

NIGHTSHIFT

Oxford's Music Magazine

Free every
month.
Issue 190
May
2011



The Epstein

After a turbulent start to the year
Oxford's great rock romantics gear
up for a summer of festivals

plus

Gunning For Tamar, Fixers, The Cellar Family,
Death By Crimpers, local festival news, five
pages of gigs *and much much more.*

 <p>Office: 01865 457009 Mobile: 07917 775477 <small>99 Oxford Road, Milton Keynes MK9 1AB</small> www.theduplicationcentre.co.uk info@theduplicationcentre.co.uk</p>  <p><small>Water Repellent, Scratchproof and UV Protected CD and DVD Disc Duplication</small></p>	<h3>CD/DVD DISC DUPLICATION</h3> <p>Oxford Duplication Centre are an all service professional disc copying centre running in-house duplication machines and thermal/inkjet printers, turning around orders of up to 400 units per day.</p> <p>Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CD/DVD Duplication• Stack (discs, packaging etc)• Colour Booklet Printing, Inlays, DVD Wraps• Video Conversions and Editing• FREE Basic Artwork Setup  <p><small>Recommended by: Prospekt, Hot Tod Shetty, Backyard Tunes Radio, Nick Cope, English Seaside and Reggae Dubs, Desert Storm, The Republics, Why, Ruff Beat, Laceration</small></p>
--	--

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

**JAMES VINCENT
MCMORROW**

The Jericho, Oxford
SOLD OUT!
www.jamesvincentmorrow.com

**Belleruche**

The Jericho, Oxford | Friday 13th May
www.belleruche.com

**BEN
MONTAGUE**

Lotte Mullan

THE JERICHO, OXFORD | MONDAY 16TH MAY
www.benmontague.co.uk | www.lottemullan.com

CULTS

PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS



THE JERICHO, OXFORD | TUESDAY 17TH MAY
www.myspace.com/cultsnorise

**THE RURAL
ALBERTA ADVANTAGE**

The Jericho, Oxford Thursday 19th May
www.therural.com

THE NAKED AND FAMOUS

PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS
CLOUD CONTROL

O₂ ACADEMY, OXFORD
THURSDAY 19TH MAY
www.thenakedandfamous.com 14+

Stargate Radio

alessi's ark

The Jericho, Oxford | Wednesday 18th May
www.alessisark.com

**NATHANIEL
RATELIFF**

THE JERICHO, OXFORD
MONDAY 23RD MAY
www.nathanielrateliff.com

THE WAVE PICTURES

THE JERICHO
TUESDAY 24TH MAY
www.myspace.com/thewavepictures

**DUTCH
UNCLES**

+ NAIROBI + THE FREEMANTLE

THE JERICHO, OXFORD | WEDNESDAY 25TH MAY
www.dutchuncles.co.uk

BRAIDS

+ BETA BLOCKER AND THE BODY CLOCK

THE JERICHO, OXFORD | FRIDAY 27TH MAY
www.myspace.com/braidsmusic

**JON
ALLEN**

The Jericho, Oxford
Wednesday 8th June
www.jonallensongs.co.uk

TELLISON

+ GUNNING FOR TAMAR

THE JERICHO, OXFORD
SATURDAY 18TH JUNE
www.tellison.co.uk

ALEX CLARE

The Jericho, Oxford
Wednesday 6th July
www.alexclare.com

— alt-tickets.co.uk —

NEWS

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



ROOTS MANUVA will headline **Fiesta in the Park** in South Park on **Saturday 2nd July**. The event is a fundraiser for Cowley Road Carnival, which takes place the following day. The doyen of British rap is joined at the fiesta by Congolese soukous musician Kanda Bongo Man, brass and percussion ensemble Brass Roots and local DJ Count Skylarkin. Tickets, priced £10, are on sale now from Wegottickets.com and the Pegasus Theatre. The all-ages event runs from 4.30-10.30pm. Visit www.cowleyroadcarnival.co.uk for more details.

THE EPSTEIN, The Rock of Travolta, Charly Coombes & The New Breed, Borderville and The Family Machine are among the local acts confirmed for the Riverside Stage at this year's **Cornbury Festival**. The Riverside

has a tradition of providing some of the hidden highlights of the annual festival, including last year's star turn, Raghut Dixit. Other acts set to play the stage are Deer Chicago, Phantom Theory, The Mighty Redox, Easy Tiger and Slainte.

They join headliners **James Blunt**, **Ray Davies** and **Status Quo**, as well as a cast of big names that includes The Faces, Cyndi Lauper, Bellowhead, Olly Murs, The Like, Wilco Johnson and Sophie Ellis-Bextor.

This year's Cornbury Festival takes place over the weekend of the **1st-3rd July** at its new home of The Great Tew Estate, near Charlbury. Tickets are on sale now, priced £160 for weekend camping passes, with concessions for under-18s and under-16s and over-70s admitted free. Visit www.cornburyfestival.com for more details.

OXFORD FRINGE FESTIVAL returns next month, running from the 10th through to the 26th June, featuring a wide variety of music, theatre, cabaret, comedy, dance and literature across various venues across the city. Highlights of the festival's live music programme include Chris TT, Listing Ships and Tamara & The Martyrs at the Wheatsheaf on Friday 10th; Black Hats and Sketches at the Jericho Tavern on Saturday 11th; Goodwin Sands and Tamara Parsons-Baker at the Honeypot on Monday 13th;



GRAHAM COXON, **PHIL SELWAY**, **THE GO! TEAM**, **RODDY WOOMBLE** and **EDWYN COLLINS** are among the latest slew of acts to be confirmed for this summer's **Truck Festival**.

They join headliners **Gruff Rhys**, **Bellowhead** and **Saint Etienne** at the 14th Truck Festival, which takes place at Hill Farm in Steventon over the weekend of the **22nd-24th July**.

Other new acts confirmed include Dean Wareham, who will be playing a set of songs from his seminal band Galaxie 500; Justin Townes Earle; Dry The River; Tunng; The Rockingbirds and The Truck Festival All-Stars.

As previously announced, this year's festival will feature a new second stage, named The Clash Stage, which will host indie labels Heavenly, Transgressive and Bella Union showcasing their favourite bands.

Blur guitarist Coxon, Radiohead drummer Selway and The Go! Team will all be making their Truck debuts, while Roddy Woomble previously headlined the festival with his band Idlewild.

Tickets for Truck, including day tickets, are on sale now, online from www.seetickets.com, as well as from the Truck Store on Cowley Road and various outlets around Oxfordshire.

Visit www.thisistruck.com for more line-up and ticket details.

Inflatable Buddha and Mustard & The Monocle at the Wheatsheaf on Friday 17th; My Piano Is A Rocketship at St Michael's Church on Saturday 18th; The Afropean Choir and Jali Fily Cissokho at Fusion Arts Centre on Friday 24th and Ju Ju and Ben from Little Fish with Matt Winkworth at the Jericho Tavern on Saturday 25th. A full programme of events and ticket details are online at www.oxfringe.com.

WITTSTOCK FESTIVAL returns this month. The free live music festivals runs over the weekend of **13th-15th May** at the Railway Inn in Culham. This year's event will be a fundraiser for local mental health charity Oxfordshire MIND with fans invited to donate money on the door or through raffle tickets and merchandise. Acts confirmed include Black Hats, The Rock Of Travolta, Barry & The Beachcombers, Superloose, Vicars of Twiddly, Quadrophobe, The Mighty Redox, Prohibition Smokers Club, Headington Hillbillies and Laima Bite. As ever there will be a limited amount of free camping available on site.

THE WINCHELL RIOTS release a new four-song EP, 'Figure 8s' on June 6th, the follow-up to last year's sold-out 'Red Square' EP. The EP is released as a numbered 10" record and CD, both formats limited to 300 copies. Fans can pre-order the EP from May 3rd at www.thewinchellriots.co.uk and receive an immediate five-song download EP. The band play a launch gig for the new record at the O2 Academy on Saturday 11th June. Tickets are on sale now from wegottickets.com or the Academy box office.

TINDERBOX FESTIVAL brings a little experimental music mania to unofficial folk capital of England, Cropredy, on Saturday 11th June. Organised by local free jazz freakout combo Red Square, the one-day event takes place at The Old Wharf in Appletree Lane. Described by organiser Jon Seagroatt as "a mini-micro festivalette of all that's good and weird in the wonderful world of the kind of stuff you read about in Wire Magazine", Tinderbox features Snorkel, Red Square, Temperatures, Bitten By A



YOUNG KNIVES played a special live set at Truck Store on Cowley Road as part of National Record Store Day last month. Truck made a full weekend of the event, which saw Little Fish, The Epstein, Spring Offensive, Half Rabbits, Phantom Theory and Richard Walters amongst a host of acts playing live in the shop.

Monkey, Bolide, Morgen Und Nite, Brighton Safehouse, Oxford Improvisers and Trevor Taylor. Information and tickets, priced £5 advance / £8 on the door, are available from www.myspace.com/tinderboxfestival.

OXFORD CONTEMPORARY MUSIC's Ethnometric Museum, a celebration of myriad experimental sound devices, which has been running all through April at the Oxford Museum Of The History Of Science, returns for two special activations on the evening of Saturday 14th May. Performances are at 7.30 and 9pm. More info at www.ocmevents.org.

THE ROCK OF TRAVOLTA AND LISTING SHIPS contribute a track each to a new post-rock compilation album released this month. 'A Cheery Wave From Stranded Youngsters: Volume Two' features new tracks from eleven acts and is available to download for free at bleaklow.bandcamp.com.

THISHASLEGS gig promotions have launched their own bi-monthly fanzine to coincide with their gig nights. The online zine concentrates on local indie bands. The first issue features Alphabet

Backwards, King Of Cats and We Aeronauts. Visit www.thishaslegs.com for more info.

A CUBAN MUSIC WORKSHOP is running at East Oxford Community Centre on Sunday 8th May, led by Sara McGuinness of Grupo Lokito. For more details email: amtalbot393@btinternet.com.

AS EVER, don't forget to tune into **BBC Oxford Introducing** every Saturday evening between 6-7pm on 95.2fm. The dedicated local music show plays the best new Oxford releases as well as featuring interviews and studio sessions from local acts. The show is available to stream or as a podcast all week on the BBC iPlayer.

REGULARLY UPDATED OXFORD MUSIC NEWS is available online at www.musicinxford.com. The interactive site also features plenty of local live and release reviews, interviews, a local gig photo gallery, free track downloads, exclusive live sessions from local acts and a regular podcast. Visit them; they're nice people.



photo: rphimages

SEASICK STEVE will headline the Friday night of this year's **Cropredy Festival**. He joins traditional Saturday night headliners **Fairport Convention** and Thursday's bill toppers, **UB40**. This year's Cropredy Festival features a more eclectic line-up than usual, with **Hayseed Dixie**, **The Coral** and **The Blockheads** joining more traditional folk acts like **Horslips**, **Lau**, **The Urban Folk Quartet** and **The Travelling Band** over the 11th-13th August. Other acts confirmed include **The Dylan Project**, **Home Service**, **Charlie Dore**, **Badly Drawn Boy**, **The Shee** and **Richard Digance**. Weekend tickets for the festival are £90. Visit www.fairportconvention.com for more details.



oxfringe 2011
10-26 JUNE

'LIVE AND LISTENING!'

live bands

music art & performance

Jericho, Wheatsheaf
Fusion & The HoneyPot

FRIDAY 10 JUNE
LAUNCH @ THE WHEATSHEAF
CHRIS T-T
LISTING SHIPS
TAMARA & THE MARTYRS

SATURDAY 11 JUNE
@ THE JERICO
BLACK HATS
SKETCHES
VERY NICE HARRY

MONDAY 13 JUNE
@ THE HONEYPOT
GOODWIN SANDS
free Netherlands folk
Tamara Parsons-Baker
Paul Askew & more

FRIDAY 17 JUNE
@ THE WHEATSHEAF
INFLATABLE BUDDHA
MUSTARD & THE MONOCLE
MEPHISTO MINOR

SATURDAY 25 JUNE
@ THE JERICO
LITTLE FISH
ACOUSTIC with Juju & Ben
MAIT WINKWORTH
SAMUEL ZASADA

Pop Up Art

Young Art Oxford at Fusion Arts
Friday 24 June 7pm Free
music art sculpture

Spm

oxfringe.com

oxfringe.co.uk

METROPOLIS MUSIC
BY ARRANGEMENT WITH WOMAN IS PRESENTS

FRANKIE & THE HEART STRINGS

PLUS GUESTS LET'S BUY HAPPINESS

RESCHEDULED DATES. ORIGINAL TICKETS REMAIN VALID

THURSDAY 12 MAY

OXFORD CELLAR

0844 811 0051
WWW.GIGSANDTOURS.COM

The Phoenix Foundation

Wednesday 1st June

THE JERICO TAVERN OXFORD

0844 811 0051 / gigsandtours.com
thephoenixfoundation.co.nz

It Captain Cook was to explore the South Pacific in 2011
The Phoenix Foundation would be his greatest discovery
- that Matariki, Night of the Conchords

A Matariki Music presentation in association with The Spring Group





THE ORIGINAL CORNBURY FESTIVAL

JULY 1ST TO 3RD 2011 THE GREAT TEW PARK OXFORDSHIRE

CORNBURYFESTIVAL.COM

FRIDAY 1ST JULY

SATURDAY 2ND JULY

SUNDAY 3RD JULY

JAMES
BLUNT

CYNDI
LAUPER

ELIZA BUFFY ST
DOOLITTLE MARIE

BELLOWHEAD

THE
BEN TOYHEARTS
MONTAGUE

THE FACES

RAY
DAVIES

IMELDA SOPHIE
MAY ELKIS
BEXTOR

PETE DEACON
BLUE
LAWRIE SAINT

THE JUDE
LIKE

STATUS
QUO

OILY MURS

SAWDOCTORS

WILKO JOHNSON

STACKRIDGE

JON STAX
ALLEN WITH
SPECIAL
GUEST

ALICE CHIPPING
GOLD NORTON
ALLSTARS

CIRCUS SKILLS | PUPPET SHOWS | SONGS FOR KIDS | STORYTELLING | BHANGRA DANCE | BHANGRA TUTS | BOLLYWOOD DANCE | MAKE A PLAY | CLAY MAKING
WILLOW TUNNELS | TIN PAN ANNIE FAMILY MUSIC | FUNNY FESTIVAL CRAFTS | FACE PAINTING | GRAFFITI WALL STREET SHOW
CARNIVAL MASKS | TATTOO | BUMP KIN KIDS YOGA | THERAPY MASSAGE & THERAPY TENT

CORNBURYFESTIVAL.COM

THEY
INDEPENDENT CAFE
NERO



a quiet word with

The Epstein



“Stornoway, Foals and Fixers have raised the bar in terms of what they have achieved and the rest of us have to aim to keep up with them.”

OLLY WILLS, SINGER, guitarist and chief songwriter with The Epstein is contemplating his band’s place in Oxford’s musical firmament and their hopes of emulating the success of those acts who have come through the scene with them in recent times.

We’ve put it to Olly that The Epstein are now Oxford’s best kept secret following on from Stornoway’s leap into the big league last year.

Having regularly graced local venues and festivals over the past five years, they’re established as one of the best loved and most respected bands in town, a captivating blend of widescreen musical ambition and romantic campfire warmth, a musical realisation of the high mountains, arid grasslands and huge, open skies Olly experienced in his time working on a farm in Wyoming.

AS WELL AS A DEVOTED local following, The Epstein have previously found themselves handpicked to play at Glastonbury and count legendary DJ Bob Harris as a fan; with a series of EPs set for release this year and a new album to follow, the scene definitely seems set for The Epstein to follow their friends Stornoway onto a bigger stage.

FATE, AS EVER, WAS NEVER going to give them an easy ride.

Late last year the band, for most of their lifetime a five-piece, lost two key members, including founding member Rowland Prytherch. Olly, along with guitarist Jon Berry and multi-instrumentalist Seb were left all dressed up with no place to go: new recordings to release, gigs lined up.

A band so well liked weren’t going to be cast adrift though: up to the plate stepped Stornoway’s Ollie Steadman and Truck’s Joe Bennett amongst others to fill in for various live shows. After a brief crisis, The Epstein are once again set for a summer of festival appearances,

including Truck, Cornbury and this month’s Wood event, as well as the next in their series of EP releases.

NIGHTSHIFT CAUGHT UP with Olly and Jon ahead of an EP launch show at the Bullingdon and asked first how the departure of Roland, along with drummer Paul Denley late last year, affected the pair.

OLLY: “There is no doubt that their departures were a massive blow. Rowland had been with us since the very start so it was really sad to see him go after all the wonderful experiences that we have had over the years and all the work we have done together. Paul had been a solid member for over a year and we were looking forward to doing a lot more with him in the future.

“There were a number of reasons for their departures but I guess that more than anything they just felt that they had put in as much as they could and were not up for all the plans that we had for 2011. The whole process of making the new recordings was lengthy and at times stressful and it certainly took a lot

out of us individually and ultimately collectively. Rowland in particular put a huge amount of his own engineering and mixing skills into these songs and for that we will be eternally grateful.

“So we entered 2011 with a new EP to release, others in the pipeline and suddenly two men down... not a great feeling at all! There were certainly a couple of dark January nights when it seemed all a bit much but Jon, Seb and I got together and very quickly decided that there was still much to be done and much to be positive about and above all that there were new songs to write as well as old ones to release, so we have just got our heads down and concentrated on getting creative again and it has been a real new lease of life for us all. Change is a good thing and hopefully it will serve The Epstein well.”

Ollie from Stornoway and Joe from Truck stepped in temporarily; are you looking for permanent replacements?

OLLY: “Having Joe and Ollie helping out with bass was fantastic as both of them are such great

musicians and vocalists... Joe brings the violin and brass too. Ollie played with a double bass, which was a first for The Epstein and we hope to get both of them down on some new recordings that we plan to do in the next few months. Andrew 'Wannie' is another local musician who has done a few shows on drums for us and who has really stepped up and brought some new ideas to the band.

"Jon, Seb and I are also doing a good number of shows as a three piece and seeing how far we can take the sound in this form. After a good number of years as a four, five and six-piece it's refreshing to have this new and open approach to live shows and as long as we can maintain the level of quality and range in the songs then we may well continue along like this and bring in guest players as and when we can and want to. Do get in touch if you want to come in for a session..."

JON: "Playing with new people has been like a re-awakening. It's made us reassess why we do what we do, and how. And it keeps us on our toes! Particularly playing as a three-piece, there's nowhere to hide! It's also great to have different people playing with us now because it pushes us to explore new areas in our songs, and it has injected us with a new creativity and passion for playing and writing."

SINCE WE LAST FEATURED

The Epstein on the cover of Nightshift the band has recruited Seb into their ranks. A veteran of local bands like Sexy Breakfast, The Keyboard Choir and Braindead Collective as well as the man behind pioneering promotions company Pindrop Performances, Seb brought a wealth of experience and talent with him.

OLLY: "Seb and I talked about him playing some shows with us about a year ago and I am really glad that we have got him on board. He and Jon are soundscape musicians; they're constantly playing with new ideas, new pedals and new approaches and what they do together is really working well with our songs. Seb has also brought a couple of beautiful songs to the table – one of which we have been playing for a while now – so I think that between us we can really take the band's sound forward in a good, good way."

Such soundscape thinking is evident on The Epstein's last release, the sumptuous, epic 'Held You Once', a glorious tidal swell of a song of the sort that The Waterboys' Mike Scott would have been proud to call his own. The song marked a distinct move on from The Epstein's rootsier debut

album, 'Last Of The Charanguistas', with a heavier emphasis on arrangements and fuller production. Elsewhere on the last EP, The Epstein sound like easy equals of bands like Giant Sand or The Low Anthem.

OLLY: "I hope that people can hear how far we have progressed since our first record. Every time you record you learn a huge amount about the processes involved. We really set out to make a proper studio album this time round and for the most part I think we have achieved this. I guess that is probably the most noticeable aspect of these new recordings. Songwriting wise I think that it is just as strong but in a different way and we hope that people will like the direction that we have taken."

How do you feel your songwriting has developed since the first album?

Ollie: "I hope that we are getting better at writing and self editing when it comes to our new songs and this comes from experience and lots of live shows throughout the years. We wanted to move away from the quite Americana-country sound of our first album and focus on the sound we have developed and I feel that we have achieved that. Hopefully people feel that they retain the intimacy of our earlier songs but they are delivered in a grander and more confident manner."

You say you wanted to capture the epic sweep on your songs on 'Held You Once' rather than try and get your live sound down as on the album.

Ollie: "I really do feel that we succeeded in achieving that; we spent months adding layer after layer onto the tracks... strings – thanks to Joe Bennett – horns, pianos, harmonies and much more and all these layers hopefully give the songs some grand peaks as well as intimate moments too. Our next couple of releases will be in this style and after that we will reassess our options for the next one.

Perhaps we'll have another crack at a stripped-back live sounding record again. We're starting to do some home recording in preparation for studio time so we'll live with the new songs for a while before deciding where to go with them."

JON: "Although there is a lot in terms of instrumentation on the recordings, the essence of the songs is there. Whether it's a recorded version, or a live version played by just a few of us, the initial energy we put into the writing of the songs will always come through. In the recordings, you can really hear that energy, that excitement and rejoice in writing the song. The base tracks on the recordings are pretty much the first or second take. That's

where the real magic is."

THE EPSTEIN'S NEW EP

features three songs, 'Calling Out Your Name', 'Chimes' and 'Sophia Loren', building up to the full album later this year. With the band reinvigorated and sounding more confident than ever before, what of this tag of being Oxford's best kept secret?

OLLY: "With these releases we want to raise our profile both in Oxford and further afield.... so yes, we certainly want to have a good crack at breaking out! It is an inspiration to see other Oxford bands doing so well. Having been part of the Oxford music scene for a few years I have to say that we are so lucky to have so much going on in this city live music wise and we hope to help reinforce that reputation a little more."

You've played Glastonbury and Wychwood and had some pretty good press coverage in the past; is the band's name out there in the big, wide world?

OLLY: "I think that our name is still out and about and hopefully these new releases will please old fans as well as bringing us a whole load of new ones. 'I Held You Once' has brought us some national coverage in magazines, newspapers and some BBC radio sessions. We

have always tried to stay busy on the live front and we will be playing a good number of festivals this summer in Germany, Holland and in the UK.

"We are still working with our German label (Dandyland) and are currently looking at the possibility of releasing something in July so as to coincide with a number of festivals that we are playing over there. In Holland we have a great live agent who is always booking us good shows and pushing us to do more so hopefully the more good coverage that we have here will lead to more decent shows over there. We have a couple of festivals in Holland in August as well as one in mid October."

And of course you're playing Wood Festival this month; is this the sort of setting The Epstein feel most at home?

OLLY: "We can't wait for it... the midnight slot on Saturday night... it is going to be magical! Truck has been really kind to us over the years and we always seem to have great shows at their festivals, so long may this continue."

'Held You Once' is out now on Zawinul. The Epstein play Wood Festival on Saturday 21st May. Visit www.myspace.com/theepstein for tracks and gig dates.

livenation.co.uk'. At the very bottom, it says 'A Live Nation presentation' and 'www.pdareps.com'."/>

RELEASED

Sponsored by

TRUCK STORE 
101 Cowley Road, Oxford

FIXERS

'Here Comes 2001 So Let's All Head For The Sun'

(Vertigo)

No, we haven't typed the year in wrong in the title; it's Fixers going all wibbly wobbly timey wimey on us, with this new four-song EP, themed on UFO-obsessed religious cults.

Not that they've gone all mad-eyed and Sun Ra just yet; the band's lysergic, harmony-drenched summery psychedelia is all still here, a musical ripple of warm air rising over the bonnet of a T-Bird on a West Coast beach somewhere – everywhere – between 1966 and 2066. The twin obsessions with Brian Wilson and Animal Collective are no less apparent on songs like 'Another Lost Apache' and 'Uriel' but the welcoming warmth they bring with them feels

like the distillation of freshly cut grass, ice cream van chimes and birdsong. If the succinct 'Another Lost Apache' is The Beach Boys reinvented for a romantically imagined synth-pop age, EP highlight 'Crystals' is pure exuberance, bouncing along like the Easter Bunny on a hippety skippety hi-hat beat, a grin as wide as a caffeinated Scientologist across its face as it dares to name-check Haight-Ashbury.

As is becoming traditional with Fixers releases, 'Passages/Love In Action' provides a flipside to their cheerily acid-frazzled pop, a more abstract, dissonant slab of electronica, all crashing beats and furtive falsetto that sounds



like a wild wood hippy band discovering techno a couple of decades too early.

Dale Kattack

ALPHABET BACKWARDS

'White Russian EP'

(Own label)

Anyone looking to find a perfect encapsulation of what twee, summery, resolutely indie pop music might look and sound like need only glance at Alphabet Backwards' latest release. From their winsome boy-girl vocals and almost nursery rhyme simplicity, to the self-conscious hipster-referencing lyrics and dinky afrobeat-borrowing guitar twinkle, they're a pretty, polka-dot wearing, zine-reading hairclipped tickle under the chin of a band. The squelchy, brassy synth stabs that punctuate 'Elton John' are as cheesy as it gets, a none-too-subtle reminder of mid-80s soul-funk, but sneak past the indie filter disguised as the long-forgotten theme tune to some obscure 80s kids TV show.

There's nothing here as fun or substantive as '80s Pop Video' or 'Polar Bears' and there are moments where the Twee-ometer threatens to go off the scale, but equally it's heartening to know that in Alphabet Backwards' hearts it's always springtime and today is always a perfect day for a picnic.

Sue Foreman



BURNING BEES

'Goodseedbadsoil'

(Apiary)

Although originally hailing from Scotland, one half of Burning Bees is now resident in Oxford, the other in France. The duo, Neil Grant and Stuart Hobbs, have some serious history behind them, having played with the likes of David Keenan and Brendan O'Hare in the past, while it was local producer Sam Williams who proved the catalyst for this debut album to be made.

While the two sides of Burning Bees' sound are hardly incompatible, there seems to be a clear divide between their more inventive psychedelic side, exemplified by album opener 'Hello Mama', with its stately glide and oddly pastoral electronica that gets you to thinking what Vangelis might have sounded like had he been an English trad folk fan, and a rootsier, laid-back Americana, where the duo lapse into pretty straight 60 country-pop, all multi-part harmonies and a hefty dose of The Band in effect.

This latter style tends to dominate the second half of the album, sapping it of a little of its initial strangeness, although the hymnal 'Far To Fall' is a gorgeous coda. They're far more engaging on songs like 'Half Inch Punch', a dreamily devotional cruise that, like much else here, harks back to The Beta Band's languid psychedelia, and particularly 'Eat The Crash', which unfurls wonderfully from its sombre cello-led intro, by way of a wandering sax lead into something far more expansive and commanding. There's a brassy, soulful euphoria about 'Tug At The Sleeves Of Nightmares', while the chiming Hammond and multi-part harmonies of 'Nature Boy', with its airy country lope is the best of the more trad-leaning tracks.

The press release suggests Neil and Stuart's geographical separation makes touring a near impossibility but listening to 'Goodseedbadsoil' makes you wonder if maybe Truck Festival wouldn't be a perfect window of opportunity to

get the pair on a stage together. Their spacious, wistful blend of folk and something stranger would be perfectly suited to the event.

Dale Kattack

THE SCHOLARS

'Arrival/Departure EP'

(Incremental)

Having announced themselves on the local scene in some style at Truck Festival in 2009, The Scholars' shiny early-80s fetishism quickly drew admiring comparisons with Editors and Interpol. Their big, synth-heavy sound, topped by Adrian Gillet's bold baritone, suggested a stadium band in waiting. This new EP furthers their cause in this direction, sounding yet more polished and with an even bigger production. 'Mind Games' stomps in like a mid-80s *Miami Vice* club hit, all brassy synth and disco beat; it reminds us of when Psychedelic Furs cleaned up their act in the wake of 'Pretty In Pink's mega success and hit the American arena circuit big time. Likewise, 'New York Smile' is epic and sweeping, a latter-day Simple Minds-style sky-punching anthem crossbred with The Killers' stadium-friendly electro-rocking. 'Birth', meanwhile, is crying out for a Wembley-scale lightshow to herald its bombastic arrival. By contrast 'Escape Plan' is too po-paced, all paranoia and portent, too determined to be taken very seriously indeed.

The upshot of The Scholars' bigger, brassier sound is they've maybe lost that bit of grit that underpinned their early songs, but the strength of their songwriting remains undiminished. These tracks sound like big-budget, major-label produced, second album material, set for big-time MTV rotation and festival sing-along status, beyond the scale of what you'd expect from an unsigned bunch of local youngsters; such grand ambition is admirable and audacious.

Dale Kattack

MIRIAM JONES

'Fire Lives'

(Own label)

Making music isn't rocket science but if you're going to make your lyrics available for everyone to read, it's best to get some basic facts right. Thus, as local singer-songwriter Miriam Jones draws, "And I hear the helicopter drowning your life out with every beat of its terrible wings," we can only sit in gobsmacked awe at the utter what-the-fuckedness of what we've just heard. There are tins of food in our kitchen cupboard that know helicopters don't have wings, and if they did they'd be aeroplanes and aeroplanes' wings don't beat. Except those mad old ones from ancient newsreels of men trying to invent prototypes which subsequently crashed off the end of a pier, killing everyone involved.

Still, it's no more than we'd expect from someone who's recently supported Sandi Thom, a woman whose contribution to literary genius was "I wish I was a punk rock girl, with flowers in my hair."

Oh sorry, have we gone off on one? Forgive us, we've just sat through 'Fire Lives' twice and are feeling a little bit tetchy. It's like spending the afternoon with only a human incarnation of the Easy FM playlist for company, eternally chuntering away in its tastefully banal way as you start contemplating exactly which number bus you're going to hurl yourself under.

In Miriam's Myspace 'Sounds Like...' section, she quote Patti Smith, which is either a wry joke or a delusion of such magnitude only a



monstrous dose of medication can save her and, more importantly, society. She sounds nothing like Patti Smith. Nothing. She sounds like Sheryl Crow (something she at least acknowledges further into her list) and – gulp – Shania Twain. We always imagined Shania Twain was something people tried not to step in on the pavement, not try and emulate.

'Fire Lives' is everything contemporary Nashville-centric country music has become – tasteful and polished, mawkish and ultimately asinine, a world away from the raw, dirty soul of its 1920s origins. Only album closer 'Oh My' escapes; finally, too late, a suggestion that there's more here than crowd-pleasing cliché. And now, if you'll excuse, someone left a window open and there's a bloody great Chinook flapping about in the office. We think it might have just pooped down the back of the stereo.

Victoria Waterfield

ROGER DALRYMPLE

'When The Crisis Comes'

(MC9)

Elegantly produced and handsomely packaged, this debut EP from local singer and multi-instrumentalist Roger Dalrymple feels like a personal labour of love, but equally suffers the common pitfalls of the musician's perfectionist touch.

Nominally wandering in the starlit world of folksy country rock, 'When the Crisis Comes' rides on a pedal steel twang, Roger's vocals recalling Donovan or even Steve Harley in their intonation at times. It's a pretty enough tune but it feels too measured, bordering on sterile, as if so much time and effort has been spent trying to make everything sound just so, no room or thought was given to the song's spirit. Similarly the more introverted, wistful 'Toad's Place', and it takes 'Heading That Way' to bring any kind of freewheeling soul into play. 'Lord Of The Long Run' could be a long-lost Ralph McTell piece, amiable but too polite to leave its mark, and the most lasting impression of the entire EP is that next time maybe dump all the attention to detail and create something that come out of the speaker at least looking like it's prepared to put up a fight.

Dale Kattack

NEXT MONTH: Gunning For Tamar; The Anydays; Coloureds, Piggasm and more...

THE
OXFORD GUITAR GALLERY
LIMITED

9 SOUTH PARADE, SUMMERTOWN, OXFORD OX2 7JL
01865 553777 · WWW.OXFORDGUITARGALLERY.COM

GIG GUIDE

SUNDAY 1st

PENNY & PHIL + MOON LEOPARD + BEARD OF DESTINY + MARK BOSLEY: Donnington Community Centre (6pm) – Free acoustic session.

HALF DECENT + GEM'N'I: Izi's, Witney – Local hip hop hopefuls give their rhymes an airing.

MONDAY 2nd

EARL THOMAS & PADDY MILNER & THE BIG SOUNDS: The Bullingdon – Powerful gospel and soul-influenced blues-rock at the Famous Monday Blues tonight as Tennessee singer Thomas teams up with Scottish pianist

Friday 6th

PETE DOHERTY: O2 Academy

As an intelligent, articulate lyricist and co-frontman of one of the most successful young British bands of recent years, you have to wonder how Pete Doherty ended up as little more than car crash tabloid fodder, his music largely forgotten amid the endless cycle of drug busts, fights, missed court appearances, prison and run-ins with the paparazzi, the crown prince of scandal to Amy Winehouse's queen. Still, that's the joy of drugs for you. A lengthy spell out of the public eye should have helped wipe the slate clean although he's still apparently helping police with their investigation into a death at a party and eye-witnesses apparently identified him in a robbery at a German record store in March, while he was filming his first movie role, alongside Charlotte Gainsbourg. How much his public persona is helping or hindering his ongoing solo music career is anyone's guess, but his recent musical output suggests his songs aren't so much composed as coughed or dribbled out in those brief moments in between courting further media scrutiny. Still, there'll likely be a few old Libertines and Babyshambles faves in the mix tonight and anyone not already sick of the sight and sound of him isn't going to be told by anyone that he isn't still England's finest pop bard.



MAY

Milner, the pair drawn together by the former's love of British rock'n'roll and the latter's love of American blues. A new collaborative album has just been released.

SHE MAKES WAR: The Port Mahon

TUESDAY 3rd

JU JU FISH + IF ALL ELSE FAILS: The Wheatsheaf – Little Fish singer and guitarist Juju goes solo at tonight's Moshka gig night.

MIKE & THE MECHANICS: The New Theatre – Sadistic Soviet-sponsored laboratory experiment designed to prove that, yes, it was possible to make music more unbearably vapid and soul-crushing than a Phil Collins-fronted Genesis back in the mid-80s.

JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon – Weekly free live jazz club, tonight featuring Alvin Roy & Reeds Unlimited.

GOOD VIBRATIONS: Café Tarifa – Weekly unplugged night, tonight featuring heavyweight acoustic act Oxygen Thief, drawing comparisons to Frank Turner.

OPEN MIC: The Port Mahon

WEDNESDAY 4th

PHARAOHS + NAIROBI + OUR LOST INFANTRY: The Wheatsheaf

THE RIFLES: O2 Academy – Return of the Jam and Oasis-inspired rockers. Although we use the word inspired reservedly.

TINIREGAR + MARK ATHERTON & FRIENDS + RAMI: The Hollybush, Osney – Acoustic session.

THURSDAY 5th

UNDERSMILE + K-LACURA + CRYISIS + JUNKIE BRUSH: The Bullingdon – Slow'n'spooky sludgecore from the mighty musical behemoth that is Undersmile at tonight's Skeletor show, coming on like Linda Blair from *The Exorcist* fronting Melvins or Swans. Titanic support from metalcore monsters K-Lacura, thrash newcomers Crysis and agit-punk outfit Junkie Brush.

THE CELLAR FAMILY + THE ANYDAYS + HOT HOOVES: The Cellar – Excellent triple bill of local talent with frantic, scouring hardcore pop venom from The Cellar Family, mixing up equal parts Fugazi, McLusky and At The Drive-In into an unholy but brilliant cacophony. Kinks and Sonics-styled garage rock and 60s beat pop from The Anydays and oddball indie rocking from Hot Hooves.

ALI CAMPBELL: O2 Academy – Step aside Bob Marley; begone Peter Tosh; here, truly is reggae's greatest champion, a titan of a... oh fuck it. It's the bloke that used to be in UB40. Had one decent album in 1980 before doing their

damnedest to put any sane human being off the entire genre for the next two decades. Yes, him. Have fun.

METAL NIGHT: Fat Lil's, Witney – Local metal bands showcase.

THE RIGHT HOOKS + KINKY BOOT BEASTS + KUBRIS: The Port Mahon – Acoustic soul from The Right Hooks, with support from Reading's drummer-fronted outfit Kinky Boot Beasts.

CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre – High quality mix of singers, musicians, poets and storytellers at the long-running weekly open mic club.

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon
BLUES JAM: Jack Russell, Marston

FRIDAY 6th

PETE DOHERTY: O2 Academy – Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's a car crash! – *see main preview*

JAKE MORLEY + BROTHER & BONES + WE AERONAUTS: O2 Academy – Soulful blues-pop in the vein of Paulo Nutini from singer-songwriter Morley, out on tour to promote his new album, 'Too Many Fish To Fry'.

MARY GAUTHIER + BEN GLOVER: The Jacqueline du Pre Building – New Orleans singer and guitarist Gauthier makes her Oxford debut, having won a slew of independent and folk awards back home for her raw, emotive style of alt.country and Americana, inspired by her troubled teenage years and problems with drink, drugs and sexual identity and only starting to write and perform aged 35. Since then she's penned songs for Candi Staton and Jimmy Buffet among others. Joining her is sometime co-songwriter Ben Glover, an Irish singer-songwriter who's been compared to Van Morrison and Bruce Springsteen.

JAMES VINCENT McMORROW: The Jericho Tavern – Wintry wistfulness and haunting acoustic balladry from the Dublin singer-songwriter in the vein of Bon Iver.
KLUB KAKOFANNEY with BODY GLASS + LOS CALAVERAS + KARL & KAREN: The Wheatsheaf – Mixed bag of musical goodies as ever at this month's Klub Kak.
WHOLE LOTTA DC: Fat Lil's, Witney – AC/DC tribute.

SKYLARKIN SOUND SYSTEM: The Cellar – Reggae, dancehall and ska from Count Skylarkin and guest DJ Derek, plus a live set from Sir Bald Diddley's 60s-styled Jamaican ska and r'n'b outfit The Nine Ton Peanut Smugglers.

FUNKY FRIDAY: The Bullingdon – Classic soul, funk and r'n'b every week.

FOUNDATION REGGAE: East Oxford Community Centre – Roots and dub every Friday.

WHO DO YOU LOVE?: The Duke, St. Clement's – Alt.rock, 60s garage, soul, new wave, punk and electropop DJ session.

SATURDAY 7th

YOOF! with VARIOUS CRUELITIES + TALKING PICTURES + REAL FUR: The Cellar – Yoof! continues to showcase some of the best emerging indie talent around, tonight featuring sweetly lachrymose indie-soul outfit Various Cruelties, sort of a cross between Alex Turner's more introverted moments and Richard Hawley. They've lately been out as support to Villagers and The Vaccines. Support from dinky electro-funksters Talking Pictures with a retro 80s style akin to Friendly Fires and La Roux. Openers Real Fur are similarly 80s obsessed, partway between Orange Juice and Talking Heads. Later on DJs Ollie Russian, Will Gilgrass and Blues Flowers play indie and electro tunes.

BROTHER: O2 Academy – Slough's previously much-heralded saviours of rock continue their ascent up the gig ladder after their last Oxford show at the Jericho Tavern back in December, kicking out a solid brand of laddish rock somewhere between Oasis, Kasabian and The Bluetones.

FIREBIRD + DESERT STORM +

DOPEFIGHT + RUNES: The Wheatsheaf – Buried In Smoke metal night.

THE BRITISH PINK FLOYD SHOW: The New Theatre – A tribute to the Australian prog-rockers, perhaps?

HOT CHOCOLATE: The Regal – Errol Brown's enduring disco and pop hitmakers crack open their barrel of timeless chart singles, from 'Emma' and 'It Started With A Kiss' to 'Everyone's A Winner' and the immortal 'You Sexy Thing'.

MATT SAGE + DUOTONE: The Pegasus – Warm, 60s-influenced pop from Catweazle supremo Mat Sage at the newly revamped Pegasus tonight, launching his new album, 'Let The Music Out', and joined on stage by a host of local musical guests. Support from Barney Morse-Brown's loop-heavy cello-based experimental pop, tonight performing a set of material from his forthcoming 'Ropes' album.

RELIX + COWBOY RACER + BREATHING LIGHT + BROWNIAN MOTION: The Jericho Tavern – Daisy Rodgers club night, tonight with solid indie rockers Relix playing alongside trippy electro-pop duo Cowboy Racer.

GLAM NATION: Fat Lil's, Witney – 70s glam rock party hits.

KNIGHTS OF MENTIS: The Folly Bridge Inn – Old time country string band launch their new monthly residency, mixing original ancient tragic ballads with the odd hip hop classic reinterpreted for fiddle and banjo.

CLAUDE BOURBON: Rose & Crown, Charlbury – Romantic Spanish blues.

PROPAGANDA + TRASHY + ROOM 101: O2 Academy – Weekly three-clubs-in-one night with indie and electro at Propaganda; kitsch pop, 80s and glam at Trashy and metal, punk and alt.rock at Room 101.

LANDSCAPE: The Bullingdon – Old and new school house and techno.

BELSHAZZA'S FEAST: Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall, Uffington

THE PETE FRYER BAND: The Bear & Ragged Staff, Cumnor – Eccentric blues rocking from the local stalwart.

TREVOR WILLIAMS: The Magic Café, Magdalen Road (1pm)

SUNDAY 8th

THE COOLING PEARLS + ALICE REAM: The Cellar – Intimate, wistful downbeat pop from The Cooling Pearls at tonight's Sunday Roast chillout session, with support from anti-folk songstress Alice Ream.

MONDAY 9th

THE MATT SCHOFIELD BAND: The Bullingdon – Return to the Famous Monday Blues for the acclaimed guitarist who started his career playing with Lee Sankey and Dana Gillespie, as well as the Lester Butler Tribute Band, before going out on the road with his own band, mixing traditional electric blues with New Orleans funk and soul. Amid a slew of awards he's been hailed as one of the ten greatest UK blues guitarists of all time, alongside Eric Clapton and Peter Green and his eclectic style incorporates influences from The Meters and Box Tops alongside more traditional blues innovators such as Freddie and Albert King.

TUESDAY 10th

DEVLIN: O2 Academy – Grime MC and rapper Dagenham Dev plugs his debut album, 'Bud, Sweat & Beers'

SECRET SISTERS + SIMON LYNGE: O2 Academy – Great 50s and 60s-style pop in the style of The Chiffons, with a country twang and surf-pop shimmer from Alabama sisters Laura and Lydia Rogers, whose debut album was produced by T Bone Burnett. Support from Simon Lynge and his musical mynge.

JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon – Funky, keyboard-led jazz grooves from The Howard Peacock Quintet at tonight's jazz club.

GOOD VIBRATIONS: Café Tarifa

OPEN MIC: The Port Mahon

WEDNESDAY 11th

MAX RAPTOR: O2 Academy – Beefy, punk-tinged heavy rocking in the vein of New Model Army or late-period Therapy? from the Midlands outfit out on tour to promote debut album 'Portraits', following on from supports to The Stranglers and Billy Talent.

CRYSIS: The Wheatsheaf – Promising young thrash metallers.

THURSDAY 12th

SPARROW & THE WORKSHOP + ROB ST JOHN + BETHANY WEIMERS: The Bullingdon – Return to town for Glasgow's

sometimes bleak folk, country and blues outfit, injecting a playful lo-fi indie edge into their tense, atmospheric pop, with versatile vocalist Jill O'Sullivan drawing comparisons to PJ Harvey, Sandy Denny and Emmylou Harris along the way. They're on tour to promote new album 'Spitting Daggers' after supporting Idlewild, The Brian Jonestown Massacre and The Pogues.

MC LARS: O2 Academy – Return of the post-punk laptop rapper and regular visitor to Oxford over the years with his literate, indie and punk-sampling brand of hip hop. New album 'Lars Attacks!' promises a return to his original lo-fi roots. There's a special aftershow at Baby Simple too, featuring live sets from local rappers Half Decent and Inspekta, plus DJ sets from Lars himself and Akira The Don.

FRANKIE & THE HEARTSTRINGS: The Cellar – Sunderland's new stars in waiting recall



Friday 13th

WARPAINT / CONNAN MOCKASIN: O2 Academy

It's crazy and not a little tragic that all-girl bands are still so rare these days that mention of gender even comes into it when they're talked about, but so it's been for Los Angeles quartet Warpaint who we've bizarrely seen compared to The Bangles recently by dint of being all-female and playing guitar-based pop music. Their sound is far darker, more spacious and atmospheric than that, ranging from the ghostly country-tinged ambience of Mazzy Star and Cowboy Junkies, through to the mellower, more melodic side of Nirvana by way of 60s Motown and The Shangri-La's. Having been together for seven years, Warpaint finally released their debut album, 'The Fool', while seductively spooky single 'Undertow' showing off the exquisite three-way vocal harmonies of Jenny Lee Lindberg, Emily Kokal and Theresa Wayman. Such is the gently spectral nature of Warpaint's music at times, it's tempting to draw a line between them, Zola Jesus and Esben and the Witch and suggest there's a new gothic movement on the rise. Tonight's show is part of the band's biggest UK tour to date and should bring a little chill back into the early summer air. Support tonight comes from oddball lo-fi electro-psychedelia chappie Connan Mockasin.

the literate jangle pop of Orange Juice and the rousing, footstomping soul of Dexy's, equally emotional and satirical and fronted by the foppish, bequipped Frankie Francis, an indie heart-throb in waiting, already compared to Morrissey and Edwyn Collins.

CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford

Community Centre

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon

BLUES JAM: Jack Russell, Marston

FRIDAY 13th

WARPAINT + CONNAN MOCKASIN: O2 Academy – LA's ghostly folk-gothsters make their Oxford debut – *see main preview*

MILES KANE: O2 Academy – A solo headline show from the former-Rascals singer and Last Shadow Puppets co-frontman, alongside Alex Turner. Miles' debut solo album, 'Colour Of The Trap', features collaborations with Noel Gallagher, Gruff Rhys and Dan The Automator, and after supporting Beady Eye on their first few live shows, he's set to support Arctic Monkeys later this summer.



Monday 16th

NME RADAR TOUR: O2 Academy

The latest NME Radar tour brings the startling vocal talents of *Anna Calvi* to town, already heralded as one of *the* artists set for success in 2011. Not difficult to see why: although she's most readily compared to Polly Harvey the similarities are superficial, although Calvi's eponymous debut album was produced by Harvey's drummer Rob Ellis. Vocally she's closer to Siouxsie Sioux, Edith Piaf and even Julee Cruise at times, her operatically gothic voice an evocative howl or seductive croon by turns, while musically her songs are spacious, haunted and minimalist, owing as much to cinematic soundscapes. Little wonder that Brian Eno is such a fan he lent backing vocals to a couple of songs on the album. Live Calvi is an intense performer whose chosen black and red clothing theme is suitably deathly and sexual. Support for the tour comes from LA's **Grouplove**, recent support to Los Campesinos! and quintessentially noisy and indie in the vein of Pixies, Pavement and Dinosaur Jr; brooding boy-girl duo **Big Deal** and dreamy surf-jangle outfit **The History Of Apple Pie**.

BELLERUCHE: The Jericho Tavern – Sleazily soulful beats-led pop from London's Belleruche, creating a trippy form of blues that's seen them compared to The Xx, Portishead and Blondie.
IN DECADENCE + FRAGMENT: The Wheatheaf – Death-metal and thrash from Stockholm's In Decadence.
WITTSTOCK: The Railways, Culham – Opening night of the annual charity festival. Tonight's headliners are power-pop trio Black Hats, mixing a little post-punk jaggedness into their moddish 60s-style rock. Support comes from Superloose, Khamsina and The Prohibition Smokers Club. Entry is free but there'll be a collection and raffle in aid of Oxfordshire MIND.
TAMARA & THE MARTYRS + ABOVE US THE WAVES + BEN WALLER + GEORGE CHOPPING: Isis Farmhouse, Iffley Lock

STEREOPHONIES: Fat Lil's, Witney – Stereophonics tribute.
FUNKY FRIDAY: The Bullingdon
FOUNDATION REGGAE: East Oxford Community Centre
NEEDLE IN A HAYSTACK: The Port Mahon

SATURDAY 14th

WITTSTOCK: The Railways, Culham (2pm) – First full day of the free festival, today headed by symphonic electro-rockers The Rock Of Travolta, plus sets from surf-rockers Vicars Of Twiddly, funk-popsters Quadrophobe, folk-rockers Mundane Sands, bluegrass and Americana outfit Headington Hillbillies and many more.
ROME PAYS OFF + ADRIAN WARDLE + ROB St JOHN: Modern Art Oxford – Pindrop Performance show with former Rothko chaps Rome Pays Off bringing their ambient form of shoegaze to town, alongside Keyboard Choir's Ady Wardle, playing a solo laptop set and Lancastrian alt.folkster Rob St John.
GUNS TO ROSES: O2 Academy
PROPAGANDA + TRASHY + ROOM 101: O2 Academy
SELECTA: The Bullingdon – Drum&bass.
ANIMALS IN LOVE: The Port Mahon

SUNDAY 15th

WITTSTOCK: The Railways, Culham (2pm) – Oddball punk outfit Barry & The Beachcombers headline the final day of the free charity weekend, in aid of Oxfordshire MIND. They're joined by a cast that includes Zim Grady, Starky & The Moon Doctor, The Mighty Redox, Laima Bite, Phil Bird and a Pint and a Half of Blues.
BEETROOT JAM: The Port Mahon

MONDAY 16th

NME RADAR TOUR with ANNA CALVI + GROUPOLOVE: O2 Academy – Sex'n'death from the operatic gothstress at tonight's NME Radar Tour show – *see main preview*
GILES ROBERTSON & THE DIRTY ACES: The Bullingdon – Rated as the best harmonica player on the European blues circuit, Giles Robertson brings his soulful blend of blues and r'n'b to the Famous Monday Blues Club, a rising star of the UK scene after being spotted playing back-up to Muddy Waters' son Mud Morganfield.
BEN MONTAGUE + LOTTE MULLAN: The Jericho Tavern – Slick power-soul balladry from the Kent singer-songwriter.

TUESDAY 17th

THE DIRTY ROYALS + HOT HOOVES + AGNESS PIKE: The Wheatheaf – Moshka club night with harmony-heavy fuzz-popsters The Dirty Royals mixing it up somewhere between The Beach Boys and Buzzcocks, plus support from classic garage rockers Hot Hooves and idiosyncratic hardcore metallers Agness Pike.
CULTS: The Jericho Tavern – New York's twee-core duo come to town, casting a winsome eye back to the pure pop perfection of 60s girl groups, not unlike Vivian Girls et al.
THE ALARM: O2 Academy – Once more round the block for the veteran Welsh rockers, cranking out 80s hits like '68 Guns' and... erm, oh you know, all them other ones.

JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon – Featuring a live set from The Hugh Turner Band.
GOOD VIBRATIONS: Café Tarifa
OPEN MIC: The Port Mahon

WEDNESDAY 18th

SET YOUR GOALS: O2 Academy – Melodic skate punk and pop-punk from the Bay Area rockers, out on a headline tour to promote new album 'Burning At Both Ends', after supports to New Found Glory, The Blackout and You, Me At Six.
ALESSI'S ARK + GEORGE SEDDON: The Jericho Tavern – The Twee-ometer is set to overload as Hammersmith songstress Alessi Laurent-Marke brings her musical alter-ego to the Tavern. Occasionally compared to Laura Marlin, she's far more whimsical, a childish sense of wonder infecting her psychedelic lullabies, like a particularly kooky female Syd Barrett.
MISTY'S BIG ADVENTURE + THE ASHBIES: The Bullingdon – 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.
GRUP LOKITO: Chipping Norton Theatre – OCM presents a re-connecting of Latin salsa and West African soukous in the form of Congolese rumba outfit Lokito.
LIZ GREEN + ROB YOUNG + JAMIE HARRISON: Arts Jericho Gallery – First of a regular series of experimental and DIY gigs at unusual venues under the banner Adventures Close To Home, tonight featuring earthy blues, folk and jazz musician and singer Liz Green, plus author and journalist, and currently editor-at-large of The Wire, Rob Young, reading from his book 'Electric Eden, exploring the history and evolution of folk music in the UK'.
HOWARD TIMBERLAKE + SCOTT GORDON + WIRELESS: The Hollybush, Osney – Acoustic session.

THURSDAY 19th

THE NAKED & FAMOUS + CLOUD CONTROL: O2 Academy – Electro-charged summer anthems from the Kiwi starlets – *see main preview*
THE RURAL ALBERTA ADVANTAGE: The Jericho Tavern – Tales from the Canadian frontier from the Neutral Milk Hotel acolytes – *see main preview*
WE AERONAUTS + MATT SAGE + DEER PARK + VERY NICE HARRY: The Bullingdon – Benefit gig for MacMillan Cancer Support, featuring expansive folk-rockers We Aeronauts and 60s-inspired popster Matt Sage.
COLOUR CHANGE FOR CAMOUFLAGE + THE GOODNESS: The Port Mahon – Hip hop-tinged bluesy pop from CC4C at tonight's Live & Loud show.
MIDGAR: Fat Lil's, Witney – Emo-ish post-hardcore rocking in the vein of 30 Seconds From Mars.
CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre
OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon
BLUES JAM: Jack Russell, Marston

FRIDAY 20th

THE ROCK OF TRAVOLTA + FLIES ARE SPIES FROM HELL + LISTING SHIPS: The Wheatheaf – A night of vocal-free musical fun with symphonic electro-rockers TROT, Chopin-

meets-Shellac mayhem from FASFH and elegant, electro-heavy krautrocking from Listing Ships.

THE BIG TEN INCH: The Cellar – Count Skylarkin hosts his monthly celebration of jump blues, rockabilly and swing, tonight featuring veteran skiffle crew Railroad Bill, alongside surf-rock clergy Vicars Of Twiddly.

IRON-ON MAIDEN: Fat Lil's, Witney – Tribute band.

HEADINGTON HILLBILLIES: Chester Arms

FUNKY FRIDAY: The Bullingdon

FOUNDATION REGGAE: East Oxford Community Centre

DAVID JAMES + INSIDE OUT: The Port Mahon

SATURDAY 21st

UTE + GUNNING FOR TAMAR + VIXENS + KING OF CATS + THE GRACEFUL SLICKS: O2 Academy – The Academy launch

'Upstairs', their new monthly local bands night, tonight featuring musically ambitious alt.rockers Ute, rising high on the acclaim accorded new single 'Innocent Tailor', which found them waltzing into more vaudevillian territory. Great riff-heavy math-pop somewhere between Biffy Clyro and Youthmovies from Gunning For Tamar (see *Introducing feature*) in support, alongside epic goth-tinted alt.rockers Vixens,

Thursday 19th

THE RURAL ALBERTA ADVANTAGE:

The Jericho Tavern

Having named themselves after a local slogan, The Rural Alberta Advantage spent most of their brilliant debut album, 'Hometowns', documenting their locale, whether it was smalltown lives and loves or bleak Canadian winters, and generally charming everyone who heard them, drawing comparisons with lost cult heroes Neutral Milk Hotel, whose reclusive Jeff Mangum is an obvious inspiration for TRAA's songwriter and singer Nils Edenloff, although you could equally point to The Low Anthem or Smog for comparisons. Having signed to Saddlecreek Records, the band now release their second full album, 'Departing', expanding those lyrical horizons while sounding more like a glorified solo project than the full band effort of 'Hometowns'. They're best when multi-instrumentalist and backing singer Amy Cole gets to share centre stage, but it's Edenloff's emotionally raw voice and words that remain the focus of the music, music that manages the rare feat of making rootsy rural folk music sound as fresh and raw as it is comforting.

inventive acoustic songsmith King Of Cats and Velvet Underground and Spiritualized-inspired psychedelic drone rockers The Graceful Slicks.

PROPAGANDA with HUW STEPHENS: O2 Academy – Radio 1's champion of the indie underdog spins a selection of his fave dancefloor fillers at tonight's Propaganda.

GENTLEMAN'S DUB CLUB: O2 Academy – Leeds' livewire nine-strong reggae collective bring the party to the O2 ahead of another summer of festival appearances, the band having played alongside Madness, Roots Manuva, The Streets and The Wailers along the way.

SHAKER HEIGHTS: The Wheatsheaf – Americana-tinged power pop.

CARAVAN OF WHORES + PROSPEKT + DEDLOK + FRAGMENT + CRYISIS + LAST DAYS OF THE SUN: The Port Mahon (4pm) – Extended local metal extravaganza, featuring expansive sludge-rockers Caravan Of Whores, technical prog-core outfit Prospekt, thrash super heavy weights Dedlok and more.

W.A.M: Fat Lil's, Witney – Ska-punk party tunes.

SIMPLE: The Bullingdon – Monthly house and techno club night.

BABA JACK: Rose & Crown, Charlbury – Folk-roots and blues.

TREVOR WILLIAMS: St Michael's Church, Cornmarket St.

SUNDAY 22nd

VILLAGERS: O2 Academy – After last year's Mercury Prize nomination for debut album 'Becoming A Jackal', Conor O'Brien brings his dark, disquieting brand of folk rock back to town, a dreamy, emotionally intense twisting of the genre that's somewhere between The Waterboys and Tindersticks.

MONDAY 23rd

HAMILTON LOOMIS: The Bullingdon – Soulful Texan-flavoured blues from the singer, guitarist and blues harpist.

NATHANIEL RATELIFF: The Jericho Tavern – Raw, rootsy folk-blues from the Denver singer-songwriter.

TWO WINGS: The Port Mahon

TUESDAY 24th

YOUNG KNIVES: O2 Academy – Last month's Nightshift cover stars play their first hometown show in an age as part of a UK tour to promote new album 'Ornaments From The Silver Arcade'.

THE WAVE PICTURES: The Jericho Tavern – Seedily romantic, defiantly underachieving indie pop from the prolific London outfit, heavily influenced by Jonathan Richman, Violent Femmes and Hefner and who have previously collaborated with Jeffrey Lewis and Daniel Johnston, out on tour to plug new album, 'Beer In The Breakers'.

LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO: The New Theatre – Joseph Shabalala and sons (and assorted others) continue to take their traditional Zulu harmony singing and dance routines to the world, over 25 years after their contribution to Paul Simon's classic 'Graceland' album made them international stars – and a good forty years on from their formation.

JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon – With guests The Howard Peacock Quintet.

GOOD VIBRATIONS: Café Tarifa



Thursday 19th

THE NAKED & FAMOUS: O2 Academy

While MGMT seem intent on alienating their more pop-conscious fans, young New Zealand starlets The Naked & Famous seem ready-made to step into the breach. Having become the first native band to enter the NZ charts at Number 1 in 16 years, with single 'Young Blood', the Auckland quintet found themselves nominated for the BBC Sound of 2011 Award earlier this year and set to provide at least a couple of this summer's big festival anthems. Their euphoric psychedelic electro-pop is pretty irresistible: big, meaty synth hooks, fun boy-girl vocal duelling, massive dancefloor potential and a simple approach to giant pop tunes. Formed by music college chums Thom Powers and Alisa Yajalith, and named after an old Tricky lyric, The Naked & Famous are influenced by the Bristol trip hop sound, as well as the likes of Bjork and early-90s shoegazers like Curve and Slowdive, and as they release their debut album, 'Passive Me, Aggressive You', be sure you're going to be hearing a hell of a lot more of their life-affirming noise this year.

OPEN MIC: The Port Mahon

WEDNESDAY 25th

THE DUTCH UNCLES + NAIROBI: The Jericho Tavern – Off-kilter, prog-tinged Macunians who've toured with Maximo Park and Dananananackroyd, tour their new album, 'Cadenza' on Memphis Industries, injecting a bit of King Crimson-style technicality into their epic, Mew-like indie rock.

SPACE HEROES OF THE PEOPLE + MR G + ONE GEAR GO: The Wheatsheaf – Moshka club night with synth-pop duo SHOTP kicking out their shiny retro-futurism somewhere between Kraftwerk, Gary Numan and Baby Ford.

BRAINDEAD COLLECTIVE + BASTARDGEIST + OXFORD IMPROVISERS + SET ENSEMBLE + SYZYGY: Christchurch Cathedral – Experimental musical interpretations of Cornelius Cardew's Treatise, featuring local improvisational collectives.

SHOWCASE: Fat Lil's, Witney – New local bands session.

THURSDAY 26th

13 GAUGE + ONCE A WOLF + NERVOUS ENDINGS + IN DECADENCE: The Bullingdon – Skeleto metal and hardcore night with grindcore outfit 13 Gauge launching their new EP.





Friday 20th – Sunday 22nd

WOOD FESTIVAL:

Braziers Park

Started four years ago as a reaction to the floods that devastated Truck Festival, Wood has grown from humble but innovative beginnings to an award-winning local institution already. The eco-friendly festival was awarded a Gold Green Festival Award recently and even its toilets have won prizes. Testament to the vision and work of Truck, with solar-powered stages and a cycle-powered cinema and disco to go alongside the wood stove catering and compost loos. In keeping with the spirit of things, the music at Wood is genteel, leaning towards the folk side of things and this year's line-up boasts American troubadour **Willy Mason** as well as English trad folk princess **Eliza Carthy**, alongside the likes of **Thea Gilmore**, **Mama Rosin** and **Uiscedwr** (who themselves live on an eco-friendly commune where they create their rustic brand of celtic folk music when they're not growing their own fruit and veg). This year's local contingent includes **The Epstein** and Robin and Joe Bennett's **Dreaming Spires**, plus naturalised Oxonian **Jali Fily Cissokho**. Despite its growing reputation Wood remains a compact 800-capacity affair to keep its characteristic atmosphere and it's likely to sell out in advance, so get in quick for a festival that's as far removed from the industrial cattle markets of Reading and Glastonbury as it's possible to find.

NICK HARPER: O2 Academy – The acoustic guitar virtuoso and political folk singer returns to action after a brief hiatus, touring his latest album, 'The Last Guitar', having made his name first as a member of his dad, Roy's band, before collaborating with Glenn Tilbrook and The Levellers, among others.

LAVINGTON BOUND: The Port Mahon – Folky acoustic pop from Lavington Bound.

PROHIBITION SMOKERS CLUB JAM: Fat Lil's, Witney – Band sets and open jam with the

nebulous local folk-pop-jazz collective, joined tonight by Billy Ray Cypher and Left Outer Join.

RICH BAT JIM: The Cellar

CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford

Community Centre

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon

BLUES JAM: Jack Russell, Marston

FRIDAY 27th

BRAIDS + BETA BLOCKER & THE BODY CLOCK: The Jericho Tavern – Intricately textured ethereal pop from the fast-rising Canadian starlets – *see main preview*
AND YOU WILL KNOW US BY THE TRAIL OF DEAD: O2 Academy – The enduringly chaotic Texan garage-rockers return to town, well over a decade on now from their first, sublime, showing at the Point. Given their combustible internal set-up (they've made it through over a dozen members so far), never mind their onstage guitar vandalism, it's a wonder they've made it this far, but they're up to album number seven now - 'Tao Of The Dead' - and showing no sign of letting up on the swaggering raunch-rock that's made their name for them. Come on, don't tell us you'd rather go and see Brother, would you?

RAGGASAUROS: The Wheatsheaf – the local Arabic reggae collective reunite in aid of Oxfordshire MIND.

SEIZE THE DAY: The Bullingdon – Greenpeace fundraiser.

FUNKY FRIDAY: The Bullingdon

FOUNDATION REGGAE: East Oxford Community Centre

SATURDAY 28th

GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES with THE TEMPLARS + SWIMS + KING OF CATS:

The Wheatsheaf – Eclectic mix of bands as ever at the monthly GTI night, tonight headed by local downbeat folk-pop types Templars. Support comes from Worthing's nervous, twitchy rockers Swims, in the lineage of Youthmovies and Foals, plus local songsmith King Of Cats, whose dramatic, occasionally unnerving delivery proves that acoustic singer-songwriters can be fun and entertaining when they put the effort in.

MISSTALLICA: O2 Academy – Self-proclaimed "all-chick tribute to Metallica". How classy.

RIVER RATPACK TOUR: The Stocks, Crown & Thistle, Abingdon – The touring gig on a boat stops off in Abingdon again for a party at the Skittle Alley's monthly gig night. Headliners at tonight's unsigned talent show are London-based, female-fronted rap crew Sound Of Rum. They're joined by Bastille, Holy Vessels, Joker & The Thief, Beans On Toast and Dark Moon.

DOGSHOW: The Cellar

PROHIBITION SMOKERS CLUB: Café Tarifa

VAUDEVILLE RAVE: The Regal

PROPAGANDA + TRASHY + ROOM 101: O2 Academy

DUBSTEP: The Bullingdon

SUNDAY 29th

MONDAY 30th

MAYDAY PARADE: O2 Academy – Florida's ever-touring pop-punkers prepare for the release of their third album this summer, the follow-up to 2009's 'Anywhere But Here', having previously supported Madina Lake and The Academy Is... as well as numerous Warped tours.

JOE D'URSO & STONE CARAVAN: The Bullingdon – Straight-up rock'n'roll, acoustic balladry and storytelling from the New Jersey singer and guitarist at tonight's Famous Monday Blues club.

BLUES JAM: Fat Lil's Witney

TUESDAY 31st

ED SHEERAN: O2 Academy – Already sold-out show from the soft-centred r'n'b balladeer, beloved of Elton John and Rio Ferdinand.

JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon – With

renowned jazz singer Alison Bentley.

GOOD VIBRATIONS: Café Tarifa

OPEN MIC: The Port Mahon

Friday 27th

BRAIDS:

The Jericho Tavern

Startlingly fresh of sound and face, Montreal's Braids have only just released their debut album - 'Native Speaker' – but the plaudits are rightly flooding in. Having made their tentative first steps in their native Canada under the name The Neighbourhood Council, supporting Deerhunter along the way, the quartet's reputation is rapidly spreading far and wide. Musically Braids' extended, cyclical songs, buoyant yet baroque, evoke 'Feels'-era Animal Collective, Broken Social Scene's expansive folk-tinged pop and The Sundays' playfully ethereal indie shimmer, deeply textured and intricate but strongly melodic, but it's singer Raphaëlle Standell-Preston's gloriously pure, almost ghostly voice that really stands out, acrobatic enough to see her compared to Björk at some juncture, but more in tune with either Julee Cruise or Edie Brickell in the way it sweetly soars and bends notes at will. Hopefully tonight's show will sell out; there's little doubt that next time Braids come to the UK, they'll be playing far larger venues, so catch a little of the magic up close while you can.



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



162 Cowley Road Oxford
01865 244516

MAY

Every Monday

THE FAMOUS MONDAY NIGHT BLUES

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

2nd **EARL THOMS & PADDY MILNER & THE BIG SOUNDS (USA/UK)**

9th **THE MATT SCHOFIELD BAND (UK)**

16th **GILES ROBSON & THE DIRTY ACES (UK)**

23rd **HAMILTON LOOMIS (USA)**

30th **JOE D'URSO & STONE CARAVAN (USA)**

Every Tuesday

THE OXFORD JAZZ CLUB

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

3rd **ALVIN ROY & REEDS UNLIMITED**

10th / 24th **THE HOWARD PEACOCK QUINTET**

17th **THE HUGH TURNER BAND**

31st **ALISON BENTLEY**

Wednesdays

18th **MISTY'S BIG ADVENTURE / THE ASHBIES**

Tickets on sale now at wegottickets.com

Thursdays

5th **SKELETOR** presents **UNDERSMILE / K-LACURA / CRYISIS / JUNKIE BRUSH**

12th **COO PROMOTIONS** presents **SPARROW & THE WORKSHOP / ROB St. JOHN / BETHANY WEIMERS**

19th **WE AERONAUTS / MATT SAGE / DEER PARK / VERY NICE HARRY** (benefit for MacMillan Cancer Support)

26th **SKELETOR** presents **13 GAUGE / ONCE A WOLF / NERVOUS ENDINGS / IN DECADENCE**

Every Friday

FUNKY FRIDAY

Funk, soul, boogie and R&B. 10.30pm-2.30am; £3.

Early Friday shows

6th **DEER CHICAGO / THE SCHOLARS / TIGERCATS**

13th **TEMPLARS / ADAM BARNES / MUSTARD & THE MONOCLE**

27th **GREENPEACE FUNDRAISER** with **SEIZE THE DAY**
Includes entry to FUNKY FRIDAY afterwards

Saturdays

7th **LANDSCAPE** – house & techno

14th **SELECTA** – drum'n'bass

21st **SIMPLE** – house & techno

28th **DUBSTEP**

Join us on Facebook: Backroom @ The Bully

THE WHEATSHEAF

Live Music May 2011

Tue 3rd

JUJU + IF ALL ELSE FAILS

Wed 4th *Men Behind Logic Present...*

PHARAOHS + NAIROBI + OUR LOST INFANTRY

Fri 6th *Club Kalkijenny Present...*

BODY GLASS + LOST CALAVERAS + CARL & KAREN

Sat 7th *Barred In Smoke Present...*

FIREBIRD + DESERT STORM + DOPEFIGHT + RUINES

Wed 11th *Modika Present...*

CRYSIS

Fri 13th *Men Behind Logic Present...*

IN DECADENCE + FRAGMENT

Tue 17th *Modika Present...*

DIRTY ROYALS + HOT HOOVES + AGNESS PIKE

Fri 20th *Men Behind Logic Present...*

THE ROCK OF TRAVOLTA + FLIES ARE SPIES FROM HELL + LISTING SHIPS

Sat 21st *Men Behind Logic Present...*

SHAKER HEIGHTS + HALF NAKED

Wed 25th *Modika Present...*

SPACE HEROES OF THE PEOPLE + MR G + ONE GEAR GO!

Fri 27th *Clashy Jambores in aid of Oxfam's World...*

RAGGASAUROS

Sat 28th *Happy Tooth Industries Present...*

THE TEMPLARS + SWIMS + KING OF CATS

Every Monday...The Oxford Imps Comedy...Every Thursday...The Spin Jazz Club www.spinjazz.com

The Wheatsheaf, 129 High Street, Oxford, OX1 4DF (Tel 01865 721156)

mbi productions@gmail.com or www.myspace.com/wheatsheaf_music

FAT LIL'S

Presents The World's Best Tribute Bands

BOWIE

Friday 22nd Apr
ABSOLUTE BOWIE
www.absolutebowie.net

OASIS

Friday 29th Apr
DEFINITELY MIGHTBE
myspace.com/oasistribute

AC/DC

Friday 6th May
WHOLE LOTTA DC
www.wholelottadc.com

Stereophonics

Friday 13th May
STEREOPHONIES
www.stereophonies.com

**IRON
MAIDEN**

Friday 20th May
IRON-ON MAIDEN
www.iron-onmaiden.co.uk

**Led Zeppelin
Deep Purple**

Friday 3rd Jun
PURPLEZEPPELIN
www.purplezeppelin.com

FOR FURTHER INFO ABOUT TICKETS ETC VISIT
fatlils.co.uk facebook.com/fatlils.witney

LIVE

THE CELLAR FAMILY / AMY'S GHOST / THE GRACEFUL SLICKS

The Wheatsheaf

Named, punningly, after Jefferson Airplane singer Grace Slick, and playing tonight's set under the psychedelic glow of an oil wheel projector, The Graceful Slicks are one step away from being a ramshackle tribute band, until you realise that it's that very ramshackle nature that makes them so authentic. Dressed all in black, right down to their scuffed Chelsea boots, their dirty, droning psychedelic garage-rock is probably more like The Velvet Underground actually sounded in their early incarnation than people would care to imagine. The singer has Lou Reed's laconic drawl down pat and their final number is a deadringer for Buffalo Springfield's 'Something Happening Here', but they can inject a bit of Spiritualized's gospel-tinged space-rock into proceedings too. One or two numbers are little more than bluesy jams and they need to end the set with a more stellar climax but at their best The Graceful Slicks prove they're not just here as a museum piece.

Gappy Tooth Industries' mix'n'match gig line-ups throw up many fun surprises but we're not sure if Amy's Ghost live up to initial impressions. Fronted by a singer in an impressively ornate gothic dress and possessed of an equally dramatic voice, they should be otherworldly and unforgettable, but end up sounding like a low-rent Esben & the Witch with an eye on the burlesque circuit.

The Cellar Family, though, are astonishing. Three songs in and we wonder their singer hasn't ground his teeth to stumps amid all the hyper-nervous urgency of the songs. He has the edgily ultra-normal look of a man who would kill you as soon as draw breath when he isn't



photo: Johnny Moto

cutting out feverishly angular shards of post-hardcore noise that throw assorted body parts of McLusky, Fugazi and At The Drive-In into a blender and turn them into a clanging mess of obstinacy and industrial funk. Songs seem to lurch into view, explode and fuck off back again before you quite know what's happened, like an old Tango advert; the drummer lurches off his stool as if he's worried his kit is going to hit him back at any moment. It's not just a load of noise Though; they have great tunes too and it feels like what Young Knives might have sounded

like had they ditched the surrealism and humour in favour of a chronic speed addiction somewhere around 'Walking On The Autobahn'.

Having named themselves with dubious taste after Joseph Fritz's children and barrelling through songs about Fred West and the like, The Cellar Family might be here for the nasty things in life, but on tonight's evidence they're set to be a very particular pleasure in the months to come.

Dale Kattack

THE KILL CITY SAINTS/ HOT HOOVES/ ZEM/ RAISING HARLEY

The Bullingdon

The difference between most US sit coms and their British counterparts is the writers. In this country we have shows penned by a single author, probably in a four week blast in some provincial town, fuelled by tinned soup and *Cash In The Attic*, whereas American shows are thrashed out by huge rosters of writers, sat round a big glass table somewhere vastly important. It's why an episode of *Friends* may have rafts of clever lines, but can feel distant, disconnected and arid. We're reminded of this by Raising Harley, not only because he plays the theme to *Scrubs* (turns out after those eight bars it gets quite dull, and you really miss the theremin), but because his amiable busking is promising, but needs a little more character to

snag our attention.

Similarly, new trio Zem have a lovely chunky rhythm section – despite injuries – but the chap strumming and moaning at the front is drabness personified. Seriously, it's like someone won a competition. The arrangement of Paul Simon's 'Richard Cory' is a strong start, but again anonymity is their worst crime.

Still, it all pales compared to crass Southern fried rockers Kill City Saints, a band so generically dire it looks like they've been created by committee to supply "Blues Rock Solutions". The truly hideous renegade skull backdrop, lyrics about midnight trains, and adept but charmless guitar solos indicate a band with a huge taste deficit; the fact the singer

is swigging vodka and Dr Pepper only confirms suspicions.

And somewhere in this sea of Not Quite Finished and Hideously Ill Conceived fall Hot Hooves, a band featuring former members of Oxford favourites ATL and Talulah Gosh, bursting with approachable character and short on self-consciousness or pretension. Their melodic new wave thrives on taut concise structures, but if that suggests Wire they're as much Eddie & The Hot Rods. The music's thumping economy comes balanced by a wry airiness (Sample lyric: "My telekinesis/ Is falling to pieces") whether it's delivered in Pete Momtchiloff's spasmodic mumble or with Bash Street cheekiness by Mac. At points Hot Hooves remind us of acts as disparate as The Auteurs and Ten Benson, but they doubtless have better, more obscure bands influencing them. Hell, they were probably *in* them.

Richard Catherall

THE UNTHANKS/ TREMBLING BELLS

The Regal

Trembling Bells manage to grab your attention despite having to battle against the curse of the support act. The vast space of the Regal feels cold and empty when they arrive on stage. Problems with the sound balance don't help, with the powerful soaring vocals of Lavina Blackwell drowned out by the band. They even seem awkward introducing their songs.

Most of their short set has an experimental rock feel, perhaps as neither their cello player nor trombonist is present, and things only start to improve when they unleash some dirty slide guitar. 'Love Made Me An Outlaw Of My Heart' is the standout but just as things are getting good they are gone, leaving me wanting more.

The Unthanks are becoming specialists in making the miserable sound beautiful. Their five core members are joined by three more string players, making up a full string quartet, and by a trumpet player. While the group's focus remains the instinctive harmonies created by the contrasting voices of sisters' Rachel and Becky, Rachel's direct and earthy and Becky's more breathy and vulnerable, Rachel's husband Aiden McNally is a major influence as the band's pianist, songwriter and arranger. He uses the string quartet and trumpet to add extra layers of mournful, soulful sound on just about

every song, nearly all of which are about death and rejection. So instead of the driving rhythm of the CD version of 'Lucky Gilchrist', who is of course far from lucky, we get a sad John Adams-like pulse and with Becky adding some solo clog dancing it makes this sad song even bleaker.

What the Unthanks put us through is a 90-minute emotional marathon. With the songs building a quite intense atmosphere, the applause at the end of each is like a dam bursting. It's impossible not to get caught up in the powerful emotional currents when the band cover the late, great Alex Glasgow's 'Close the Coalhouse Door'.

With all the emotion flying about the room, the homely banter about pregnant Rachel being banned from clog dancing and Becky being engaged comes as welcome light relief. While they don't stretch the boundaries musically and only with their version of King Crimson's 'Starless' is their use of the string quartet musically interesting, The Unthanks have become brilliant at making sadness pleasurable. But if they continue to push this further, by the next time they come to Oxford the banter might not be relief enough, and a helpline might be needed for anyone adversely affected by the contents of their songs.

Colin May

ESBEN AND THE WITCH/ TEETH OF THE SEA

The Jericho Tavern

Barely five months ago I described Teeth of the Sea as 'wild and abandoned' but tonight they're anything but, to the point of checking it was really was the same band. Songs are still long, drawn-out, post-rock instrumentals building up to a half-satisfying climax, but someone seems to have told the guitarist to tone down his act. Last time he could have doubled for Robin Simon (Ultravox, Magazine) or even Michael Karoli, all awkward angles and thrilling sci-fi noises, but tonight he's too restrained and fights a losing battle with the bloke with the trumpet, and there's nothing good in that. There remains plenty of potential, they just need to loosen up a bit.

Tonight's audience seems to be silently reminding me I'm not in East Oxford. Dressy doesn't start to describe it; this is like walking onto the set of a Fellini film. Brighton's Esben and the Witch have solid Oxford credentials, supporting Foals on their recent North American tour and then returning the favour to Trophy Wife. Musically they could be described lazily as The Cocteau Twins meets Fucked Up, and if indeed were they that good they

would be very fine indeed. Unfortunately tonight they come over more like Siouxsie and the Banshees with a ketamine problem. New album 'Violet Cries' is a delicately crafted little symphony, twisting and turning in unexpected ways as it takes the listener on a journey, as all good records should. But here they just turn up all the instruments and shriek their way through a genuinely painful set, in every sense of the word. Rachel Davies has a fine voice, though she appears to only like singing in one key. Long-time favourite 'Marching Song' shines out for having a semblance of a proper tune and structure but too much of the rest sounds like re-working the same formula. Only towards the end, when she shares vocal duties with keyboardist Thomas Fisher does the interest perk up, if only by offering a short break from the one-dimensional onslaught. Their voices work together perfectly, his low and menacing, hers ethereal and other-worldly. Next month they're off to continental Europe, where this kind of thing generally goes down well. Personally I'm staying at home.

Art Lagun



Café
Tarifa
MUSICIANS WANTED!
SEMI-ACOUSTIC & ACOUSTIC
NIGHTS EVERY TUESDAY
email demos to musik@cafetarifa.co.uk

Records, CDs and DVD Fair

OXFORD TOWNHALL

SATURDAY 7th May

10.30am-3.30pm

ROCK-POP-DANCE-GOLDEN OLDIES-INDIE-
SOUL-TECHNO-HIP-HOP-JAZZ-LATIN-REGGAE-
DRUM&BASS-GARAGE—R&B-DISCO-1950s-
2000s. Brand new back catalogue CDs £4 - £7



Empty Room Promotions Live 0000000000
MARY GAUTHIER
with Tania Elizabeth Goodrich
support from Ben Glover
Friday 6th May 7.30pm
Jacqueline Du Pre Music Building
St Hilda's College, Cowley Place
Oxford OX4 1DY
Tickets and more information go to
www.empty-rooms.com

RADIATE

**A NEW MONTHLY BAND NIGHT
THE JERICHO TAVERN, OXFORD**

band submissions :
radiatebookings@gmail.com

No covers bands, please
www.radiatepromotions.com

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
Fat Lil's: 01993 703385
East Oxford Community Centre:
01865 792168
The Port Mahon 01865 790970



ETHOMETRIC MUSEUM

Museum of the History of Science

You could argue that a live demonstration of noise-making equipment in a museum scarcely constitutes live music, and therefore falls outside the remit of this publication. Yet this is a performance so extraordinary that it helps us remember and celebrate the diversity of musical experience on offer here, uniting Oxford's scholarly and cultural sides in a beautiful suspension of disbelief.

The Ethometric Museum falls into the hitherto-unexplored space between live music, the stage and exhibition space – a one-man sound-art vaudeville masquerading as a scientific demonstration. Right down to the curator's warning of potential radiation leaks and proud descriptions of the collection's vaunted, and entirely fictional, centrepieces, this is pure theatre.

We're led into a room full of glass cabinets, filled with arcane devices labelled with specious names like 'Hypnocillatron Mk. I', all spinning tentacles, wood panelling, whirring discs and ornamental lights. They're the kind of devices you couldn't keep your hands off for a minute even if there was a hundred quid in it for you.

Ray Lee, as the sole boffinish performer, leads us like the Pied Piper of his own sound world, striding from one device to the next surrounded by craning onlookers, allowing himself a gratified half-smile as each makes its ascribed click or buzz. Within thirty minutes, we're alone in a dark museum, while swishing hums envelop us, red spinning LEDs the only light source. At its heart it's little more than thirty minutes of warm-sounding analogue drones (more than enough for some of us as it is), but packaged with such attention to detail and showmanship that it becomes something much greater.

One of the highlights of the 2011 calendar – both in terms of exhibitions and of gigs – this feels like a true original that could only really work right here. A load of droning boxes really have never sounded so good.

Stuart Fowkes

SPIERS AND BODEN

The North Wall

John Spiers and Jon Boden were already well on the way to being leading lights of the current folk revival as a duo before they launched their big band Bellowhead. Once the new kids on the block, the duo have become mainstays of the folk scene and beyond with their uplifting and cheerful take on the folk tradition. Tonight is part of their tenth anniversary tour. It's also a celebration of what their strong Oxford links mean to them: when Oxford Folk Festival, which they were due to headline, was cancelled, they asked Big Village if they could put on a gig so that they could play Oxford on their tour.

They open with 'Tom Padgett', which encapsulates what the duo are about. There are constant changes of rhythm and seemingly effortless interplay between Spiers' melodeon and Boden's fiddle, the sum of which is so much more than their individual skills. The song is driven along by the melodeon and Boden's high-pitched vocal and his theatrical ability to make a good tale come alive. The song becomes a foot stomper too with Boden stamping on the stomp board.

They follow this with two sets where they intersperse tunes from

their whole career, going right back to 2001's, 'Through and Through'. Their skill and creativity is to make this material sound newly minted by creating resonances from outside the folk world and not overcooking them. So their sparse playing of 'Horn Fair' conjures up the minimalism of Steve Reich or what folk might sound like if recorded by the ECM label. Their playing of Boden's tune to 'The Rain It Rains' even gets me thinking of drum&bass as Spiers brings out a dirty bass line from the melodeon in combination with Boden working the stomp box.

On tonight's showing they are still putting enthusiasm and energy into performing numbers like 'The Birth of Robin Hood' and 'Captain Ward', which they must have done at least a hundred times before. They also perform a couple of new tunes they have just written, 'Giant's Waltz' and 'The Tractor Hornpipe', and acknowledge their creation of the hugely successful Bellowhead by doing 'New York Girls', a number associated with the band rather than them as a duo, as one of the encores. The duo's last ten years have been a triumph, and on tonight's evidence they've got plenty more to come.

Colin May

THOUSANDS / TREVOR MOSS &

HANNAH LOU

The Jericho Tavern

Trevor Moss has the tall willowy look of a stereotypical Edwardian and you half expect him to ride on stage atop a Pennyfarthing. Along with wife Hannah Lou, they are a blue-green grass evocation of the byways rather than highways of England. At first you want to yell "Get a Room" as they sing their melted harmonies into each others faces while using the same microphone and look to be less than an inch away from a full on French kiss. You soon realise, though, that doing this is the cherry atop their vocal brilliance, tying Trevor's reedier, almost female voice, to Hannah's rich phrasing, in a way that two mics would have diminished. They cover Pepe Belmonte and Pete Greenwood, both Heavenly Records labelmates, but it's their own songs like 'The Lion & The Unicorn' and 'Cheap Wine' that make you think how much poorer life would be if they'd never met.

Kristian Garrard and Luke Bergman are Thousands. Two Seattle guitar-playing poets, sheep-shorn of their long-standing timberland beards and hair, and fast-tracked by the success of Fleet Foxes, who got them to sign

to Bella Union after a decade of deliberately being low key. Now on their first UK tour, they seem naturally nervous and bemused. They are at their best on the rare moments when they both sing together, so much like late-period Simon and Garfunkel that you wish they would do a cover of 'My Little Town' and blow us all out the room.

But not for them br-eezy listening music; their songs are dense, full of John Fahey-like guitar parts that plait together into one extremely hard guitar part, stopping and starting in the oddest places, and over this, Kristian's lyrics skip like touchstones on a pond of flat poetry, splashing on descriptive words plucked from the cosmos, nature, and maudlin spirituality, without ever going beneath the surface or introducing character.

I love their ambient outdoor recording concept, with debut album 'The Sound of Everything' being literally that, but promising as they are they'll have to fill their songs with something other than just rainy-night-home-alone ephemera, for their next turn around the island.

Paul Carrera

RUMER

The New Theatre

Cruise ship music for the masses seems to be the order of the day. With a musically brilliant band and impeccable vocals Rumer's performance cannot be faulted in a technical sense. Sadly this doesn't always transpire to a perfect concert. Though the set list is well pitched, variation weaving its way throughout, the upbeat numbers come in the form of covers, which leave Rumer's own material feeling somewhat lacklustre.

The editorial pitch of Dionne Warwick-meets-Karen Carpenter should have been a giveaway and I can't help but nod and agree to the comparisons as Rumer's smooth but sadly somewhat nondescript vocals fill the theatre with their lullaby quality. In fact, the "close your eyes and see what stands out" advice of a hardened reviewer nearly sees me spiral into the land of nod. Were it not for the occasional punch of drums and the up-tempo saxophone additions in 'Saving Grace' I probably would have been left like the rest of the

audience, motionless and seemingly unaffected.

Whilst low-key, chilled-out music has its place (namely an idle Sunday afternoon when you want to relax) it only ever translates when it has a lyrical punch. 'Slow', however, seems to mark the depth of Rumer's songs, leaving me lyrically unfulfilled. Just as the covers pack the musical weight, it's the rendition of Paul Simon's 'Long, Long Day' that fills the desire for substance in words.

Perhaps this is where the cruise ship vibe really sinks home, since it's Rumer's ability to deliver covers with an authentic twist that captures me most. The likes of The Miracles', 'You've Really Got A Hold On Me' and Bread's 'Goodbye Girl' mark the peak of the night. As a female vocalist enthusiast, I leave disappointingly impressed but uninspired, feeling that her acclaim comes only in her ability to reawaken the songs of her predecessors.

Lisa Ward

LIBRARY TAPES / MATT

WINKWORTH / BETHANY WEIMERS

St Michael at the Northgate Church

Going to a gig doesn't always have to be about the sound of clinking glasses at the bar, or of all-too-audible crowd mutterings getting in the way of the quiet bits. So, this evening, a gig in a church: it's a quiet and awe-inspiring setting, even for a Godless heathen. Tonight's sparse, yet appreciative crowd file into the pews as twinkling lights play off the stained glass windows in a hushed, semi-lit environment.

Bethany Weimers fits the scene perfectly; she talks almost in a whisper between songs, leaving the focus to fall on the content of her work. With voice and guitar or piano only, the songs are crisp, clear and fill the space impressively. Melodically and lyrically, they're relatively straightforward pieces, but that's not a problem when material is played with such quiet confidence and such a pure, strong voice. The setting, and the simplicity of instrumentation, are perfect for this music.

Matt Winkworth approaches things from another direction, bringing along a set of musicians including percussionist and trombone player to generate a 'show tune' feel to his set. It is perky, humorous and very self-confident, yet it doesn't quite hit

the spot. Whilst the music and performance is very, very competent and slick, it all seems to ring less true than it could, and consequently seems more of an opportunity to demonstrate a skillset than to connect with an audience. Whilst not every performance should rip one's heart out with its honesty and integrity, such cheekiness as this doesn't quite add up in a church.

One-man act Library Tapes strip things back – way back – with a set that seems longer that it probably is. This is probably due to the extraordinary emptiness of the music, which is three-quarters space, one-quarter single notes on piano. There's certainly melody here, it just demands to be found by the listener by their providing full attention. Doing so repays the effort, however, as this is a sound to drift off into, and get lost within. It's almost a meditative aid, providing one note to consider for several minutes, before the surprisingly startling effect generated by nothing more than the next note coming along. If this is a venue in which quiet contemplation is the order of the day, this is a musician that enables nothing but.

Simon Minter

WARPAINT

Plus Special Guests
CONNAN MOCKASIN

o₂academy

OXFORD

FRIDAY 13TH MAY

Tel: 0844 844 0444
Buy online at Livenation.co.uk

THE FOOL ALBUM OUT NOW ON ROUGH TRADE

A Live Nation presentation in association with CODA

www.warpaintwarpaint.com

DOCTOR SHOTOVER

Planet Of The Canapes

"Spryngge has sprungge", as my ancestor the poet (Guillaume Le Batard du Chateau Vert) once wrote. Oh the parties, the launches, the lunches! The East Indies Club has been a-buzz with receptions, canapés, fine wines (and the odd spot of Chateau Vert cooking sherry when the good stuff has run out). Excitement has been hard to contain at the prospect of Lord Spyrograph's forthcoming rockumentary-cum-thriller, *Who Killed The Candyskins?*, with its veiled revelations of organized crime links to the local band scene. Older readers of this column may recall dark undercurrents in the 1990s relating to the sinister and shadowy body known as Oxford Music Central. The question "Who IS Mr Big?" has been on everyone's lips... and some of our longest-serving members have been disturbed to find, under hypnosis, that they *know the answer*. But my honest advice, Bud, is to keep schtum on that one, unless you want to end up dressed in cement trousers making friends with the prawns at the bottom of the Farmoor reservoir... Meanwhile Sir Radclyffe Maconie and those fearless cub reporters Adam and Jolyon have been taking the investigation to the airwaves, along with members of popular local jazz combo The Radiohead Five, who are keen to name the guilty men but seem to be suffering from an attack of *film noir*-ish amnesia. (E.g. "I found myself in the Jericho Tavern in 1991, wearing a trench-coat and sipping a lager and lime... Oxford had just got cool, baby!") What did we fight the Great Punk Wars for, that's what I'd like to know... let alone the late 80s Indie Skirmishes? Still, amnesia can do that to a man, as I myself well know. What is your name again? Why am I here, dressed in a wetsuit and shades? Are those your prawns? And, most importantly, whose round is it?

Next Month: The Prawn Identity

"Why, Dr Shotover! Is that a wetsuit? Or a wet suit?"



Bringing it home since 1998

TRUCK

14

FESTIVAL Hill Farm,
Steventon

22nd 23rd and 24th July 2011

in the heart of Oxfordshire

GRUFF RHYS / BELLOWHEAD
GRAHAM COXON / SAINT ETIENNE
JOHN GRANT / TRUCK ALL-STARS
PHILIP SELWAY / EDWYN COLLINS
THE GO! TEAM / JOHNNY FLYNN

THE DUKE & THE KING / CHERRY GHOST
TUNING / DEAN WAREHAM PLAYS GALAXIE 500
RODDY WOOMBLE / JONNY / JUSTIN TOWNES EARLE
ADMIRAL FALLOW / RICHMOND FONTAINE (ACOUSTIC)
DRY THE RIVER / PETE MOLINARI / DREAMING SPIRES
JONQUIL / ALESSI'S ARK / SEA OF BEES / FIXERS
CAITLIN ROSE / TREEFIGHT FOR SUNLIGHT / CHAD VALLEY
JUSTIN ROBERTSON / RICHARD NORRIS (BEYOND THE WIZARD'S SLEEVE)
PET MOON / MECHANICAL BRIDE / MARQUES TOLIVER
GAGGLE / TROPHY WIFE / THE ROCKINGBIRDS
TREVOR MOSS & HANNAH-LOU / JAMES WALBOURNE
MARCUS FOSTER / LANTERNS ON THE LAKE
CASHIER NO9 / TWO FINGERS OF FIREWATER
AND MANY MORE ...

NEW CLASH STAGE CURATED BY
TRANSGRESSIVE, HEAVENLY AND BELLA UNION

**CABARET, COMEDY,
THEATRE AND CINEMA**

PARTY 'TIL LATE IN BOXFORD

DEDICATED FAMILY FIELD

KIDS ACTIVITIES AND ENTERTAINMENT

WIDE RANGE OF LOCAL AND ORGANIC FOOD

LOCAL BEERS AND COCKTAILS

STAY IN TENTS, TIPIS AND YURTS

3 DAY ADULT TICKETS STILL UNDER £100

DAY TICKETS AND YOUNG PERSONS TICKETS AVAILABLE,
UNDER 12S GO FREE!

Get tickets from

TRUCKFESTIVAL.COM

box office

0844 854 1350

in person

TRUCK STORE
AND SELECTED OUTLETS



20th/21st/22nd
May 2011

**MUSIC
&
NATURE**

The award-winning Wood Festival:
20th, 21st & 22nd May 2011

A celebration of music and nature
at Braziers Park, Oxfordshire,

with

**Eliza Carthy Band, Willy Mason,
Thea Gilmore, Khaira Arby,
and much more great music.**

Workshops, talks and demonstrations for all ages

visit now

www.woodfestival.com

lost.fm

BELLA
UNION

Heavenly
recordings

Transgressive
records

OXFORD
Folk Festival

CLASH

PLAYSOUT
P

Go to TRUCKFESTIVAL.COM or FACEBOOK.COM/TRUCKFESTIVAL for more information

INTRODUCING....

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

Gunning For Tamar

Who are they?

Gunning For Tamar began life as Rise East Strike West in 2009. They released one EP before discovering a similarly named band. Gunning For Tamar (Joe Wallis: *vocals/guitar*; Dan Pollard: *guitar/keyboards/vocals*; D'Arcy King: *drums* and Ben Green: *bass*) announced their arrival with two tracks on a split EP with Phantom Theory. 'The Organs. The Senses. The Muscles. The Memories.' and 'Norse Blood'. 'The Organs...' was selected as *NME*'s Breakthrough Track Of The Week. It also got airplay on BBC Introducing and XFM and made it into the end of year Nightshift Top 25. The band subsequently went into the studio with former-Forward Russia! frontman Tom Woodhead and recorded a new four-song EP, 'Deaf Cow Motel', which will be released on 30th May by Walnut Tree Records.

What do they sound like?

Like local kindred spirits Spring Offensive and Ute, Gunning For Tamar follow in the path of Oxford pioneers Youthmovies, and prog-tinged rock manglers The Mars Volta, exploring off-kilter song and time structures, mixing math-rock textures with a spangly pop sheen and moments of ferocious guitar noise, while Joe's strong, emotive voice gives them a dynamic melodic kick. They describe themselves as the sound of building something new and beautiful from the wreckage of a destroyed Lego model.

What inspires them?

"We're interested in the two routes to the brain. You can smash your way through the face in an unrelenting fashion, or subtly creep up the spine. Either way, we want your brain."

Career highlight so far:

"Seeing our faces in the *NME* at a service station and leaving that page open next to a copy of *Zoo* was a particularly satisfying moment."

And the lowlight:

"A show we played in London where the PA packed up before our set. We spent half an hour building our own PA from things we could find. We were



in a pretty triumphant mood until we discovered that the promoter had told the previously decent sized crowd that the gig was cancelled."

Their favourite other Oxfordshire act is:

"The Winchell Riots. They are consistently spectacular live and that's just in modest venues in Oxford"

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

"'Deloused in The Comatorium' by The Mars Volta; it manages to be completely mental at the same time as having a collection of rock solid songs, hooks and melodies hidden amongst the madness."

When is their next gig and what can newcomers expect?

"21st May at the O2 Academy. We can't dance but we do."

Their favourite and least favourite things about Oxford music are:

"The standard of bands here is truly unbelievable. Didcot power station must be burning a potent mix of music books, seminal albums and spinach and wafting the smoke over Oxford. We'll probably all get ill from the fumes one day, but we'll leave behind some excellent records. The only downside is that gigs regularly clash."

You might love them if you love:

Youthmovies; Biffy Clyro; Billy Mahonie; The Mars Volta.

Hear them here:

www.myspace.com/gunningfortamar

Whatever happened to... those heroes

Death By Crimpers

WHO?

Goth-hardcore-indie-punk-metal quintet Death By Crimpers were one of the most popular bands on the local scene – and some way beyond – in the early-90s. The band (Karen Nolan: *vocals*; Teresa Hooker: *guitar*; Lin Lloyd: *guitar*; Jo Reid: *bass* and Clare Howard: *drums*) formed in 1990 to enter a band competition at Oxford Polytechnic (they didn't win but quickly eclipsed the competition). Supporting the likes of UK Subs, Th'Faith Healers and riot grrl faves Seven Year Bitch around the UK they became cult faves, picking up rave reviews in *NME*, *Melody Maker* and *Kerrang!* as well as a startlingly fanatical touring band of followers before being picked up by German label Sonic for whom they released one single, 'Obsessive', before splitting in 1993.

WHAT?

A ferociously melodic collision of bubblegum pop fun and hardcore venom dressed up in lurid colours, painted Docs and crimped hair; they found themselves compared to everyone from The Stooges and Motorhead to The Runaways and All About Eve, while *NME* called them "a bottle of venom shaken up and sprayed over the crowd" and declared that "Their shit is so hot they have to use special asbestos bogs". Singer Karen had the raw, throaty voice of a young Joan Jett or Janis Joplin, while the band's blitzkrieg pop found favour across the board with goths, metallers and less timid indie kids.



WHEN?

The Crimpers packed a lot of gigging into their three-year lifetime, regularly touring the UK and selling out local venues where they played alongside other local acts like Radiohead, The Daisies and Sevenchurch. After a couple of demos and dalliances with a number of record labels they signed to Sonic and 'Obsessive' was released on pink vinyl in 1993, by which time their own record label's machinations had accentuated in-band tensions to breaking point; the band split up after a final, sold-out show at the Oxford Venue (now the O2 Academy).

WHY?

Because they were brilliant and fun and rocked harder than most boys and made a serious reputation for themselves on the underground gig and zine scene, but also because they defied the inherent sexism of the music industry before succumbing to its more sinister workings. While Oxford is by no means worse than any other scene, The Crimpers remain one of very few all-female bands to make a mark locally. Also their cover of 'Are Friends Electric?' was an unholy triumph.

WHERE?

Post-split Teresa and Clare went on to form the equally popular Beaker, who released singles for Fierce Panda and Shifty Disco; Lin formed goth outfit

Passion Play, who released a brace of albums before frontman Justin Stephens relocated to Berlin, while Jo later joined Ivy's Itch, with whom she still plays. She is the only former Crimper still playing; all of the band still reside in Oxfordshire, except Teresa who now lives in North Yorkshire.

HOW?

'Obsessive' is now a minor collectors' item in goth and riot grrl circles. The dormant www.myspace.com/deathbycrimpers site features the single and its b-side while the video for 'Obsessive' is up on Youtube. Demos for the band's unreleased debut album might one day surface.

APPLETREE studios
72 TRACK DIGITAL / 34 TRACK ANALOGUE



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS IN THE BUSINESS
Take a look at the new website and recent refurb at
www.appletreestudios.com

FOR ALL YOUR RECORDING, MASTERING
AND DUPLICATING NEEDS
01844 237916
Great rates for local Bands / Soloists

Warehouse Studios

24 Track HD Digital Recording
Full Production & Rehearsal Studios

Oxford 01865-736411
www.warehousestudios.com

*** Special Local Band Rates ***

coldroom studios

we give you **quality** recordings
all budgets

practice makes **perfect**
fully equipped rehearsal rooms

www.coldroomstudios.co.uk
contact Susy 07823770079

FLASH HARRY ENTERPRISES

PA.HIRE

3k / 5k
compact & potent **BOSE** Other systems available

32 channel desk & foldback
24 track live recording

Tony Jezzard
01865 876084 07702 211792
Email: pahire@flashharryenterprises.co.uk
www.flashharryenterprises.co.uk



Grannyflat Studios

- *Great selection of analogue and digital recording equipment
- *Fantastic Live room with natural light
- *On Site Accommodation
- *Idyllic Farm Location
- *Evening and Weekend Bookings Available

info@grannyflatstudios.co.uk
01865 884042
www.grannyflatstudios.co.uk

DEMOS

DEMO OF THE MONTH

VIENNA DITTO

An Oxford-Reading-London-based trio, Vienna Ditto sent us a great one-song demo just over a year ago, which we thought sounded like Portishead soundtracking a lost Tarantino movie. This four-song follow-up is even better. 'Best Shot' is a gorgeous, shimmering slice of film *noir* soundtrack pop, Hattie Taylor's lazily spectral voice coasting on a funereal marching snare beat; it reeks of tragically failed romance, dark Parisian backstreets and claustrophobic regret, Beth Gibbons mentored by John Barry by way of *Twin Peaks*. 'This Is Normal' finds Hattie's sweet vulnerability rolled away to reveal a predatory soul diva surrounded by siren synths as she croons "This is fucked up" in a manner even the most prudish maiden aunt couldn't object to. 'Wintertime' is a bitter counterpoint to the classic 'Summertime', with its "Wintertime, and the living is hard" refrain. Only the incongruously grinding 'Dang', with its big, nasty guitar lacks the subtle magic of the rest of the demo. It's not so much dream-pop as fog-pop; seedily exotic tripped-out pop heard through late-night mist. "This is fucked up"? No, this is fucking great.

CARAVAN OF WHORES

Dirty by name; dirty by nature. Caravan of Whores are so entrenched in the stoner-rock milieu, you can almost smell the pungent scent of hash as demo opener '03 9 Bar' slopes in, an eleven-and-a-half-minute slow-burner that waits well over a minute before delivering its first crunching power-riff, like a slow-motion bus through a shop window. From hereon in it's all big, ballsy blues riffage and gravelly hollering, an almighty edifice of a song in the steady, relentless lineage of Kyuss, Sabbath and Monster Magnet, a winding psychedelic guitar excursion taking it further out from its earthy beginnings. The comparatively compact nine-minute 'Crowfeet' is sludgier still, a horror film soundtrack rumble of timeless metal riffage, the lead guitar increasingly disconnected from the solid hull of the rest of the band as they downtune and slow down classic Led Zep. Closer 'Now' is an almost blink-and-you'll-miss-it four and a half minutes and harks back further still, to the classic gonzo hard rock of Steppenwolf, albeit coated in some nasty Motorhead-flavoured grit and grime. Admirably unreconstructed stuff.

LISTING SHIPS

Formed from the fallout of electro-tinged krautrock exponents From Light To Sound

and featuring former-Witches drummer Dave Balch, Listing Ships continue in FLTS's bullish updating of Neu!'s motorik instrumental journeys. Each track is nautically themed, so we get 'Skipper's Daughter', 'Equus Ager' and 'All Aboard The Andrea Doria'. Really, there's not enough music written about Italian battleships. Fewer still that actually sound like Italian battleships. As you'd expect with such subject matter this is pretty aggressive stuff, steadfast linear grooves providing a solid base for the guitars to go off like a twenty-gun salvo, lulls in the action brief respite from the next barrage of tightly-reined noise. At full pelt they're close to fellow modern krautrockers like Einsturz, managing to deliver musical violence with admirable discipline, serrated synths occasionally cutting through the sheet metal guitar, all the while striking a fine balance between pensive and cathartic. One of a very few demos that could justifiably come complete with a Play Loud sticker attached.

BRICKS

We wonder if Vangelis and Jean Michel Jarre realised just how influential they were going to be back in the days when the music press had little but bile saved for their respective takes on ambient electronic music. Of course, three-plus decades of filtering through the likes of Autechre, Future Sound of London and, latterly, Radiohead, have nominally upgraded their visions and nowadays anyone with a laptop can create soundtracks to imaginary astronomy documentaries. Like fellow local soundscapists Euhedral and Neon Pulse, Bricks (or possibly Just Bricks, depending on how you interpret their online address) twinkle, shimmer and glitch discreetly and generally sound like the backdrop to something on the Discovery Channel. 'Lawrence' is Jarre's 'Zoolook' filtered through Radiohead's recent offerings, while 'Mwmamww' could well be nabbed straight off of Carl Sagan's *Cosmos*. Pretty and pleasantly relaxing, if maybe a little too polite.

CIRCUIT CHASE

Nothing pretty or polite about this lot, a Bicester-based band who substitute finesse and technical expertise for several barrels of gusto and discover it actually works better. They're hopelessly blokey in a Britpop-cum-pub-rock kind of way, brilliantly-monikered singer Thomas Muddle shouting like Billy Bragg trying his hand at Rod Stewart karaoke, while the band hammer through songs filled to capacity with big, unsubtle hooks and big rolling punk powerchords. 'Paris In The Springtime' is as cheesy as it's possible to get, like a Menswear tribute band trying to cover 'The Final Countdown', replete with ludicrously OTT synth chorus. Token slowie 'Architecture Is Frozen Music' is, predictably, utter crap – laboured, strained and tuneless, with the band's shocking lack of subtlety laid bare, a frozen block of shite and onions. Thankfully

'I Can't Live Without You' is on hand to gallop to the rescue, a brazen spaghetti western tribute, complete with mariachi horns and beefy guitar chords. The whole thing is borderline abomination, but when all's said and done, if a band's got a bloody great daft chorus or two tucked away in their set, you're a fool to argue technicalities.

DALLAS DON'T

Dallas Don't are named, we're informed, after a whisky distillery in Scotland called Dallas Dhu. More bands should be named after whisky-related puns; it'd cheer us up no end sitting through a session that included Cragganfaithnomore, Trembling Bell's, The Johnny Walker Brothers and Glenncampbellmorangie. Even better, Dallas Don't's opening track is called 'Burning Furniture', which is what we tend to end up doing after a few drams too many of a wet Tuesday evening. Only one of Dallas Don't is from Scotland, singer Niall, but his rich, rolling accent dominates the band's sound, variously a fuzzy but cuddly sort of punk-folk, a more contemplative, semi-acoustic Idlewild and a fidgety indie spangle. It's all highly likeable but you wonder if they maybe need some stronger songs to bring the best out of Niall's strong voice.

TOMMY VINE

Tommy lives in Bristol but was apparently based in Oxford "in the good old days of the Zodiac and when The Young Knives were the cool new band that only you knew about," which makes you wonder why he'd even consider moving away with all that fantastic stuff going on. Maybe he was sad. We think he might have been. And still is. Because he's written some songs about the general unfairness of things. On his acoustic guitar. One of which is called 'Do You Want Me To Go?'. Which is a bit daft since he already has done. To Bristol, remember? Please keep up at the back. 'Oxford Patch' is an autobiographical tale about playing local open mic sessions and asks us to take him round the world but bring him back again, doubtless to some benighted corner of a pub where failed Bob Dylans gather to declaim the lack of authenticity in modern pop music before whining endlessly through blocked adenoids about being like a rolling stone. 'Beat Hands Down' is all about losing out in love or something, delivered with all the euphoric gusto of an expiring rodent and we start to wonder if maybe Tommy didn't leave of his own volition, but was driven out of town by fellow open mic denizens, worried that he was in danger of monopolising Oxford's quota of self-absorbed misery and general utter fucking soul-crushing tedium. Well Tommy, some things have moved on in Oxford: it's no longer the Zodiac; Young Knives aren't quite as new as they once were but at least some things never change: Nightshift are still a bunch of total bastards. You're welcome back any time.

THE SLOW DEATH OF JULIUS WAY

The picture accompanying this album-length demo is of someone, head in hands, face down on a desk in a picture of despair. At last, a band that understand how we feel every month when we go through the demo pile, and particularly when an act announce that their principle influences are Nick Drake and Elliot Smith. Not because we don't like Drake and Smith, but the people they inspire do tend towards the, y'know, miserable fucking mumbling shitebag side of things. Not so with The Slow Death Of Julius Way, though. TSDOWJ is the solo work of Matthew Adams and for the first song here we picture him sitting in a woody glade penning odd medieval campfire jigs. Soon after that we picture him prancing like a tit round said campfire with someone called Jessie, who owns a yurt. It's all starting to tip into the land of preposterous. Matthew's strength though is in keeping on moving, musically speaking, through wistful, pastoral pop, into bolder full-band efforts and the occasional soppy duet of the sort you feel dropped off the back end of an old Fleetwood Mac album. Some of it's a bit monochrome – typical strum and mumble stuff; elsewhere it's really rather nice. Probably a bit much expecting us to sit through a full 13 tracks of the stuff, particularly when the final number is entitled 'Slow Death', something we feel we've metaphorically endured too many times in the pursuit of demo nirvana, but enough talent and good ideas to make for a decent EP.

THE DEMO DUMPER

LUTECE CONSTANT

Only 16 years old we should perhaps go easy on Lutece here, but sod it, if we want something small warbling and squawking in our ear constantly, we'll buy a budgie or a parrot. Armed with an acoustic guitar, discreetly plucked throughout, Lutece practises her scales with what we guess passes for not inconsiderable ability, but being technically gifted does not necessarily great pop music make. Using six notes when one will suffice might get the *X-Factor* massive whooping like an army of deranged gibbons, who might mistake such an ostentatious display for emotional authenticity but an elongated "oh-oh-wo-oh-oh-wo-oh. Oh-wo-oh-oh-wo-umbongo" or whatever just makes us think you forgot to go to the loo before you pressed the record button. Maybe Lutece would be better off auditioning for a Mariah Carey tribute act, or some Andrew Lloyd-Webber production, where technical perfection is better appreciated. Here it just feels like style over soul, and for all its acrobatics, it feels remarkably pedestrian.

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



Interzone House
74-77 Magdalen Rd
Oxford OX4 1RE

For bookings and enquiries please phone

01865 715705

drum kits available to hire,
good location + vending machines.
Rehearsals from just £24 for 3 hours
Recording £100 per day (mon-fri)

THE COURTYARD STUDIO

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

Residential facilities included.

www.courtyardrecordingstudio.com

PHONE PIPPA FOR DETAILS

ON 01235 845800

**shonk
studios**

Recording Studios
Protools on Mac
Great Sound
Rates For Local Bands

Phone - 01865 203922
or
07878960286

info@theshonk.com

www.theshonk.com

LAST MONTH I MASTERED...

MILLION FACES
PAULSOUNDS
JUMPING SHIPS
CATS AND CATS AND CATS
MIKE JOHNSON
BILLY AND THE GEEK
FAMOUS FLAMES
SUSAN AJAYI
STEVE IZAC
HOT RED DRESS
THE SCHOLARS
BRICKWORK LIZARDS
DEAD MASK CLUB

ROUGH DIAMOND
BRING ME THE HORIZON
ALTAR OF PLAQUES
STAGECOACH
LALÉE COMPTON
INVISIBLE VEGAS
THE HAPPY MEN
BURNING BEES
THE LIVING FIELDS
DUBWISER
NAZARETH
SAILOR
ALOE



01865 716466

tjm@turanaudio.co.uk

decibel studio
.co.uk

email & enquire about
2hrs FREE rehearsal

loud is better

Chalgrave, Oxon 01460 221541

07774 228440

studiodecibel@aol.com

Weds 4th May • £12 adv
6.30pm - 11pm

The Rifles

Thurs 5th May • £22.50 adv

Ali Campbell

The Legendary Voice of UB40

Fri 6th May • £18 adv

Peter Doherty

Fri 6th May • £8 adv

Jake Morley

(Full Live Band)

+ Brother and Bones

(Full Live Band)

+ We Aeronauts

Sat 7th May • £9 adv

7pm - 10pm

Brother

+ Dog Is Dead

Tues 10th May • £11 adv

Devlin

Tues 10th May • £7.50 adv

Secret Sisters

+ Simon Lynne

Weds 11th May • £5 adv

6.30pm - 10pm

Max Raptor

+ Half Naked

+ Cellar Family

+ Very Nice Harry

Thurs 12th May • £8 adv

MC Lars

Melanin Challenged Tour

+ Mr Shadown

+ Weed Science

+ MC Chris

+ Akira The Don

Fri 13th May • £9 adv

6.30pm

Miles Kane

Fri 13th May • £12 adv

Warpaint + Crystal Stilts

Sat 14th May • £10 adv

6.30pm

Guns 2 Roses

Mon 16th May • £9 adv

Emerge

NME Radar Tour

ft. Anna Calvi

+ Grouplove

Tues 17th May • £15 adv

The Alarm

30th Anniversary Tour

+ The Last Republic

Weds 18th May • £10 adv

6.30pm

Set Your Goals

Thurs 19th May • £9 adv

The Naked & Famous

Fri 20th May • £10 earlybird / £12 adv
10.30pm - 4am • over 18s only

MODA

ft. Benga, Kissy - Sell Out,

Jaymo & Andy George,

Jakob, Tom Starr + more tba

Sat 21st May • £8 adv

Gentlemen's Dub Club

+ Agitator

Sat 21st May • £5 adv

7.30pm - 12am

Upstairs:

The Launch Edition

ft. Ute, Gunning For Tamar,

Vixens, King Of Cats,

The Graceful Slicks

Sat 21st May • £5 adv / £6 on door

£5 NUS / £4 NHS

10.30pm - 3am • over 18s only

Propaganda

ft. Huw Stephens

+ Trashy

+ Room 101

Sun 22nd May • £11 adv

Villagers

Tues 24th May • £10 adv

The Young Knives

+ The Neat

Thurs 26th May • £11 adv

Nick Harper

Fri 27th May • £10 adv

6.30pm

And You Will Know Us By The Trail Of Dead

Sat 28th May • £8 adv

6.30pm

Misstallica

All Chick Tribute To Metallica

Mon 30th May • £12.50 adv

Mayday Parade

+ We Are The In Crowd

+ Rocket To The Moon

Tues 31st May • SOLD OUT

Ed Sheeran

+ Kal Lavelle

Weds 1st June • £13.50 adv

The Kills

Thurs 2nd June • £7.50 adv

Futures

+ Lower Than Atlantis

+ Pegasus Bridge

Sat 4th June • £8 adv

6.30pm - 10pm

Cash (Johnny Cash Tribute)

Sun 5th June • £15 adv

Springbok Nude Girls

Mon 6th June • £7 adv

Wallis Bird

+ Midas Fall + Sandra MacBeth

+ Jon Oakeley

Mon 6th June • £8 adv

10pm - 2am • over 18s only

ICON launch party

ft. Boy George

Fri 10th June • £16 adv

Yo La Tengo

Reinventing the Wheel Tour

(No support 2 1/2 hr set)

Sat 11th June • £6 adv

The Winchell Riots

Fri 17th June • £6 adv

Wolf Gang

Sat 18th June • £15 adv

6.30pm

Fun Lovin' Criminals

Mon 24th Oct • £10 adv

Wretch 32

Thurs 30th June • £5 adv

Evarose + Atlas & I

Fri 1st July • £10 adv

10pm • over 18s only

Prism Reunion - Part 2

ft. Kieran, Marty P, Osprey

and 2 Bad Mice

Sun 17th July • £7 adv

Deaf Havana

Sat 23rd July • £7 adv

3pm

Room 101 -

Metal Mayhem

Thurs 28th July • £10 adv

Room 94

Thurs 8th Sept • £10 adv

Pearl Jam

(Europe's No.1 Tribute to Pearl

Jam) - 20th Anniversary Tour

Performing TEN in its entirety

Sat 17th Sept • £12.50 adv

6.30pm - 10pm

The Jamm

Tues 20th Sept • £16 adv

The Bluetones

(The Farewell Tour)

Sun 16th Oct • £11 adv

Blessthefall

+ Pierce The Veil

+ Motionless In White

Thurs 27th Oct • £5 adv

Johnny Get The Gun

Sat 10th Dec • £10.50 adv

6pm - 10pm

Electric Six



Propaganda
THE UK'S BIGGEST INDIE NIGHT
EVERY SATURDAY
O₂ ACADEMY
OXFORD

MR	PROPAGANDA	R	TRASHY	R	ROOM 101
A	THE BEST NEW	O	KITCH GLAM	O	ROCK
O	CLASSIC INDIE	O	POP AND	O	METAL &
I	ALTERNATIVE	M	GUILTY	M	PUNK
NM	MUSIC	2	PLEASURES	3	ANTHEMS

£5 ADMISSION, £5 NUS/MEMBERS, £4 NHS
10:30PM-3AM, DRINKS FROM £1.95
WEEKLY PHOTOS, MORE INFO & ADVANCE TICKETS:
WWW.THEPROPAGANDA.COM

Tickets for Saturday night shows include free entry to Propaganda / Trashy / Room 101 (or £6, £5 NUS / members, £4 NHS on the door)