

# NIGHTSHIFT

## Oxford's Music Magazine

Free every  
month  
Issue 226  
May  
2014

# OXFORD PUNT 2014

The annual showcase of Oxford's best new music returns

**Full Punt preview inside**

*Also in this issue:*

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plus

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

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THE ORIGINAL

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MUSIC FESTIVAL

4th | 5th | 6th JULY 2014 THE GREAT TEW PARK OXFORDSHIRE

**JOOLS HOLLAND** ★ **SIMPLE MINDS** ★ **VERY SPECIAL GUEST**

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# NEWS

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Online: [nightshift.oxfordmusic.net](http://nightshift.oxfordmusic.net)



**TOWERSEY FESTIVAL** celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this summer with an all-star cast of folk music and more. The five-day festival takes place in the Oxfordshire village from the 21<sup>st</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> August. Richard Thompson (*Fri 22<sup>nd</sup>*); Seth Lakeman (*pictured, Sat 23<sup>rd</sup>*); Norma Waterson and Eliza Carthy (*Sat 23<sup>rd</sup>*); Lau (*Sat 23<sup>rd</sup>*); The Bootleg Beatles (*Thu 21<sup>st</sup>*); Dick Gaughan (*Fri 22<sup>nd</sup>*) and Michael McGoldrick and John MucCusker (*Mon 25<sup>th</sup>*) are among a host of acts performing. Other names include Nancy Kerr and James Fagan; Urban Folk Quartet; John Smith; The Chipolatas; Roy Bailer and John Kirkpatrick. Adult weekend tickets are £120, with kids weekend tickets £55, though day tickets and tickets for specific shows are available. Visit [www.towersefestival.com](http://www.towersefestival.com) for full line-up and ticket details.

**FAIRPORT'S CROPREDY CONVENTION** returns over the 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> August in its traditional setting of Cropredy village, just north of Banbury. As well as Fairport's Saturday night headline set, The Waterboys; The

Australian Pink Floyd; Marillion; Steve Hackett; Chas & Dave; The Wonderstuff and Al Stewart will all be bringing exciting new musical sounds to the party. No, really. Other acts confirmed for the event include Capercaille; The Travelling Band; Cara Dillon; Behemoth and Treetop Flyers. Tickets (from £110) and more info is at [www.fairportconvention.com](http://www.fairportconvention.com).

**IRREGULAR FOLK** returns with another season of summer sessions. The sessions, in the exotic setting of a Bedouin tent in the grounds of The Perch in Binsey, were one of the big hits of last summer. An all-day event, featuring a dozen acts, takes place on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July, from 2-11.30pm. Acts confirmed so far are Salvation Bill; The May Birds; Ben Champion; Duotone; Jess Hall; Rachael Gladwin; You Are Wolf, and Steph West, with three more, including the headline act, to be confirmed. Tickets, priced £12, go on sale from Truck Store and online at [Wegotickets.com](http://Wegotickets.com), from the 4<sup>th</sup> May. Visit [www.irregularfolk.co.uk](http://www.irregularfolk.co.uk) for more info and news updates.

**WITTFEST** takes place over the weekend of the 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> June at the Plough Inn in Long Wittenham. The festival – not to be confused with Wittstock, which takes place at the same venue over the weekend of the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> July – is a free three-day live music event which aims to raise money



**CATE LE BON** heads the list of new acts added to the bill for this year's **Wilderness Festival**. The singer-songwriter, and *Nightshift*'s favourite Welsh person ever, ahead of even Aneurin Bevan, joins **Burt Bacharach**; **Metronomy** and **London Grammar** at the music and arts festival, which takes place from the 7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> August at **Cornbury Country Park**.

Other recent additions to the bill include **Joan As Policewoman**, **Slow Club**; **Chet Faker**; **Jack Savoretti**; **Teleman**; **Hozier** and **Josh Record**, with the likes of Sam Smith; Jessie Ware, Mount Kimble and Connor Mockasin already confirmed.

Renowned for its eclectic array of entertainment, Wilderness also features banquets hosted by big-named chefs; theatre and cinema; talks and debates, plus various outdoor activities and spa treats.

Tickets for Wilderness are on sale now, with adult weekend camping tickets at £143.50, and kids under 10 getting in for just £5, from [www.wildernessfestival.com](http://www.wildernessfestival.com).

for Pets As Therapy, and Young Dementia. A limited amount of on-site camping is available. Visit [www.wittfest.org.uk](http://www.wittfest.org.uk) for more details.

**OXFORD CONTEMPORARY MUSIC** hosts the world premiere of Matthew Herbert's '20 Pianos' piece this month. The concert

takes place at The North Wall in Summertown on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> May. Composer and producer Herbert has previously worked with Bjork, Dizzee Rascal and Quincy Jones, and was recently appointed Creative Director of the reformed BBC Radiophonic Workshop. '20 Pianos' aims to tell the story of pianos from around

**DEAP VALLY** are among a swathe of new names added to this year's **Truck Festival** line-up. The LA garage-rock duo are joined by house producer **Julio Bashmore**, who will be heading up the late night revelry at the event, which takes place over the weekend of the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> July at **Hill Farm** in Stevenon.

Other new names on the bill include **Slow Club**; **Dan Croll**; **Catfish & the Bottlemen**; **Canterbury**; **Saint Raymond**; **Dodgy**; **Superfood**; **Chris TT & the Hoodrats**, and **Danny & the Champions of the World**. Additionally a slew of local acts, including **The Original Rabbit Foot Spasm Band**; **The Dreaming Spires**; **Pixel Fix**; **Ralfie Band** and **Empty White Circles** have been added to the line-up.

As previously announced **White Lies** and **The Crips** will headline Truck on a bill that also features Peace; Stornoway; Andrew WK; Kids in Glass Houses; Swim Deep and Cerebral Ballzy.

More info, and tickets are available at [truckfestival.com](http://truckfestival.com).



# NEWS

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the world through acoustic and electric performance, samples and found sound. Among the artists performing are Sarah Nicolls and Same Beste, who was part of Amy Winehouse's band. Tickets are on sale, priced £15, from [www.ocmevents.org](http://www.ocmevents.org).



**DB BAND** headline this year's D-Fest. The band, fronted by former Supergrass chap Mick Quinn, play the one-day festival, at the Red Lion in Drayton on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> July. Joining them for the fifth D-Fest are NudyBronque; Balloon Ascents and Orange Vision, with more acts to be announced.

## HUCK & THE XANDER

**BAND** present their rock opera, 'Alexander the Great', in its entirety next month. The band will play all three acts of the piece for the first time at the Old Fire Station on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> June. The musical story, inspired by everything from *Paradise Lost* and *Catcher in the Rye*, to Nick Cave, tells the tale of two runaways in the American south, escaping from prejudice and religious bigotry. You can catch the band playing the first two acts at the Wheatshaf as part of the Oxford Punt on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May.



**PIERCE ARTISTS** release their debut album, 'Raking Dead Leaves In Autumn', this month. The Oxford/London/Liverpool hip hop collective comprises Darren Ijada (Deeq from local hip hop collective Flooded Hallways) alongside Elliot Fresh and Rack Mode. Full review next issue, but you can buy it now at [boombappro.com](http://boombappro.com) or on iTunes.

**AS EVER**, don't forget to tune into **BBC Oxford Introducing** every Saturday night between 8-9pm on 95.2fm. The dedicated local music show plays the best Oxford releases and demos as well as featuring interviews and sessions with local acts. The show is available to stream or download as a podcast at [bbc.co.uk/oxford](http://bbc.co.uk/oxford). Regularly updated local music news is available online at [www.musicinoxford.co.uk](http://www.musicinoxford.co.uk). The site also features interactive reviews, a photo gallery and gig guide.

Local musicians and promoter Mark 'Osprey' O'Brien returns to Destiny 105fm from this month, playing local music on the local station ever week day from 1.30-3pm. The show will also feature regular live sessions from local bands. Oxford acts wanting their music played should contact Mark via Facebook. Nightshift's online form is open to all local music fans and musicians at [nightshift.oxfordmusic.net](http://nightshift.oxfordmusic.net)

**OXFORD BANDS** looking for members or musicians looking for bands can advertise for free in Nightshift. Simply email your needs in up to 30 words, to [nightshift@oxfordmusic.net](mailto:nightshift@oxfordmusic.net).



**THE ORIGINAL RABBIT FOOT SPASM BAND, DUBWISER AND BLACK HATS** are among a host of local acts confirmed to play on the Riverside Stage at this year's **Cornbury Festival**.

The Riverside Stage traditionally gives local and emerging acts the chance to share a festival bill with big name acts. Jools Holland & His Rhythm & Blues Orchestra with Melanie C and Marc Almond; Simple Minds; Sophie Ellis-Bextor; Arrested Development; 10cc; Kid Creole & the Coconuts; Scouting For Girls and Sam Bailey are among the acts playing on the two main stages at this year's event, which takes place over the weekend of the 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> July at **Great Tew Estate**.

Other local acts confirmed for the Riverside Stage are Brickwork Lizards; Hope & Glory; Grudle Bay; Knights of Mentis; ToLiesel and Mariana Magnavita.

Tickets for Cornbury Festival are on sale now from the festival website – [www.cornburyfestival.com](http://www.cornburyfestival.com), or on 0844 338 0000.

The first few acts for this year's **Charlbury Riverside Festival** have also been announced. The Epstein will headline the Saturday night of the free festival, which takes place over the weekend of the 26<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> July at Mill Field, next to Charlbury station. The Standard; Knights of Mentis; The Mighty Redox and Brickwork Lizards are also confirmed. More news and names at [www.riversidefestival.charlbury.com](http://www.riversidefestival.charlbury.com).

**PART CHIMP** have reformed to play at this summer's **Supernormal Festival**. The band, one of the loudest and most brutal *Nightshift* has ever witnessed, and therefore absolutely brilliant, split in 2011 but are reconvening to bring a hefty dose of musical shock and awe to the leftfield festival, which takes place at **Braziers Park** over the weekend of the 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> August. They join Gnod, Esben & the Witch; Joanna Gruesome; Bong; Death Shanties; Sly & the Family Drone; Teeth of the Sea and myriad other strange and wonderful acts at what has become *Nightshift*'s favourite festival of the year. The artist-curated, not-for-profit event also features plenty of musical improvisation and experimental art among its ever-challenging attractions. Get more information and tickets at [www.supernormalfestival.co.uk](http://www.supernormalfestival.co.uk).

# WILDERNESS

*Tburs 7<sup>th</sup> - Sun 10<sup>th</sup>  
August, 2014  
Cornbury Park, Oxfordshire*

METRONOMY • BURT BACHARACH • LONDON GRAMMAR  
JESSIE WARE • SAM SMITH • JOAN AS POLICE WOMAN • CATE LE BON  
CONNAN MOCKASIN • GREGORY PORTER • MOUNT KIMBIE  
SUBMOTION ORCHESTRA • SLOW CLUB • CHET FAKER  
JACK SAVORETTI • TELEMAN • HOZIER • JOSH RECORD  
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# RELEASED

## CANDY SAYS

### ‘Not Kings’

(Self-released)

The self-inflicted implosion of what was once the music industry and the all-consuming power of the internet means that homemade mini masterpieces are hardly the stuff of fantasy any more, but they’re still a rare and precious commodity. And here’s one from just up the street.

Candy Says are, among many things, a triumph of ambition and imagination over resources as ‘Not Kings’, their debut album, recorded in a garage, self-produced, self-released, and self-financed, joins the likes of Spring Offensive’s equally impressive ‘Young Animal Hearts’ on the leader board for what is rapidly turning into a vintage year for local albums.

Candy Says have so many strings to their musical bow it’s difficult to know which ones to highlight, but obviously Julia-Sophie’s voice is chief among them, and her interaction with the (sadly now departed) Eliza Zoot makes pretty much every song here irresistible. Then there’s their ability to cram so many toys and trinkets and tricks into each song while making everything sound dead simple. And their ability to avoid each and every comparison and pigeonhole you care to throw at them. Oh yeah, and a hatful and a half of great pop songs. Most bands are lucky to have one or two decent ones. Candy Says have the luxury of even being able to leave their last single, ‘Kiss Kill’ off ‘Not kings’ because it doesn’t quite fit the narrative.

From the breezy opening handclaps and twinkling r’n’b of the album’s title track opener to the dark, *chanson* of ‘Understand the Night’, every corner is filled with wows and flutters, the tinkle of bells and the buzz of synthesizers as Juju and Eliza’s voices shadow and bounce off



each other, each as fresh as the other but neatly contrasted.

Highlights? Here’s just a few: the simply gorgeous pure musical sunshine of ‘Favourite Flavour’; the introverted, confessional reverie that is ‘Hummingbird’; the Patti Smith-does r’n’b poetry of ‘Dreamers’; the sultry, autumnal ‘Dead on Arrival’, and the wowzy AlunaGeorge-like electro-pop of ‘Cool Sensation’. Only the disjointed, slightly trite opening of ‘C’est Pas Comme Ca’ in any way finds them faltering, and that’s soon washed away by a strident marching melody.

If Juju was always one of Oxford’s finest ever singers, her versatility has increased in proportion to the band’s stylistic expansion, switching from sultry French torch song to puppy dog yelp in a split second; partner Ben Walker’s deceptively elaborate arrangements making it all sound like a minor riot in a toy shop at times – playful even in its rare autumnal moments.

“I’m not your candy girl,” chants Juju during ‘The Lord’s Mistake’. Oh yes she is.

**Dale Kattack**

## MY CROOKED TEETH

### ‘Watch The Darkness Stumble Home’

(Bear on a Bicycle)

As the frontman of country-folk-pop types Toliesel, Jack Olchawski is a confident, assured individual, and while his solo persona My Crooked Teeth doesn’t see him baring all of his hidden anguish in a strangled yowl of emotion, it’s a pleasing counterpoint to the layered sheen of the full band’s music.

The five tracks of ‘Watch The Darkness Stumble Home’ place Olchawski’s voice in a stark context: plain recordings of just him and his guitar, free of processing, effects and clutter.

This, in effect, makes for a set of songs that have something of an impromptu, ‘coffee shop folk’ feel; an attractive quality. The guitar playing is reined in to define each tune in a simple framework; the vocals are straightforward and largely free of forced inflection; the lyrics are just on the right side

of opaque without slipping into mawkishness. The self-confidence mentioned earlier remains, albeit in more subtle form – with moments of pure silence in ‘Call It Off’, with lyrics skirting away from cliché on ‘A Better Edit’, a broken-hearted song described through cinematic terminology.

It’s difficult to criticise an EP such as this, as it’s so personal in its sound. It may be that at times the vocal style seems slightly flat and unmoving, or that the super-simple recordings *really* lay everything out for all to see. But these are minor details; this is a debut EP and it benefits from *not* being too considered or ‘developed’. Indeed, it might be the lack of such premature forced evolution that lends ‘Watch The Darkness Stumble Home’ a particular charm.

**Simon Minter**

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## LISTING SHIPS

### ‘The Flat Holm Island

### Sessions’

(Self-released)

In the world of instrumental post-rock, context is everything, lack of lyrics making what little explicit information you get all the more important. For the nautically-minded Listing Ships, this extends well beyond sleeve notes and complicated song titles. Following on from 2012’s ‘The Hayling Island Sessions’, recorded at a life boat station, ‘The Flat Holm Island Sessions’ was recorded in a Victorian barracks on the titular island, five miles out from Cardiff, surrounded by its lighthouse and wartime gun pits. Released in a limited edition “album in a bottle”, complete with documentary of the recording process, it manages to feel expressive without being gimmicky.

The opening tracks start out as strong as the guns of Flat Holm Island itself, ‘Drop The Anchors’ cultivating a serious groove with currents of guitar reverb and buzzing synth, while ‘Fireship’ plays with dynamic in a far more dramatic way, some lovely melancholic guitar touches making way for a squall of thudding drums and distortion. After being buffeted about from the opening, ‘The Wolves’ offers a sea change, a quieter track that is arguably the standout on the record. Intricate and subtle, with shoreline samples and tidal synth washes, it works beautifully as a counterpoint to some of the EP’s more driving rhythms. Below clean guitar, drone-like bass is a nod to the cluster of rocks off-shore that the song is named for. ‘The Lighthouse’ is a few minutes of field recordings sampled from within (surprise!) the lighthouse, Both atmospheric and a little suffocating, it’s the last stretch of calm water. ‘All Aboard the MS Stockholm’ begins with a discordant amble into a slow jam, luring you closer with whisper-quiet bass before pushing you overboard into an almighty riff.

Far from the often soundscape-y nature of many post-rock tracks, this is a record that feels site-specific: atmospheric and claustrophobic in a way that suggests island mentality rather than open ocean. If context is everything, this is almost an installation piece rather than an album, and Listing Ships most ambitious voyage to date.

**Sean O’Reilly**



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# GIG GUIDE

**THURSDAY 1<sup>st</sup>**  
**THE MIGHTY REDOX: The Wheatsheaf (6.30am)** – The local psychedelic swamp-blues favourites greet May Morning with an extra early show.  
**THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT: O2 Academy** – Hoary, hairy blues-rocking inspired by Free, The Faces and The Stones from the London-Glasgow outfit.  
**RED CEILIDH: The Art Bar** – May Day

*Friday 2<sup>nd</sup>*  
**THE JACE EVERETT BAND: The Art Bar**  
More quality Americana courtesy of Empty Room Promotions tonight, with the first showing in Oxford for Indiana’s Jace Everett. He’s best known for ‘Bad Things’, his cover of The Radiacs song which is used as the theme tune to HBO’s *True Blood*, which as well as a slew of awards has earned him hits in Norway, Sweden and the UK. Everett also co-wrote Josh Turner’s Country Chart number 1 ‘Your Man’, which further added to the trophies cluttering is mantelpiece. Not bad for a chap who looks like he spends not just his spare time but his every working hour starting fights in truck stops and roadhouse bars. With a husky vocal style and an occasional surf twang to his guitar work, Everett sits partway between Steve Earle and Chris Isaak at times, his atmospheric country rocking and dark-edged rock’n’roll perfect for soundtracking nocturnal films and TV shows. Despite singing and playing in church as a child, he came into the music business late, releasing his eponymous debut album in 2006 at the age of 35. He’s over in the UK to promote his fourth album, ‘Terra Rosa’.



**MAY**  
ceilidh.  
**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre** – Oxford’s longest-running open mic club marches on towards its twentieth anniversary, showcasing local singers, musicians, poets, performance artists and more every week.  
**IRON KNIGHTS: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Metal from the recently revamped rockers.  
**OPEN MIC CLUB: The Half Moon**  
**OPEN BLUES JAM: Jack Russell, Marston**

**FRIDAY 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**BOOTLED ZEPPELIN: O2 Academy** – Tribute band.  
**KLUB KAKOFANNEY with EMPTY VESSELS + FRACTURE + MASIRO: The Wheatsheaf** – Heavy-duty blues-rocking and proto-metal in the vein of Led Zep and Blue Cheer from Empty Vessels at tonight’s Klub Kakofanney. They’re joined by rocking blues crew Fracture and tempestuous math-core monsters Masiro.  
**JACE EVERETT BAND + POLLY & THE BILLETS DOUX: The Art Bar** – Bad Things sounding good from Indiana’s country rocker – *see main preview*  
**SKYLARKIN SOUND SYSTEM with LAID BLAK: The Cellar** – Count Skylarkin’s monthly reggae, dancehall and bashment night out, tonight with regulars Laid Blak, the Bristolian collective bringing their livewire reggae party to the stage. The band’s DJ Bunjy and MC Joe Peng will join Count Skylarkin on the decks, spinning reggae, dancehall, hip hop and more.

**THE BEUTONS + RUSHIL + THE BAD’N’VULGAR: The Jericho Tavern** – Reggae, folk and rock from Cornwall’s Beutons at tonight’s It’s All About the Music showcase.  
**TEST RUN: Modern Art Oxford** – Chad Valley plays a DJ set alongside the ODC Drumline at tonight’s live music and art event. Support comes from psychedelic noise-pop crew Beta Blocker & the Body Clock, and rising local songsmith Charlie Cunningham.  
**JESS GLYLNNE: Also Known As, Banbury** – A low-key show from double chart topper Jess Glynne, the powerfully soulful voice of both Clean Bandit’s ‘Rather B’ and Route 94’s ‘My Love’.  
**ARE YOU EXPERIENCED?: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Jimi Hendrix tribute.  
**DISCO MUTANTES: The Library** – Disco, funk, boogie and house session.

**SATURDAY 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
**FEED THE RHINO + THE HOWLING + ZOAX + CROWS REIGN + PERCEPTION: O2 Academy** – A night not for the fainthearted as Kent’s prolific, ever-touring virulent hardcore brutes Feed the Rhino rampage into town, touring

their new ‘The Sorrow and Sound’ album. Hanging onto their coattails are east London’s adrenalized synth-core rockers The Howling; hardcore types Zoax and local thrash/metalcore crew Crows Reign.  
**LISTING SHIPS + GRUDLE BAY + THE WORKHOUSE: The Jericho Tavern** – Electro-heavy instrumental post-rockers Listing Ships launch their new ‘Flat Holm Island Sessions’ EP. They’re joined by airy indie-funkers Grudle Bay, while post-rock pioneers The Workhouse make a rare return to Oxford with their dark spangled soundscaping.  
**THE MIGHTY REDOX + OSPREY’S ALLSTARS: The Art Bar** – Swampy psychedelic blues-rockers The Mighty Redox continue a typically hectic gigging month in the company of veteran local songsmith Osprey’s Allstars.  
**ORANGE VISION: The Wheatsheaf** – Arctic Monkeys-styled rocking.  
**FRESH OUT THE BOX: The Cellar** – Disco, house, breaks and more, with breakbeat and bass maestro Lee Coombes alongside Kostas G and Ed Steele.  
**SELECTA: The Art Bar** – Drum&bass club night with Hospital Records’ S.P.Y, plus Serial Killaz and MC Lowqui.  
**PROPAGANDA + TRASHY: O2 Academy** – Indie anthems every week at Propaganda, with kitsch pop, glam and 80s at Trashy.  
**EXTRA CURRICULAR: The Cellar** – House, techno and bass tunes every Saturday.  
**PALMERSTON + MARIA WEDLEY + JAMES BELL: The Swan, Ascot-under-Wychwood** – Wychwood Folk Club session.  
**THE STANDARD: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Pop covers.

**SUNDAY 4<sup>th</sup>**  
**BLACK HATS: Truck Store** – Single launch show from the local post-punk popstrels.  
**FATHOMS + BLACK DOGS + BRICKS&MORTAR + I CRIED WOLF: The Wheatsheaf** – A night of serious hard rocking courtesy of Black Bullet, with Brighton’s malevolent hategroove brigade Fathoms going up against metalcore monsters Black Dogs, who not inaccurately describe themselves as “an unstoppable pack of northern bastards”. Banbury’s I Cried Wolf open the show with their Dillinger and Bring Me the Horizon-inspired metal.  
**DAVID RODIGAN: The Art Bar** – Return to town for the undisputed king of reggae and dancehall, the recently MBE’d Mr Rodigan, the former-Kidlington schoolboy who is now widely recognised as one of the chief authorities on reggae, as well as one of the finest and most respected reggae DJs in the UK, having toured with Shinehead and been name-checked in song by The Beastie Boys along the way.  
**IAN ANDERSON: The New Theatre** – The Jethro Tull frontman plays songs from his new album, ‘Homo Erraticus’, along with material from his solo and band career.

**POSITIVE VIBES CREW: The Cellar** – Reggae, jungle and dancehall party as Positive Vibes Crew launch their ‘Around the World’ EP, with support from The Dublings, Zaia and Jaatone.  
**BEARD OF DESTINY + THE FIREGAZERS + MOON LEOPARD + OXFORD UKULELES + CELESTE: Donnington Community Centre (6pm)** – Free evening of acoustic music hosted by Moon Leopard’s Jeremy Hughes, and featuring one-man blues machine Beard of Destiny among others.  
**THE PETE FRYER BAND: The Dolphin, Wallingford**

**MONDAY 5<sup>th</sup>**  
**MARMOZETS: O2 Academy** – Splenetic post-hardcore from West Yorkshire’s sibling-heavy creamers, out on tour to promote new single ‘Why Do You Hate Me?’ after being nominated for Best Newcomers at last year’s *Kerrang!* awards.  
**RAE MORRIS: The Art Bar** – Blackpool’s rising blues and jazz songstress returns to town, her smooth, emotive piano-based balladry recalling Joss Stone and Edie Brickell at times.

**TUESDAY 6<sup>th</sup>**  
**MATT CARTER + CRAYON + VIENNA DITTO: The Old Fire Station** – Local folk singer Carter joins indie rockers Crayon and voodoo blues duo Vienna Ditto.  
**NEON SOUL: The Cellar** – Funk, soul, house and disco from south London’s Neon Soul, mixing up live performance and DJing, with James Massiah, Hill&Heath, Pedlar, and Hudnall.  
**JAZZ CLUB: The Art Bar**  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The White Rabbit**  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: James Street Tavern**

**WEDNESDAY 7<sup>th</sup>**  
**MEANSTEED + JABRONI SANDWICH + EMPIRE DIVIDED: The Wheatsheaf** – University Rocksoc bands night.  
**CIRCUIT: The Art Bar** – Brookes band night.  
**SUBVERSE: The Cellar** – House, garage, techno and bass club night with Johannesburg’s Adam Johnson, plus Midnight Mary and Harry Scholes.

**THURSDAY 8<sup>th</sup>**  
**WE AERONAUTS + MAIANS + SHH! TDHA!: The Cellar** – Gorgeous, sweet-natured indie-folk and electro-pop from local faves We Aeronauts, alongside Aeronauts spin-off Maiians, recalling the sounds of 90s Ibiza in the vein of Banco de Gaia and The Drum Club, as well as the drum&bass of LTJ Bukem and electro noise of Fuck Buttons.  
**CHRIS ALLARD BAND: The Wheatsheaf** – Jazz guitarist Allard comes to the Spin Club off the back of playing in Russell Watson’s band on tour.  
**THE MIGHTY REDOX: The Wheatsheaf** – Free unplugged show in the downstairs bar from the local blues-rock faves.  
**ROBOT SWANS + OP21 + RUEBEN’S ROCKET + CHARLIE LEAVY: The Art Bar** – Lo-fi indie and electro-pop from local newcomers Robot Swans.  
**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre**  
**OPEN MIC CLUB: The Half Moon**  
**OPEN BLUES JAM: Jack Russell, Marston**

**FRIDAY 9<sup>th</sup>**  
**ALBERT HAMMOND Jr: O2 Academy** – The Strokes guitarist continues to keep himself busy in between the prolonged gaps between that band’s albums, his solo career so far including two studio albums with another surely due imminently on the back of his ‘AHJ’ EP, Hammond Jr treading into reggae, folk and psychedelic pop along the way, while keeping one foot in the garage rock of The Strokes.  
**REDLANDS PALOMINO COMPANY + CASE HARDIN: The Art Bar** – Double bill of homegrown Americana courtesy of Empty Room Promotions, with country-rockers Redlands Palomino Company evoking memories of Gram Parsons and Emmylou Harris, while Case Hardin tour their new album, ‘PM’.  
**HAMMERLOCK + RATTLESHACK + MOTHER CORONA: The Wheatsheaf** – Country and roadhouse rocking by way of 80s hardcore from Californian veterans Hammerlock at tonight’s Buried in Smoke show. Support from dirty hillbilly rockers Rattleshack, bringing that ol’ country rock to town via Black Sabbath and the Pistols. Didcot’s super-heavyweight groove rockers Mother Corona open.  
**SAM LEE: St John the Evangelist** – Having previewed his new album of forgotten wartime songs, ‘Forever England’, at Cogges Farm in Witney a couple of months back, song collector Smith heads off on tour properly, bringing WWII-era folk songs back to life in conjunction with the Imperial War Museum’s Centenary Partnership.  
**BOSSAPHONIK: The Cellar** – Dancefloor Latin, afrobeat, Balkan beats, global grooves and nu-jazz club night, tonight with a live set from Afrospot Allstars, with their West African hi-life.  
**THE MELODIC + COUNT DRACHMA: William Osler House** – Airy, melancholic, Latin-tinged folk-roots from London’s The Melodic, in the vein of The Decemberists and Stornoway, at tonight’s TIGig night, with support from Zulu folk ensemble Count Drachma.  
**THE MIGHTY REDOX + PETE MOORE: The James Street Tavern**  
**ONE WING LEFT: The Jericho Tavern**  
**BLACK DOGZ: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Led Zep tribute.  
**HOUSE FOUNDATIONS: The Art Bar** – House club night.

**SATURDAY 10<sup>th</sup>**  
**ALEX LANYON + EMPTY WHITE CIRCLES + ELLA MARTINI: O2 Academy** – Soulful acoustic rocking from Birmingham’s Alex Lanyon, launching his ‘Lions’ EP, with support from local country-rockers Empty White Circles.  
**ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN + BLACK SUBMARINE: O2 Academy** – The kings of darkly elegant post-punk return – *see main preview*  
**THE INFLATABLES: The Art Bar** – Classic ska and Two Tone.  
**LAST RITES + 13 BURNING + EVYLTIDE + MATT EDWARDS: The Wheatsheaf** – Double dose of old-school metal and hard rocking from Last Rites and 13 Burning.  
**PROPAGANDA + TRASHY: O2 Academy**  
**WHAT YOU CALL IT GARAGE?: The Cellar** – Garage, house and grime club night.  
**SANCTUM: The Varsity Club** – Monthly metal club night, with classic and new tunes from across the heavyweight spectrum. Tonight is Vikings vs Pirates fancy dress.  
**BREAKER 1-9: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – 70s trucker



*Saturday 10<sup>th</sup>*  
**ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN / BLACK SUBMARINE: O2 Academy**  
Like a comet, Echo & the Bunnymen come back round every couple of years or so to remind us of how majestic music can occasionally sound. Last time round they played the whole of their first two albums, ‘Crocodiles’ and ‘Heaven Up Here’, in their entirety, a treat for hardcore fans; this time round there’s a new album, ‘Meteorites’, to plug, their first new release since 2009. Emerging out of Liverpool’s astonishingly fertile post-punk scene, The Bunnymen’s dark take on alternative pop, cloaked in a heavy-duty overcoat, inspired as much by Scott Walker’s sweeping gothic portent as punk’s spirit of rock revolution, always had a vision and ambition beyond most of their peers, one that has helped core members Ian McCulloch and Will Sergeant survive the deaths of two of their bandmates in motorcycle crashes and remain the epitomes of rock cool for three decades. Even a truncated list of their classic moments should inspire awe: ‘The Cutter’; ‘Seven Seas’; ‘Over the Wall’; ‘The Killing Moon’; ‘Pictures on My Wall’; ‘Rescue’. These and many more will doubtless get an outing amid the new songs. Well worth getting along early for support band Black Submarine, featuring former-Verve chaps Si Jones and Nick McCabe.

faves from Free and The Doobie Brothers to Lynyrd Skynyrd.  
**MUDSLIDE MORRIS: James Street Tavern** – One-man blues and boogie machine.

**SUNDAY 11<sup>th</sup>**  
**CATFISH & THE BOTTLEMEN: O2 Academy** – Llandudno’s rockers return to the O2 after their show in September, sounding like a cross between Arctic Monkeys and The Kooks.  
**LEIGH ALEXANDER + LAIMA BITE + POPLAR JAKE + MARK SOLLIS + GREEN CHILDREN OF THE WOLF PIT + MARK ATHERTON & FRIENDS: The Wheatsheaf (2.30pm)** – Klub Kakofanney hosts a free afternoon of unplugged live music in the Sheaf’s



*Monday 12<sup>th</sup>*

## AUGUSTINES: O2 Academy

They might have ditched the We Are from their band name, but Brooklyn’s Augustines have lost none of their rock power if their new eponymous album is anything to go on. Here’s a band unhindered by notions of what’s cool and how to cut swooning shapes, concerned only with the power of the rock show as their sold-out gig here two years ago proved. Rarely have we seen an audience so completely spellbound by a simple rock band. Much of this is down to singer-guitarist Billy McCarthy, a true rock and roll preacher and an intensely emotive performer, driven by demons that have informed his music and lyrics since debut album ‘Rise Ye Sunken Ships’, a raw, emotionally wracked affair based on McCarthy’s tragic family history which saw first his mother, then his brother die from schizophrenia and drug abuse. The ghosts of both continue to haunt his songs, which, sound-wise, channel Bruce Springsteen at his most emotive, through the epic, orchestral pop of Arcade Fire and The Gaslight Anthem. The result is quite brilliant and manages to conjure something uplifting out of highly personal grief. A genuinely stunning band.

downstairs bar, with Beaver Fuel main man Leigh Alexander bringing his potty-mouthed observational pop along, with darkly emotive songstress Laima Bite, and trad folkies Green Children among the others playing. **WILL SAMSON: Truck Store** – Instore show from Tibetan singer-songwriter Samson, mixing rootsy acoustic folk with hushed electronics.

### MONDAY 12<sup>th</sup>

**AUGUSTINES + NEON WALTZ: O2 Academy** – No We Are, but they still are. Awesome, that is – *see main preview*  
**THE BREW: The Art Bar** – Rock’n’soul from Grimsby’s The Brew at tonight’s Haven Club show.  
**WE WERE EVERGREEN: The Cellar** – Sweetly whimsical electro-pop with toy instruments and kazoo from the Parisian trio, out on tour to promote debut album ‘Towards’.

### TUESDAY 13<sup>th</sup>

**WOLF ALICE: O2 Academy** – Grungy, ethereal pop somewhere between Hole and Mazzy Star from the London outfit, on tour to promote the follow-up to their debut ‘Blush’ EP.  
**JAZZ CLUB: The Art Bar**  
**INTRUSION: The Cellar** – Goth, ebm, industrial and darkwave club night.  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The White Rabbit**  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: James Street Tavern**

### WEDNESDAY 14<sup>th</sup>

**THE OXFORD PUNT** – *See main pull-out feature*  
**HOT HOOVES + GIRLPOWER + BETA BLOCKER & THE BODY CLOCK + KOMRAD – The Purple Turtle**  
**TROPHY CABINET + THE NEON VIOLETS + FLIGHTS OF HELIOS + SWINDLESTOCK: The Cellar**  
**JORDAN O’SHEA + HANNAH BRUCE + RAWZ + JULIA MEIJER: Turl Street Kitchen**  
**THE COOLING PEARLS + BALLOON ASCENTS + ART THEEFE + HUCK & THE XANDER BAND: The Wheatsheaf**  
**SALVATION BILL + LEE RILEY + KID KIN + VIENNA DITTO: The White Rabbit**  
**DROWNERS: O2 Academy** – Strokes-lite indie rocking from the New Yorkers who have opened for Foals, Arctic Monkeys and The Vaccines.  
**MOIETY + THE KNEECAPS + SUNDAY KIDS: The Art Bar** – 60s-inspired folk-pop and psychedelia from Moiety at tonight’s It’s All About the Music show.

**EZRA FURMAN: Truck Store** – Chicago’s punk-fired rock’n’roller plugs his ‘Day of the Dog’ album with an instore show, channelling the spirits of Black Francis and Bruce Springsteen alongside the classic r’n’b of early Stones.

### THURSDAY 15<sup>th</sup>

**PENTATONIX: O2 Academy** – *A cappella* performances of everything from Ellie Goulding and Jessie Ware to Daft Punk and Swedish House Mafia from the Texan TV talent show winners.  
**SNAKE DAVIS & THE SPIN TRIO: The Wheatsheaf** – Eurythmics and M-People saxophonist Davis joins the in-house band at tonight’s Spin Club session.  
**THE URBAN FOLK QUARTET: The Jericho Tavern** – Traditional folk music gets a jazz and dance makeover.  
**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre**  
**THE PETE FRYER BAND: The Wheatsheaf** – Free gig in the downstairs bar from the veteran local bluesman.  
**OPEN MIC CLUB: The Half Moon**  
**OPEN BLUES JAM: Jack Russell, Marston**

### FRIDAY 16<sup>th</sup>

**WOOD FESTIVAL: Braziers Park** – Opening day of the annual eco-friendly festival – *see main preview*  
**MR SCRUFF: O2 Academy** – A characteristically marathon five-hour set from the tea-drinking master of eclecticism and quirky mixology Andy Carthy, touring his new bass-heavy studio album, ‘Friendly Bacteria’, blending deep house, electro-funk, afrobeat, soul, hip hop, dubstep and whatever else takes his fancy.  
**MATTHEW HERBERT’S 20 PIANOS: The North Wall, Summertown** – Oxford Contemporary Music host the world premiere of Matthew Herbert’s ‘20 Pianos’ composition, the composer, recently appointed Creative Director of the reformed BBC Radiophonic Workshop and who has previously worked with Björk and Dizzee Rascal, aiming to tell the story of pianos from around the world through acoustic and electric performance, samples and found sound. Among the artists performing are Sarah Nicolls and Same Beste, who was part of Amy

Winehouse’s band.  
**NORTHEAST CORRIDOR + BALKAN WANDERER + IONEYE: The Wheatsheaf** – It’s All About the Music gig with uni band Northeast Corridor.  
**THE DUBLINGS: The Art Bar** – Dub and reggae from the promising local newcomers.  
**SHEDONISM: The Cellar** – Hip hop and funk party with Scratch Perverts’ Prime Cuts on the decks, alongside Count Skylarkin.  
**LES CLOCHARDS + THE SPARROWS OF PARIS: The Jericho Tavern** – Intimate Parisian-style café folk and classic rock’n’roll from Les Clochards.  
**LISA KNAPP + THE AUGUST LIST +WES FINCH: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – South London folk songstress Lisa Knapp tours her acclaimed ‘Hidden Seam’ album, fresh from being nominated in three categories at the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards, winning the Best Non Traditional Composition, her passionate, tremulous voice seeing her described as “the sexiest voice in modern folk music”. She’s joined by the superb

*Friday 16<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 18<sup>th</sup>*

## WOOD FESTIVAL: Braziers Park

Before every festival and his wife started boasting about their eco credentials, there was WOOD. Started in 2008 by Truck Festival organisers Robin and Joe Bennett as a reaction to the catastrophic floods of 2007, the festival in the intimate outdoor surroundings of Braziers Park has always walked it like it talked it: from the wooden stages, compost toilets and organic food and drink, to solar, cycle and cooking fat powered sound systems and discos, getting back to nature is as much what WOOD is about as the music. But the music is still at its core. This year’s headliners are wistfully idiosyncratic Welsh songsmith **Sweet Baboo**; loveably twee Hammersmith singer Alessi Laurent-Marke’s **Alessi’s Ark**, (*pictured*) whose whimsical, childish sense of wonder and psychedelic lullabies marks her out as a kooky female Syd Barrett; BBC Sound of 2014 nominee **Luke Sital-Singh**, and **Jackie Oates**, originally a member of Rachel Unthank and the Winterset. A bill that leans towards the folkier and organic side of things also includes Bella Union signings **My Sad Captains**; **Oliver Wilde**; **The Original Rabbit Foot Spasm Band**; **O’Hooley & Tidow**; **Nick Cope**; **The Dreaming Spires**; **Trevor Moss & Hannah Lou**; **Rachael Dadd**; **Jali Fily Cissokho**, and a solo set from Stornoway’s **Brian Briggs**. Plenty more besides, including workshops, talks and kids activities, and this year has been designated as The Year of the Badger, so there’ll be plenty of badger-related stuff going on – you can even dress as one for the weekend if you like. Hopefully an effigy of prize twit Owen Paterson will be burned at the climax of the festival.



east Oxfordshire backwoods porch folk duo The August List, and recent Billy Bragg support Wes Finch.  
**FIELD TEST: Cogges Farm, Witney** – Light and sound installation from artist Alex Bradbury, plus acoustic music from Jess Hall and harpist Steph West at Cogges’ Field Test evening, in conjunction with OCM.  
**WHITE MAGIC REGGAE NIGHT: The Art Bar**

### SATURDAY 17<sup>th</sup>

**WOOD FESTIVAL: Braziers Park** – Second day of the award-winning eco-friendly folk, roots and world music festival – *see main preview*  
**ZENSHIT with PET MOON + EYE & NO EYES: The Art Bar** – Local electro/r’n’b stars Pet Moon headline their bi-monthly Zenshit club night, mixing the rarefied early-80s sounds of Japan and Scritti Politti with D’Angelo’s modern r’n’b. London’s pensive indie-folksters Eyes and No Eyes support.  
**JEFF BECK: The New Theatre** – Jeff Beck is a guitar legend, we’re told. He was in The Yardbirds after all, and always comes near the top of those ‘100 Greatest Guitarists of All Time’ lists, usually just below Jimi Hendrix and Jimmy Page. He can do fancy stuff with a fretboard for sure – complex solos and stuff that fuses blues, jazz, rock and eastern music. But we still reckon Steve Albini is better. And there’s nothing you can do to change our minds, so put the green ink back in the cupboard and have another sip of your Horlicks, Mr Angry Pants.

**UPSTAIRS with MEADOWLARK: O2 Academy** – The Academy’s monthly showcase night of up and coming and local acts celebrates its third anniversary tonight in the company of Meadowlark, a band celebrating exactly one year together with the release of their debut ‘365’ EP, with a sweetly sombre, airy form of chamber pop.  
**THE EPSTEIN + IN ZANADU + TENTERHOOKS: The Jericho Tavern** – Daisy Rodgers Music celebrate their fifth birthday with cinematic local alt.country faves The Epstein. They’re joined by rock, blues and funk act In Zanadu, plus London’s Tenterhooks, mixing Tom Odell and Passengers influences.  
**SWORN AMONGST + EMPIRE DIVIDED + CROWS REIGN + LAST EXIT: The Wheatsheaf** – Death and thrash night with Hull’s Sworn Against, plus local death-metallers Empire Divided.

**PUNKOLYMPIA: The Cellar** – Punk and noise with bruising heavyweights Headcount, mixing up equal parts Killing Joke, Therapy? and Queens of the Stone-Age. They’re joined by The Snags; Die In Vain; Headstone Horrors; Don’t Go Plastic, Beaver Fuel and Molotov Sexbomb.  
**PROPAGANDA + TRASHY: O2 Academy**  
**EXTRA CURRICULAR: The Cellar**  
**DRUM&BASS NIGHT: The Art Bar** – Club night with Dillinja Valve Recordings and DJ Loxy.  
**THE CARRIVICK SISTERS + BRUCE GOMERSALL: Tiddy Hall, Ascott-under-Wychwood** – Devon twin sisters Laura and Charlotte Carrivick visit the Wychwood Folk Club, playing their rootsy mix of traditional English folk and bluegrass.

### SUNDAY 18<sup>th</sup>

**WOOD FESTIVAL: Braziers Park** – Final day

of the green weekender – *see main preview*  
**ARCH GARRISON: Truck Store** – North Sea Radio Orchestra’s Craig Fortnam sings songs about Roman roads, ditches and mounds.

### MONDAY 19<sup>th</sup>

**JIMI GOODWIN: O2 Academy** – With Doves seemingly off on a permanent hiatus, there’s room for frontman Jimi Goodwin to do his own thing for a while. The result is his solo debut ‘Odludek’, which takes his band’s big-hearted indie rock sound out into the worlds of northern soul, Krautrock and elegantly sad-eyed orchestral pop.  
**DEEP COVER: The Cellar** – Hip hop club night, with a 90s golden era special theme.

### TUESDAY 20<sup>th</sup>

**THE HOT 8 BRASS BAND: O2 Academy** – Hip hop and funk-infused New Orleans’ tragedy-struck marching band – *see main preview*  
**JAZZ CLUB: The Art Bar**  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The White Rabbit**  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: James Street Tavern**

### WEDNESDAY 21<sup>st</sup>

**JUNGLE + ALL WE ARE: O2 Academy** – 1970s New York-style disco and liquid funk from west London’s publicity-shy duo T and J, making a name for them via viral videos and earning a place in the BBC Sound of 2014 list. Liverpool’s fidgety indie-funk and electro types All We Are support.  
**BIG TROPICS + CARDBOARD CASTLE: The Art Bar** – Synth-y indie-dance from local newcomers Big Tropics, plus Bicester’s acoustic pop trio Cardboard castle.  
**SPARKY’S JAM NIGHT: The James Street Tavern** – Jam and open mic session.  
**SUBVERSE: The Cellar**

### THURSDAY 22<sup>nd</sup>

**TAME IMPALA: O2 Academy** – Kevin Parker’s electro-pyschedelia worldstorm hits town – *see main preview*  
**PHIL PESKETT & THE SPIN TRIO: The Wheatsheaf** – Pianist Peskett joins the Spin jazz club’s in-house band.  
**SILVERSPARK + NOISESCAPE**  
**DISTURBANCE: The Art Bar**  
**ELVIS ON STAGE: The New Theatre** – Elvis! On a stage! But not actual Elvis! Obviously!  
**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre**  
**LIMEHOUSE LIZZY: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Thin Lizzy tribute.  
**OPEN MIC CLUB: The Half Moon**  
**OPEN BLUES JAM: Jack Russell, Marston**

### FRIDAY 23<sup>rd</sup>

**ANNERO + DRIVEN + K-LACURA + SECOND RATE ANGELS: The Wheatsheaf** – Old school metal, thrash, grindcore and hardcore punk from Annero at tonight’s Black Bullet show, alongside London’s metal-funk-grunge-hip hop fusioners Driven, hardcore thrash crew K-Lacura, and Hemel Hempstead’s heavyweights Second Rate Angels.  
**ALL TAMARA’S PARTIES with SALVATION BILL + JESS HALL + THE AUGUST LIST + GEORGE CHOPPING: Restore Garden Café** – The latest edition of Tamara Parsons-Baker’s intimate music and poetry shows in unusual venues brings the show



*Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup>*

## THE HOT 8 BRASS BAND: O2 Academy

Formed in 1995, New Orleans’ Hot 8 Brass Band earned their reputation playing the jazz clubs and festivals of their native city, as well as local jazz funerals, but it was in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina that they achieved worldwide recognition, featuring in Spike Lee’s documentary *When the Levee Broke: A Requiem in Four Parts*. As a result they became the first American act signed to Tru Thoughts, their fusion of New Orleans marching brass and jazz with hip hop and funk spicing up a traditional style. Their endurance and increasing success, though, hasn’t been without tragedy. No fewer than three of the group have suffered violent deaths: trumpet Jacob Johnson shot dead aged just 17; 22-year-old trombonist Joseph Williams gunned down by the police and drummer Dinerral Shavers killed in a gang shooting when his stepson was the intended target. Such tragedies might have brought an end to lesser groups but last year The Hot 8 released their second album, ‘The Life & Times of the Hot 8 Brass Band’, which takes their roots yet further into new territories, the brass backing up commentaries of injustice and violence in New Orleans and adding a new twist on The Specials’ ‘Ghost Town’ and Basement Jaxx’s ‘Bingo Bango’.

to Restore’s café off Cowley Road. Salvation Bill brings his soulful murder ballads along for the ride, and he’s joined by angel-voiced folkstress Jess Hall and backwoods porch-folk duo The August List, the evening compèred, as usual, by the ever-brilliant George Chopping.  
**HAZE: The Art Bar**  
**LATIN SALSA NIGHT: The Art Bar**  
**ULTRA PLAID TURBO SHIRT: The Cellar** – Indie club night.  
**CASH: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Johnny Cash tribute.

### SATURDAY 24<sup>th</sup>

**THE UNDERTONES + THE NIGHTINGALES: O2 Academy** – Two sides of the post-punk coin in perfect union – *see main preview*  
**CURVATURE + GEMMA MOSS: The Art Bar** – Gothic synth-metal from Aylesbury’s Curvature at tonight’s It’s All About the Music show, plus burlesque electro-folk/blues singer Gemma Moss.  
**TOM HINGLEY + ONE WING LEFT: The Cellar** – Bluesy rocking from the Inspiral Carpets singer.  
**PROPAGANDA + TRASHY: O2 Academy**  
**SUPERLOOSE + MOON LEOPARD: Donnington Community Centre** – Folk, blues and Americana.  
**EXTRA CURRICULAR: The Cellar**

**HOUSEWURKS: The Art Bar** – House club night with Lance Morgan.  
**ROURKE’S DRIFT: Fat Lil’s, Witney**

**SUNDAY 25<sup>th</sup>**  
**SIMPLE: The Art Bar** – House club night with Waifs and Strays.  
**BLUES JAM: Fat Lil’s, Witney (3pm)**

**MONDAY 26<sup>th</sup>**  
**TUESDAY 27<sup>th</sup>**  
**JAZZ CLUB: The Art Bar**  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The White Rabbit**  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: James Street Tavern**

**WEDNESDAY 28<sup>th</sup>**  
**BURY TOMORROW + CHUNK! NO, CAPTAIN CHUNK! + NAPOLEON: O2 Academy** – Southampton’s melodic metalcore warriors head back on tour to promote third album ‘Runes’, promising a more technical edge in the style of Killswitch Engage and As I Lay Dying. Paris pop-punkers Chunk! No, Captain Chunk! Support.  
**WEDNESDAY WOLF: The Art Bar**  
**VAGUEWORLD + OP21 + THE KNEECAPS + MEGAN JOSEPHY: The Wheatsheaf** – Indie-rock from Abingdon’s Vaguestworld at tonight’s It’s All About the Music showcase.  
**FREERANGE: The Cellar** – Drum&bass, hip hop and dubstep club night.

*Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup>*  
**TAME IMPALA: O2 Academy**  
As with all the best psychedelic music, Tame Impala have one foot in the future, the other in the past, rather, as it too often the case, both in the latter. Perth auteur Kevin Parker – who is, to all intents and purposes Tame Impala all by himself – channels the spirit of the late-60s, in particular early Pink Floyd and ‘White Album’-era Beatles, and employs so many tropes of psychedelia – heavy on the phaser, flange and distortion, as well as a love for vocal panning – but in his hands such things avoid any semblance of hippy idealism and carry a synthetic feel, from the electronic drums to fake harpsichord, while lyrically his tales of isolation and loneliness have little in common with preconceptions of the genre. But then, the best psychedelia was always slightly dark – from ‘White Rabbit’ to ‘Arnold Layne’ and Nick Nicely’s ‘Hilly Fields’. On the back of 2012’s much heralded ‘Lonerism’ album, Parker has gone from bedroom recluse to globally recognised rising star, a Grammy nomination topping off an ocean of critical acclaim. Little wonder tonight’s show is already sold out. Hopefully success won’t polish away that vital edge of darkness.



**THURSDAY 29<sup>th</sup>**  
**CANDY SAYS: Truck Store** – The local chic-pop faves launch their debut album, ‘Not Kings’ with an intimate instore show.  
**GUILTY PARENTS + GIRL POWER + HALBER MENSCH: The Library** – Angular post-punk and hardcore from Guilty Parents at tonight’s free Smash Disco gig. Hardcore punk and Amphetamine Reptile-inspired hardcore from Girl Power, and violin and loops-based deathcore from Halber Mensch in support. Grrr.  
**THE RACKET + ADAM McMILLAN: The Art Bar**  
**DEEP COVER: The Cellar**  
**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre**  
**OPEN MIC CLUB: The Half Moon**  
**OPEN BLUES JAM: Jack Russell, Marston**

**FRIDAY 30<sup>th</sup>**  
**SWITCH featuring EATS EVERYTHING: O2 Academy** – The O2’s weekly electro club welcomes Bristol producer and DJ Daniel Pearce, mixing up bass, house and techno.  
**THE KNIGHTS OF MENTIS: The Art Bar** – Country-folk and Americana from the local regulars.  
**SINKING WITCHES: The Wheatsheaf** – Prog-tinged grunge rocking from Sinking Witches, launching their debut album, ‘Inhale / Exhale’.  
**TEMPLE FUNK COLLECTIVE: The Cellar** – Brass-heavy funk from the local collective.  
**THE MIGHTY REDOX: James Street Tavern**  
**SCARLET VIXENS: The Jericho Tavern** – Burlesque night.  
**BOOTLEG BOSS: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Bruce Springsteen tribute.

**SATURDAY 31<sup>st</sup>**  
**CHAS & DAVE: O2 Academy** – The critical reappraisal of norf Laarndan duo Charles Hodges and David Peacock continues apace with suggestions in respectable quarters that if Blur had written the likes of ‘Ain’t No Pleasing You’, it’d be considered a pop masterpiece. Whatever, you can bet pretty much anyone you meet over the age of about 20 can sing most of one of their hits, from ‘Gertcha’ to ‘Margate’ to ‘Rabbit’, their mix of cheery, beery pub singalong, boogie woogie and music hall – dubbed rockney – has proved remarkably timeless and if they pledged back in 2011 that they were off on their farewell tour, that seems to have no end date either.  
**PROSPEKT + BRUTAI + JABRONI SANDWICH + IGNITE THE SKY + MUTAGENOCIDE: O2 Academy** – Another mighty mixed bill of heaviosity from Skeletor, tonight featuring local prog-rockers Prospekt, inspired by Dream Theatre and Opeth. London’s progsters Brutai; stoner-metallars Jabroni Sandwich; death/grind nasties Ignite the Sky, and eclectic tech/thrash metallars Mutagenocide provide amply brutal support.  
**GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES with BACK POCKET PROPHET + THE SCRIBERS + WHO PUT BELLA IN THE WITCH ELM? The Wheatsheaf** – Mixed bill of bands from



*Saturday 24<sup>th</sup>*  
**THE UNDERTONES / THE NIGHTINGALES: O2 Academy**  
Two rather contrasting faces of the post-punk period’s invention tonight. The Undertones barely need an introduction. Singer Fearghal Sharkey may have wanted no part in the Derry band’s reunion back in 1999 but the band have carried on without him, Paul McLoone taking on what might have seemed like an impossible job. He’s gone on to record two new albums with the core of the original line-up, but it’s those classic – and we mean classic – old hits that will get the hearts of hardcore fans beating that little bit faster - ‘My Perfect Cousin’; ‘Jimmy Jimmy’; ‘Here Comes the Summer’; ‘Wednesday Week’, and of course the song that kicked it all off - ‘Teenage Kicks’, as perfect a musical encapsulation of adolescent infatuation as has ever been written, a song that reduced the late, great John Peel to tears when he first heard it and provided the inscription on his headstone. They came out of punk but The Undertones were always a brilliant pop band. Contrast them with the cerebral-caustic blast of Birmingham’s Nightingales, a band who never achieved such commercial success but remain an angry thorn in the side of music to this day, founder and leader John Lloyd splitting the band in 1986 before reforming it in 2004, a prolific, obstinate figure that typifies the intelligence and inventiveness of post-punk as well as its refusal to compromise.

GTI again this month, with classic thrash and NWOBHM from local crew Back Pocket Prophet, alongside Fall-esque rockers The Scribes from Birmingham and Witney-based indie-electro types Who Put Bella in the Witch Elm.  
**EMILY SCOTT + JULIA MEIJER + WISDEN: The Old Fire Station** – Pindrop show with Edinburgh’s folk singer Emily Scott; Swedish-Oxfordian singer-songwriter Julia Meijer and local folk collective Wisden.  
**PROPAGANDA + TRASHY: O2 Academy**  
**EXTRA CURRICULAR: The Cellar** – With a live set from Alpines, touring their debut ‘Oasis’ album.  
**SYNTRONIX: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Classic 80s synth-pop covers.

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

**NIGHTSHIFT** presents

# Oxford Punt 2014

## Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May

### Twenty acts - five venues - one night

### The year’s best showcase of new Oxford music

**THE PURPLE TURTLE**

*The Tony Jezzard Stage*  
7pm HOT HOOVES  
8pm GIRL POWER  
9pm BETA BLOCKER & THE BODY CLOCK  
10pm KOMRAD

**THE CELLAR**

7.30 TROPHY CABINET  
8.15 THE NEON VIOLETS  
9pm FLIGHTS OF HELIOS  
9.45 SWINDLESTOCK

**THE WHEATSHEAF**

8pm THE COOLING PEARLS  
9pm BALLOON ASCENTS  
9.45 ART THEEFE  
10.30 HUCK & THE XANDER BAND

**TURL STREET KITCHEN**

8pm JORDAN O’SHEA  
9pm HANNAH BRUCE  
10pm RAWZ  
11pm JULIA MEIJER

**THE WHITE RABBIT**

8.30 SALVATION BILL  
9.30 LEE RILEY  
10.30 KID KIN  
11.30 VIENNA  
DITTO

*The Oxford Punt runs from 7pm through to midnight, starting at the Purple Turtle and finishing at the White Rabbit. Entry to each venue is £5, except Turl Street Kitchen and White Rabbit, which are free.*

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# nightshift.oxfordmusic.net

# The Oxford Punt 2014 - the who, what and where of it



## THE PURPLE TURTLE

*(The Tony Jezzard Stage)*

The Purple Turtle is where we traditionally kick off Punt proceedings. This year we have named it the Tony Jezzard Stage. Why? Tony Jezzard was a legendary local sound engineer and guitarist as well as a mentor to local young musicians. Tony did the sound for us at pretty much every Punt since it started in 1997. Sadly he passed away last year and we wanted to remember his presence at the Punt. Tony was a huge fan of volume abuse; he liked to play loud and get others to play loud. So in his honour we’ve gathered four of the very noisiest bands on this year’s Punt bill. Opening this celebration of sound are **HOT HOOVES**, themselves made up of assorted bona fide local music legends. Combining the melodic brilliance and capacity for booze of Guided By Voices with the dreamy fuzz of Husker Du and the sweet simplicity of early Teenage Fanclub, they’re pop-punk brilliance incarnate. Nothing sweet about **GIRL POWER**. Nasty, brutish and short, wrote Thomas Hobbes back in 1651, long before Girlpower formed, but it’s a fair description of a band whose cornerstones are Discharge’s hardcore punk and Amphetamine Reptile’s uncompromising roster of noisy bastards. Don’t stand in their way; you’ll get hurt. **BETA BLOCKER & THE BODY CLOCK** do have an irresistible melodic sweetness at their core, but they coat it in enough buzz and fuzz to disguise their soft centre. Chuck in some trancey West African vibes and some lysergic Stone Roses-like psychedelia and you’ve got a wonderfully shrapnel-coated choc-fudge-mallow delight of a band. Rounding off a riotous session are prog-core behemoths **KOMRAD**, a technically-gifted storm of complex riffage and time signatures and pure, unadulterated rock rage. Like Shellac, King Crimson and Dillinger Escape Plan locked in a battle to the death in a fight cage. It will be mighty. Hope you can hear it up there, Tony.

*Hot Hooves - 7pm; Girlpower- 8pm; Beta Blocker & the Body Clock - 9pm; Komrad - 10pm*

## THE CELLAR

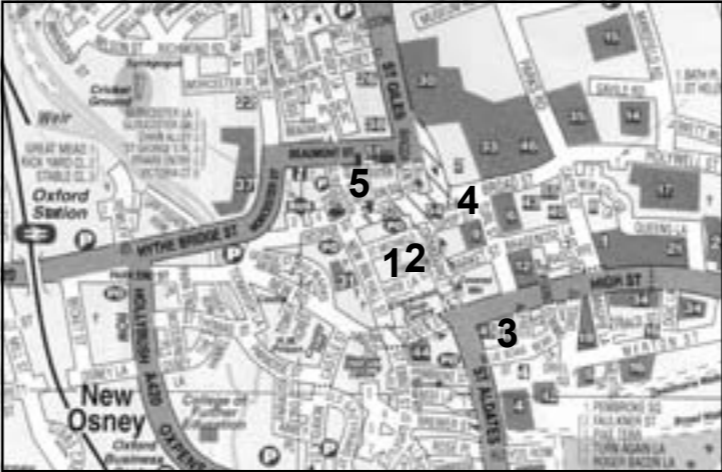
The Cellar celebrated forty years of hosting live music last month. Forty years! That makes *Nightshift* look like a newborn kitten by comparison. As such, the venue has rock and roll locked into its very brickwork, where it can never be diluted or killed. Perfect for the Punt then. **THE TROPHY CABINET**’s history doesn’t go back quite that far but it’s not so far behind. The band formed in Birmingham back in 1989 at university before re-emerging in Oxford a few years ago, as pure and fresh as if it’d been locked in an air-tight time capsule. Harking back to the gilded indie-pop of acts like The Go-Betweens and The House of Love, The Trophy Cabinet often sound like they’re light enough to float on air, but their songs are as sharp as a bee sting and as pretty as apple blossom. Are we overdoing the nature metaphors now? Who cares, we’re happy and so should you be. And your happiness will increase tenfold when you hear **THE NEON VIOLETS**, a band whose subterranean hypno-psych rock is tailor-made for these surroundings. Think all things black: Black Rebel Motorcycle Club; Black Angels; Black Mountain; Black Sabbath. They got riffs. Riffs as big as the sun. A place you could expect to find **FLIGHTS OF HELIOS** hanging out. In fact they’ve got big wowzy stellar back projections that make it look like they’re playing in space. Which is just about right since their ambient electro-drone pop is well spaced-out. Did you see what we did there? We don’t just make this stuff up for no reason. Someone suggested Flights of Helios were Oxford’s very own Pink Floyd. In a way they might be right, but you could mix in a little Spiritualized, Radiohead and Elbow, and then buy a small condo on Saturn. Back down to earth with **SWINDLESTOCK**. For earthy is their thing – a rootsy Americana hoedown where the blues and the booze mingle on the banks of the Mississippi, BB and Albert King pop round for a few jars; out comes the slide guitar and in the morning it wakes up with a whole heapa dirt under its fingernails. Which means you know you had a good time.

*Trophy Cabinet – 7.30; The Neon Violets – 8.15; Flights of Helios – 9pm; Swindlestock – 9.45.*



## THE WHEATSHEAF

If *Nightshift* has a home from home it is The Wheatsheaf. Whether it’s promoter Joal’s enduringly cheery demeanour and willingness to indulge in the consumption of cider, or the seemingly endless supply of great new music, we forever seem to find ourselves draped over or leaning against one of the venue’s many surfaces – walls, bar, stage, occasionally the floor if it’s been a particularly good night. Tonight will be a particularly good one, we’ve no doubt. How could it not be with the likes of **THE COOLING PEARLS** playing? Like a small part of the dark, windswept Orkneys has landed in sedate Oxfordshire, their often beautiful, trippy folk-pop is as warming as a large dram of fine malt by a roaring fireside. **BALLOON ASCENTS** are the newest and youngest band on this year’s Punt bill and their inclusion is testament to the high regard they’re already held, a highly promising quintet who have been drawing admiring comparisons to both Radiohead and Stornoway for their fresh, intelligent blending of electronica, rock and almost folky melodies. By contrast Matt Sage is a proper local scene veteran, not just the man behind the long-running, much celebrated Catweazle Club, but a singer and musician with a love for classic 60s tunes. His new band, **ART THEEFE**, with a slight surf shimmer and an edge of darkness, come from that grand lineage of acts like The Kinks, The Zombies and even Donovan, and prove that good songwriting will never go out of fashion. Nor great storytelling. Which is what **HUCK & THE XANDER BAND** excel at. If we mentioned rock operas you’d be excused for heading straight for the exit, but stay and immerse yourself in Humphrey Astley’s ongoing tale of two runaways in the southern states, escaping from religious zeal into hedonism and something unholy. It’s a tale informed as much by *Paradise Lost* and Donna Tartt as it is by the musical likes of Nick Cave, Patti Smith and The Violent Femmes, and we can’t wait to see how it all ends. Unhappily, we’re guessing. *The Cooling Pearls – 8pm; Balloon Ascents – 9pm; Art Theefe – 9.45; Huck and the Xander Band – 10.30.*



- 1 - The Purple Turtle
- 2 - The Cellar
- 3 - The Wheatsheaf
- 4 - Turl Street Kitchen
- 5 - The White Rabbit



## TURL STREET KITCHEN

This is the Turl Street Kitchen’s Punt debut but the venue is used to hosting intimate shows, including the annual Oxjam event, which is why we were keen to have them on board. Hey, you could even go and have dinner downstairs before heading up to hear the music. Which is free. But also priceless, as is all good music. Which is why we love it so. You’ll love **JORDAN O’SHEA**; he sings sad songs – songs as sad as the ocean. He called his album ‘Desperation, My Dear’ and poetically revels in resignation and romance of the ill-fated kind. And yet his songs are really rather beautiful, full of an almost heroic defiance. And to hear Jordan’s voice is to love it. **HANNAH BRUCE**’s recent debut EP had *Nightshift* drawing admiring comparisons with Tricky, Kate Bush and Bat For Lashes, which is near as dammit perfect in our little book of sorrow. Trippy, washed-out, lo-fi and enchanting, Hannah surrounds her voice with sparse, somnambulating textures that give the whole thing the feeling of being lost in the mist. Lovely. Hannah was joined on that EP by rapper/poet **RAWZ**, and they’re reunited on tonight’s bill as the rising star of the burgeoning local hip hop scene brings his narrative-heavy style to play, his downbeat style recalling Ghostpoet, RZA and MF Doom at times, with the emphasis on intelligent, poetic wordplay. **JULIA MEIJER** may be Swedish but she’s Oxford’s now, and we’re proud to call her on of our own. Her soulful, haunting voice is undercut with an endearing nervousness that merely accentuates her class; soon the whole world will want to claim her as theirs.

*Jordan O’Shea – 8pm; Hannah Bruce -9pm; Rawz – 10pm; Julia Meijer – 11pm*



## THE WHITE RABBIT

Last year The White Rabbit, situated in Friar’s Entry just off Gloucester Green, was a Punt virgin, but everyone agreed it was one of the best additions to the Punt circuit in years with an intimate gig space that made for a great atmosphere as the event built to its climax. With assorted local musicians involved in its running the pub is as welcoming as you can hope for. **SALVATION BILL** will know exactly how welcoming since he played here last year as part of the excellent Limbo Kids. In fact Ollie Thomas, the man who is Salvation Bill, is making his fourth Punt appearance, having been here before with previous bands Ute and The Old Grinding Young too. Which we think might be a record – although Seb Reynolds from Flights of Helios could dispute that particular title. So anyway, another welcome back to Ollie, even though it’ll feel like he’s never been away. And we’ll always be happy of his company as he blends dark murder ballads with an uneasy soulfulness and a gentle humour, coming in somewhere between Nick Cave and Otis Redding. Flying the flag for electronic music at the White Rabbit is **LEE RILEY**, a man who made his local reputation with the groundbreaking Euhedral a few years back and specialises in highly textured improvised instrumental music, best heard on his recent ‘Deeper Steps Into the New Path’ album, recorded live at the Pegasus Theatre. His sound veers from the almost imperceptible to terrifying. Be warned. Solo instrumental electro-dominated soundscaping of a very different type from **KID KIN**, whose guitar-meets-synths sound rises from its shoegaze roots into ethereal heights that will consume you like a blizzard of cherry blossom. And so to the final act on tonight’s Punt bill, and what a class act it is: **VIENNA DITTO**, the voodoo blues, synthabilly soul train that has seduced local gig goers round these parts over the last couple of years, singer and synthist Hattie Taylor and guitarist/synthist Nigel Firth conjuring something magical from a dark, dark well of soul and blues and just perfect for sending us all out into that dark, dark night with a spring in our steps and a shadow lurking in the corner of our minds. Happy Punting, people. *Salvation Bill – 8.30; Lee Riley – 9.30; Kid Kin – 10.30; Vienna Ditto – 11.30.*

To hear every Punt act, visit **OXFORD PUNT 2014** on **FACEBOOK**

**Hello and welcome to this year’s Oxford Punt.**

This is the bit where we try to explain what it’s all about to those of you what haven’t been to a Punt before. If you have, and we know some of you have been coming back for years and even look forward to it, then please skip this bit: you’ll only start getting a sense of déjà vu, when what you should be getting is a nice, cold pint of something dangerous from the bar before you poddle off round town having the time of your life. We’ll have two large gins and two pints of cider, ice in the cider, since you’re asking.

For those of you less familiar with the concept, the Oxford Punt started off in 1997 as a way of showcasing the best up and coming unsigned acts in Oxfordshire in one night. Because we know it’s hard sometimes to keep up with everything. Just looking at the gig guide every month can make you feel dizzy – so much to see, so little time. So we have the Punt, so you don’t have to turn up at half seven every time you go to a gig in the hope of catching the next big thing in town. They’re all here in one handy one-night, five-venue package. It’s like a feast. Of music.

In the past the Punt has played host to early gigs from so many future Oxford music stars, from Stornoway, Young Knives, Candy Says and Spring Offensive, to future members of Foals, Jonquil and Chad Valley. Some of the acts you’ll catch on the Punt sound like they’re destined for greatness; others are simply a bloody great barrel of fun. There are twenty acts crammed into tonight’s event, so there’s bound to be something in there for everyone. Unless you’re a brass band purist, in which case sorry, we’ll try harder next year, and find a bigger venue to accommodate one.

	7pm		8pm		9pm		10pm		11pm	
<b>Purple Turtle</b> The Tony Jezzard Stage	Hot Hooves		Girl Power		Beta Blocker		Komrad			
<b>Cellar</b>		Trophy Cabinet		The Neon Violets	Flights of Helios		Swindle-stock			
<b>Wheatsheaf</b>			Cooling Pearls		Balloon Ascents		Art Theefe	Huck & the Xander Band		
<b>Turl St Kitchen</b>			Jordan O'Shea		Hannah Bruce		Rawz		Julia Meijer	
<b>White Rabbit</b>				Salvation Bill			Lee Riley	Kid Kin		Vienna Ditto

Ah yes, the venues. Some on the Punt circuit are old favourites – step forward The Wheatsheaf, The Cellar and The Purple Turtle – others are more recent additions to the circuit, like the Turl Street Kitchen, and the White Rabbit, but each brings something unique to proceedings and each hosts an eclectic mix of live music over the evening.

The best way to get the most out of the Punt is to get yourself an all-venue **Punt Pass**. There are only 100 of these available and they’re a mere £8 (plus a quid or so booking fee), which is a bargain when you consider just how many acts you could potentially see (a word of warning: please do not attempt to see all twenty acts; it is impossible in the same way that it’s impossible for Santa to deliver presents to every house in one night, and we don’t want to be sweeping innards off the pavement after you’ve combusted trying to get to two places at once. Anyway, Punt passes: you can get one from **Truck Store** on Cowley Road, or online from **oxfordmusic.net**. Support local independent businesses while you’re about it.

If you don’t get a pass, don’t worry, you can pay on the door at any of the venues. It’s only a fiver each, while Turl Street Kitchen and The White Rabbit are free. This here handy pullout guide can be your friend for the evening, guiding you through the myriad musical styles on offer. Please don’t buy your Punt guide a pint though – we know from experience it can’t take its drink.

Think that’s all. Let’s be off shall we – lots of music to hear, stuff to discover and new favourite bands to love. Plus there’s already a queue for the bar and all this enthusing is making us thirsty. Have a fantastic Punt, may all your musical dreams come true.

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DEEP COVER PRESENTS  
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## KATY B O2 Academy

Not much is accidental about Katy B’s success, but everything about her demeanour suggests she still struggles to believe it and has no intention of taking anything for granted. The Brit School and Goldsmiths pop music graduate, whose association with London community radio station Rinse FM and its head – her producer and co-manager Geeneus – will no doubt always place her at the cooler end of the pop naffness scale, is quick to mention, with genuine gratitude, that tonight’s venue was the location of her first headline gig. Even a collaboration with Guy Chambers – resulting in the exquisite ‘5am’ (her second song tonight – no faffing around here) and ‘Crying With No Reason’, her performance of which is nuanced and captivating – has slotted in perfectly next to the Route 94 and M.J. Cole productions on her second album, ‘Little Red’. The new album’s lyrical matter is naturally more mature and reflective than that of debut album ‘On a

Mission’, but the earlier party-going stuff (such as ‘Katy On A Mission’ and ‘Lights On’) is musically as self-assured as the later heartbreak stuff. She should be far bigger than, say, Emeli Sandé by now; ‘Still’ would be a far bigger hit for Emeli had she got her mitts on it first, though credit to Katy for not wearing the public out through Emeli-esque ubiquity. The beauty of Katy’s music is the way that her seemingly delicate, soulful and r’n’b-flavoured voice floats dynamically and majestically over all sorts of dubstep-, grime- and house-rooted arrangements, moulding an electronic dance sound that feels well-established yet is unique to her. Even when it gets a bit grandiose – as in the Kanye-like ‘All My Lovin’ – you can forgive her. Tonight Katy B proves proper pop stars needn’t be distant, mystical creatures; sometimes someone you genuinely suspect you could be friends with makes the most effective music.

**Kirsten Etheridge**

## METRONOMY / GLASS ANIMALS

### O2 Academy

Bold isn’t a word you’d naturally associate with Glass Animals’ music, but there’s no doubting their recent flurry of live activity – from touring with St Vincent to eight shows in six days at SXSW, as well as working with producer Paul Epworth – has brought a new steeliness. Tonight is their biggest hometown gig yet and they’re rewarded by a sizeable early evening crowd who in turn are treated to a set that unfurls slowly and meticulously, an understated grace forever undercut by a feeling of nervy unease that brings the songs into sharper focus. Dave Bayley’s whispery, soulful voice sounds like Prince if he was made of feathers and a light breeze, while the icicle and bamboo textures of the music remind us of early-80s art-pop stars Japan. If its component parts sound fragile, tonight Glass Animals sound unbreakable. Metronomy have changed a lot since we first encountered them, supporting Foals at this same venue back in 2007, and not for the better. Back then they were playful, edgy and inventive. Tonight they sound slick and successful and maybe a little soulless. New album ‘Love Letter’, which went Top 10 a couple of weeks before tonight’s gig, sees the Devonians slipping into an easier 80s funk groove – less Human League, more Hall & Oates. Joseph Mount is sporting white trousers; never a good sign. Too often tonight we wonder if they’ve got one eye on a slot at Rewind Festival, such is their adherence to an early-mid-80s sound that variously recalls The Buggles and Imagination. Not that they’ve lost their sense of a good pop song. Opener ‘Monstrous’ is underwhelming but ‘Love Letters’ is fun and brassy, drummer Anna Prior’s bubblegum backing vocals adding that sheen of magic to the effervescent melody. They’re at their best when Anna is either singing to the fore or hammering her kit with metronomic glee, a stark contrast to the weaker electronic beats. ‘She Wants’ is dark and sultry, while ‘Everything Goes My Way’ is a fresh spring breeze of a song, though possibly the highlight of the set is the fidgety ‘Radio Ladio’, taking them back to their early, more electro roots. Too much of the new album, though, like ‘The Upsetter’, lacks both a strong groove or the sort of singalong tunes they’re more than capable of. Hardly a disaster by any means, then, more mild disappointment that a band who once sounded like the future seem content to recline in a part of pop’s past maybe best forgotten.

**Dale Kattack**

## BEEHOOVER / UNDERSMILE / CARAVAN OF WHORES

### The Wheatsheaf

Propping up tonight’s bill are two more bands that provide yet more evidence that Oxford possesses more than a few monumental metal bands. First up are Caravan Of Whores, a band that have come a long way in recent years, becoming more assured and confident with every gig. In thrall to the riffs of Black Sabbath and the drawn-out monolithic stoner slabs of Sleep, COW know how to work a riff to the point where repetition becomes hypnotic. It’s tempting to suggest that sometimes their songs could do with a little judicious clipping here and there, but to do so is probably missing the point. Undersmile make a welcome return tonight having been out of action for nearly six months. They’ve lost none of their power in that time though, and tonight’s set is an exercise in slow, relentless bludgeoning. Ridiculously heavy sludgy riffs fill the venue, whilst the vocals of Taz Corona-Brown and Hel Sterne

twist around each other in beguiling shapes. The audience appears to be stuck in a haze of shock and awe and with good reason. Undersmile, as challenging as they might be, are arguably the best band in Oxford at the moment. Germany’s Beehover are a peculiar proposition. Bassist/vocalist Ingmar Peterson sits barefoot, bass slung to one side, an array of pedals under his toes, while his fingers throw out an array of mindboggling riffs and licks. Beehover’s music however does not sit still. One moment they’re rattling through spiky post-punk, the next they’re exploring cosmic-rock territory. As the set progresses they touch on elements of jazz, low-slung stoner riffs and classic metal. Ultimately no turn is left unstoned as Peterson and the drummer Claus-Peter Hamisch hammer through a set that manages to be dextrous, direct and spellbinding.

**Sam Shepherd**

## CANDY SAYS / CHRYSTA BELL

### Holywell Music Room

If David Lynch had decided to film his collaborator Chrysta Bell’s live show he couldn’t have chosen a better location than this, somewhere that could easily be set from one of his films. The Texan emerges to join her black-clad band looking like a chanteuse from a smoky Berlin nightclub. Her set combines passion with an undercurrent of darkness, her extraordinary voice reaching into every corner of the ancient building as the keyboards contribute a 60s sci-fi flavour. It works best when she allows the band to rock out a bit, with finale ‘Swim With Me’ the most satisfying moment of the set.

No-one could accuse Candy Says of playing things safe. The most restless and un-Oxford of Oxford bands, they constantly reinvent themselves and reinterpret songs, making every gig a unique and unpredictable experience. Years of experience in the music industry, many in the uncompromising rock duo Little Fish, have given them an understanding of the visual aspects of being a band as well as how to craft a great pop song. At Gathering festival last October they played a dance-leaning set dressed as air stewards, but tonight’s pre-launch of new album ‘Not Kings’, is more about vintage clothes and lots of percussion. Singer Juju is her usual ball of restless

enthusiasm and energy as Ben Walker plays electric keyboards via an accordion, the remaining two members contributing percussion, more keyboards and layers of harmonies. ‘Favourite Flavour’ continues its journey of development but remains the finest song to emerge from the city in a long time, ridiculously catchy yet chock full of hidden complexity. Unexpected chord changes come from all directions, such as on the slightly sinister ‘Dead On Arrival’ and the dancefloor-oriented ‘Camilla’. The Little Fish songs they have retained, like ‘Lord’s Mistake’, have been entirely successfully migrated and updated, though they do bring back memories of that intense, sweaty set at The Punt a few years back. Juju’s half French background has led to two new songs sung in the language, further evidence of their growing confidence and playfulness. Another danceable number is dedicated to Oxford poets, and they’re always quick to acknowledge their debt to their home town, choosing venues for performances as carefully as they construct their music.

The only question remaining is where to go from here. Chrysta Bell and her band have fallen in love with them; they’ve toured China and could easily win over Japan. We can only hope they continue to reward us with treats like this.

**Art Lagun**

## POLAR BEAR / SHIVER

### St John the Evangelist

Power trio Shiver’s guitarist Chris Sharkey and bass guitarist Andy Champion should have badges proclaiming “No Nurdling Here”, as they have no truck with the electric guitar being smoothed out in jazz. With Joost Henderickx on drums and drum pad, they use swathes of pedals to bend notes and create effects to the max. Their opener, ‘Hammerhead Blues’, goes straight for the jugular, jagged guitar peals washing over a churning bass and a frenetic rhythm on the drum pad before a searing crescendo. It sets the theme of free jazz improv meeting trash metal and electronic effects head on, and is very, very loud for a venue that usually hosts classical piano recitals. No wonder there’s a nervous shiver discernable among the SJE staff before the gig. The set is not completely visceral, though. ‘Quickstep’ includes some gentler eerie effects and later a segment of slow elegiac guitar is set against an irresistible four-note bass riff from Champion. It’s back to the inner metal head for set closer ‘Rudderless’, which Shiver’s terrific and committed playing certainly isn’t. If only they had gone easier on using the drum pad though. With the vast palette of Leafcutter John’s electronic beeps, burps and loops now

central, but also other band members using effects, Polar Bear’s current music is both densely textured and spacey while being rhythmically restless. Their melodic hooks emerge organically from this mix, often as fragments on one or other of the saxes, Pete Wareham and Mark Lockheart both in top form whether staccato honking or playing lyrically. With Leafcutter’s beats and pulses driving the rhythm, leader and drummer Seb Rochford is freed up to deftly embellish the music at will and skilful improvisation is very much the game for the whole band as they expanded on the recorded versions of tracks from recent album, ‘In Each and Every One’. ‘Be Free’, whose edgy meditative ambiance resolves into a celebratory peal of melody, typifies the whole set, both in its structure, and its song title. Yet Polar Bear are also tight and cohesive, their new denser style creating a satisfying sense of continuity for however long it is they play. While omitting some of the spikier tracks on the CD like ‘WW’ might have made them a little less edgy than anticipated, their live performance is still thoroughly absorbing.

**Colin May**



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## DARLIA / SUN MACHINE The Cellar

With the kind of bad haircuts that don't currently happen to be fashionable Sun Machine may look like a bunch of scrappy teenagers but their music is more mature than you'd guess. With a Led Zeppelin influence that could be observed from a mile off – without even looking at

the bassist's band tee – they sport nice vocal harmonies with psychedelic guitars in concise rock tracks. They also manage to subtly incorporate trashy synth lines and alternate vocals between members to good effect. They finish with a slow, substantial track; a simple stubborn bass line and

stroppy drums set up a conversation between the high riffing guitar and synthesiser, bringing to mind a sprightlier version of Toy. Not afraid to let a simple song run its course, they slowly build the intensity into a fun, crashing finale. Fresh out of Blackpool, Darlia seem

## THE FAUNS / FLIGHTS OF HELIOS / TOLIESEL The Cellar

ToLiesel feel like an oddly rock and roll opener for a band like The Fauns. While the headliners are a delicately ferocious snowstorm of noise around the soft songbird tones of singer Alison Garner, ToLiesel are bold, bordering on heroic, cutting shapes while singer Jack Olchawski near enough rips his throat to shreds. They're best when they play it pretty, as on the sweetly shimmering 'Whispered Half To Sleep', and the full-on country slope of set-closer 'Wilderness Blues'. Their more histrionic moments would be better suited supporting someone like Augustines.

Any rocking tendencies Flights of Helios possess come enveloped in gothic atmospherics, so they appear like fleeting shadows across the collective's slow-build, sci-fi prog-pop, which hits its zenith with the warmly flowering 'Factory', and there's plenty of evidence to suggest they might well be Oxford's answer to Pink Floyd.

If Flights of Helios are adrift in the firmament, Bristol's Fauns are pure shoegaze heaven. Pretty and ethereal but astonishingly noisy, they're a spangle and a sparkle and a rush and a hush and an unstoppable build of torrential, effects-saturated guitar glissando that, in songs like 'The Sun Is Cruising', and mesmeric set-closer 'Seven

Hours' is like a nightingale solemnly but defiantly resisting the oncoming storm, a storm than on softer songs, like the aptly-named 'Fragile', sounds like it's made from a trillion cherry blossom petals that spiral around you until you're blinded and disorientated by their infiniteness. Yep, that good. The band – signed to Geoff Barrow's Invada label – are steeped in the late-80s/early-90s sounds of Slowdive, Cocteau Twins, Bang Bang Machine and Lush's first flowing, but no less thrilling for being so obvious. Here's a band to get completely and utterly lost in.

*Sue Foreman*

## NIGHTWORKERS/ THE GRACEFUL SLICKS

### The Cellar

The only bad thing about The Graceful Slicks' first number is that it has to finish. Because, you see, not only does their music have an ahistorical simplicity and atavistic two-chord punch that is less a collection of music, and more a glimpse into the universal *anima mundi*, but they tend to fluff the endings up. To some ears tonight's set will be a generic string of psychedelic grooves and garage buzz that never seems to quite get as far as an actual song, whereas to others it will be a whirlwind of wordless howls and mysterious

to have appeared on the musical radar almost out of thin air, having released their debut EP late last year. Their grunge-soaked indie rock has seen them support the likes of nearly-boy-band The 1975 but for all the “ones to watch” hype tonight's gig is one of only four dates on their current UK tour and draws a modest crowd.

Darlia have a controlled energy which makes for an intense set, deafening the majority of Cellar dwellers. 'Napalm' is the best three minutes of the show, with frenzied drums and dirty guitar underscoring Nathan Day's growling vocals; having drawn a few Kurt Cobain comparisons – you could blame the bleached hair as well as Nirvana's obvious influence on the band – latest release 'Blood Money' has Day sounding more like a male Courtney Love. With his guitar switching from trembling frailty to crunching out chords, the track grows on the dynamic of 'Napalm' and takes it to new heights. Elsewhere 'Candyman', from their current EP, and 'Choke On Bones' – already introduced by the young band as “an old track” – are warmly recognised. Most exciting is an upbeat new song which races from start to finish, leaving behind a feeling somewhere between déjà vu and premonition, the sort of intangible quality that will no doubt see it sound tracking peoples' summers.

*Celina Macdonald*

murmurs, a primitive Lascaux painting in sonic form, an ochre mammoth sketched in sludgy blues changes. We fall in the latter camp, and especially love 'Bulbul Tarang', not so much a composition as a peaty aroma of sound, cut through with sheet aluminium slashes from the bowed guitar. It's timeless, transcendent and hypnotic. But, you know, they could still do with fluffing up the endings a bit less. A tune or two into their set, the headliners announce, “We're not wankers from Brighton”. Yes, we can see how you'd wish to clarify that, seeing as it can appear as like Nathan-Barley-On-Sea. A few bars later, the tired mind decodes the stage drawl: “We're Nightworkers, from Brighton”. And work they do, throwing themselves wildly into a set composed primarily of sweat and wildly wagged outdated haircuts. The music leans towards classic rock with a laddish swagger and a lightly narcotic haze – think Brian Jonestown Massacre meets Cast – and is highly entertaining, even if it never reaches the ignition point the songs crave. The vocals are strong, yet malleable enough to offer some variation, and the keys are excellent, finding unexpected space in the songs to fill with cheeky synth lines or vintage thriller Rhodes. In fact, the whole band are very good, but we still find our attention wandering before the gig is over. Nightworkers: they're not wankers, not by any means, but they're not our new favourite band quite yet, either.

*David Murphy*

## BANKS

### O2 Academy

The catalyst for the emotional connection between artist and audience takes many forms. Jillian Banks connects with her music by making her listeners feel unsettled, rendering them uncomfortable, then intrigued – and ultimately hooked.

Tonight she opens with 'Before I Ever Met You', in which her slightly untuned voice drifts over a menacing, Massive Attack-y crunchy trip-hop backing, with cymbals creating dissonance. In 'This Is What It Feels Like', her double-tracked octave vocals take a vacant nasal tone and quiver melodramatically over a creaking bass and deep orchestral stabs, which, combined with the back lighting on stage and her aloof demeanour, give an air of spookiness.

She does get more chatty, revealing the dark place and insecurities behind the writing of 'Goddess' – a somewhat confrontational plea via the medium of low-rumbling r'n'b for every woman to feel like the goddess they are, she says – and how most of her songs start with just voice and

keyboard. A stripped down version of 'Warm Water proves that the darkness is nuanced in her voice, tunes and form as much as in the lyrics and arrangements. In the late-night slinky ballad 'Bedroom Wall', a collaboration with Oxford's own TEED, delicately emotional and repetitive vocals make desperation and isolation palpable.

Tonight's thirteen-song set includes two covers. She was so nervous when she played her first festival that she played covers backstage to relax her – and “it felt like butter”, so she replays Aaliyah's 'Are You That Somebody' tonight. Her first time ever touring was in support of The Weeknd, whose sparse and discordant 'What You Need' suits and concludes the night's mood perfectly.

In terms of lugubrious synth r'n'b, The xx and London Grammar might have got there before and Lorde might have broken through earlier, but Banks is more sinister than all three; if you'll let her, she'll get under your skin – and stay there.

*Kirsten Etheridge*

## GIRL POWER / HALBER MENSCH / SEBASTIAN MELMOTH

### The Wheatsheaf

Gappy Tooth Industries' monthly gigs always carry the fun unpredictability of a good lucky dip, but tonight's show feels like winning the jackpot with every turn.

Naming themselves after one of Oscar Wilde's pseudonyms and sporting vintage Gay Pride armbands in honour of the legalisation of same-sex marriage this week, Sebastian Melmoth are a breath of fantastically foul air in the face of rock's increasing sterility. Powered by a drummer possessed by the spirit of Mo Tucker, with a dedication to economical, metronomic relentlessness, theirs is a swill and swirl of distorted drones and freaked-out stream-of-consciousness vocals (“I think about you all the time” they chant in disconcerting unity for the duration of their opening song), churning back to The Velvet Underground by way of 1970s New York No-Wave. They lose it a bit in the middle, becoming more normal and edging into surf-rock at one point, before rescuing it all at the end with a viciously distorted dirge. Play Sebastian Melmoth to a cross-section of the population and chances are 99% would declare them a horrendous racket and not even proper music. Because 99% of people are fucking idiots. They're sprightly springtime

pop chickens compared to Halber Mensch, though. The recent *Nightshift* Demo of the Month winner is one man, a loop pedal, electric violin, percussion and an entire suitcase of rage to let out. With each number he loops plucked strings and bass before lashing out at his basic drumkit and screaming into the void. He's a blur of nervous intensity and his set carries an air of impending chaos that holds your attention throughout. Maybe things become a little formulaic towards the end but if he can expand on these ideas Robby Halbermensch could be something genuinely special.

Thomas Hobbes probably didn't have Girl Power in mind when he wrote the words “nasty, brutish and short,” but it's a perfectly apt description of their no-holds-barred old-school hardcore punk. Made up of former members of Sextodecimo, Suitable Case For Treatment and Bersicker they were never going to be soft or subtle but their speedfreak onslaught is uncompromising in the extreme, Discharge via Halo of Flies and Nashville Pussy, everything turned up to the max and played at 150mph all the time. Down the front a lively moshpit is turning into a raucous mass bundle. Music like this is meant to hurt, after all.

*Dale Kattack*





## BIPOLAR SUNSHINE / INDIANA

### The Art Bar

Setting up, tonight’s support Indiana seems to be an indie clich  ; but as Indiana herself takes to the stage it becomes clear that these vintage-clad boys are merely the “lovely band” supporting her vocal performance. Heavy with 80s-style synth and drum pad, Indiana’s music is at once fresh and reminiscent. This is pop without the often associated soul-crushing emptiness as gloomy lyrics and organ keys prelude bright moving choruses. A band keen to contest gender assumptions, her backing band are multitasking to the limits, playing at least two instruments at once while Indiana sticks with the singing, which is aided with a pre-recorded backing provided by one of the guys on keys. The Apple Mac player is singing along, and if only someone would give him

a microphone he could provide backing himself, just to make things a little more real, if less perfect. It is rare that an act preaches the message “Love More, Worry Less” and attracts a crowd who seem to have a matching attitude. I get this impression as a girl spills half a beer on me before apologising profusely and, despite my immediate and very British acceptance, trying to dry me with her sleeve. Bipolar Sunshine’s Adio Marchant teaches his audience the backing vocals and asks for their co-operation. They don’t need cajoling to join in at every opportunity. To use the word preach is not to suggest a force-feeding of morals but a whole-hearted faith in his own philosophy that shines through his songs. There are gospel elements to some of their rousing choruses that somehow

merge with squealing guitars and impressive drums to create radio-friendly indie pop. A short musical interlude shows that the band clearly rehearses together a lot and the outfit translates well live, especially the drums that give the set an extra element of drive which is sometimes inevitably polished out in the recording process. As the show nears its close Bipolar Sunshine play ‘Fire,’ one of the first tracks they released. It’s a quietly moving track, mixing world-war-y spoken word, an innocently hopeful-sounding chorus and samples from cinematic romance *The Notebook*. Because apparently there’s nothing Ryan Gosling’s voice can’t improve. Marchant tells us that the song still means a lot to him. His enjoyment of playing his own songs is apparent, which is important as he will surely be in demand to play them for a long while.  
*Celina Macdonald*

## THE IRREPRESSIBLES

### The Cellar

There’s a little bit of the Billy Elliot about Jamie McDermott, the man behind The Irrepressibles. Hailing from a council estate in Scarborough, he knew he was gay from an early age and was bullied because of it. A sympathetic teacher saw the potential in him to become a dancer but, infatuated by Kate Bush and David Bowie, he always wanted to be a rock star and bring some flamboyance back to the genre. He’s subsequently spent most of his adult life trying to do exactly that, constructing his own elaborate stage sets and employing a nine-strong mini-orchestra to perform his ambitiously choreographed shows. And if the world hasn’t sat bolt upright and hailed his genius, he’s carried on as if it has. As such he’s more of a star than so many far more commercially successful artists. Tonight’s show is part of a tour for his latest series of EPs, and a chance to strip back some of the stage show and let the songs breathe. As such there are a mere five in his band who squeeze onto a stage that neither rotates nor comes surrounded by mirror walls or glass screens, as has become his norm. Cello and violin combine to bring the requisite maudlin elegance to McDermott’s songs but it’s his voice that’s central to everything, and a thing of real wonder. Somewhere between Bryan Ferry and Anthony Hegarty, it’s

variously stubborn, awkward, graceful and fragile, a quavering, soaring bird of a voice. It can be fantastically understated, barely there but for a soft hum, but on a sixpence it turns into a piercing shriek that could shatter every glass in the venue. If he’d taken different turns in his life he could have become an opera singer; if he’d been born a few years earlier he would have fitted neatly into This Mortal Coil’s ethereal fold. You look at him on stage though, and it’s hard sometimes to piece his imposing, if sleepy-eyed, figure together with such a delicate instrument. He’s a big lad, and when he speaks – softly – between songs it’s with an incongruously strong northern accent. Occasionally, notably when his cellist switches to electric bass and the band rock out a bit, the songs misfire and sound hamfisted, but when McDermott sits behind the piano and plays solo it’s mesmerising, while set climax ‘Nuclear Skies’ is astonishing in its ambition and sheer scale. He tells us proudly that the band played at one of the first gay weddings in the UK earlier in the week; a lucky couple to enjoy such a class act at an event as intimate as their nuptials. Yet you hope The Irrepressibles will one day play regularly at events more in keeping with the grandeur of Jamie McDermott’s dreams.  
*Dale Kattack*

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2<sup>nd</sup> **JACE EVERETT BAND / POLLY & THE BILLETS DOUX** 7.30-11pm

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16<sup>th</sup> **THE DUBLINGS**

23<sup>rd</sup> **HAZE**

30<sup>th</sup> **THE KNIGHTS OF MENTIS** 7.30-10.30pm

Friday club nights

9<sup>th</sup> **HOUSE FOUNDATIONS** – House & electro club night 11pm-3am

16<sup>th</sup> **WHITE MAGIC SOUND** presents **REGGAE, HIP HOP, R’N’B & DANCEHALL CLUB NIGHT** 11pm-3am

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Saturday early gigs

3<sup>rd</sup> **OX4 ALLSTARS / THE MIGHTY REDOX / MARK ATHERTON BAND** 7.30-10.30pm

10<sup>th</sup> **THE INFLATABLES** – live ska 7.30-10.30pm

17<sup>th</sup> **ZENSHIT** with **PET MOON / EYES & NO EYES** / more tbc 7.30-10.30pm

24<sup>th</sup> **CURVATURE / GEMMA MOSS**

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3<sup>rd</sup> **SELECTA** – Drum’n’bass club night with **S.P.Y** (Hospital Records) / **SERIAL KILLAZ / MC LOWQUI** / more 11pm-4am

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This year’s Cornbury Festival takes place over the weekend of the **4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> July** in the picturesque grounds of the **Great Tew Estate**.

Headlining this year’s event are **Jools Holland and his Rhythm & Blues Orchestra**, who top Friday’s bill and feature guest vocal appearances from **Marc Almond** and former Spice Girl **Melanie B**. On Saturday night **Simple Minds** close the show, while Sunday’s headline act is still to be announced. Joining them will be pop queen **Sophie Ellis Bextor**; **Southside Johnny featuring Gary US Bonds**; **Suzanne Vega**; **10cc**; **Arrested Development**; **Lissie**; **Kid Creole & the Coconuts**; **The Feeling**; **Sam Bailey**; **Hudson Taylor**; **Kacey Musgraves**, and plenty more besides. Did we mention **Scouting For Girls**? No, and probably best to keep it that way.



Enough to fill two stages over three days anyway. In the sunshine! With beer! Except there’s more than that. There’s another music stage – The Riverside Festival Stage, which hosts both local acts and a few emerging talents. Among those this year are **Dubwiser**; **The Original Rabbit Foot Spasm Band**; **Grudle Bay**; **Black Hats**; **Knights of Mentis**; **ToLiesel**; **Jim Scott & the Find**; **Ilona**;

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Tickets for Cornbury Festival are on sale now from the festival website (**www.cornburyfestival.com**) as well as the ticket line (**0844 338 0000**). Adult weekend camping tickets are £170, with discounts for oldies and young’uns. Day tickets are also available.

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## THE WHEATSHEAF

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## DR SHOTOVER: Tubular Balls

Ah, there you are, oh egg-faced one. You want to partake of some pearls of Shotoverian wisdom? Pull up a pew, then, and buy me drinks until I tell you to stop. While we’re on the subject of – and in the bar of - Oxford’s famous East Indies Club... has it ever occurred to you that Kidlington’s own Richard Branson used to run one of the first ‘indie’ labels in the world? How young, happening and underground Virgin Records seemed in the early 70s, with its mail-order business in the back pages of *Melody Maker* (alongside the ads for loon pants and ginseng legal highs), and its scruffy-denim-suited board of directors. Those were the days, eh... when us urchins would club together to buy copies of *The Faust Tapes* in Taphouses for 49p, then throw them off Magdalen Bridge after a few chillums on Angel Meadow. Branson may have been sporting a stupid manicured beard, but he still seemed vaguely credible a few years later when he moved away from arty prog and Krautrock to sign the Sex Pistols, the Ruts and Penetration... then, before we knew it, he was suddenly a synonym for Super-Corporate Man, and Virgin had become the unacceptable face of 80s Nanny Thatcher capitalism. Just imagine if some of the later indies had followed Branson into transport and all those other markets... Rough Trade Trains, anyone? Mute Mobile? Kitchenware Air? Cherry Red Cola? 4AD Comics? Factory Hotels? Postcard Holidays? Actually, apparently one of Oxford’s top independent labels might soon be diversifying into Big Red Sky Balloon Trips. Stop simpering, Harmondsworth, and keep those drinks coming. Make mine a pint of foaming Beggar’s Banquet Ale with some Small Wonder c risps on the side.

**Next month:**  
**Staring at the Rude Noise**



1972: ‘Tell you what, Mick... if I grow a groovy beard and give you this super-modern portable cassette recorder, will you sign to Virgin?’

‘Awwwlrighhht, Mr B... let’s start with the beard and then we’ll seeee in about twenty yeeears’ time, yeahh...?’

## INTRODUCING....

*Nightshift’s monthly guide to the best local music bubbling under*

## Huck & the Xander Band

**Who are they?**

Huck is Humphrey Astley whose musical CV includes Sextodecimo, Tamara & the Martyrs and The Epstein. He has been playing as Huck for the past six years but The Xander Band formed 18 months old and features Jamie Cooper (*guitar*); Billy Quarterman (*bass*); Seb Reynolds (*keyboards*), and Tommy Longfellow (soon to be replaced by ex-Suitable Case For Treatment and Guillemots man Greig Stewart) on drums. The name comes from Huck’s three-part album and forthcoming stage show ‘Alexander the Great: a Folk Operetta’, which he describes as “a queer runaway myth about two young friends and their fall from grace in Dixie.” Huck and Seb were awarded PRS funding in 2012 and have been using it to develop the stage show with the Cambridge Junction; it debuts in Oxford at the Old Fire Station on June 12<sup>th</sup>.

**What do they sound like?**

Americana is the catch-all phrase for anything rooted in traditional American folk, blues and country music, but The Xander Band sit neatly in the bluesier end of that spectrum, exploring the American Gothic tradition with the emphasis on storytelling and a poetic lyrical leaning. ‘Alexander the Great...’ is a rock opera but not in the traditional sense, informed as much by Donna Tartt and JD Salinger as it is by Nick Cave and The Violent Femmes.

**What inspires them?**

“I’m a writer and student of poetry and I would hope that that shows in my songwriting; in fact, the creation of ‘Alexander...’ was my first serious attempt at combining literature with music, taking the big themes of classic texts like *Paradise Lost* and *Peter Pan* (yes, *Peter Pan* has big themes!) and reproducing them in the style of the Beats and James Baldwin, for whom language, rhythm and melody were all part of the same toolkit.”

**Career highlight so far:**

“I was honoured to be the sole support act for Candy Says at their ‘coming out’ show at St Barnabas Church last year. They’re a great band and lovely people and it was an excellent night. I’ve played at quite a few churches over the past couple of years, which is fairly ironic if you read my lyrics.”



**And the lowlight:**

“I recently headlined at AKA in Banbury (great venue) and had to stop halfway through a 40-minute set when I lost my voice - that was a first, and embarrassing to say the least. I still took the money though.”

**Their favourite other Oxfordshire act is:**

“We’re big fans of our bass player’s band Billy T’Rivers & The Wild West Retirement Home, who do a kind of pastoral post-grunge indie-folk. Seriously.”

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

“We all love The Doors so perhaps we’d go with ‘LA Woman’. It’s dark, it’s dreamy, it’s groovy... it ticks a lot of boxes!”

**When is their next local gig and what can newcomers expect?**

“We’re headlining The Wheatsheaf for The Oxford Punt on May 14<sup>th</sup>, where we’ll be playing highlights from the first two Acts of ‘Alexander the Great’.”

**Their favourite and least favourite things about Oxford music:**

“Favourite: so many cool young people around. Least favourite: I’m not sure I’m one of them.”

**You might like them if you like:**

Nick Cave; Richmond Fontaine; Patti Smith; The Violent Femmes; The Felice Bros.

**Hear them here:**

[huckandxander.bandcamp.com](http://huckandxander.bandcamp.com).

## ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

### 20 YEARS AGO

“Although a mere ten gigs old, **Supergrass** is a name everyone in London know,” announced *Curfew* magazine by way of introduction to the young cover stars of the May 1994 issue. Formed from the wreckage of earlier *Curfew* favourites **The Jennifers**, who had released their debut EP on Nude Records and toured with **The Wedding Present**, at this point in time the nascent stars were set to release their first single, ‘Strange Ones’ / ‘Caught By The Fuzz’ on local label Backbeat, and Gaz, Danny and Mick were chatting to *Curfew* about what made them different to Gaz and Danny’s previous band. “Me and Danny were still at school when we were in the Jennifers,” explained Gaz, “so the band was bound to be more pretty and melodic. We’ve had more life experiences since then. Our lives are more intense. In a nice way.”

Interviewer Chris Mugan pointed to Mick’s wailing, yelping backing vocals as one of the magic ingredients in Supergrass’ sound. “That comes from practise sessions when he shouts ‘Danny, don’t do that!’” pointed out Gaz. Not long after the band would release their classic ‘I Should Coco’ album and become one of the biggest selling bands of the era. “We’re total lunch-outs,” concluded Danny.

Elsewhere this month local legends **The Anyways** announced their split. The band, who had spearheaded Oxford’s first wave of nationally-recognised acts alongside **Talulah Gosh**, bowed out with a rare 5-Star demo review

before leaving us with a legacy of perfect jangle-pop gems.

Acts coming to town this month included **The Inspiral Carpets**, **Roachford**, **Buzzcocks** and **The UK Subs at the Oxford Venue**; **John Otway** and **Jacob’s Mouse at the Jericho Tavern**, and **Jethro Tull at the Apollo**. The cross-over with some of this year’s gigs is frightening.

### 10 YEARS AGO

A decade after they first featured on the cover of *Curfew*, **Supergrass** were back home, playing a Greatest Hits set at a sold-out **New Theatre**, coinciding with the release of their ‘Supergrass Is 10’ album. It was a triumphant return to Oxford for the band who had outlived their Britpop roots to become one of the most enduring hitmakers of the last 20 years.

Also out this month in May 2004 was ‘Want More’, the debut album from local synth-pop favourites **Trademark**, singing like robots and recalling the likes of Pet Shop Boys, Human League and Depeche Mode, while enduring punk-metal titans **Headcount** released their single ‘Die Monkey Die’.

The front cover band in *Nightshift* back then was the mighty (that’s **MIGHTY** in capital letters, bold type and underlined twice if we’re being accurate), **Sextodecimo**, the heaviest band ever to come out of Oxford, and described as “rampaging Norsemen whose music can make buildings vibrate” in both looks and sound. “Not enough bands look like rampaging Norsemen and make

### THIS MONTH IN OXFORD MUSIC HISTORY

buildings vibrate,” we surmised. They quintet were set to release their debut EP, ‘The Banshee Screams For Buffalo Meat’, on Hanging Out With the Cool Kids. Produced by **Sevenschurch** axeman Dave Smart, it came as close to their molten live sound as they’d so far managed. Were they morbid people we wondered. “Ha ha ha. Yes.” And did they smoke more drugs than any other Oxford band? “Is that a challenge? We’ll have a damn good go.”

### 5 YEARS AGO

**Desert Storm**, **We Aeronauts**, **Black Hats** and **Winchell Riots** were among the acts playing the **Oxford Punt** in May 2009. The annual showcase of local talent was topped by **The Original Rabbit Foot Spasm Band** whose riotous, drunken set has gone down in local legend as one of the great Punt sets of all time. Other acts playing that night included **Mary’s Garden**, **Dial F For Frankenstein**, **Bethany Weimers**, **Spiral 25**, **Matt Kilford** and **From Here We Run**. Dial F were also that month’s *Nightshift* Demo of the Month, while Black Hats were the Introducing band.

Other gigs this month included shows by **La Roux**, **Holy Fuck**, **Gallows** and **Patrick Wolf**, all at the **O2 Academy**, though local music news this month was dominated by festival line-up announcement. **Supergrass** and **Ash** were set to top the **Truck Festival** bill, while **Stornoway** had been selected to play **Glastonbury**, winning the Emerging Talent competition.



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# DEMOS

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## DEMO OF THE MONTH

### PAUL EMERY

Sod summer, sod sunshine and be off with optimism, this month we're going to wallow in MISERY. So, a radical change their for the *Nightshift* massive. This is the fourth demo Paul Emery has sent us, which he now seems to have collected into an album-sized chunk, and these three songs are by far and away his best, fulfilling much of the promise he's thus far shown. Increasingly he's moving away from his mostly electronic sound into something more organic and bluesy. 'Berlin' is an underwhelming start, a maudlin shuffle that mournfully documents David Bowie's Berlin years over a hazy wash of synths and acoustic guitar picking. But moving on we find a far deeper, darker mine of gothic blues, notably on the excellent 'Polyphemus', Paul's voice moving from almost keening to a gravelly growl that's close enough to Mark Lanegan to make us get really quite excited. The nasty grumbling guitar and lazy beat add to the casually eerie menace of it all and at last Mark's voice seems to match the desolation of his music. And right now we feel transported to a cold, lonely desert at midnight with just a bottle of sourmash and the ghosts of all our past sins for company. Good work, fella. Don't wait up.

### AUCTIONEERS

We think this is Auctioneers' third demo we've reviewed and we're showing no sign of getting sick of the sound of them any time soon. The duo of Tom Ashton and Rob Stringer – plus an un-credited female backing singer – sound like a much more English take on The August List's rough-hewn backwoods folk music, punk-informed folk music with just enough dirt under its nails to keep it real. Opener 'The Sound & The Fury' is easily their best track, kind of like Seth Lakeman having a go at an old Billy Bragg track, though it also reminds us a bit of 80s folk-punks The Men They Couldn't Hang; it's vocally and lyrically bold and comes armed with a great chorus dusted with a little bit of magic by those backing vocals. From here the pair become more downbeat and considered, working best on the earthy, driving 'You Win Again',

but falling flat on the mournful, lifeless strummedown ballad that is 'Somewhere We Can Both Talk', which delivers the knuckle-bitingly awful lines "You say no man is an island / Like you got your degree / In advanced geography." Back to that first track again then, and a reminder that they can do things so much better.

### CLEVEDON

Jeff Wode celebrated being *Nightshift's* Demo of the Month not long ago by splitting up minutes after. Or possibly beforehand. Something to do with the guitarist not being arsed or something. A sad state of affairs really given they looked like becoming heirs to The Cellar Family's warped punk throne. While they (hopefully) regroup, here's something some of them did with some members of local indie-folksters Sweet William. The result sounds little like either band and is a deliberately glum affair, 'Rockwell MFG' a somnambulant stumble through a fog of mumbled blues-folk that's occasionally punctured by incongruous lumps of distorted electric guitar. We try and resist the temptation to shout at them to speak up and form proper words, but we know they'd just shrug and mutter something along the lines of "whatever, granddad," so we allow them to keep mumbling and drifting through 'Severn Sound', which vaguely promises to at least possess half a melody and has one line of recognisable lyrics: "I stole a camping stove". But just in case you're tempted to drift off to the land of nod, they stick a nasty burst of scrambled noise in the middle and again at the end. Kids today; no bloody manners.

### STEPHANIE KONG

Stephanie Kong – or Stephaniethelyricist as she's billed on her Bandcamp page – doesn't actually sing "Hello trees, hello birds, hello flowers," on her one-song offering, but she might as well, such is its fluffy nature. Actually, maybe she does sing that line; in what appears to be a trend this month it's near enough impossible to decipher any lyrics since poor old Stephanie sounds like she's been rudely dragged from her slumber to record her vocal part over a computer-generated herbal tea advert jingle while still mostly asleep and wearing her pyjamas. It's pretty and pleasant and dreamy enough in its barely-there kind of way, like Edie Brickell on a hefty course of tranquilisers, but we'd like to her what Stephanie can come up with when she's fully awake and performing a song written

by an actual human being.

### DON'T GO PLASTIC

Talking of herbal tea, calling your song 'I'm Too Vanilla' might conjure images of floaty-clothed hippy dipshits cavorting in fields and thinking about bunnies, but Don't Go Plastic are a bunch of spiky, effervescent garage-punk scrappers more inclined to roll the contents of said herbal teabag into a giant spliff and see just how munted it can get them before dispensing with it, swilling a four-litre bottle of industrial cider and trying to eat the aforementioned rabbit. The singer's got a bit of the Jello Biafra about him as he wails with slightly hysterical excess, while the song barrels along with good-natured boisterousness, climaxing with a massed choruses of "Hey, Hey, Hey, Hey!" and some screaming. It's all a wee bit silly, but when the sensible alternative is detox and self-denial, we're all for unwise life choices.

### K-LACURA

Still, you can be serious and still sound nasty and loud and like you're having some semblance of fun as the reliably solid (solid as in "can drive through brick walls without pausing for breath" rather than solid in the turgidly reliable kind of way) K-Lacura unleash (of course they do) a new track, ominously titled 'Counterfeit Freedom'. Because, like, you only imagine you're free. In reality, as in *The Matrix*, The Man has you right where he wants you and is probably sucking the life force from you even as you slumber in your amniotic fluid tank. So it's time to wake up and go to war. And the war will sound a lot like this: battering ram blast beats; super-shredded guitars and gnarly ogre vocals. Fast, loud, ferocious and sounding a lot like a cross between Pantera and Lamb of God as the singer bellows "Make some fucking noise!" over and over again. Don't try and tell us that's some kind of bad thing. BECAUSE WE CAN'T HEAR YOU!

### CARRION DECAY

Just in case you think *Nightshift* will give any old heavy metal bollocks a good review as long as it's loud and fast and about bloody warfare and decapitated priests or something, here's some that isn't very good. Despite having a moniker that sounds like it was culled from a Random Death Metal Bandname Generator, Carrion Decay, from Banbury, are a bunch of soft shites when it comes to the crunch - or lack of. Abysmal recording quality is no excuse for riffs that Stryper would consider beneath them and vocals that want to be a rampaging Uruk-Hai but sound more like a toddler choking on a rusk. Back to playing *Halo* chaps, don't bother us again, else it'll be your rotting corpses the crows are pecking at next time.

*Send demos for review to: Nightshift, PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU, or email links to [nightshift@oxfordmusic.net](mailto:nightshift@oxfordmusic.net), clearly marked Demos. **IMPORTANT:** no review without a contact address and phone number; no more than four tracks on a demo please. If you can't handle criticism, please don't send us your demo.*

## BOON, MEW & WOOSTER

The impending summer seems to have infected the minds and moods of at least one of this month's demo pile. This lot seem to have the carefree air of happy campers with the swinging, swaying massed campfire singalong of 'The Sun', which seems to nab half its tune at least from 'On Top of Old Smoky' and carousels along on the back of a jovial harmonica melody and some upbeat close harmony singing. 'Lightning Strike' is, on the face of it, a turn for the darker, a real old-school rockabilly rumble, partway between a young Elvis, Eddie Cochran and Springsteen's 'State Trooper', but even this canters along with a sense of positivity, like it's chuffed that Jake Bugg has made it popular with the other kids in the playground at last. Add in the scrappy but lively skiffle of 'Only Uke N Save Me' and we can even forgive the soppy 60s soft-rock shite of 'What Did You Do To Me?', which could be something Mungo Jerry or Cat Stevens forgot to flush away in the studio toilets. Just this once, mind.

## THE DEMO DUMPER

### THOMAS JAMES

Our forgiving mood can't last of course. Thomas James describes himself as "a genre-defying performer," blissfully unaware that he sounds an awful lot like David Gray much of the time. Is David Gray a genre all by himself, or does he fit into the "insipid, soulless utter bollocks" category? A category shared with the likes of Simply Red, whom Thomas also resembles at times. Christ, we're really selling him here, aren't we. How about we throw in a casual "a cross between sub-Van Morrison bollocks and tenth-rate Stevie Wonder arse seepage. With a side order of four-day-old boiled onions." Chances are The Wanted would laugh 'In Love & War' out of the room for being just a bit too insipid and manufactured, while '1989' would get its sorry arse kicked by Scouting For Girls in a Who's the Most Punk Rock competition. This is music that doesn't so much blast out of the speakers as leak like thin, fetid bin juice, enchanting menopausal simpletons with its sickly pheromones. It is music that deserves to be killed. Whether that is done painlessly or with a ferocity its perpetrator couldn't even comprehend is unimportant. All that matters is that it dies, preferably before it breeds, or before we vomit copiously and uncontrollably all over our computer keyboard.



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Fri 13th June • £7 adv  
**It's All About**  
**The Music Presents...**  
**North East Corridor**  
+ Rushill  
+ Lies of Elizabeth  
+ Adam McMillan

Sat 14th June • £8 adv  
7pm - 10pm  
**Andy Jordan**

Fri 20th June • £7 adv  
6pm - 10pm  
**It's All About**  
**The Music Presents...**  
**The Mechanisms**  
+ Megan Henwood  
+ Vienna Ditto  
+ The Other Dramas

Thurs 26th June • £12.50 adv  
6pm - 10pm  
**Parquet Courts**

Sat 28th June • £7 adv  
6.30pm - 11pm  
**Skeletor ft. Salvage**  
+ The One Hundred  
+ Dead Mesa  
+ K-Lacura + Retribution

Weds 9th July • £15 adv  
**The Dandy Warhols**

Thurs 10th July **SOLD OUT**  
**James**

Fri 18th July • £9 adv / £25 VIP  
6pm - 10pm  
**Mike Dignam**

Fri 8th Aug • £20 adv  
**NOFX**  
Only UK Club show this year

Fri 15th Aug • £10 adv  
6pm - 11pm  
**Skeletor ft.**  
**Karma To Burn**  
+ Desert Storm  
+ Hatemail  
+ Evavoid + Overlord

Thurs 9th Sept • £10 adv  
**Cate Le Bon**

Sat 13th Sept • £10 adv  
6.30pm - 10pm  
**The Doors Alive**

Sat 21st Sept • £15 adv  
**The Magic Numbers**

Fri 3rd Oct • £20 adv  
7pm - 10pm  
**From The Jam**  
'Setting Sons'  
35th Anniversary Tour

Sat 4th Oct • £13 adv  
6.30pm - 10pm • Show starts 7pm  
**Ultimate Genesis**

Thurs 9th Oct • £15 adv  
**Nine Below Zero**

Thurs 16th Oct • £15 adv  
**The Orb**

Fri 17th Oct • £11 adv  
6.30pm - 10pm  
**Guns2Roses &**  
**Metallica Reloaded**

Mon 20th Oct • £22 adv  
**Heather Peace**

Sun 26th Oct • £14 adv  
**Kids In**  
**Glass Houses**

Sat 1st Nov • £11 adv  
6.30pm - 10pm  
**The Smyths**  
'Hatful of Hollow' 30th Anniversary

Fri 7th Nov • £17.50 adv  
6pm - 10pm  
**Band Of Skulls**

Sat 15th Nov • £8.50 adv  
6.30pm - 10pm  
**Saedly Dorus and**  
**the Hoolie Band**

Sun 16th Nov • £10 adv  
**Boy & Bear**

Sat 6th Dec • £10 adv  
6.30pm - 10pm • on stage 8pm  
**UK Foo Fighters**

Fri 12th Dec • £26 adv  
6pm - 10pm  
**Saxon**  
35th Anniversary Tour

Fri 19th Dec • £7.50 adv  
8pm - midnight  
**The Original Rabbit**  
**Foot Spasm Band**  
**Knees Up 2014**  
ft. The Original Rabbit Foot  
Spasm Band + The Long Insiders  
+ Special Guests

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

# ticketweb

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