist elements of Pablo's cubism, with just a drummer and bass to back up Gideon's acoustic guitar. However, it's Wil Hesketh and his mixing desk which adds the *je ne sais quoi*, giving Schlesinger the finishing touches to Gideon's vocal quirks in 'I Want You Around' and turning 'Yesnomaybe' from an elementary style song into a classic depiction of everything that's wonderful about Gideon's style, and as he closes his set with a cover of Outkast's 'Ms Jackson' and his self-titled 'Eccentric', it becomes clear that weird as it may be, the art of music holds no bounds.

*Lisa Ward*

## **4 OR 5 MAGICIANS / GRESHAM FLYERS / WHITE SAILS**

### **The Wheatsheaf**

White Sails construct frail, rickety indie edifices that teeter on the edge of collapse, yet somehow stay together. As a band they're hesitant, but manage to keep the songs afloat, coming across as a YTS version of The Wannadies. Half the songs are performed by Stornoway's Ollie Steadman, and his intimate voice sneaks into the songs charmingly, even if he could do with projecting a little more; sadly, other lead vocal duties are taken by Swiss visitor Ulysse Dupasquier, whose weedy, cracked voice is as limp and nourishing as a Little Chef salad garnish, and whose magical inverse stage presence sucks any life out of the band. Some very promising elements on display, but some serious homework to do, too.

Gresham Flyers are named after a vintage pushbike, sell immaculately-crafted split EPs with bands called The Pale Corners and Wintergreen, and have songs named 'Factory Records Museum' and 'Berry Buck Mills Stipe': exactly what we'd come up with if we wanted to parody a Swiss Concrete booking, basically. But why be cynical, when the performance is such fun, all ungainly

spasming, tinny guitars and sherbet lemon keyboards. They remind us by turns of a pre-fame Pulp, The Wedding Present, Bis and Coventry's Ludicrous Lollipops, a band so obscenely obscure we feel guilty mentioning them. But what better way to describe these indie archaeologists than with a defunct band you're even less likely to have come across? And they have Fall-referencing coloured vinyl. Bloody great fun.

Intensity levels change for Brighton's 4 Or 5 Magicians, who play bouncy indie with a shiny, muscular carapace, which is oddly like a hi-octane cross between The Senseless Things and The Foo Fighters. The room may be alarmingly empty in terms of punters, but the band fill every corner with their dense guitars, thumping drums and clean arcing vocal lines. We'll be honest, we weren't mad on the songs (although the opener was pleasingly like a steroid-pumped A House), but we're all for any band who can look out into yet another empty, listless toilet venue and play with such passion, joy and volume regardless.

*David Murphy*

## OCM OPEN SESSION

### The North Wall

Full marks to Oxford Contemporary Music for choosing this most pleasant of venues to sample some of Oxford's less well-known musicians.

First up is **Adam Percussion** playing a hang, a Swiss percussive instrument. It looks like a barbecue and sounds like a steel drum, only more versatile. Adam is clearly a virtuoso, extracting unexpected subtleties out of an unexciting-looking artefact and his six-minute set is tantalisingly short.

Everything written about **Kimwei** uses the word 'unusual', and that best describes her approach to the acoustic guitar, striking the strings and employing odd tunings to create a distinctive, percussive sound she's clearly proud of. Songs vary from vocal pieces like the in-your-face 'Shattering' to instrumentals providing more complexity and satisfaction. A true original.

Next up is **Ensemble Azut**, playing classic French songs like Brel's 'Amsterdam' as well as café jazz instrumentals. While Bruno Guastalla's voice is strong and sonorous there's nothing particularly Oxford or contemporary about them, except their association with Oxford Improvisers, whose Dominic

Lash plays double bass here. His star is definitely in the ascendant, from lurking about the Port Mahon to having his name featured on the cover of *The Wire* (the magazine not the TV show).

**Natureboy**, AKA Dave Noble, describes himself as "a quiet little fellow" and his music as nu-jazz. Some might say it's fluffy, cloying, sentimental pop that makes Crowded House sound like Cradle of Filth. For some reason he's made a bit of a name for himself, and has the dubious honour of having one of his songs covered by someone out of Manhattan Transfer. But he's got a good keyboard player.

**Kate Garrett's** set is simply wonderful. With accompaniment including harp, cello and two violins, everything works together perfectly and each song is more moving than the last. Rooted in a broadly folk tradition, the richness and complexity of the construction reveals her diverse background including her time in local rockers The Mystics. It's obvious that she lives for music and nature, and her ability to express this so eloquently is awe-inspiring. Everyone I speak to afterwards is just lost for words.

*Art Lagun*

### PAPERCUTS / TRISTAN & THE TROUBADOURS

#### The Cellar

The almost impossibly fresh-faced Tristan and the Troubadours are perhaps the foremost of the current crop of emerging bands in Oxford, not least due to the impressive range and scope of their music. Taking everything from the warmth of Magnetic Fields to the Divine Comedy's arch nods to the Vines, and stamped through to the core with rural Oxfordshire, they're a repertory of fascinating influences blended together without ever becoming desultory.

Their restraint serves them well in their spacious, clear arrangements, but in a different way it may hold them back from even greater things. Their frontman is politely spasmodic, where with a little less restraint he'd be utterly hypnotic. Something similar could apply to their music. In places it's complaisant where it may benefit from a little more confrontation – if they threw themselves with abandonment into the weirdest corners of their sound, they'd be an absolute force of nature.

Like their Oxford support, Papercuts are an unassuming-looking bunch, sauntering on stage as if they're lost punters who have wandered in off Cornmarket, before bursting open a box they've been hiding backstage labelled 'coruscating summery pop'. As warming as the prettier parts of Yo La Tengo's musical universe, it's all keyboards, harmonies and a lovely undercurrent of fuzzy, ill-defined, but comforting sadness that slings a consolatory arm around you and whispers reassuring mottos.

But while Papercuts have perfected their own twist a sound that others have been building for years, their songs are less likely to take permanent residence inside your head as make a fleeting, albeit pleasant flying visit, never to return. More a bittersweet, brief romance at the end of a sultry summer than a love on which to build your hopes, as it were. On the way home from the venue, it's Oxford's troubadours who have left us with something more lasting.

*Stuart Fowkes*

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# OXFORD FOLK FESTIVAL

## Oxford Town Hall etc

In six brief years the Oxford Folk Festival has become an established brand on the national scene. The festival has been ready to learn and to not stand still. Having big names from year one was great but they didn't of themselves make it a festival. So the festival took to the streets. The Saturday street parade and the flooding of the city centre by Morris dancers is now a highlight, particularly this year with the glorious Saturday early spring sunshine after such a hard winter. 'Summer is icumen in', indeed.

Meanwhile this year's big new development was to reach out to local schools and get them into the festival as performers. Friday features a ceilidh with a school folk band from John Mason School, mentored by Jon Spiers of Bellowhead. School choirs perform at the Holywell, Oxford Castle and on the main Town Hall stage to warm applause and a hall fuller than I have ever seen it on the Sunday morning.

Another sign of the festival's good health are the local acts who have played the second stage in previous festivals and now find themselves promoted to the main stage. **Kismet** overcomes a slightly nervous start; the **Afropean Choir** give an atmospheric performance, complete with dancing, on the big stage. It's remarkable, as they are amateurs having to reach the high standards set by their leader, the supremely professional ex Zap Mama, Anita Daule. Equally impressive is **Jack Harris**, a Welshman with a mid-Atlantic accent and a one-time Oxford student who has the knack of being able to sing and play the guitar

well at the same time rather than doing one after the other.

As for the main attractions, best act by some way are **Lau**. Symphonic in the way they build their sound, they're really in tune with one another, and have to be to play such complex material. Though **Kris Drever** gets the headlines, fiddler Aiden O'Rourke and Martin Green, who is one of those making the accordion cool again, are his equals. They play the whole set sitting down but just about play themselves out of their seats and the audience out of theirs. Kris Drever is also the best solo act of the festival. Which, is probably why he gets the headlines.

Loudest band of the weekend are **The Dhol Foundation**, by many decibels. Led by the charismatic Johnny Kelsi, they get just about everybody moving, simply because they give their audience no choice. Best anorak session: an accordion workshop run by Lau's **Martin Green** with four good players. Now I finally get why the accordion is cool. Most headbanging moment: the finely-honed **Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain** doing their covers and letting their hair down, literally in the case of one of the seven uke maestros. Most worrying moment: no hurdy gurdys at the French Breton Session. Last year there were four all in a line. Is this the death of the gurdy?

Award for the band who have hopefully earned a headline evening slot next time goes to **Robert Maseko & the Congo Beat**. On at Saturday lunchtime their infectious soukous beat and the

Bhundu Boys-style guitar riffs are astounding and would sound even better at night. Grimmiest song of the weekend? Always a hotly contested category at a folk festival, so it is surprising how easily it's won by **Fay Heild** singing movingly about a soldier in the Spanish Civil War waiting to be killed in battle. Surprise hits are **The Reel Bach Consort**, probably because they have an accordion player. From one of Oxford's twin towns, Bonn, they fuse Bach and Irish tunes with tall tales of JSB visiting Ireland.

Longest Queue is to see festival headliner **Kate Rusby**, who comes with the lush strings of Donald Grant's Red Skies ensemble, and Kate Rusby mugs and tea towels, which, I sincerely hope, are meant to be ironic. She holds my attention for two or three songs but loses me because every song sounds exactly the same. It's more a set for the faithful who have packed out the Town Hall, but I preferred it when I saw her many years ago in Charlbury. Back then she was on the way up on and without strings and tea towels.

Second best act of the festival are **Spiers and Boden**, who have played all six Oxford Folk Festivals, either as a duo or as "The Mighty Bellowhead", as festival director Tim Healey calls their eleven-piece folk big band. This time as a duo, they put in a sparkling performance. They're playing to the converted of course, and a hardcore surprise the duo by beautifully acting out the chorus of their anthem 'Prickle-eye Bush'. Many of this hardcore are also among those who have worked so hard to turn the Oxford Folk Festival into such an unmissable annual event. They deserve their own award.

*Colin May*

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# INTRODUCING....

*Nightshift's new monthly guide to the best local bands bubbling under*

## The Black Hats

### Who are they?

The Black Hats are Nick Breakspear on vocals and guitar, Ian Budd on bass and Mark Franklin on drums. The band formed two years ago after the demise of Nick's previous band, Chamfer, big favourites on the local scene with their fusion of psychedelic rock and Indian dance music. Nick met Budd through a mutual friend; Mark, who had played in bands with Budd previously, joined the pair later on. They have been gigging regularly as a three-piece ever since and have just finished recording their debut album, 'What's Not To Understand?', which is released on May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### What do they sound like?

They're a classic power trio – big, meaty hooks, irresistible choruses, sharp edges, a punky energy and simple but weighty guitar pop songs. They lie somewhere between The Jam and Young Knives. "Their frenetic power-pop, full of flowing 60s melodies and Maximo Park-style spiky intent is so tightly disciplined and irresistibly anthemic it'd take an army to hold them back," said Nightshift of a recent gig.

### What inspires them?

Nick: "The News.... I get so angry about nearly everything I see and have to write about it. Musically I try to listen to different types and not get stuck in one genre. I'll listen to Joni Mitchell and then put on The Velvet Underground, followed by Ian Dury & The Blockheads."

### Career highlight so far:

"The best moments have been when we've had a great gig and the energy has been just right. It's not always the packed out gigs; it could be to three people, but if we've played well and sweated loads, then it's an amazing feeling. Actually whenever we play with Little Fish we seem to raise our game. Equitruke was a blinder; real in-and-out rock'n'roll job."

### And the lowlight:

Nick: "My guitar will never stay in tune – is that a lowlight?"



### Their favourite other Oxfordshire act is:

"The Family Machine, Cat Matador, Long Insiders. Mephisto Grande are absolutely fascinating."

### If they could only keep one album in the world, it would be:

"A toss-up between Guns'n'Roses: 'Appetite For Destruction', Queen's 'Sheer Heart Attack' and 'Dream Factory' by Prince."

### When is their next gig and what can newcomers expect?

"The Punt on May 13<sup>th</sup> – we're playing at the Wheatsheaf. People can expect eight or nine songs they'll be humming for days after. After that it's the album launch show, also at the Wheatsheaf, on May 23<sup>rd</sup>."

### Their favourite and least favourite things about Oxford music are:

"Favourite thing is you can walk into any Oxford venue and stumble upon something really special. There are a lot of seriously talented people round here. Least favourite: bloody stairs! Why is every good Oxford venue up or down horrible stairs! When you play an Eden bass rig that weighs as much as a small car, it's not fun!"

### You might love them if you love:

Young Knives, The Jam, Maximo Park.

### Hear them here:

[www.myspace.com/blackhatshome](http://www.myspace.com/blackhatshome)

## Whatever happened to... those heroes

## The Bigger The God

### WHO?

Perhaps, along with The Candyskins, The Bigger The God were the quintessential Oxford band: huge favourites in their hometown, with a certain level of success and a cult following beyond. The quartet was made up of singer David Cowells-Hamar, guitarist Ellis James, bassist Andy Smith and drummer Steve Brownsill, who replaced original sticksman Simon a couple of years after they formed. The original trio of Ellis, Andy and Simon, formed in 1990, inspired by The Smiths, Teardrop Explodes and more advertised for a singer and "this weirdo called David" turned up. Unsure about him, ten years later they still hadn't told him he'd got the job full time.

### WHAT?

Indie pop when that actually meant something, The Bigger The God were steeped in classic post-punk noise and 80s guitar pop. Ellis' serrated guitar called on Dead Kennedys, Adam & The Ants and Wire as much as Johnny Marr, and combined with David's arch, coquettish stage manner, witty, camp lyrics and asexual, often staggeringly emotive vocals made for a lethal combination. The band were almost pathologically prolific, anthemic crowd favourites regularly ditched in favour of new songs.

### WHEN?

From an untidy first gig at the (then) Dolly, which earned them an ambivalent review in Nightshift predecessor Curfew, they quickly tidied themselves up and became one of the most popular bands in Oxford, releasing a string of singles and two albums before they split in November 2003 after one final, triumphant sold out gig at the Zodiac to celebrate



Nightshift's 100<sup>th</sup> issue. Along the way the band toured the UK extensively, including as support to friends and fans Radiohead. Their peak was in the mid-to-late 90s when a string of singles such as 'Mum Steals Boyfriend', 'When Martin Met Martine' and 'Shagged' elicited critical praise and a wider audience around the UK. They never quite moved up to the next level, however, and when David moved away to Brighton after second album '... And The Ugly', the band drifted apart before that last hurrah.

### WHY?

Quite simply The Bigger The God were one of the most entertaining live bands ever to come out of Oxford, with a sense of theatre, and a sense of humour that lifted them above the pack. As well as their own bountiful

catalogue they were masters of the cover version, and undoubtedly the best band ever to play at the legendary Your Song parties, including one sublime moment playing 'My Way' shortly after Frank Sinatra's death, when David removed his boot onstage to use as a telephone to speak to Frank in Heaven before the band, with immaculate timing, launched back into the anthemic climax of the song. Local music scene veterans will tend to go all misty eyed at the mere mention of the band's name.

### WHERE?

In the immediate aftermath of the split, Andy, Ellis and Steve continued without David as TV Baby, a punkier affair, but as Ellis moved to France that fell by the wayside. Andy now plays bass in The Relationships and works on new songs with Steve. For his part, the inimitable David, always a fan of cross-dressing, went the whole hog and is no longer a David at all.

### HOW?

Pretty much all of The Bigger The God's back catalogue is available to buy online at [oxfordmusic.net](http://oxfordmusic.net). Videos for 'Pentonville' and 'Mum Steals Boyfriend' are up on Youtube, or visit [www.myspace.com/thebiggerthegod](http://www.myspace.com/thebiggerthegod)

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# DEMOS

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## DEMO OF THE MONTH

### DIAL F FOR FRANKENSTEIN

When we first encountered Dial F a year back, they were a band just starting out, showing glimpses of promise but little by way of their own identity. Now though, still in their teens, confidence and personality is stamped boldly on everything they do. Essentially what they're playing is grunged up indie rock with excursions into spiky punk-pop and post-hardcore, but their attention to detail marks them up a good level or two from the mass of bands playing similar stuff. 'Headcase', for example, is spirited, sharp-elbowed fuzz-pop that recalls Radiohead's grungier moments, while 'Remedy' is closer to Dive Dive's precision punk. Elsewhere they dip into surf rock or classic metal solos, even dropping down into pockets of contemplation without muddying their musical waters or losing momentum. Maybe their fifth and final track here, 'Noise Pollution', sounds a bit pedestrian, but only because they've set themselves such high standards already. Dial F have an admirable grasp of texture in a genre not renowned for subtlety, and a heart full of guitar noise just buzzing to be let out. We look forward to seeing exactly what sort of monster they can turn into.

### THE DIRTY ROYALS

Back in the late-90s The Samurai Seven were Oxford's pop-punk darlings, rightly loved by just about everyone. Fate conspired to rob them of rock stardom just as it beckoned, but these days, three-quarters reconvened as The Dirty Royals, they show they've not lost that way with a simple, eager to please pop melody. Since the band's drummer is based in America, they tend to play more as an acoustic three-piece and these three new songs are lightweight, gentle summer pop strums, but instilled with plenty of kitchen sink non-romance ("You've got a man who takes off his wedding ring when he's out of town"), the odd spot of swoonsome Beach Boys harmonising and an innate buoyancy that's kept on a tight leash lest it compromise the waspish put-downs of tracks like 'Mosquito', where an unwanted ex is given typically short shrift. Overall it's like a cross between The Beatles and Beautiful

South, but mostly it's just sweet, simple pop music that doesn't need a hook to hang itself on.

### ME & THE NECK

By all that's holy, this is rudimentary, lo-fi stuff. But for once, we think such limitations actually work in the band's favour. Me & The Neck's demo doesn't so much kick in as drunkenly tumble through the door and proceeds to stumble around the room on the verge of collapse. 'The Switch' could pass muster as a long-lost late-50s garage-rock track, albeit reinterpreted by Sultans Of Ping (oh you know – them what did 'Where's Me Jumper?'), while 'Bunny' is raucous, ramshackle indie-skiffle that makes up in enthusiasm what it lacks in any discernible ability. Best of the lot, though, is 'Pastel Colours', which we felt obliged to hate on the first listen due to its heroic soft-rock chorus, but turns out to be a strangely enthralling, if uneasy alliance, between Idlewild, The Fall and The Blue Aeroplanes, militant and stern-faced one minute, cheesy and jaunty the next. 'Leonard Cohen', meanwhile, suggests they're best off sticking to shambolic belligerence than melancholic self-contemplation.

### VIBRATONIC

Recorded at Funklab Studios, apparently, this is, unsurprisingly, funk. But what in bloody blazes is going on this month? It's actually pretty bloody good. Okay, so they've nicked the guitar sound wholesale from Isaac Hayes and the squelchy synth and organ from Stevie Wonder, but despite that, Vibratonic have done a good job of a period piece that doesn't just sound like a retro tribute act. The beats are machine-like and solid instead of fluid, and if that occasionally makes them sound awkward it also gives them more of their own identity, while the female vocalist just about manages to switch from low and sultry to airy and smooth on 'Wise Guy', which mines a great dense, dirgy soul groove. They tend to drift off later on the demo, an ambient flute-led jam offering little beyond coffee table funk, but overall it's a difficult task ably completed.

### A BROKEN FRAME

A freakishly strong month for demos continues with the return of one-man noise machine Zube Sultana, whose previous offering was a freaked-out blend of acid-folk and acoustic psychedelia, but who, under his Broken Frame guise, has previously won

the Demo Of The Month award for a more misanthropic approach to music. Here we get churning industrial-gothic guitars, eerie electronic drones and meaty machine beats, but all fused together in an introverted fashion to the point they start to resemble an ambient collision between John Williams and 65 Days Of Static. Thereafter the mood shifts between moody virulence and tripped-out meandering, the best pieces sounding like soundtracks to the darker corridors of Zube's dreams, fuzzy round the edges but swimming hazily through the dark.

## PISTOL KIXX

When we say the best thing about Pistol Kixx's new demo is the accompanying photo, we're not being rude. It really is a great photo. They look like a bizarre cross between Hanoi Rocks and The Wurzels. As for the music, they've reined the high fidelity in even more than usual with a no-budget live recording, but such is their rough'n'raw, no-frills approach to sleazy glam-punk, you'd barely notice the difference. In fact, you could offer them an entire week in Abbey Road studios and they'd still kick it all out in fifteen minutes with no overdubs and spend the rest of the time necking cider and whisky and eating the potted plants. If you're already aware of Pistol Kixx, you know what to expect; if not, and you get off on the idea of Motorhead, New York Dolls and the first Motley Crue album, with songs about strip clubs and lyrics about sex, drugs and rock'n'roll, then you've just met your new saviours.

## KANGO BILL & THE LONG COATS

We seem to remember being rather dismissive of this bunch last time round, mainly because their CD turned up virtually smashed to pieces and soaked in what appeared to be tramps' piss, but this is a far more wholesome – not to mention fragrant – proposition. The band are an acoustic three-piece built around brothers Dara and Nial O'Brien, although they never sound like a typical acoustic outfit, more like a full-on rock band going unplugged for the day. In the case of opener 'Uncles' that could be Oasis or similar, straining to be strident and emotive but never hitting the right spot, sounding like a rough demo of something more fully formed. Far better is 'Lonely Town', closer to Nirvana's unplugged sessions: it's more full blooded, a far stronger melody, earthier vocals and better interplay between bass and guitar. 'Serpent' is a step down, too much of a dirge at times, but the understated guitars and sparse beat work hard enough to detract from the moaning vocals and there's promise here of better things to come. Tramp piss allowing.

Send demos for review to: Nightshift, PO Box 312, Kidlington, Oxford, OX5 1ZU. Or email MySpace link to [nightshift@oxfordmusic.net](mailto:nightshift@oxfordmusic.net), clearly marked Demo for review.

**IMPORTANT:** no review without a contact address and phone number. No more than four tracks on a demo. If you can't handle criticism, please don't send us your demo.

## 14-TEN

It couldn't last. The bottom of the barrel is always there, waiting to be scraped. What strikes us most about Bicester's 14-Ten is the strap-line at the top of their letter which describes them as '...it's all a bit Black Sabbath meets Metallica meets a female singer...' Sorry, what? Which female singer? Or just anyone randomly picked from the entire history of rock, soul, jazz, folk and pop music? Are we talking Bjork or Bonnie Tyler? Cat Power or Kat Bjelland? Joan Jett or Joni Mitchell? Or is the person who wrote that quote so lazy, ill-informed and vague that they think female singers are a homogenous mass, each indiscernible from the rest? Perhaps the lead singer of 14 Ten isn't sure herself so simply wails in a stiffling shrill fashion for duration of the demo, while behind her the band chug and chug. And chug. And chug. Like a jobbing pub rock band, not quite blues, not quite metal, but content to follow a straight and (very) narrow path of off-the-peg riffery. All the while the singer wails like something being strangled or stretched beyond what might be considered fair or comfortable. So, it's all a bit Led Zeppelin meets Whitesnake meets a tortured cat...' But, hmmm, do we mean a Persian or a Manx? Siamese or common tabby? This is harder than we thought.

## THE DEMO DUMPER

## BLIND SKIES

The very great electronic genius Jim Davies – aka Spunkle – one declared that, yes, playing a detuned piano with your teeth at the bottom of an abandoned mineshaft might be experimental, but it's also shit. It seems like someone decided to take him up on that challenge. Blind Skies' attempts at ambient guitar'n'electronics ambience are so random, so unfocussed, you suspect any number of monkeys given access to any number of musical instruments could have produced something more interesting than this. It starts off okay, the first track a shifting scenery of Eno-ish distorted guitar that might have the chin-stroking massive frotting with knowing glee, while leaving tune-loving luddites confused and slightly nauseous. But when the next track seems to consist of nothing much more than a dodgy jack lead being plugged in and removed over and over again, followed by two tracks of nothing more than feedback and randomly hit piano keys, we wonder if the perpetrator has actually disappeared so far up his own backside he can nibble his own liver. Shove up a microphone up there at the same time and the resulting recording might make for something more musical than this bucket of bums.



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7pm - 10pm

## For Those About To Rock

ft. Livewire AC/DC  
+ Limehouse Lizzy

Weds 14th Oct • £22.50 adv  
6.30pm - 10pm

## The Proclaimers

Tues 20th Oct • £10 adv

## Frank Turner

Tues 3rd Nov • £15 adv

## Y&T + Ron Keel

Sat 5th Dec • £13 adv  
6.30pm - 10pm

## The Answer

Fri 18th Dec • £10 adv

## The Complete Stone Roses

+ The Hazes