

NIGHTSHIFT

Oxford's Music Magazine

Free every
month
Issue 232
November
2014

MAILIANS



“We enjoy the chaos”

Double drummer action from Oxford's new electronic music stars

Also in this issue:

Oxford remembers **DAVE NORLAND**
Introducing **KID KIN**
SEXTODECIMO return!
So do **GUNNBUNNY!**

Plus

Oxford news, reviews and previews
Six pages of local gigs!

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

THE BULLINGDON

NOVEMBER 2014

Friday 31st October

Halloween Special!
Peerless Pirates
Port Erin
Gemma Moss
Raezoe

Doors: 7pm

Friday 31st October

Halloween Special!
Rotation

Doors: 11pm

Saturday 1st November

Head Bangers Ball

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 1st November

Simple:
Leon Vynehall

Doors: 11pm

Monday 3rd November

The Haven Club:
Kirk Fletcher
Katie Bradley Band

Doors: 7pm

Tuesday 4th November

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
Stuart Henderson Quartet

Doors: 8.30pm

Thursday 6th November

The Retros

Doors: 7pm

Friday 7th November

Amber Run
Fyfe
Kimberly Anne
Pixel Fix

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 8th November

Nonstop Tango

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 8th November

Do The Ska

Doors: 11pm

Sunday 9th November

Humour Tumour
Comedy Club

Doors: 7pm

Tuesday 11th November

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
Hugh Turner Band

Doors: 8.30pm

Friday 14th November

Friday Street
Tom Waddington
Fraser Archie

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 15th November

Charms Against
the Evil Eye
Mad Larry
True Rumour

Doors: 7.30pm

Saturday 15th November

Zaia + Friends

Doors: 11pm

Monday 17th November

The Haven Club:
The Brew

Doors: 7pm

Tuesday 18th November

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
The Martin Pickett
Organisation

Doors: 8.30pm

Friday 21st November

Western Sand
Piston

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 22nd November

Bedrock
Oxford's Rocking Club Night.
Release Your Inner Dinosaur!

Doors: 11pm

Tuesday 25th November

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
Eddie Condon
Legacy Band

Doors: 8.30pm

Wednesday 26th November

City of Oxford Festival:
Death of HiFi
Black Tish II
The Fr3e Lions

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 27th November

City of Oxford Festival:
Southern Blues Fiasco
Matt Edwards Band

Doors: 7pm

Friday 28th November

City of Oxford Festival:
The Mighty Redox
Smilex
The Haze

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 29th November

City of Oxford Festival:
Vienna Ditto
Interstellar Emily
Aureate Act

Doors: 7pm

Sunday 30th November

Charms Against the Evil Eye
Lewis Scot

Doors: 7pm

Tuesday 2nd December

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
Stuart Henderson Quartet

Doors: 8.30pm

Friday 5th December

Dreadzone

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 6th December

Church of the Heavy

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 6th December

Simple:
Pangaea (Hessle Audio)

Doors: 11pm

Sunday 7th December

Buried in Smoke
Xmas Weekender

Doors: 1.30pm

Monday 8th December

The Haven Club:
Oli Brown's RavenEye

Doors: 7pm

Tuesday 9th December

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
Alvin Roy's Reeds Unlimited

Doors: 8.30pm

Wednesday 10th December

STEAMROLLER

With Special Guests

Roy Young/Dave Smith
Johnny Barry/Mark Freeman/Rory Evans

Doors: 7pm

Friday 12th December

The Lost Arts
Sea Stacks

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 13th December

Autumn Saints

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 13th December

Bedrock
Oxford's Rocking Club Night.
Release Your Inner Dinosaur!

Doors: 11pm

Tuesday 16th December

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
Hugh Turner Band

Doors: 8.30pm

Thursday 18th December

It's All About the Music
Christmas Bash!

Doors: 7pm

Friday 19th December

Crows
EP Launch

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 20th December

The Beat

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 20th December

Simple & HouseWurk:
Grant Nelson

Doors: 11pm

Tuesday 23rd December

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
Stuart Henderson Quartet

Doors: 8.30pm

Saturday 27th December

White Magic Sound
House of Roots

Doors: 11pm

Tuesday 30th December

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
Guitar Summit

Doors: 8.30pm

Tuesday 6th January

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
The Rory McInroy Quartet

Doors: 8.30pm

Tuesday 13th January

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
The Martin Pickett
Organisation

Doors: 8.30pm

Tuesday 20th January

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
Alvin Roy's Reeds Unlimited

Doors: 8.30pm

Tuesday 27th January

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
Guitar Summit

Doors: 8.30pm

Saturday 7th February

Drew Holcomb (Duo)

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 7th February

Simple:
Midland

Doors: 11pm

Wednesday 11th March

Tragedy - A Metal Tribute
to The Bee Gees & Beyond

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 14th March

Simple:
Ben UFO

Doors: 11pm

Sunday 22nd March

The Selector
The Tuts

Doors: 7pm

Monday 23rd March

The Haven Club:
Stephen Dale Petit

Doors: 7pm

Monday 30th March

The Haven Club:
Ben Poole

Doors: 7.30pm

Monday 30th April

The Haven Club:
Earl Thomas

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 30th April

Simple:
Pearson Sound

Doors: 11pm

Monday 8th June

The Haven Club:
Laurence Jones

Doors: 7pm

JAM SESSION
FREE EVERY THURSDAY
FROM 8.30PM



NEWS

Nightshift: PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU

Phone: 01865 372255 email: nightshift@oxfordmusic.net

Online: nightshift.oxfordmusic.net



PHILIP GUY DAVIS has announced his retirement from running the **Famous Monday Blues**, bringing to an end a career spanning 50 years in the music business. Philip, 78, has suffered ill health for a while now, and bowed out with a final Famous Monday Blues show at The Jericho Tavern at the end of September, a date which

coincidentally marked his 50th anniversary working in music and 30 years running the renowned blues club. Guests for the night were Never The Bride, regular visitors to the FMB over the years and who played at the club's 20th anniversary party in 2004.

Having started out running clubs in Cheltenham and London, working with the likes of Kenny Ball, Tommy Steel and Alexis Korner, Philip – nicknamed Silver Phil on account of his long, white hair – moved to Oxford in the 1980s and, with his American contacts, helped book bands for the blues nights at The Red Lion in Gloucester Green with Bob Foley. Over the years the FMB, run by Phil along with the late Tony Jezzard until a few years ago, has moved around town, including stints at The Bullingdon, before finding its most recent home at the Jericho, over the decades bringing acts from across Europe, America and Australia as well as generations of

UK blues acts. It is hoped the club with continue under the stewardship of Sylvia Summers and Ady Cox. Talking to *Nightshift* after his retirement show, Phil said, "I'm being forcibly retired I'm afraid; I've not been well and it's all come to an abrupt halt. It's terribly sad but they put on a lovely party from me and I've had so many good wishes from around the world. "If I had to pick one single

highlight from all that time running the Monday Blues it would be when Chaka Khan came and played for our Christmas Party at the Bullingdon. I was told if I got her a decent bottle of champagne – a really decent bottle – she would come and sing but they wouldn't say for how long. In the end she just kept on going. It was lovely, a great Christmas present."

Phil was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2014 British Blues Awards (*pictured*). *Nightshift* wishes him all the very best of health in his retirement.

THE OXFORD CITY FESTIVAL returns to take over venues across Oxford in the last week of November. Featuring over 100 acts across nine venues from the 24th-29th November, the event covers pretty much every genre of music, from rock, indie, metal, hip hop and punk to folk, jazz, blues and funk. Venues involved include the

O2 Academy, The Wheatsheaf, The Bullingdon, The Cellar, The Jericho Tavern, The Corridor, The Marsh Harrier, James Street Tavern and The Bear. This year's festival is dedicated to the late Dave Norland. Tickets for all gigs on during the week are available from Wegottickets.com. See this month's gig guide for a full list of every gig in the festival line-up.

PADDOX launch their debut album with a show at The Old Fire Station this month. The band, formed by former Trophy Wife drummer Kit Monteith, release 'Aphrodisiaque' on Bear On A Bicycle Records on the 1st December. The album will come in a special concrete sleeve. The launch gig takes place on the 29th November. More details at bearonabicycle.co.uk.

TRUCK FESTIVAL has been nominated for three awards at the UK Festival Awards. Truck, widely regarded as a pioneer of small festivals in the UK, is up for Best Small Festival, Best Toilets and The Grassroots Festival Award. Festival Director James Goodall said, "With the history that Truck has as a groundbreaking small festival it means the world to us to continue this tradition into 2014, by being nominated for The Best Small Festival and The Grassroots Festival Award in particular."

DAVE NORLAND 1974-2014



also quick to recognise Dave's contribution to his band's early career. "Dave was one of those people that just made things happen. When I first arrived in Oxford with the Mystics he released our first single on Backbeat; the next night it was on the Radio 1 Evening Session, and within a few weeks the band was signed to Fontana. I went straight back to him with the first Supergrass tracks and he did it again. He had great musical instinct and was the real deal in terms of independent attitude with no regard for authority. I remember him as being completely intuitive and spontaneous, whether it was watching him hand stamp 7" vinyl labels with a Woolworth's printing kit on the floor of his Ifley Road squat, or watching him break into a record pressing plant window to emerge triumphantly with the first Supergrass singles under his arm because we had arrived late too late to collect them the normal way. Dave was a truly maverick spirit and he had a major effect on my own musical life and that of

the whole Oxford music scene."

Local musician and promoter and long-time friend Mark 'Osprey' O'Brien said, "Dave was an absolute rock to me over the last decade. He mastered and released my first album, which put me on a good pedestal from the start. Without him I'd never have been able to do it. When he came up with the idea of a radio station he asked me to be a presenter and I said 'yes' straight away. We had to go through so many meetings to get a license but he stuck with it through all the shit and we came out with a great station. And he was a good friend, he made everything fun. He was the most loving person; I'm going to miss him forever.

Hugo Makepeace, who worked with Dave on Desta*Nation, said, "he knew how to make stuff happen, he never stopped being on it. We'd talk about stuff, but he'd do it *then* ask permission. When Dave opened his mouth, I'd be listening. David was the Oxford bass line, the foundation, the engine room."

Dylan Davies, who worked with Dave at Soundworks and The Zodiac, added, "David helped people make music from nothing; he gave them the key to make music."

Promoter Mac, who also worked with Dave at the Zodiac, paid a simple tribute to his friend: "He was a top man, the only person ever to drink me under the table."

For *Nightshift's* part, we remember Dave's seemingly boundless enthusiasm, both with Backbeat and working with bands as a sound engineer. He was a man who believed absolutely in music and its place in the community. As such, he remains an inspiration to many, many people in Oxford.



SEXTODECIMO release their long-lost album this month and will reform for one hometown show to launch the record.

The band, voted Oxford's greatest ever metal band by *Nightshift* in our 2010 metal special issue, were renowned in their time for clearing venues with an astonishingly brutal blend of sludge, stoner-metal and hardcore, but were huge favourites at *Nightshift*, appearing on the front cover in June 2004, and, since their demise, have been quoted as a major influence on the current generation of local metal bands, particularly Undersmile and Desert Storm. They released one mini album, 'The Banshee Screams For Buffalo Meat', produced by Sevenchurch guitarist Dave Smart, in 2004.

The quintet will play in the none-more-intimate setting of The Library on Cowley Road on Thursday 27th November. Their final show was in 2010 when they celebrated The Club That Cannot Be Named's 10th anniversary at The Wheatsheaf. In an even more exciting twist, they will be supported by **GUNNBUNNY**, who will similarly reform for one night to mark the occasion.

Talking to *Nightshift* about the reunion and the release of the album, Sextodecimo's Tommy Longfellow – now part of Tamara & the Martyrs – said, "The album was recorded seven years ago with the two Bens from Winnebago Deal. For whatever reason – none of us can quite remember why – we let the process grind to a halt and it got shelved. Around a year or so ago we remembered its possible existence and set out on a quest to find it. The tapes turned up under a pile of boxes in Ben Perrier's dad's spare room and we gave it to (A Silent Film frontman) Rob Stevenson, who managed to mix it amongst his insanely busy schedule.

"We didn't forget about it such, but after the band split up it got pushed

to the back of our priority lists. We got pretty lazy towards the end, and it took a few years, and endless requests, to rekindle our enthusiasm to get it finished. Then it was just a matter of tracking down the tapes...

"Personally, I think it sounds incredible. Our live show had ventured far away from what we'd recorded previously, and we wanted to capture that on record. Looking back, I really think we managed it."

The album is set to be released as a limited edition CD on Lonely Linda Records, available to fans attending the Library show. Having established a reputation as one of the most polarising bands ever to come out of Oxford, Sextodecimo have subsequently become a touchstone influence on a new wave of bands, something Tommy is understandably pleased about.

"It feels pretty good to know that. We've had nothing but badgering from those guys to reform over the years; it definitely helped keep an ember burning whilst we weren't playing. It's funny, we've had so many people asking us to reform and put the album out; I reckon this show in November is gonna be packed, but I don't remember there being more than ten people in the audience at the end of any of our shows. Splitting up seems to have won us more fans than playing live ever did!"

As to whether the reunion will be more than a one-off, though, hasn't been decided. "We're all busy with our families and stuff. It'll be interesting to see how we get on in rehearsals and whether we can still write together. We certainly wouldn't want to keep rehashing the old stuff. Time will tell."

The news that grunge/hardcore trio Gunnbunny would be joining Sextodecimo just added to the excitement of the news. Fronted by Jack Goldstein, who would go on to form Fixers with Sextodecimo guitarist Roo Bhasin, Gunnbunny are still regarded as one of the best young rock bands to come out of the city, in their early days sharing stages with pre-Foals band Elizabeth.

Jack also chatted to *Nightshift* about the upcoming reunion gig and future Fixers plans.

"It's been ten years since the three of us last played together. I hadn't thought about it in years. Then, out of the blue, you wake up one morning, five stone lighter, and say to yourself 'I wanna listen to all of my Fu Manchu records and smash stuff'. I think it correlates with being lost, or at least being comfortable with being lost. We were kids in a small village just outside of Witney singing about muscle cars, 80s Hollywood actors and road movies; all I did was watch horror films, eat pizza and play keyboard drums. I'm a master of the keyboard drums. Seriously, it might even be the thing I'm best at in life. Fucking hooray for me.

"The new Fixers record is more or less finished; it's being mixed and mastered at the moment. We are going to give it away for free to all Nokia 3310 users. Seriously, if you have a Nokia 3310, then you will wake up one morning with a new Fixers record on your phone. It's our little way of saying thank you."



PINDROP PERFORMANCES celebrate entering their tenth year of promoting gigs in Oxford with a series of specially commissioned shows at Modern Art Oxford. On Friday 5th December they host a launch gig for a new exhibition of works by Andy Warhol and William Morris, featuring sets from Balloon Ascents (*pictured*), Rainbow Reservoir and Julia Meijer. Then on Thursday 11th December they host the Midwinter Drone Festival, with Petrels, Laid Eyes, Paddox, After The Thought and Lee Riley. Moving into 2015 Brickwork Lizards – the first act to headline a Pindrop show back in 2006 – will return for a show on the 24th January. Find out more at www.facebook.com/pindropmusic.

BLACKWELLS MUSIC STORE in Broad Street will be stocking a wide range of rock, pop, blues, world music and folk CDs and vinyl from this month, filling a void in the city centre market left by the closure of HMV in June. The store, which also stocks instruments and accessories, can also take orders for any albums not already in stock. On Thursday 13th November, rock journalist Mick Wall be at the store to talk about his new book on The Doors, *Love Becomes a Funeral Pyre*.

IRREGULAR FOLK host their Christmas party at East Oxford Community Centre on Saturday 13th December. The innovative folk club will feature live sets from Magic Lantern, Flights of Helios and Wooden Arms, as well as myriad other attractions. Tickets, priced, £10 in advance, are on sale now from Wegottickets.com. Visit www.irregularfolk.co.uk for more news.

MOTHER CORONA release a new

album this month. 'Reburn' is released on When Planets Collide Records and is, according to the band, "fifteen pure sludge anthems." Full review next issue, but grab your copy from whenplanetscollideuk.com.

THE BULLINGDON has two jobs up for grabs this month. The Cowley Road is venue is looking for an Assistant Venue Manager and a Bar Supervisor. Anyone interested should contact Paul Williams at the Bullingdon by the 10th November – 01865 244516.

CLEARWATER STUDIOS in Headington, is offering a free studio demo CD to any local bands interested in recoding there. Visit www.clearwater-recording.moonfruit.com for details.

TRAPS bow out with a posthumous EP this month. The band, who played their farewell gig at the O2 Academy at the end of September, have made 'Darker' available at soundcloud.com/wearetraps/sets/darker.

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.

Regularly updated local music news is available online at www.musicinoxford.co.uk. The site also features interactive reviews, a photo gallery and gig guide. Nightshift's online form is open to all local music fans and musicians at nightshift.oxfordmusic.net.

OXFORD BANDS looking for members or musicians looking for bands can advertise for free in Nightshift. Email your needs in up to 30 words, to nightshift@oxfordmusic.net.

A QUICK NOTE TO SAY, if you don't send us your listings, you can't complain if they're not included. Well, you can, but we'll laugh at you.

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A quiet word with

MAIIANS



LAST YEAR BEN GOLDACRE, the renowned physician, academic and science writer tweeted, “The genius of Gary Numan was the discovery that synthesisers must only be played alongside real drum kits.”

Ben’s rarely wrong about stuff, and we imagine he’d love Maiians. Maiians play synthesizers. They also have *two* real drum kits. While a lot of “live” electronic music can be a slightly sterile experience – watching a couple of guys peering at their laptops isn’t great entertainment in anyone’s (Mac)book – Maiians are one of the bands who buck the trend. Propelled by two live drummers, their gigs, the few they’ve played so far in their short existence, are compelling evidence that electronic music can be every bit as much fun and feel as alive as any other more organic style.

“I’VE SEEN PLENTY OF electronic acts listed as ‘live’ when it’s just a one man and his laptop scenario; I’ve no problem with that, but it’s not ‘live’ in the band sense,” explains James Cunning, one of Maiian’s two synth botherers, “the lack of laptops means we can improvise more and each performance can be different.

I enjoy the chaos.”

Maiians’ other synthesist is Sam King, who also plays guitar. If those two names sound familiar, James is perhaps better known around Oxford as frontman for expansive indie pop crew We Aeronauts, while Sam was previously producer, and sometimes co-host, of BBC Oxford’s *Introducing* show. James was also a part of The Keyboard Choir, the synthesizer orchestra put together by Adrian Wardle a few years ago.

The pair are joined by their twin powerhouse percussionists Matt Goolding and Callum Peaston, who have similarly done time in local bands. The quintet is completed by bassist Jake Swadling, once of indie-folksters The Cooling Pearls, and who is soon to depart the band and these shores to take up a university professorship in Japan.

MAIIANS CAME INTO BEING last year but remain a relatively unknown quantity on the Oxford scene having played a mere handful of gigs to date, including a show in March this year that was rapturously received by *Nightshift*’s reviewer who likened their mix of ambient electronica, drum&bass and rock-style

dynamics to Fuck Buttons, LTJ Bukem and Banco de Gaia (“We’d never even heard of Banco de Gaia before then,” admits James, “but it’s always nice to be given new musical areas to explore.”).

Their name is set to become much better known though with the release this month of their debut EP, ‘Tokyo’, on Idiot King, the label set up by local musician Michael Chilcott and friends.

The EP features three expansive instrumental electronic journeys punctuated by sparse vocal samples (from a reading of a Walt Whitman poem), chief of which is lead track ‘Lemon’ that could be early Kraftwerk being taken for chilled drive along an Ibiza coastal road rather than an endless autobahn. Further in you’ll hear the influence of Four Tet and Caribou.

While the electronic side of the music veers from dreamy to euphoric to steely, it’s those constantly driving rhythms that really take it to another level. While so much ambient electronica is held back by tinny electronic beats, this is a groove you can get seriously lost in.

IT’S NO SURPRISE TO discover, then, that Maiians came together because Matt and Callum

were both available.

SAM: “The main reason we started was because I knew Matt and Callum and we were in town at the same time; it was a happy accident that it seemed to work. I love the use of electronic beats and a lot of the music we listen to incorporates them, but there’s something unique about having two drummers playing together.”

JAKE: “The approach we take to writing songs is more in the style of dance music, lots of 16 bar phrases with many parts dropping in and out, and I don’t think we could have achieved that with a single drummer. It was a bit of a gamble when we started but now I’d say it’s essential, having two drummers. It’s not like they’re just exchanging fills or anything like that.”

JAMES: “I like the way we can achieve very subtle rhythmic shifts and touches that can give the band more or less drive. I was very sure that the two shouldn’t be playing the same thing.”

OXFORD IS WELL SERVED for house and techno club nights, with the likes of Simple having been around for a over a decade and others spread across the city’s clubs and venues, but rather less

so for live electronic music. What do Maiians think can be done to improve the situation? Is there even a decent audience for live electronic music in Oxford?

JAKE: “Club nights for house and techno in Oxford have certainly gotten better in the last couple of years, but you’re right, less so for live electronic music. We know that some of the house and techno promoters in Oxford are trying to put on live shows, which would definitely improve things. And just the fact that dance music is becoming fashionable again is helping. There’s definitely an audience for dance music in Oxford, this is evident from the Simple, Extracurricular and NTNS nights we go to and the Field Manoeuvres festival. There’s obviously an audience for live music, so we’d hope there is an audience for live electronic music.”

JAMES: “The venues that tend to be able to handle live acts alongside DJs as a late night entertainment option tend to be large, multi-room structures that Oxford doesn’t really have – and maybe there aren’t quite enough people to fill that kind of venue at the moment, though you can see from the success of the aforementioned club nights that there is *some* audience, and I think it’s growing.”

SAM: “Certainly from our live performances we feel that there is an audience for it. Whilst Oxford isn’t renowned for its electronic scene, it’s definitely growing, and although there probably isn’t the audience to bring in bigger acts, people are certainly receptive to it when we play.”

Which other local electronic acts are you fans of or who have influenced you?

JAMES: “The Evenings were a big influence when they were around, which was coincidentally when I joined Keyboard Choir. You could probably see a few similarities between them and Maiians – stage set up built around the drums, and I’m sure I’ve seen them play with two drummers at points. Also I can remember seeing South Sea Company Prospectus, Sunnysvale Noise Sub-Element and The Rock of Travolta at various points over the years. All incredible live acts with strong electronic elements. Also Chad Valley and the Coloureds/ODC Drumline collaboration at Truck a few years back. At the moment there a few decent acts; Theo Bass, After The Thought and Kid Kin immediately spring to mind.”

SAM: “There’s been a number of successful acts from Oxford like TEED and Glass Animals that have gone on to release really good electronic records; it’s great to see those kind of acts being able to step over into the mainstream.”

GIVEN THE DOMINANCE OF electronics in their sound, why is it so important to Maiians to perform live rather than with laptops and loops?

JAKE: “We all grew up playing in local bands so it’s a way of making and playing music that we’re comfortable with. Also most of us spend all day working on computers so when we come to make music we prefer not to stare at waveforms on an Ableton screen. We don’t want people thinking we’re analogue purists or anything though; we don’t

“Most of us spend all day working on computers so when we come to make music we prefer not to stare at waveforms on an Ableton screen.”

have anything against that way of making music. In fact, we plan to adopt more electronic ways of making and playing music in to our set-up, but the core will always be live instruments, I think.”

JAMES: “This is something that, for me, goes back to Keyboard Choir; I was really into creating something that can be so robotic – electronic music – in the live arena. Maiians feels like an extension to the feeling Keyboard Choir generated, although we have much more energy.”

SAM: “Certainly from my previous experience, when you use a backing track that is limited to a click, you’re restricted to that tempo. There’s no flexibility to react to the crowd or the energy of the room, and that’s something that’s really important to me. As Jake says, we’re not purists or anything, and we do use samples and loops, but they’re more for layers and not something that restricts our live performance.”

Do you think there is still a clear divide between live electronic acts and DJs, or is anyone properly blurring those lines?

MATT: “It seems to be happening a lot more; we recently went to see Dark Sky in London who started off as producers but now perform as a live band, and then there acts like Mount Kimbie who have a live band. That’s the kind of thing we’re striving towards.”

JAKE: “I’ve been seeing a lot of DJs play with a live set-up recently, like Gardland, Blawan and Pariah’s Karenn project, and Juju and Jordash with Move D, who play under the name Magic Mountain High. These have mostly been based around drum machines and synths and an improvised set. I’d love to play a live improvised techno set in a club. The hard part would be getting people to treat it as a club night as opposed to a gig, I think.”

CERTAINLY ‘TOKYO’ FEELS like a record that demands to be played live, an assured debut that belies the nervousness Maiians felt when they set out to make it.

JAMES: “We weren’t sure how to record initially, whether to sample it all and build it up electronically

or to record live. I think at one point we were going to do both. We ended up deciding on live though as we’d written the tracks that way. We recorded it up at Strawhouse with Richard Neuberg, who is a genius. He set up his live room in a way that allowed us to play everything live. I’m really happy with how it’s turned out, especially the drums. There are a few overdubs on there but mostly it is us playing live, so, yeah, other than a few bits we don’t have enough hands for, it is pretty much a completely live recording.”

SAM: “We knew we wanted it to sound a little different and distinctive, so we spent a lot of time finding the right person to mix it. There is a Polish duo who I’m a big fan of called Ptaki, who released a great track called ‘Krystyna’ at the start of the year. There was something that really stood out about the sound of their work, so I dropped them a message to see if they might be interested in mixing the EP. Fortunately Bartek got back to me and said he’d be up for working on it, and we think he did a fantastic job. He really brought a punchiness to the songs that wasn’t there before. So yeah, I think we’re all really pleased!”

And it’s out on Idiot King, another local DIY label to add to the list. JAMES: “It’s very incestuous. I think most of us are connected to Mike and Tim in some way.

Tim played with Jake in The Old Grinding Young. Mike played in that band too, and Salvation Bill with me, whilst both Mike and Tim also work with Sam on the IK video sessions. They’re a lovely bunch and very efficient!

SAM: “It’s great to have people outside the band who are really into the music and are really keen to help you push it. I don’t think we’d have gotten the exposure we’ve had so far without them. And it’s obviously great to be able to hold all of your meetings in a pub in Oxford.”

FOR A BAND DEDICATED TO the ideal of playing live, Maiians’ gig outings have been few and far between so far, but on the 1st November you’ll be able to see them live at Modern Art Oxford when they launch the EP. The band claim they’d rather do fewer but more special shows rather than trawl round the local circuit. What does the launch gig hold in store and can they imagine doing Pink Floyd-scale live shows in the future?

SAM: “It’s going to be the first time we’ve played with some proper visuals, so we’re really excited about it. A lot of the songs are quite cinematic, and lend themselves well to visual content, so I think it’s going to go down really well. We’ve found in the past that when we’ve had lighting that reacts to the songs it really complements them, so to use some visuals was the next natural step. “We’ll be using some of the content from the videos we’ve been working on, mixed in with some other footage, so it’ll be great to see how it goes down. We’ve also got some new material that’ll be heard for the first time, so to mix that in amongst the EP is something we’re all really looking forward to.”

How about a live residency in a suitable club in Ibiza next summer?

JAKE: “Yeah, Maiians B2B Carl Cox in the main room at Space, six-hour set! But in seriousness, we’d like to play more club type venues like Corsica Studios and Bussey Building, for sure. I don’t think we want to be pigeon-holed into being something like an electronic act or a live dance outfit: we want to play live house and techno in clubs and we want to play indie festivals too.”

Tokyo is released on 3rd November. Maiians play Modern Art Oxford on Saturday 1st November. Visit maiians.com for more news and gig dates.

RELEASED

SEXTODECIMO

‘Sextodecimo’

(Lonely Linda)

During their tenure as probably the most extreme band on the local scene, Sextodecimo were the musical equivalent of a Lars von Trier movie: critically-lauded, yet able to clear a room in under twenty minutes, and with some extremely unpleasant bits you wouldn’t want your mum to experience.

The editor of this magazine once threatened a dictatorial mandate that every mention of Sextodecimo’s name must be preceded with ‘the mighty’. Thankfully, he never had to enforce it since down to the last writer the *Nightshift* crew were as much in awe of their monstrous sludge as of their ability to alienate most of an audience through sheer force of riff. Back by (un)popular demand, Sextodecimo have re-emerged with a long-lost album, recorded back in 2007 and presumably so heavy they lost it in a rift in the space-time continuum for seven years.

The album pretty much picks up where they left off with ‘The Banshee Screams for Buffalo Meat’ a decade ago, with just a few extra bells and whistles. Muffled, distressed vocal samples punctuate the gloom, giving twelve-minute opener ‘Vulture’s Military Soap’ a whiff of Neurosis (in fact, the middle section is a dead ringer for ‘Through Silver In Blood’). There are passages of moody ambience bringing to mind some of Justin Broadrick’s work as Council Estate Electronics or Final, but their mere presence mostly serves to emphasise the gaps between business as usual.

And business as usual for Sextodecimo is



unremittingly bleak, crushing doom of the highest order, with passages sitting somewhere between a slowed-down Carcass and a sped-up Sunn0))) . What’s most impressive about the band is their sheer relentlessness, clenching down until their knuckles whiten and refusing to let go. Only ‘Cervix With A Smile’ ups the pace slightly, slipping almost involuntarily into some stoner rock motifs before dropping abruptly into an Earth-style tremolo-inflected Western soundtrack. Before, y’know, smashing straight into a brick wall of feedback and noise.

If you’re going to level a criticism at this bludgeoning blunt instrument of a record, it’s that there’s nothing new here, either for them or in terms of adding a distinctive voice to the wider scene. But then gargantuan riffs from bands who sound like they’re playing their very souls out will always have a home here. A hearty ‘welcome back’ to – yes – the mighty Sextodecimo.

Stuart Fowkes



LIMBO KIDS

‘Graceless’

(Self released)

Eeeee, I remember when this were all fields around here, and a ‘single’ meant at least two tracks on a 7” record, or a tape (remember the ‘cassingle’?), or even the overblown multi-formatted CD releases of the 1990s. These

days, though, everything’s all multimedia and short-attention-span bursts, so Limbo Kids’ third single ‘Graceless’ is in fact a single, solitary track. Admittedly, it’s accompanied by a video, giving it more of a sense of occasion that an MP3 in my inbox may afford, but still... strange.

As seems to be an increasingly familiar sonic thing in recent times, ‘Graceless’ hints rather heavily at the pop music of the mid-1980s, while tilting at the clean’n’clear rhythms and skitterings of latter-day Foals songs. It’s exceptionally well recorded, performed and assembled; a carefully-pitched combination of bright guitar melodies, groovin’ basslines and gentle drum patterns. Level 42? Tears For Fears? Echo And The Bunnymen, perhaps? It may be all of these, or more modern references that hark back to such olden times, that have informed the sound of ‘Graceless’. They’re not shying away from clarity, space, or even the dreaded funk. Emotionally-scarred post-grunge catharsis this may not be; but it’s not unpleasant to hear high quality, confident and unchallenging pop music.

Simon Minter

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FLOODED HALLWAYS

‘Impervious To Hell’s

Fires’

(Illgotit)

Flooded Hallways’ modus operandi has always tended towards the ‘chuck it all in the blender and see what mixes or sticks.’ Such dedication to lo-fi adventuring means that what comes out the other end can be as much a chaotic old mess as a cohesive slice of hip hop, but we kind of like such a haphazard approach in an increasingly over-polished world.

For this latest in a very long line of releases the duo – Nemrot and Deeq – have gathered what amounts to a who’s who of Oxford hip hop – from Illgotit label honcho Elliot Fresh, to Rawz and Asher Dust to Death of Hi-Fi, plus a few London mates, like Tang the Pilgrim. This revolving cast keeps the album fresh when otherwise, at close to an hour, it could get stuck in the doldrums at times. Asher and Rawz’ contribution to ‘Enough’s Enough’ makes for a rapid-fire jam and the album’s highlight, while the authoritative tones of Evo Lucian make for a neat counterpoint to Deeq’s near-hysterical delivery on tracks like ‘They Think I’m On Drugs’.

While drugs are hardly the dominant subject matter, there remains a slight stoner edge to much of Flooded Hallways’ vibe, like on the loping, brassy skank of ‘It Don’t Really Matter’, with cuts by Death of Hi-Fi, although there’s a hint of pot confusion on ‘Sucka Toe’, which is a curdled mess with little apparent idea what it wants to be. Far more fluid is ‘Just Passing Through’, with Elliot Fresh on guest vocals, though even here there are moments when the freestyling loses its focus.

As is so often the case with hip hop albums, the desire to squeeze everyone’s contributions in means brevity is at a premium and a couple of Deeq and Nemrot’s own tracks could easily be ditched to make it feel more cohesive and compact, but there’s enough ragged invention on show to help ‘Impervious To Hell’s Fires’ stand its ground, and for fans of Mos Def or GZA, they could be the local act you’re looking forward

Victoria Waterfield



PHILIP SELWAY

‘Weatherhouse’

(Bella Union)

When you hear the drummer from a world-renowned band has spent some of his downtime recording a solo album, the temptation, even compulsion, to go, “aw, bless,” can be overwhelming. Particularly when that band is Radiohead whose two most prominent members have their own catalogues of boundary-challenging solo works to hold up to the light. It possibly doesn’t help that Philip Selway is one of the most genial men in music, and one who gives much of his time to working for The Samaritans and being a patron of local youth theatre and music projects. Of course everyone will smile and say well done and isn’t that nice and when will the new Radiohead album be ready?

And then they’ll actually hear ‘Weatherhouse’ and they’ll start asking why Philip hasn’t made more solo albums. He has of course; ‘Weatherhouse’ is the follow-up to 2010’s ‘Familial’, but while that solo debut actually *was* a genial, mostly acoustic moment of career diversion, this new album is far more fully realised, proof positive that you underestimate your humble sticksman at your very great



peril. Working with Adem Ilhan and Quinta, Philip has stepped out from behind his kit but, crucially, unlike on ‘Familial’ is happy to return to it when duty calls.

From the off ‘Weatherhouse’ oozes a rare sense of class. ‘Coming Up For Air’ could be a prime cut from a Radiohead album, with its ominous electronics, chattering beats and sense of repressed epic, Phil’s voice misty and distorted. From here he touches base with Mark Hollis (a big favourite of all of Radiohead), particularly the renowned perfectionist’s post-Talk Talk work, while on ‘It Will End In Tears’ his voice

dynamism, but retain the languid fluidity, finding an ambience pitched neatly in the middle between Fuck Button and Toro Y Moi. An unexpected treat from a band that started out as a side-project diversion from We Aeronauts, and one that sounds like it could easily eclipse its mother band.

Dale Kattack

TIGER MENDOZA

WITH DAVID

GRIFFITHS

‘Along Dangerous

Roads’

(Self released)

Electro-rockers Tiger Mendoza have been descending into darker industrial hip hop of late, but their (or rather his, this release’s incarnation effectively being a solo project for Ian de Quatros) new EP ‘Along Dangerous Roads’, a collaboration with ex-Eeeblee and Witches chap and latterly solo artist David Griffiths, draws on both parties’ influences of computer game music and soundtracks – with hypnotic results.

‘Now That Days Are Colder’ is a synthesis of rhythm and orchestra on a claustrophobic scale, like a mini-Hybrid. This theme continues in the swooping violin-led title track, which is punctuated by frenetic, impatient beats and descends into snipped-up nu-skool breaks like it’s the turn of the Millennium again and Adam Freeland will be along any minute to remix the hell out of it.

‘In Desperate Times’ is a Bedouin-flavoured heavy soundclash that would serve an

treads with surprising ease into Morrissey-esque croon territory, the song full of properly epic sweep at its climax. Certainly he’s not afraid to bare his soul a little; ‘Around Again’ is fully engaged emotionally, charged with uncertainty.

There are weaker links – ‘Ghosts’ drifts softly and elegantly but there’s little substance to it, but his tender touch works better on ‘Don’t Go Now’, all sombre reflection with its plucked acoustic guitar, cello hum and vocal swoons. At each turn it’s Phil’s vocal strength that grabs you. He shames most dedicated frontmen and if he doesn’t stretch himself too far, that is a talent in itself; listen to the starry-eyed ‘Waiting For a Sign’ and tell us this man doesn’t have the voice of a world-weary angel.

Amid the constant clamour for new things, and coming so quickly in the wake of Thom Yorke’s latest, low-key solo release, chances are ‘Weatherhouse’ will get a fraction of the exposure it so richly deserves, just something to sate Radiohead completists before the next main event. Truth is it is easily equal to anything his Radiohead compadres have made, and certainly far more accessible. Frankly, the depth and breadth of talent in that band is breathtaking.

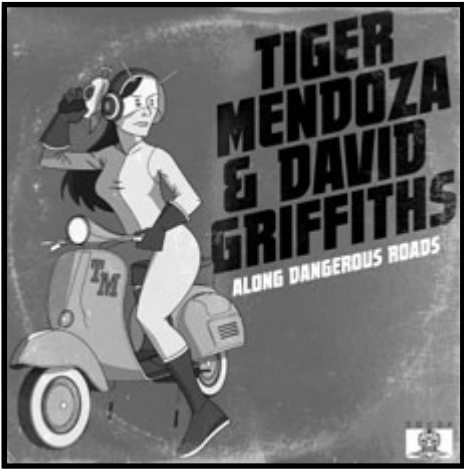
Dale Kattack

espionage thriller well, and ‘Eating Crayons’ is archetypal first-person shooter video game music: an Orb-like pulsating drone with bleeps that takes you through a dimly-lit shipwrecked spacecraft on an unfamiliar planet, stalking pursuing aliens.

On the one non-instrumental, ‘Literature and Life’, David’s hushed and measured vocals are underpinned by a plaintive cello while percussion batters around them. The slow and steady resultant tension is palpable.

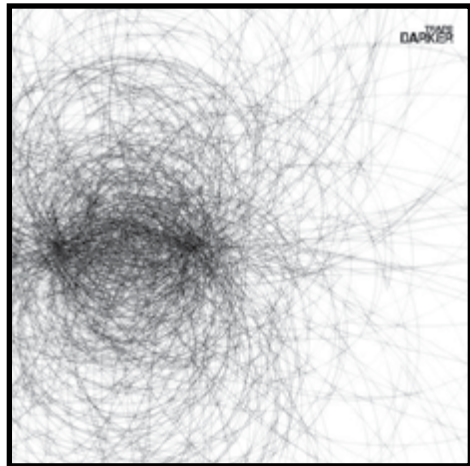
‘Home Is The Sailor’ is reminiscent of ambient electronica proponent Ulrich Schnauss with its relentless drifting of beats above layers of strings. The beats remain delicate as the strings are joined by grinding guitar in a compelling juxtaposition of the whimsical and the sinister. While video game and film soundtracks work with the visuals and action to consolidate the experience for the player or viewer, these tracks tell stories themselves; melody and mood combine into something evocative and compelling.

Kirsten Etheridge



RELEASED

Sponsored by



gotharama, it billows and expands by way of a serious overdriven crescendo into a towering climax, with Lex's soaring yet slightly clipped voice giving it everything amid the Euro-goth-grunge guitar storm. Further in they add hefty amounts of cello to 'Blood Is Warm' for extra, extra gravitas and repeat the old billow'n'build dynamic on closer 'Bore War'.

It feels like Traps, having decided to split, decided to put every ounce of effort and emotion they'd have expended over a ten-year career into three final songs. They might not go down in local music history as much more than a footnote, but we can safely say, they were never knowingly understated.

Dale Kattack

TRAPS

'Darker'

(Self-released)

Having called it a day with a final headline show at the Academy last month, Traps leave us with this farewell EP, a little online evidence that, while they might not quite have set Oxford on fire, they were here and their time among us was worthwhile.

In stark contrast to the prevailing mood in the city for fidgety dynamics and oblique lyricism, Traps were unabashed rock romantics with a predilection for the epic and melodramatic. This EP's lead track, 'Particles', pretty much sums the band up: from questing All About Eve-like

but we're the sort of cruel bastards who think Einsterdende Neubaten tended to be a bit too tune-heavy at times. Some types of music tend to make us want to break stuff.

The stand-out track from Phoebe's EP, 'Angel', is an epic piano ballad that sounds like it was ripped straight off the *Frozen* soundtrack, with its starry-eyed lyrics and rousing chorus. She sounds like a cross between Jewel, Alecia Keys and Feist, with a pure, shrill bird-like voice and you can just imagine a nation of Saturday evening prime-time TV watchers thinking she's a talented lass as they shovel another fistful of Pringles down their throats, but we're sat wondering when it'll finish so we can stick the Sextodecimo album on again. So let's leave it at that. Phoebe's good at what she does, and we're not in the habit of upsetting 14-year-olds.

Phew. Do you think anyone noticed we just completely avoided the issue?

Dale Kattack

PHOEBE ROSE

'Fledgling'

(Self-released)

We think that just once in a while we shouldn't have been sent something to review. It's going to do neither side any good.

Phoebe Rose's debut EP is a case in point. Phoebe, her publicist tells us, is 14 years old, has been writing songs since she was 9, was invited to take part in *The Voice* but was still too young and has performed as part of *Joseph & The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*. She cites Taylor Swift as a chief influences. *Nightshift* is a broad church



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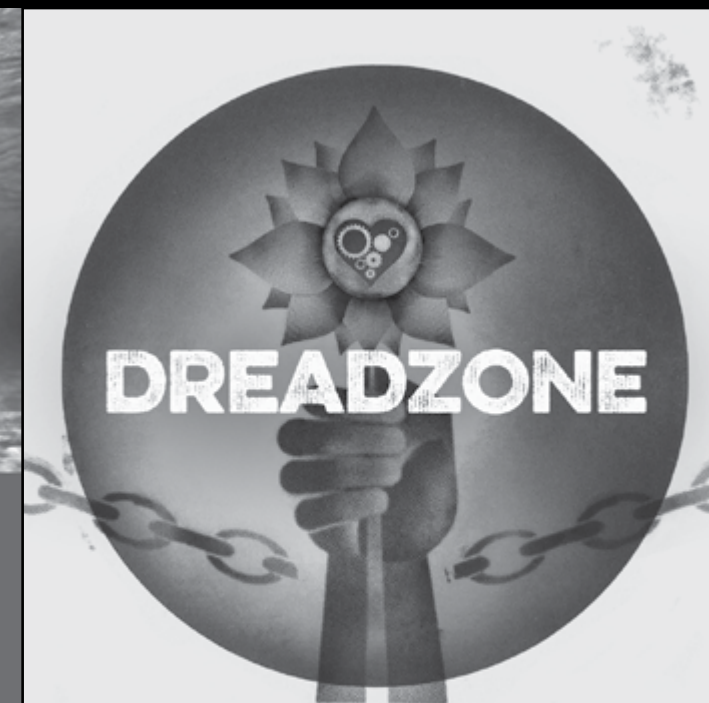
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G I G G U I D E

SATURDAY 1st
CATWEAZLE 20th BIRTHDAY PARTY:
Holywell Music Room – Oxford’s longest-running open club night (not an open mic night, as host Matt Sage pointed out in last issue’s interview – they don’t have a microphone) celebrates two decades of showcasing local singers, musicians, poets, storytellers, performance artists and pretty much everything in between and beyond. Tonight’s celebration party brings together assorted performers from the club’s past in the historic but suitably intimate setting of the Holywell.
THE BOOMTOWN RATS: O2 Academy – Bob Geldof’s punk outsiders reform and head back out on the road to coincide with an extensive Greatest Hits package. Always treated with some disdain by the press and fellow punk bands, they nevertheless enjoyed far more commercial success than most others and scored what was arguably punk’s first Number 1 hit with ‘Rat Trap’. Geldof is of course a celebrated public figure well beyond the band, not least for Live Aid, but while rarely celebrated in punk retrospectives, hits like ‘Like Clockwork’,

Monday 3rd
KIRK FLETCHER:
The Bullingdon
With The Famous Monday Blues possibly no more, it’s very much in the hands of the Bully’s Haven Club to keep the flag flying for blues in Oxford. With gigs like this it seems things are safe. Kirk Fletcher is rightly renowned around the world as one of the best blues guitarists on the scene, having spent four years playing in The Fabulous Thunderbirds as well as performing with blues supergroup The Mannish Boys. From his earliest days, playing guitar at his father’s church, he’s made the blues his life, brought up on gospel before discovering jazz, then Hendrix and Steely Dan. A meeting with singer Al Blake of the Hollywood Fats Band led to an introduction to the Thunderbirds’ Kim Wilson, which in turn led Fletcher to play with Charlie Musselwhite and Pinetop Perkins amongst others. So the man’s been there and done it, that’s for sure. As leader of his own band he’s released four albums, with a fifth on the way, and earned himself four Blues Music Award nominations. As ever, it’s in intimate backroom venues like tonight where live blues works best, so make the most of this rare opportunity to see a master at work.



NOVEMBER

‘Mary of the Fourth Form’, ‘She’s So Modern’ and of course ‘I Don’t Like Mondays’, still hit the spot, and they’ll all be getting an outing tonight, with Bob still a commanding onstage presence.
THE SMYTHS: O2 Academy – Smiths tribute band celebrate the 35th anniversary of ‘Hatful of Hollow’.
MAIIANS + KID KIN: Modern Art Oxford – This month’s *Nightshift* cover stars launch their debut EP for Idiot King Records, mixing up the ambient electronic soundscapes of Four Tet and Caribou with the more propulsive electronica of Fuck Buttons. They’re joined by this month’s Introducing piece star Kid Kin, with his heavy-duty instrumental post-rock and math-rock – *see main interview features*
HEADBANGERS BALL: The Bullingdon – Heavy duty tribute goings on at the Bully with local metallers Jabroni Sandwich, Dead Mesa, Aethara, Godsbane and Crow’s Reign playing at being Rage Against the Machine, Nirvana, System of a Down, Metallica and more.
SIMPLE with LEON VYNEHALL: The Bullingdon – The Bully’s long-running house and techno club night hosts rising producer Leon Vynehall, with an often offbeat take on bassline-heavy house and r’n’b.
TURF with RANDOMER + TESSELA: The Cellar – The techno, beats and breaks club welcomes back London’s Randomer – Rohan Walder – with his new jack techno and roughneck house, treading a fine line between inventive, distorted experimentation and full-on party bangers.
TRASHY: O2 Academy – Kitsch pop, glam, 80s and more at the O2’s weekly pop extravaganza.
EYECON: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Classic mod covers.
SUNJAY BRAYNE + 15-STRING TRIO: Tiddy Hall, Aston-under-Wychwood – The Wychwood Folk Club welcomes BBC Young Folk Awards nominee Sunjay Brayne, the blues/folk singer-guitarist drawing comparisons to John Martyn, Ralph McTell and Jackson C Frank.
THE HONOLULU COWBOYS: St. Giles Church Hall – Hawaiian tea dance with live music.

SUNDAY 2nd
RICHARD BROTHERTON + TWIZZ TWANGLE + BEARD OF DESTINY + MOON LEOPARD + CELESTE: Donnington Community Centre (6pm) – Free evening of acoustic music hosted by Moon Leopard’s Jeremy Hughes, featuring bluesman Beard of Destiny and all-round pop loon Twizz Twangle, among others.
FACEOMETER: The Jam Factory – After a prolonged absence from the Oxford scene, singer-songwriter Will Tattersdill returns to action with a new album, which he’s launching at tonight’s TIGMUS show, the well-travelled troubadour a wordy, offbeat songsmith in the vein of Jeffrey Lewis.
DAVE & THE TRAMP + LUNA GECKOS + PURPLE MAY + JOHNNY’S SEXUAL KITCHEN: The Wheatshaeaf (3.30-7pm) – Free

afternoon of unplugged music, with Ian Nixon and Karen Cleave from Les Clochards playing together as Dave & the Tramp, plus Grieg Stewart from Guillemots joining Ben Heaney for a violin, loops and percussion project.

MONDAY 3rd
KIRK FLETCHER + THE KATIE BRADLEY BAND: The Bullingdon – Blues mastery from the renowned guitarist at tonight’s Haven club show – *see main preview*
LUCY WARD & JOY GRAVESTOCK: Nettlebed Folk Club – Elegantly brooding folk from the 2012 BBC Folk Awards Horizon Award winner, joined by Joy Gravestock for tonight’s visit to the weekly Nettlebed Folk Club gathering.

TUESDAY 4th
THE COURTEENERS: O2 Academy – Another year, another Courteeners tour. You’re either going or you’re not and nothing we can say can make you feel otherwise. The pressing question, though, is when are Shed Seven coming back to town?
JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon – Free live jazz every Tuesday in the Bully’s Backroom venue, tonight with The Stuart Henderson Quartet.
SAMUEL RODGERS & REBECCA LEE: The Old Fire Station – Oxford Improvisers present flautist Rebecca Lee collaborating with audio engineer Samuel Rodgers.
OPEN MIC SESSION: James Street Tavern

WEDNESDAY 5th
STORNOWAY: The Sheldonian – First of Stornoway’s two celebratory Sheldonian shows, playing songs from their forthcoming third album alongside old faves – *see main preview*
NETSKY: O2 Academy – Liquid funk and drum&bass in the vein of High Contrast from the Belgian producer and DJ, enjoying a run of dance hits in recent times, including Come Alive’, ‘Love Has Gone’ and ‘Running Low’.
SUPERFOOD + HONEYBLOOD: O2 Academy – *NME*’s latest New Breed tour brings together two types of indie revivalism. In the case of Birmingham’s Superfood, the 90s Britpop sounds of Blur, Oasis, Supergrass and Bluetones condensed into a pop-friendly package that’s seen them rise from tour support to friends and neighbours Peace to headliners in their own right. Glaswegian duo Honeyblood, meanwhile, opt for a more 80s-styled fuzzbox of Throwing Muses and The Primitives, with a pleasingly lo-fi edge.
TACOCAT + RAINBOW RESERVOIR + EMMA BALLANTINE: The Wheatshaeaf – All Tamara’s Parties teams up with Pindrop Performances to bring Seattle’s Tacocat to town, the band pitching a perfect blend of summery bubblegum pop, surf-rock and 60s girl group sounds with sabre-sharp feminist satire. They’re joined by Oxford-based American singer Rainbow Reservoir, whose jaunty, gleefully quirky style of pop leans towards the Randy Newman and Ben Folds style of whimsy.
OXFORD ACOUSTIC CLUB: The Jericho Tavern – Megan Josephy, Andy Robbins and

Anastasia Gorbunova unplug themselves for tonight’s acoustic club.
FUNK’N’SOUL: The Cellar – Isis (no, not that Isis) host a night of funk and soul with Dot’s Funky Odyssey and Zander Sharp.
ACOUSTIC LOUNGE: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Open acoustic session.

THURSDAY 6th
MONSTER TRUCK + THE GRAVELTONES: O2 Academy – Gruff, anthemic heavy rocking in the grand tradition of AC/DC from Ontario’s Monster Truck, squeezing a handful of UK headline

Wednesday 5th / Thursday 13th
STORNOWAY:
The Sheldonian
Thursday 20th

SPRING OFFENSIVE: O2 Academy
Three gigs by two of Oxford’s favourite bands this month. Two will be an anniversary celebration, the other a wake. But in each case we should celebrate the music with equal gusto. For Stornoway two nights at the Sheldonian mark the fifth anniversary of their historic show there in 2009 when they became the first non-orchestral band to perform at the venue. It was a show that has almost come to define Stornoway as they played the gig of their lives, alongside the Oxford Millennium Orchestra, the event much, much more than a mere gig. Having already sold out the show on the 13th, they added a second – earlier – gig, and any spare tickets should be snapped up immediately. As the band record their third album, with producer Gil Norton, financed by a Pledgemusic campaign, they’ll be playing new material alongside old favourites, while once again connecting with their home crowd in a way that few other bands can.
And after that we bid a teary farewell to Spring Offensive, who furnished us with an indisputably superb debut album earlier this year – again financed by a Pledgemusic campaign – but, after an inspiring five-year career seem to have worn themselves out. It’s in the nature of bands to come and go, but the best of them leave us with a musical legacy that will last for years to come, so come along, celebrate Spring Offensive’s short but bright lifespan and then go home happy to relive it all on vinyl to your heart’s content.



shows into their schedule between supporting Alice in Chains on tour and heading off to open for Slash in Europe.
GERARD WAY: O2 Academy – Sold-out-in-seconds solo show from the former-My Chemical Romance singer, leaving the post-hardcore rock of his old band behind on solo debut ‘Hesitant Alien’ for a no-less stadium-friendly pop anthem sound in the style of mid-70s Bowie and Suede.
THE RETROS: The Bullingdon – The knowingly-named retro rockers launch their album, ‘In Our DNA’, playing covers of The Beatles, The Who, David Bowie and more.
CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre – Following on from their 20th anniversary celebrations at the Holywell on Saturday, Catweazle continues to do what it’s done so well for the past two decades, providing opportunities for singers, musicians, poets, storytellers, performance artists and more every week.
BURIED BY BEARS: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Post-hardcore in the vein of Lower Than Atlantis and Four Year Strong from Witney’s Buried By Bears, making their live debut tonight.
OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon

FRIDAY 7th
BAND OF SKULLS + BO NINGEN: O2 Academy – Grungy blues-rocking from Brighton’s Band of Skulls, with incendiary support from Japanese noisemongers Bo Ningen – *see main preview*
KATE TEMPEST: O2 Academy – Wordmaster Tempest celebrates her Mercury nomination and Ted Hughes poetry prize – *see main preview*
SWITCH: O2 Academy – Electro, house and bass with Connoisseur, Maxquerade and Archie B.
SKYLARKIN SOUNDSYSTEM: The Cellar – Count Skylarkin’ hosts his monthly reggae, dancehall and ska shindig, tonight featuring a return visit to town for Bristol’s Laid Blak, 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.
KLUB KAKOFANNEY with THE BALKAN WANDERERS + THE RECKLESS SLEEPERS + BEARD OF DESTINY + PUPPET MECHANIC: The Wheatshaeaf – Klub Kak’s monthly get-together brings eastern European folk and dance from Balkan Wanderers, plus psychedelic folk-pop from Reckless Sleepers, blues from Beard of Destiny and acoustic folk and blues from Puppet Mechanic.
AMBER RUN + FYFE + KIMBERLY ANNE + PIXEL FIX: The Bullingdon – New Faces package tour featuring Oxford’s own chilled electro-pop starlets on the rise, Pixel Fix. They’re joined by Nottingham’s epic soft rockers Amber Run, London’s spectral r’n’b chap Fyfe and south London acoustic soul singer Kimberly Anne.
PEATBOG FAERIES: The Cornerstone, Didcot – Traditional Scottish folk music gets abducted and taken raving by Skye’s Peatbog Faeries, heading off on a tour of indoor venues after a festival-filled summer, including Glastonbury and Cornbury, fiddles, bagpipes and beats mixing up an infectious party cocktail of traditional Scottish sounds, reggae, funk, African rhythms and techno.
DISCO MUTANTE: The Library – Disco, boogie and house club night.
BLACKTHORN + BEWARETHISBOY: James Street Tavern

SATURDAY 8th
AUDIOSCOPE: The Jericho Tavern – The



Friday 7th
KATE TEMPEST:
O2 Academy
Rapper, poet, playwright, novelist. Kate Tempest is all of these, but give it a couple of years and you’ll doubtless be able to add a few more strings to her impressive bow. In the last few months she’s been nominated for the Mercury Prize and listed among the Poetry Book Society’s Next Generation Poets. Which is a bit of a turnaround for someone who was kicked out of school as a disruptive influence aged 16. Now 27, the south Londoner has studied music at the BRIT School and poetry at Goldsmiths and looks like becoming an overnight sensation a mere decade or so after making her first live appearances at hip hop open nights and slam poetry sessions. Her debut album, ‘Everybody Down’, rides on simple, uncluttered hip hop beats and textures, but it’s her lyrical dexterity that’s her chief weapon – she’s a fluid, potent master of words, some sort of meeting point of Wu Tang Clan, Virginia Woolf and Mike Skinner with her hometown tales. Billy Bragg was an early supporter and got her on the bill for Glastonbury and she’s since gone on to perform at Latitude, Reading and Leeds, and when you learn that Chuck D is a fan, you know there’s something special going on.

annual festival in aid of Shelter brings Public Service Broadcasting, Silver Apples and more to town – *see main preview*
MOTHERLOAD + SANSARA + TWISTED STATE OF MIND: The Cellar – OxRox hosts Wycombe’s monsterweight metallers Motherload, named after a Mastodon song and boasting suitably giant riffage and choruses made from granite. They’re joined by Bournemouth’s melodic heavyweights Sansara and local teen grunge-metallers Twisted State of Mind.
IVO NEAME’S ESCAPE HATCH: The North Wall – MOBO-winning pianist Ivo Neame teams up with Italian double bass virtuoso Andrea di Biase, drummer Dave Hamblet and Loose Tubes saxophonist Julian Arquelles for his latest Escape Hatch project, tonight performing their polyrhythmic compositions as part of OCM’s autumn season.
NON-STOP TANGO: The Bullingdon – The Oxford Improvisers supergroup mix up jazz, funk, electronica, psychedelia and more.
HEPZIBAH + ANASTASIA GORBUNOVA + TOM IVEY + RICHARD BROTHERTON + BEN PILSTON + SAM EDWARDS + KARL HERRING: The Wheatshaeaf – An evening of acoustic singer-songwriters.



Friday 7th

BAND OF SKULLS / BO NINGEN: O2 Academy

Some bands should be wary of who they pick as their tour support. Southampton’s Band of Skulls are a fine enough band – heavy-duty blues-grunge and garage rock in the vein of Black Keys, The Kills and The Dead Weather, with a glammy T-Rex edge to their hook-laden songs, hirsute and beardy but given a sweet edge by bassist Emma Richardson’s co-vocals and, following on from 2012’s Top 20 album ‘Sweet Sour’, looking to climb another couple of steps of the rock hierarchy ladder with follow-up ‘Himalayan’, which proves, in the likes of ‘Nightmares’, that they’re poppy enough to make it big. But tonight they follow Bo Ningen on stage. Which is a bit like picking a fight in the pub with a pitbull armed with a Kalashnikov and a claw hammer. The London-based Japanese noise band have earned an enviable reputation on the back of incendiary live shows, cutting extreme psychedelic exploration and sheer volume through with cool melodies and leaving carnage and tinnitus in their wake. Intense, shamanic frontwoman Taigen Kawabe is a nominal focal point for the group but really it’s the noise that’s the spectacle, and good luck to any band following that.

DO THE SKA: The Bullingdon – Ska club night.
TRASHY: O2 Academy
EXTRA CURRICULAR: The Cellar – Techno, bass and house club night.
HIPSHAKIN!: **James Street Tavern** – A vinyl-only selection of 50s and 60s rock’n’roll, r’n’b, boogaloo, jazz and Latin.
DAMN GOOD REASON: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Heavy rock covers.

SUNDAY 9th

WARD THOMAS & THE SHIRES: O2 Academy – Back in town after their headline set at Halfway To 75 back in July, Nashville-based twin sisters Ward Thomas come to the O2 to promote their debut album, recorded with country music mainstay Vince Gill. Preceded by an instore set at Truck Store.
THE WAILERS: O2 Academy – The legendary Jamaican band, or what’s left of the original line-up (only Aston ‘Family Man’ Barrett remains from Marley’s classic band) return to town to perform ‘Legend’ in its entirety, so essentially Marley’s Greatest Hits. Barrett’s joined by former-Upsetter and renowned reggae session man Keith Sterling as well as his son Aston Barrett Jr. These days Dwayne Anglin takes on vocal duties, providing a pretty authentic Marley vocal style to the old classics.
WARD THOMAS: Truck Store – Pre-gig instore set from the Nashville sisters.

MONDAY 10th

JAMES: O2 Academy – Re-arranged sold-out

show from July after Tim Booth lost his voice, the Mancunian indie stars playing songs from their 14th album, ‘La Petite Mort’, along with hits from their 25-year career, including ‘Sit Down, ‘Laid’ and ‘Come Home’.
COOPE, BOYES & SIMPSON: Nettlebed Folk Club – Nettlebed’s weekly folk gathering plays host to a special concert, ‘In Flanders Field’, songs created from the words of WWI soldiers alongside specially-commissioned songs for the commemoration of the centenary of the start of The Great War.

TUESDAY 11th

ROYAL BLOOD + TURBOWOLF: O2 Academy – Brighton’s garage rocking duo enjoy life at the top – *see main preview*
SLOW DOWN MOLASSES + WE AERONAUTS + ROBOT SWANS: The Wheatsheaf – Expansive, almost orchestral folk, alt.country and post-rock dream pop from Canada’s Slow Down, Molasses, at tonight’s Divine Schism show, the collective over in the UK to promote second album ‘Walk Into The Sea’. Euphoric folk-pop support from We Aeronauts and folky electro-pop from Robot Swans.
JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon – Live jazz from The Hugh Turner Band at the Bully’s free weekly jazz club.
INTRUSION: The Cellar – Goth, ebm and industrial club night with residents Doktor Joy and Bookhouse.
OPEN MIC SESSION: James Street Tavern

WEDNESDAY 12th

WE LEGIONAIRES + MISSING PERSIANS: The Wheatsheaf – Moshka local bands showcase.

THURSDAY 13th

STORNOWAY: The Sheldonian – Second of Stornoway’s celebration hometown shows – *see main preview*
THE WEDDING PRESENT: O2 Academy – David Gedge and his veteran indie warriors return to town, this time playing 1994’s ‘Watusi’ album in its entirety, the Weddos’ “lost album” having alienated much of their famously loyal fanbase when it was released for its move away from their trademark wall-of-sound noise-pop in favour of a lo-fi aesthetic. With eight of the band’s albums set for deluxe re-release this month, expect a whole heap of classic oldies besides.
ELLIE ROSE + JORDAN O’SHEA: The Cellar – Gentle melancholy from singer-songwriters Ellie and Jordan.
SUPERMARKET: The Cellar – Pop, disco, UK garage and house club night.
BOO HEWERDINE: Fat Lil’s, Witney – The former-Bible frontman and renowned, Ivor Novello-nominated songwriter plays an intimate show at Fat Lil’s. After enjoying some minor chart success with his band in the 1980s, Hewerdine went on to write for and play alongside Richard Thompson, Eddie Reader, Martha Wainwright, Kris Drever and John McCusker, amongst others, author of cult classics like ‘Harvest Gypsies’, and a literate songsmith in the lineage of Nick Drake and JJ Cale.
CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre
OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon
THE PINK DIAMOND REVUE + THE OTHER DRAMAS + KID KIN: The Bell, Bicester – Last month’s *Nightshift* Demo of the Monthers Pink Diamond Revue bring their twisted psychedelic electronica to tonight’s Strummerroom Project show, joined by garage-pop duo The Other

Dramas and post-rock instrumentalist Kid Kin.

FRIDAY 14th

CIRCA WAVES: O2 Academy – Liverpool’s lightweight guitar pop newcomers head off on a headline tour after supporting The Libertines back in September.
BOSSAPHONIK: The Cellar – Latin dance, Balkan beats, world grooves and nu-jazz club night, tonight featuring a live set from funk-ed-up Ethiopian roots outfit Krar Collective, adding a strong dance edge to traditional Ethiopian music, led by Tamesgen Zeleke, a former student of Ethio-jazz legend Mulatu Astatke, his krar lyre is electrified and turned into a gritty, ancient rock guitar, accompanied by kabero drums. They have been dubbed The White Stripes of Ethiopia and for this gig they will be beefed up by a three-part horn section.
FRIDAY STREET + TOM WADDINGTON + FRAZER ARCHIE: The Bullingdon – Indie rocking in the vein of Arctic Monkeys from Friday Street.
THE FALLEN LEAVES + THE OTHER DRAMAS + LES CLOCHARDS: The Wheatsheaf – Rob Symons from punk legends Subway Sect brings his garage rock band The Fallen Leaves to town. They’re joined by garage-pop duo The Other Dramas and Gallic folk-cum-rock’n’roll veterans Les Clochards.
LITTLE RED + STUART CLARK + GUS HEWLETT: The Old Fire Station – Album launch show for the sweet-natured local folk trio.
NOASIS: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Tribute to Blur... no, Pulp... no, oh work it out for yourself.

SATURDAY 15th

LA ROUX + MEANWHILE: O2 Academy – Elly Jackson makes her overdue comeback, now going it alone as La Roux – *see main preview*
SAEDLY DORUS & THE HOOLIE BAND: O2 Academy – Disco and funk hits get the ceilidh and honky tonk treatment from the Hoolie folk dance band and singer Saedly.
MASSIVE: The Wheatsheaf – Melbourne’s Earache-signed road dogs hit the UK to promote new album ‘Full Throttle’, a suitably-titled opus for a band whose anthemic hard rock recalls AC/DC, Guns’n’Roses and Motley Crue.
CHARMS AGAINST THE EVIL EYE + MAD LARRY + TRUE RUMOUR: The Bullingdon – Poetic 80s-flavoured indie in the vein of REM and The Church from Charms, alongside bluesman Larry Reddington and jazzy pop crew True Rumour at tonight’s One Gig Closer to Wittstock show, in aid of the annual free festival.
TURF with HACKMAN B2B CROPPER + ANUSHKA: The Cellar – B2B set from the London producers.
FRACTOFUSUS: St Michael @ The Northgate – Experimental music, taking influences from Irish, Indian, Hawaiian, Native American, Romany, Eastern European and English folk music, and Arabic and Western classical music from the quartet, launching their new album, ‘Making Sense of Trees’.
TRASHY: O2 Academy
JITTERBUGGIN: The Jericho Tavern – Ragtime, swing, jazz, boogie and jump blues night, with a live set from seven-piece nu-swing band Captain Redeye and The Hoods.
MARK PIDGEON: The Swan, Aston-under-Wychwood – Wychwood Folk Club host Mark Pidgeon takes to the stage mixing traditional English and American styles, inspired by Steve Earle, Steve Knightley and Martyn Joseph.

SUNDAY 16th

BOY & BEAR: O2 Academy – Mellow, 1970s-California-style folk-rocking from Melbourne’s Boy & Bear, out on an extensive European tour to promote their ‘Harlequin Dream’ album, following on from supports to Laura Marling and Mumford & Sons in their native Oz.
PERKELT + LEWIS NEWCOMBE-JONES + SPOON THEORY + PURPLE MAY: The Wheatsheaf (3.30-7pm) – Free afternoon of music in the downstairs bar with celtic folk act Perkelt, Nick Drake-inspired songsmith Lewis and Leigh Beaverfuel’s solo Spoon Theory project.

MONDAY 17th

THE BREW: The Bullingdon – Rock’n’soul from Grimsby’s The Brew at tonight’s Haven Club show.
THE EMILY PORTMAN TRIO: Nettlebed Folk Club – Glastonbury’s folk singer and concertina player comes to Nettlebed’s weekly gathering in the company of harpist Rachel

Saturday 8th

AUDIOSCOPE: The Jericho Tavern

The annual mini-festival in aid of homeless charity Shelter returns for its 14th outing, boasting potentially its most exciting line-up to date. While always leaning toward the musical leftfield, Audioscope this year boasts two acts who can rightly be considered legends in their respective fields. **SILVER APPLES** laid down the template for metronomic psych-rock, anticipating Krautrock and inspiring the likes of Spacemen 3 and acid house along the way. Drummer Danny Taylor sadly died in 2005 but Simeon, with his home-made electronics, continues to take his music into the stratosphere. He’s joined on today’s bill by Stephen Mallinder, an electronic music pioneer with Cabaret Voltaire back in the 1970s and through the 80s, now going out under his **WRANGLER** moniker, keeping the flame of analogue electronica very much alive. Today’s headliners are **PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING**, making an overdue return to town after the success of their superb ‘War Room’ EP and last year’s ‘Inform Educate Entertain’ album, pillaging Pathe’s archives to fuel their heady, motorik soundscapes. Other highlights across a day of serious quality should be **MATT ELLIOTT** from 3rd Eye Foundation and Flying Saucer Attack cult fame; minimalist drone crew **TELESCOPES**, and divine loop-based folk singer **YOU ARE WOLF**. Flying the flag for Oxford will be one-man shoegaze noisemaker **KID KIN** and heavy-duty psychedelic rockers **THE NEON VIOLETS**. Great music, a great cause, and one of the friendliest, most adventurous crowds you’ll find; it’s already sold out, so if you’re still without a ticket, bad luck. Donate the money anyway.



Newton and singer and violinist Lucy Farrell.

TUESDAY 18th

JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon –The Bully’s free weekly jazz club plays host to the Martin Pickett Organisation.
OPEN MIC SESSION: James Street Tavern

WEDNESDAY 19th

EAGLES FOR HANDS + GAG REFLEX: The Jericho Tavern – Soulful garage, r’n’b and bass from Brighton producer Laurie James Ross in his Eagles For hands guise, out on tour to promote new single ‘Glass Heart’.
SPARKY’S JAM NIGHT: James Street Tavern – Open mic and jam night.

THURSDAY 20th

SPRING OFFENSIVE + SALVATION BILL + WILLIE J HEALEY: O2 Academy – And so we say goodbye to the local faves, bowing out with a final Oxford show – *see main preview*
POLLY & THE BILLETS DEUX: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Winchester’s twee, smooth-edged country-folk and jazz outfit Polly & co. return to the county.
CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre
OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon

FRIDAY 21st

MAD CADDIES: O2 Academy – California’s veteran ska-punks tour their new ‘Dirty Rice’ album, coming up to 20 years of rabble-rousing fun on Fat Wreck Chords.
MALLORY KNOX: O2 Academy – Big-boned alt.rocking from Cambridge’s Mallory Knox, out on tour to promote new album ‘Asymmetrical’.
SWITCH with RAM RECORDS: O2 Academy – Andy C’s RAM Records, home to Chase & Status, DC Breaks and Sub Focus, return to Switch after their showing here last year for a night of dubstep and drum&bass.
THE BIG TEN INCH: The Cellar – Count Skylarkin’s monthly celebration of jump blues, rock’n’roll, r’n’b and vintage dance sounds, with live bands, plus The Disco Shed’s Kerry Smallman and the Count spinning vinyl from the Cotton Club to the Caribbean.
LITTLE ARROW + BE GOOD + OWL & MOUSE: The Wheatsheaf – Divine Schism show with rustic alt.folksters Little Arrow, plaintive local folk-pop crew Be Good and sweet, stripped-down acoustic pop from London’s Owl & Mouse.
WESTERN SAND + PISTON: The Bullingdon – Classic southern-flavoured hard rock from Dorset’s Western Sand on tour.
FLIGHTS OF HELIOS + JULIA MEIJER: The Jericho Tavern - Daisy Rodgers Music night with spaced-out psych-prog-electro drifters FoH, plus Swedish/Oxford singer-songwriter Julia Meijer.
POD: Oxford University History Faculty Garden – One of three OCM-curated shows as part of the Christmas Light Festival tonight across Oxford. POD features tactile sonic sculptures created by Alison Ballard and Mike Blow in the secluded gardens of the Uni’s History faculty.
TWITTERING MACHINES: Lamb & Flag Alley – Kathy Hinde’s homemade musical machines as part of the Light Festival.
PLAYHOUSE: The Old Museum – Ever-changing hypnotic house music made from an automata made of Lego gears, levers and latches.
HEADINGTON HILLBILIES: James Street Tavern – Americana, country-folk and bluegrass.



Tuesday 11th

ROYAL BLOOD: O2 Academy

Things are moving fast in Royal Blood’s world. Last time the Brighton duo came to town was in February at the Bully. It was busy and the band looked like contenders. Nine months later singer.guitarist Michael Kerr and drummer Ben Thatcher have a Number 1 debut album under their belts, are favourites for the Mercury Prize and tonight’s show sold out in about ten minutes. And you can’t put all that down to the patronage of Arctic Monkeys. Seems a well-aimed guitar band can still stoke the imaginations of the gig-going massive. And Royal Blood’s aim is certainly straight. Steeped in grunge and blues, the pair exist fully in the lineage of Led Zeppelin, Queens of the Stone-Age and Black Keys – but they create a pleasingly thunderous old noise, particularly given they make it all on just bass guitar and drums. Kerr has a great blues holler, while Thatcher hits his kit with all the methodical violence of John Bonham, and together the pair resemble a couple of redneck truckers. In ‘Little Monsters’ they have one of those riff-laden anthems that’ll be cropping up on TV montages for some time to come, and if no musical barriers are being broken, no statues overturned, Royal Blood simply remember what it means to rock, and such simple pleasures never really go out of fashion.

SATURDAY 22nd

THE PRETTY RECKLESS: O2 Academy – If Disney had made a film of the story of Hole, scripted by a hormonal teenage Motley Crue fan, it might have looked like the video to The Pretty Reckless’s ‘Fucked Up World’. Courtney Love would be played by *Gossip Girl* actress and sometime model for Madonna’s fashion line Taylor Momsen, there would be lots of boobs and bikinis on show and the music would sound a bit like The Runaways if The Runaways had been imagined by Chad Kroeger from Nickleback. Tonight’s show is already sold out, folks, so don’t worry, you don’t have to go and see it.
BRIGHTWORKS + KANCHO: The Wheatsheaf – Uptight electro-tinged Afropop from local faves Bright Works.
SALVAGE + I CRIED WOLF + EVAVOID + GODSBANE: The Bullingdon – Warming up for tonight’s Bedrock rock club is a quartet of local metallers, including Salvage, inspired by Killswitch and In Flames; Banbury’s Dillinger and Bring Me The Horizon-influenced I Cried Wolf; recent Karma To Burn support Evavoid, and Nordic-inspired tech/blues-metallers Godsbane.
BEDROCK: The Bullingdon – Skeletor’s new rock club night plays classic rock and metal anthems and the best new tracks from the genre.



Saturday 15th

LA ROUX: O2 Academy

We were beginning to think La Roux’s Elly Jackson would never be back in town, so long has she been gone. After the success of her debut album in 2009 and its associated hit singles – ‘In For the Kill’, and ‘Bullet Proof’ – everything seemed to be set for a swift follow-up, with Jackson and her musical partner Ben Langmaid returning to the studio. And that’s when things went quiet. Then got a bit weird, and then went quiet again. There were rumours they were working with Nile Rodgers. And White Lies. Then Langmaid announced he’d left the band, and not on friendly terms. Then it emerged Jackson had suffered a debilitating stress-related illness and couldn’t sing. Five years is a long time in music, and even more so in electronic music; it seemed that even if La Roux were to return, she/they would be irrelevant. So it must have been heartening for Jackson to read the almost universally enthusiastic reviews of ‘Trouble In Paradise’, some claiming it to be the best album of the year so far. Certainly her voice is recovered, and while the 80s synth-pop references are still strong, there are more fluid funk and disco elements in the new songs, with everyone from Grace Jones and Carly Simon to ABBA seemingly playing a small part in the influence stakes. It’s pretty lightweight pop, but it’s heavy on catchy tunes, and those are things that never go out of fashion, however long you disappear for.

SOUND EXPLORERS: The Story Museum – OCM present an exploration of music and sound via a headphone nature tour.
TRASHY: O2 Academy
BREEZE: Fat Lil’s, Witney

SUNDAY 23rd

THE SUMMER SET: O2 Academy – Polished pop-punk from Arizona’s Summer Set, back in town after supporting Mayday Parade, now out in their own right to promote their fourth album, the follow-up to ‘Legendary’.
CROOKES + LAUREL CANYONS: The Jericho Tavern – Sheffield’s sprightly indie-rockers head off on tour to plug new album ‘Soapbox’, their third for Fierce Panda, following a tour support to fellow Sheffieldonian Richard Hawley.

MONDAY 24th

THE FLEUR STEVENSON JAZZ BAND + KEVIN JENKINS + SAMUEL EDWARDS: James Street Tavern – Launching this year’s week-long Oxford City Festival is a free night of live jazz and acoustic music.
SAL & TOM: The Bear - Acoustic show as part of Oxford City Festival

TUESDAY 25th

WARDENS + ENDLESS MILE + DAISY + SUGAR DARLING: The Wheatsheaf – Indie rockers Wardens, heavy rockers Endless Mile and electro-funk types Sugar Darling play as part of the Oxford City Festival.
DIME WEST + TOM IVEY BAND + BEARD OF DESTINY + PURPLE MAY + MOMENTO: The Jericho Tavern – Oxford City Festival show with groove-heavy blues rockers Dime West, plus one-man blues army Beard of Destiny.
JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon – Classic Dixieland jazz from The Eddie Condon Legacy Band, paying tribute to the late pioneer.
DEEP WHOLE TRIO: The White House – Oxford Improvisers host a 30th anniversary show from saxophonist and bagpipe player Paul Dunmall, bassist Paul Rogers and drummer Mark Sanders, who’ll be joined by hosts Pat Thomas, Dominic Lash and Lawrence Cassidy.
OPEN MIC SESSION: James Street Tavern
RECOGNISE: The Cellar – House, disco, funk, garage and techno club night.

WEDNESDAY 26th

BEARDYMAN: O2 Academy – Inventive human beatboxing from the former UK champ, using vocal loops to augment his virtuoso beatmaking skills, taking in hip hop, dubstep and drum&bass.
DEATH OF HI-FI + HALF DECENT + THE FR3E LIONS + BLACK TISH II + IAM MIKEY: The Bullingdon – Hip hop and roots show as part of the Oxford City Festival, with sci-fi sampling electro/hip hop duo Death of Hi-Fi up alongside rapid-fire rapper Half Decent and hip hop newcomers Fr3e Lions.
CHURCH OF THE HEAVY: The Wheatsheaf – The Deviated, The Mark, Sanity Loss and Kid Kin play tonight’s heavyweight leg of the Oxford City Festival.
THE RUSSIAN COWBOYS + PROD THE SHEEPLE + RUSHIL + RAYZO + SYLVA KAY: The Cellar – Oxford City Festival show with funk-pop and 60s-style rock from Russian Cowboys.
THE BALKAN WANDERERS + AUTUMN SAINTS + JOSH SAVAGE + CARDBOARD CASTLE: The Jericho Tavern – Oxford City Festival show with Balkan folk-dance crew The Balkan Wanderers and more.
MEAN MONTAGE: The Corridor – Oxford City Festival show.

THURSDAY 27th

SEXTODECIMO + GUNNBUNNY: The Library – Double dose of reformed local monsters of rock - *see main preview*
RALEIGH RITCHIE: O2 Academy – Actor Jacob Anderson – best known for his roles in *Adulthood* as well as the part of Grey Wor in *Game of Thrones*, dons his musical identity, banging out epic r’n’b and garage on songs like Top 40 hit ‘Stronger Than Ever’.
SOUTHERN BLUES FIASCO + THE MATT

EDWARDS BAND + REVELATOR + CAT SHAKER: The Bullingdon – Oxford City Festival show with local blues faves SBF and Matt Edwards.
PEERLESS PIRATES + DUCHESS + MAN MAKE FIRE + SEX WITH YOUR X: The Cellar – Oxford City Festival show with rum-fuelled indie-rockabilly seafarers Peerless Pirates alongside Township dance and samba pop crew Duchess, and bolshy blues-punkers Sex With Your X.
NORTHEAST CORRIDOR + THE SEA, THE SEA + JEFFERSON DUKE + ADAM McMILLAN: The Jericho Tavern – Oxford City Festival show with fidgety indie types The Sea, The Sea and more.
DENNY ILETT Snr JAZZ QUARTET + TONY BATEY: James Street Tavern – The local jazz luminaries play tonight’s Oxford City Festival show.
BEN AVISON + ROB LANYON + ALAN JAGGS: The Bear
TAKE WARNING + GEMMA MOSS + DJ PRISM: The Corridor – Oxford City Festival show.
CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre
OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon

FRIDAY 28th

BALLOON ASCENTS + THE AUGUST LIST + OSPREY & THE OX4 ALLSTARS + THE STRAYS + MEGAN JOSEPHY + ANDY ROBBINS: O2 Academy – Local rising indie starlets Balloon Ascents headline tonight’s Oxford City Festival show, mixing up Radiohead’s understated electronica with Stornoway’s questing folk-rock. Backwoods porch-folk duo The August List, and festival organiser Osprey are among the supporting cast.
THE MIGHTY REDOX + SMILEX + CHARLIE LEAVY + THE HAZE: The Bullingdon (6pm) – Swamp-blues veterans The Mighty Redox headline this Oxford City Festival show, joined by rabblerrousing rockers Smilex, making a return to action, and singer Charlie Leavy.
SWITCH with ETON MESSY: O2 Academy – The O2’s weekly electronic dance night hosts Bristol’s Youtube sensations Eton Messy, a DJ collective who’ve turned their online presence into a live showcase for new future garage and bass artists, hosting the likes of Pusherman, Maribou State and Bondax along the way.
ORANGE VISION + THE OTHER DRAMAS + THE SHAPES + PLASTIC BARRICADES: The Wheatsheaf – Oxford City Festival show with rockers Orange Vision, garage-pop duo The Other Dramas and 60s-styled r’n’b outfit The Shapes.
CHURCH OF THE HEAVY: The Cellar – Oxford City Festival show with local stoner-rock titans Desert Storm, plus Manchester’s bluesy heavyweights Blackballed, Germany’s Brothers of the Head, and local rockers Last Rites and Indica Blues.
LES CLOCHARDS + PUPPET MECHANIC + THE LOST ART + THE MILLER TEST + MARK COPE: The Jericho Tavern – Oxford City Festival show with Les Clochards mixing Parisian café folk with classic rock’n’roll crooning in the vein of Roy Orbison.
CHASING DAYLIGHT + ROCKY VALLEY + ANASTASIA GORBUNOVA: James Street Tavern – Oxford City Festival show.
THE MAGIC MANGO BAND + RICHARD BROTHERTON: The Corridor – Oxford City

Festival show.
CLAIRE LEMASTER + JENNIFER STEEVES: The Bear
INDIA ELECTRIC CO.: The Cornerstone, Didcot – Folk with a flourish from India Electric Co, recent tour support across Europe to Show of Hands, as well as Hazel O’Connor and Midge Ure.

SATURDAY 29th

AFRIKA BAMBAATAA: O2 Academy – Back in Oxford after his DJ show at the Cellar last year, the hip hop legend returns to town as part of a short UK tour. Indisputably the man born Kevin Donovan in the Bronx is a true hip hop Godhead,

Thursday 27th

SEXTODECIMO / GUNNBUNNY:

The Library

You have no idea just how excited *Nightshift* is about tonight’s Smash Disco show, featuring two of the finest bands to have come out of Oxford reforming for one night only to celebrate the release of Sextodecimo’s long-lost second album. Back in 2010 we named them Oxford’s greatest ever metal band for their monstrously dark and viciously loud blend of sludge, stoner-metal and hardcore, back in the mists of time describing them as “what the radioactive fallout from Chernobyl would sound like if it formed a band,” as well as “a whole new world of musical pain.” Back in the day they could clear a room of hardened metallers with only the hardest of gig-goers left standing, but years later they’re credited as a major inspiration for the likes of Desert Storm and Undersmile and plenty of folks are getting a bit frothy about the prospect of re-entering Sextodecimo’s terrifying musical world. We first witnessed Gunnbunny on the same bill as Elizabeth, a teenage trio that featured future-Foals Yannis and Jack, and they more than held their own, lava-lunged frontman Jack Goldstein possessed of the raw grunge power of a young Tad. Of course Jack went on to form Fixers (with Sextodecimo’s Roo Bhasin) but it’ll be an absolute joy to see them bringing the house down once again. Given the Library’s compact nature, early arrival is advised for this historic occasion. *Nightshift* has bought a sleeping bag and taken up residence under the bar already, just to make sure of our vantage point.



one of the great musical pioneers of the last 50 years. He was an originator of breakbeat DJing and turntablism; arguably invented the whole electro-funk genre; is credited with giving hip hop its name, and strived for many years to bring a semblance of peace and unity to New York’s street gangs through the power of hip hop and his Zulu Nation movement. He was an activist as much as a musicians and DJ, campaigning against apartheid as well as violence closer to home, and the block parties he organised burgeoned into the global music style we now take for granted.

LITTLE DRAGON + NAO: O2 Academy – Wobbly electro-house from Gothenburg’s collaboration-happy Little Dragons – *see main preview*
FRESH OUT THE BOX with STANTON WARRIORS: The Cellar – House club night with veteran breaks duo Dominic Butler and Mark Yardley.
VIENNA DITTO + INTERSTELLAR EMILY + AUREATE ACT + CHARMS AGAINST THE EVIL EYE: The Bullingdon (5pm) – Oxford City Festival show with electro-soul-rockabilly-blues duo Vienna Ditto, proggy rockers Aureate Act and poetic indie-psych popsters Charms Against the Evil Eye.
PUNKOLYMPIA: The Cellar (6pm) – Oxford City Festival punk show with Barmy Army, Twat Daddies, Hatemail, Trauma II, Four Minute Warning and Don’t Go Plastic.
FRACTURE + ONE WING LEFT + NUDY BRONQUE + STORYTELLER: The Jericho Tavern – Oxford City Festival show with grungy rockers Fracture and more.
BLACK MAX & THE PIRATES + BAXTER CURRIE: The Corridor – The final Oxford City Festival gig of the week, featuring late DJ sets from Northern Mark and Art Lagun.
GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES with THE BALKAN WANDERERS + LOST HARBOURS + JULIA MEIJER: The Wheatsheaf – GTI’s eclectic monthly gig night tonight brings local eastern European folksters The Balkan Wanderers to the Sheaf’s stage. They’re joined by Southend’s psych-folk outfit Lost Harbours, and Oxford-Swedish songstress Julia Meijer, a hit at this year’s Oxford Punt with her sweet, soulful electro-acoustic folk-pop.
PADDOX: Old Fire Station – Lush ambient soundscaping from Paddox at tonight’s launch gig for their debut album ‘Aphrodisiaque’, former Trophy Wife drummer Kit Monteith setting sail with his new band.
WHITE MAGIC SOUND: The Bullingdon
TRASHY: O2 Academy
THE PETE FRYER BAND: The Railway, Wheatley – Blues-rocking from the local veteran.

SUNDAY 30th

3 DAFT MONKEYS: The Bullingdon – Eclectic blend of traditional English protest folk, Latin, Balkan and gypsy dance with dub, punk and reggae from Cornwall’s 3 Daft Monkeys, a



Saturday 29th

LITTLE DRAGON: O2 Academy

For a band so loved and in demand, one that’s featured on so many critically-acclaimed and commercially successful music projects, Gothenburg’s Little Dragon remain a bit of a no-hit zone under their own name. Individually or collectively they’ve worked with Gorillaz, SBTRKT, Outkast, DJ Shadow and Dave Sitek, singer Yukimi Nagano being the chief in-demand Dragon. It’s after her that the band is named, for her in-studio tantrums apparently, though you’d not think that to hear her nimble, sometimes almost Björk-ish vocals on the band’s last album, the near-breakthrough ‘Ritual Dance’, and this year’s more atmospheric follow-up, ‘Nabuma Rubberband’ (part produced by The Weeknd), becoming ever more a commercial prospect with their r’n’b and electronic dance, hints of everything from Prince to Zero 7 infecting their grooves. It’s all relative, mind; Little Dragon remain a bit too wayward, restless and off-kilter to worry about bothering the singles charts much, even as they inch towards such things with each new album. It’s live where they come into their own, bridging the gap between gig and club night, electro-house vibes going up against bold rock rhythms and a propensity to go off on one like some old psychedelic jam band at times. After their last visit to town, almost three years ago, chances are tonight’s show will be a sell-out. Word is slowly getting out beyond the already converted.

band who’ve gradually made their reputation on endless gigging – including tour supports to The Levellers – and myriad festival appearances.
MAD LARRY + MEGAN JOSEPHY + MARK BOSLEY + PURPLE MAY: The Wheatsheaf (3.30-7pm) – Unplugged session in the downstairs bar with Larry Reddington’s new band, mixing up blues, country and rock, alongside folk singer Megan Josephy and gothic troubadour Mark Bosley.
JALI FILY CISSOKHO & NATUREBOY + THE JON FLETCHER BAND: Florence Park Community Centre (2-5pm) – Florence Park Community Centre’s monthly family Sunday session, with local kora player Cissokho teaming up with soulful singer-songwriter Natureboy.

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FRANK TURNER / KOO KOO KANGA ROO Oxford Town Hall

Here at *Nightshift* we can appreciate the humour of a novelty act. However, when, as in the case of Koo Koo Kanga Roo, the punchline is simply an appalling lack of musicality, the joke is lost on us. The music itself is an atrocious product of the Internet age: pre-recorded, poorly crafted beats and sickly, saccharine synth parts are dubbed with childishly yelled, crudely humorous vocals. The band completes the package with a series of increasingly inane dance moves which evoke the atmosphere of a toddler’s birthday party. Even those tonight who do seem to get into the set do so in a strictly ironic sense, and Frank Turner himself even takes to the stage to show his

support, describing the band as “one of the best live acts ever”, but for every one of Koo Koo Kanga Roo’s newfound ‘fans’, there are several unimpressed faces dotted around the crowd, arms crossed, sipping their pints in a vaguely disgusted fashion. Even so, we can’t help but commend the band as a warm-up act - they’re certainly high octane, and the end of their set sees the energy levels of the crowd lifted to a fever pitch of anticipation for the main event of the night. In the last ten years, hardcore punk turned singer-songwriter Frank Turner has developed a fanatical following, rising in stature from an unknown who once opened a show at The Wheatsheaf

to a stadium-filling artist whose most recent album, ‘Tape Deck Heart’, reached number 2 on the charts. In addition, most of The Sleeping Souls, Turner’s backing band, will be familiar to followers of the Oxford scene under their other name, Dive Dive, and they jovially point out that this is a hometown show for three of the five performers on stage, reminiscing about their first gig together at The Port Mahon, which only adds to the air of friendliness and familiarity emanating from the stage. As such, tonight’s show is packed to the rafters with dedicated fans, creating an electric atmosphere in the grandiose confines of the Town Hall.

Alternating between powerful rock and roll with a full band and soulful solo acoustic performance, Turner controls his audience with the masterful skill of a natural frontman, chatting personally to the crowd as if he was still playing to punters in pub back rooms. A mixture of recent hits, old favourites and as-yet-unheard new tracks create a well-rounded set, showcasing song writing imbued with a phenomenal sense of subtlety and style that lifts otherwise straightforward rock songs leagues above the sea of mediocre acts attempting to do the same thing. Turner truly performs to each and every individual in his audience, and as the crowd spills haphazardly out into the street at the end of the night, there’s a collective sense of having witnessed something very special. ***Tal Fineman***

PEERLESS PIRATES / VIENNA DITTO / THE OTHER DRAMAS / CHARLIE LEAVY The Jericho Tavern

Charlie Leavy, from Hook Norton via Leeds, falls neatly into the confessional-girl-with-guitar bracket, displaying the best and worst of that particular niche. Occasionally she slips into melisma and wailing over ragged acoustic strumming, but when she hits the right tone, as on ‘Patchworks’, she shows she’s got something worth investigating, a sweet, almost folky voice that she pushes just to its limits and no further, and a strong sense of melody. We’d like to hear more of her natural Yorkshire accent in her singing but with a more polished sound on her recent ‘The Best Damn Ride’, there’s undoubtedly better things ahead for her than opening a four-band bill.

The Other Dramas is a duo made up of local scene veterans Maria Ilett and Richie Wildsmith. With a stripped-down voice/guitar/drums set-up, they’re heavily reliant on Maria’s voice but seem unsure, at least for the first half of their set, whether to go for sweet and poppy, or all-out garage rocking. Turns out they’re better at the former: ‘Starlight’, about being abducted by aliens, is the stand-out, adding a well-needed dose of bounce to the set. If they need any pointers as to how much noise two people can make, they need look no further than Vienna Ditto whose balance between musical splendour and outright chaos becomes more precarious with each gig. When the pair aren’t laughing about

singer Hattie pressing the wrong buttons on the little box of tricks, or threatening to end the night in the JR as Nigel plays a guitar solo atop a fan’s shoulders or teeters across the monitors, they’re knocking out a snarling, glitterstomping synth-soul-rockabilly racket that’s held together by paperclips and hope but packs an almighty punch, their take on blues classic ‘I Know His Blood Will Make Me Whole Again’ still a thing of absolute wonder.

Peerless Pirate, unsurprisingly, dress as pirates, as do a sizeable number of their following. It could be a horribly kitsch novelty, but while their music is unabashed, rum-soaked roustabout fun, it wouldn’t count for anything if they didn’t have the songs to back it up. The Smiths influence is well-documented, best heard on set highlight ‘Bring Out Your Dead’, but they skitter through all manner of offbeat styles through tonight’s set, reminding us of 80s Balearic beat pioneers The Woodentops at one point, the Shadows a few minutes later, Ennio Morricone soon after that, and all three at once on ‘The Ghost of Captain Kid’. A great, strident cover of ‘Swords of a Thousand Men’ adds to the knockabout nature of the band’s show, while new single ‘El Gringo’ shows they’re as happy on the Tequila as the grog. Looks like The Original Rabbit Foot Spasm Band finally have a serious rival for best drinking music in town.

Dale Kattack

LORRAINE McCAULEY & THE BORDERLANDS Albion Beatnik Bookstore

Some gigs prompt questions the moment you’re through the door. Is this the smallest of Oxford’s myriad small venues? Probably. Is this the first *Nightshift* review from a bookstore since the The Punt used to begin among the shelves of the now defunct Borders? Almost certainly. And who is that dude apparently asleep in the corner? Of course he turns out to one of the band as became clear when Lorraine McCauley and The Borderlands settled themselves in front of the bookshelves to play.

One of their lyrics goes “Finally it all seems worthwhile, right places right time,” and it might be becoming true as they’re currently making waves on the Scottish contemporary folk scene and have

just been funded to record their second album. It’s easy to see why they are attracting this attention. Donegal-born, Edinburgh-based Lorraine has a highly expressive voice that can go through the emotions; it combines delicacy with a touch of huskiness, plus she’s got a raw almost soulful power when she chooses to flick the switch. The Borderlands are multi-talented and multi-instrumental with percussion, hang, accordion, glockenspiel, cello, fiddle ,viola and mandolin, plus Lorraine’s guitar. Not your usual folk band, they’ve been compared to a string quartet with some justification, as their rich tight ensemble playing leaves space for each instrument’s distinctive sound

CO-PILGRIM / THE AUGUST LIST / SWINDLESTOCK

The Bullingdon

Perhaps in tribute to Vienna Ditto, for whom they’re last-minute replacements, Swindlestock have slimmed down to a duo for the evening. It hardly matters. Dava possesses a better set of pipes than the tobaccoconists on Oxford High Street, even if he doesn’t have a harmonica case (“I should get one instead of a fucking Tesco bag”), and a cover of Townes Van Zandt’s ‘Lungs’ isn’t noticeably superior to any of their own rootsy folk. The jaunty ‘Sitting On The Stoop’ sneaks in an improbable reference to snorkelling before the complete contrast of final song ‘Let It Storm’, which finds Dava really letting rip.

While Swindlestock have scaled down for the occasion, The August List have scaled up. Normally a twosome comprising husband-and-wife combo Kerraleigh and Martin Childs, tonight they’re backed by electric guitar, bass and drums to give us a flavour of the fuller sound of debut album, ‘O Hinterland’. At first it’s something of a curveball, rendering the stupendously good ‘Wooden Trunk Blues’ – the set opener and a personal favourite – disconcertingly unfamiliar. A couple of tracks later, however, spellbound by the additional depth and force the backing instrumentation brings to their raw, dark-hearted Americana, I’m completely smitten, quite prepared to stand on street corners loudly proclaiming them the best band in Oxford. Chinnor’s answer to Carter and

Cash do get the stage to themselves for a while (“We let the band go and ring their families, so they can let them know they’re okay”), inspiring a mass stompalong to ‘High Town Crow’, as sinister a tale of claustrophobic small-town life as you’ll hear. Their accomplices return to provide backing holler on rollicking ode to moonshine ‘Forty Rod Of Lightning’. The only misstep is the cover of Jenny Lewis’ ‘See Fernando’ to finish, if only because they could put more faith in the strength of their own material to do the job. Also launching a new album are Co-Pilgrim, who immediately situate themselves somewhere between the American Midwest and the West Coast and whose tender songs wear their melancholy like a comfort blanket. ‘I’m Going To The Country’ clearly signposts where the set is headed, though with detours for the gorgeously slow and meditative ‘Come Out Alive’ and the prime Teenage Fanclub jangle of ‘Pushover’. ‘It’s Curtains For Me’ is the appropriately titled set-closer (“If you’ve still got the will to live after that, come and say hello,” jokes Joe Bennett), though it’s testament to their abilities that they somehow manage to pull off a percussion-free encore of Don Henley’s ‘The Boys Of Summer’ despite reluctant frontman Mike Gale being five audience-purchased whiskies worse for wear and struggling to recall the lyrics. ***Ben Woolhead***

talented, with the achingly poignant story of ‘Roscrea Robbery’ and as the ominous ‘Man & Machine’ staying long in the memory. Throughout she carries the lyrical theme that whatever the emotional baggage and however tough life is, it can get better; so, her song about being misused, ‘Stepping Stones’, is immediately followed by ‘Big Love’, about the opposite. The biggest contrast of the night, though, is Lorraine and the band launching into a rumbustious jam of an encore, revealing a hitherto hidden aspect of their playing. It leaves us wondering whether, impressive as they are, perhaps they’re too respectful of their lovingly-crafted arrangements and maybe should do more jamming. To see how that works out could be an even more intriguing gig. ***Colin May***

photo: Keira Cullinane



BAD FOR LAZARUS / INDICA BLUES

The Bullingdon

Recent *Nightshift* Demo of the Monthers Indica Blues have already started their first live gig when we get here tonight. We know this because we’re blown back against the doors by the downtuned bass, forced to retreat and review the rest of their set through the windows and the comparative peace of the ticket lobby. The sheer weight of their Iommi riffage takes us back to the

basics of bands like Eyehategod, and Grief. With guitarist John Slaymaker from Caravan of Whores shoring up the doom end of things, Indica Blues are going to be a mighty addition to the local metal scene. Brighton five piece Bad for Lazarus, on the last leg of a UK tour, are the kind of band you wish you were in, the freewheeling, skinny-jeaned antithesis of

convention, where the naked energy of The Stooges and MC5 has exchanged body fluids with droll English macabre and psychotropic pop. The resulting fever of long hair, sweat and compellingly unhinged adrenaline romps us through their debut album ‘Life is a Carnival, Bang! Bang! Bang!’, with the dark hustling jauntiness of singles ‘My Muddle’ and ‘Caught In the Twist’ the standout crowd

pleasers. Even in the slower parts of songs like ‘Appetites’ and ‘Billiards’ don’t let up, as they perp walk us into rock heaven. The fans are in town from London and the south coast, and frontman Rich Fownes, with his ex-NIN credentials knows exactly what shapes people want, but beneath all the mayhem this is a bunch of highly creative musicians working at their peak, and tonight is a celebration that the heart of rock is still very much alive, and ever ready to roll. *Paul Carrera*

DRY THE RIVER / GENGAHR

O2 Academy

Unfortunately for most of tonight’s audience the peaceful falsetto vocals are talked over by rowdy headliner fans during London band Gengahr’s opening track, but lead guitar and drums rudely interrupt, allowing the openers to take over the proceedings. Fluid new song ‘Bathed in Light’ builds slowly into an unobvious yet compelling chorus; elsewhere aggressive guitar interludes and heavy pedal-related fun weigh their floating tracks down to earth, which makes for a set both mellow and tightly orchestrated. Their sound is similar to Glass Animals with a hint of Kate Bush as they create ambient yet spiky lullabies. Dry the River have been away for a while but it seems their absence has only made their Oxford fans’ hearts stronger. The band have taken a slight change in direction since their first album ‘Shallow Bed’; new song ‘Everlasting Light’ has a catchy, indie sound and a very pop video that features the band members having their arses kicked by female karate experts, unlike their older, darker videos where they lay in piles of rocks singing their hearts out while water was poured over them, although arguably keeping with the facing-random-uncomfortable-situations theme.

WOMAN’S HOUR / FARAO

The Cellar

Tonight’s opening act is Norwegian song-writer Kari Jahnsen known to the world as Farao. Her delicate almost harp-like solo-guitar floats in a sea of reverb under her strong and intense vocals. These are beautiful, melancholic songs but somehow they still fill the room. Jahnsen has the power of Anna Calvi, but is balanced with a delicate sincerity that is really quite special. Woman’s Hour, however, are less about the stripped back and intimate; even though we’re in The Cellar, they’ve brought a big production; there’s a smoke machine, intro music, and 4ft high recreations of the pyramidal artwork from their recently released debut album. It all seems a bit much, and it makes me think the whole performance might be a tad overwrought, but I needn’t have worried. Woman’s Hour are a band who have risen to indie-blog stardom pretty quickly this year, but in fact they’ve been playing together for years and it really shows. They have the confidence and polished performance of a much more established band. On record they are sedate and controlled, like Beach House and Rhye, but live the whole band comes alive giving their reflective brand of dream-pop some much needed drive and energy. Tracks like ‘Conversations’ morph from rhythmically interesting on the album to full-on dance pop, and on the slower numbers like ‘Two Sides Of Her’ really benefit from the fuller low-end. Woman’s Hour are band that it would be easy to dismiss as “of the moment” but Fiona Jane Burgess, whose breathy and plaintive vocals reflect on loss and the darker sides of love, give the band the substance of a real pop band, not just a flash-in-the-pan indie sensation. If you want a clear image of the scope they have in their minds, you only need to look to their choice of cover: Springsteen’s ‘Dancing In The Dark’. They may only be playing the basement circuit at the moment but they’ve got the talent and ambition for far bigger things. *Matt Chapman-Jones*

EAGULLS

The Jericho Tavern

A relentless, melody-free sonic assault. Depending on your way of thinking, you can look away now; Eagulls might not be the band for you. We’re sure Ed Sheeran will be along soon with some more asinine cod-soul guff to sate what morsel remains of your sense of taste. For everyone else, let’s just repeat that: a relentless, melody-free sonic assault. Feel the warm, shrapnel-infused treacly goodness of that wash over you. Then go and tend to your wounds. Eagulls, hailing from Leeds, look a complete mess, like five random twenty-something thrown together and told to form a band. Singer George Mitchell looks like he’s fallen out of Steve Strange’s Blitz club circa 1980. The drummer looks like Gary Numan when he dyed his hair blonde and pretended to be a machman. One of the guitarists should probably be in a metal band. The other seems to have got lost on his way to a geography lecture. But put them together musically and they’re a clanging, churning, superfuzzed, screaming joy of a band. Mitchell’s near-hysterical scream,

which he maintains throughout the entire set, contrasts starkly with his louche appearance, like Neil Hannon possessed by the evil spirit of Jaz Coleman, and this fuses perfectly with the hollowed-out clamour of bass and guitars that riptide you right back to Killing Joke’s industrial punk by way of The Comsat Angels’ almost gothic pop desolation. And that’s how it stays for the entirety of a set that is as brilliant as it is subtle. ‘Possessed’ is as near to a recognisable tune as they get, but the rest of the set, drawn from their eponymous debut album draw from a dark well of post-punk rock nihilism, get firmly under your skin and just keep on piling on the pressure until they hit a brick wall at the far end. The band don’t return for an encore however much the crowd bay for it. Maybe because they’ve simply run out of songs to play, or energy to play it with, but it leaves a lasting impression that they’ve just given you all they have to give and it’s yours to take out from here into that dark, dark night. *Dale Kattack*

DAN CROLL / PANAMA WEDDING

The Bullingdon

Going to see new bands at the moment is like one long pub quiz. It’s not so much that the music is retro – pop’s been retro since the second minute of its existence – it’s just the current reference points are such odd mid-80s choices that we spend most of our time amongst trendy, bopping audiences with furrowed brow, trying to dredge up names that have lain dormant in the grey cells for 25 years. New York’s Panama Wedding, for example, with their cleanly emotive, breathy vocals and bleached funk keyboard stabs, are essentially Huey Lewis crossed with Brother Beyond. Two tracks in, presented with a riff redolent of ‘Owner Of A Lonely Heart’, we’re gearing up to abhor them, but it turns out that good pop music, played by a band that’s impeccably rehearsed without dropping into cynical posturing, will always melt the hardest heart. ‘Uma’ might be more suited to a rom com miniature golf montage than the Bully, but essentially these guys are Hot Chip with the irony replaced by gosh-darned American pluck and, frankly, they’re just as

good. When they’re not spinning ‘Now 7’ for inspiration, hip young things are copping some tricks from African music, although Dan Croll has recorded in Durban with the mighty Ladysmith Black Mambazo, so he has clearly taken his influences more seriously than most. But, ignoring a few high life licks, tonight’s set owes far more to smooth, mildly euphoric pop, somewhere between Black’s Moss Bros sophistication and The Beloved’s cultured Ibiza comedowns. Croll’s voice might be a little thin and falsetto-happy, but he has an articulacy that lifts the songs beyond mere fluff. Whilst our favourite tonight is ‘Can You Hear Me?’, an improbably huge bass drum making it sound like MOP’s take on ‘Cold As Ice’ without the hip-hop, and while the odd guitar wail or gratuitous Meatloaf drum fill sticks in our craw, Croll, like his support, reminds us that well-made pop, with an ear for a ripe melody, will never go out of style, regardless of fashion’s whims. *David Murphy*

photo: James Sutton





TOM VEK / FUN ADULTS The Bullingdon

People who claim that they have a good sense of humour or categorically state that they are always the “fun” one in a group are so often the most godawful bores who do nothing but recite the worst bits of Miranda episodes. Fun Adults might well be adults, but they’re really not fun at all. They’re clever and arty enough, and some of their synth-matic

instrumental sections sound as if they might have been plucked from an obscure Warp release, but this is what happens when ‘Kid A’ gets into the wrong hands. Overwrought, theatrical, and utterly tedious, the only interesting thing about them is that not one of the band has a beard, but this is possibly because any semblance of hair has been rubbed away by over-zealous chin stroking.

Tom Vek is undoubtedly a lot more fun, but even he struggles to make a set of almost two hours truly soar. In truth, he’s something of a one-trick pony, but when the trick works, as in the case of ‘C-C’, it’s worth hearing. ‘Aroused’, for example, is shot through with swathes of footstomping energy, while ‘Nothing But Green Lights’

throbs with urgent bass and is positively slinky. ‘Sherman (Animals In The Jungle)’, which closes the set, plays to his strengths: tight bass lines, repetitive beats and a lyrical hook that digs in deep. Yet there’s too many moments where his songs feel as if they’re written to a template, and his sardonic presence doesn’t cut through. At those points, the “you’re not really listening to me?” refrain of ‘A Chore’, becomes entirely applicable. ***Sam Shepherd***

DELIA DARLINGS The North Wall

Delia Derbyshire was a genius. That is indisputable. Her work with the BBC Radiophonic Workshop in the 1960s was so far ahead of its time it still sounds like the future. Derbyshire’s work was massively under-appreciated in its time and she sadly died in 2001, unrewarded and disillusioned with electronic music. The discovery of a huge archive of tapes in her attic has inspired tonight’s touring show, mixing live pieces alongside a documentary about her life and a collage of Derbyshire’s own work set to visual accompaniment. Tonight’s opening film, *The Delian Mode*, by Cara Blake, reveals Derbyshire, a working class girl from Coventry who grew up hearing music in the noises of the Blitz – sirens, explosions, plane engines and clogs on cobbled pavements – to have been a brilliant mathematician who could apply its rules and possibilities to music, spending hours, whole nights, recording sounds onto magnetic tape that she sliced and taped into pioneering music, including the seminal *Dr Who* theme tune. The live segment of the show features three pieces tagged ‘responses’ to her archive. The problem with responding to a genius is you’re always standing on the shoulders of giants. Brendan Ball and Geth Griffith’s trumpet and double bass piece is sadly flimsy and doesn’t appear to have much in common with its source, but Daniel Weaver’s inventive piece based on an

old dansette, and Caro C’s hypnotic work with laptop, ping pong ball and a plastic ruler share much of Derbyshire’s vision of making the most from unusual sounds and rhythms. It’s the final part of the show, though, that is simply stunning. Sara Hill’s often unnerving visuals complement Derbyshire’s music perfectly. And the music is astonishing – by turns eerie, playful, harshly industrial, soothingly ambient and otherworldly. Despite the fact that much of this music has never been heard publically before, you’d swear Delia had been a direct influence on everyone from Coil and Nurse With Wound, through Future Sound of London and Coldcut, to John Carpenter and Sonic Boom. The latter turns up in the first documentary to pay personal tribute and is, like Aphex Twin and Portishead’s Adrian Uttley, an avowed fan. With copyright issues holding up a proper and fitting release of the archive, a wider audience still awaits music that was made over 50 years ago, before even the most basic synthesizers were being used. It’s a wider audience such visionary music deserves, and you hope that, much as van Gogh’s paintings were so belatedly acknowledged as masterpieces, Delia Derbyshire will one day be fully recognised as one of the most important musicians of all time. ***Dale Kattack***

THE ORB O2 Academy

There’s one question everyone seems to be trading tonight: Were you here in 1990? The Orb’s last show in this very room (fortunately we’re upstairs again) became an event passed into musical legend. Fourteen projectors illuminated the stage and band, all decked in white; seven showing films, seven still images, with nothing digital in those days. The highlight came after the main show when Alex Paterson stumbled back on stage, barely able to stand, to play the most amazing DJ set using just two records; a series of endless cuts and blends between ‘Naked In The Rain’ by Blue Pearl and The KLF’s ‘What Time Is Love?’ Though promoted as an ambient band, early performances varied between the unsettling and the downright terrifying, culminating in another legendary headline set, at Glastonbury 1993, where a rumour circulated that they were about to summon lightning to strike a huge metallic orb floating above the stage. What marked them out in those early years was a completely immersive 3D environment, with treated spoken word samples echoing between the speakers, with numerous references to aliens, space exploration and science fiction, often enjoyed with a large

dose of LSD. Tonight’s leg of their 25th anniversary tour sees Paterson, the only consistent member of the band, joined by long-time on-off collaborator Thomas Fehlmann, playing as a duo. The visual element is a very modern morphing of images projected behind the two, while Paterson pulls out CDs out of a wallet to mix and treat into proceedings as Fehlmann does something creative with his MacBook. The set leans towards the more accessible, danceable parts of the band’s history, but lacks the sonic extremes, huge bass lines and multiple layers of sound that typified those early shows. ‘Little Fluffy Clouds’ gets a visit from The Beach Boys’ ‘God Only Knows’ in a clever twist, and a decent version of ‘Blue Room’ keeps the faithful happy. While Fehlmann takes a break Paterson plays around with Pink Floyd’s ‘Echoes’, a band they’ve been often compared with. But there’s a hint of Orb karaoke about proceedings and I’ve seen Paterson play DJ sets, billed as just that, with more experimentation and creativity on show. That said, the talk afterwards is overwhelmingly positive, reflecting an affectionate loyalty to a most British musical institution

Art Lagun

OXJAM TAKEOVER Various venues

This year’s Oxjam Oxford Takeover spreads across five venues, its remit remaining to raise money for the anti-poverty charity, while providing a mix of music that this time round ranges from reggae in The Cellar to acoustic pop in Turl Street Kitchen. The takeover starts at Turl Street Kitchen at 2.30pm; the next venue to open its doors would be The Purple Turtle, but as the first band has pulled out sick, those averse to quiet, mostly gentle, acoustic sounds are wise to arrive later in the evening as the Kitchen holds its own for the first few hours of the takeover. **Helen Sanderson White** sings pretty but mostly hookless music accompanied by her own soothing keyboard-playing. The venue has a good vibe, with many people absorbed in the music, absorbing their drinks, and mostly making the most of the only venue where they can sit on the floor while retaining an ounce of self-respect. After those opener problems, **Leader** appropriately kick off proceedings at The Purple Turtle. Looking quite like a group of *X-Factor* hopefuls, the five-piece play solid but unmemorable rock tracks as their singer delivers most of his lyrics bent over in a display of Chris Martin-style stomach cramps. They seem to be setting a good mood for the night, with an unusually appreciative audience for an early-evening set. Later, on the same stage, **Zurich** – familiar to many as The

Scholars, pre-name change – play gloomy, driven tracks to a packed crowd. With tense guitar riffs, heavy bass and rolling drums underpinning the vocals, their set is like one big catchy heartbeat. But the highlight of The Turtle’s noise-making tonight must be the all-girl London rock band **Rouge**. In a mass of leather, polka dots and sequins they squabble over where to put the set-list before launching into an energetic set of hard-hitting growling vocals and wailing guitar solos. With ballsy, catchy, loud songs they create a compelling argument to seek out the mysterious man who the bassist tells us is lurking around the back of the venue waiting to sell us merch. Squeezed into a corner, The White Rabbit stage plays host to duo **Los Dos Amigos**, who have been entertaining the crowd with an extra impromptu set to cover up an organisational flaw. Shortly after them folk duo **Little Red** take to the stage with warm, story-telling songs. They lull their audience with pretty harmonies as chips are dished up loudly in the kitchen beside them. The venue is fit to burst by the end of the night when Los Dos Amigos get the crowd dancing to their second set, especially a particularly enthusiastic dancer dressed as a tiger. Despite a few problems causing delayed or cancelled sets, the takeover venues, scattered over town, create little surprise pockets of light and music and pull together for a fun night. ***Celina MacDonald***

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CORNERSTONE

Not destined for such huge things but on the way up and in town this month were **We Were Promised Jetpacks**, **The Magic Numbers**, and **Wavves** at the Jericho Tavern, while the mighty **N-Dubz** were down at the Academy. On second thoughts, sometimes it's best to stay well away from local gigs.



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DEMOS

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demo of the month

FALSE FRIENDS

There’s not much we can tell you about False Friends since their Facebook page is vague on details, but we’re guessing they’re mates with local drone-meister Lee Riley since he remixed one of their tracks, and Rainbow Reservoir, since she contributes vocals on that same track. Thing don’t start particularly promisingly, ‘Keith and Michael’ is an understated, sullen dirge that goes nowhere with little apparent haste until it gets bored of its own company, stamps on a couple of effects pedals marked ‘shrapnel’ and ‘purge’ and rumbles off on a new, far more abrasive tack altogether. Over nine minutes it ploughs this simple, singular furrow, a metallic grunge bass rumble that thinks tunes are for sissies, until it eventually collapses in a breathless heap amid a tangle of guitar strings and bits of studio junk. After which ‘Bluebird’ offers gentle whimsy by way of musical balm: birdsong and the odd bongo introducing the piece before Rainbow Reservoir’s dreamy vocals slink in. What starts off sounding a bit like the soundtrack to *Twin Peaks* if Angelo Badalamenti had teamed up with Mo Tucker instead of Julee Cruise, unfurls into a dubby electro wow and flutter that wears its unfocussed nature as a badge of honour. It feels a bit unfinished at the moment, as if ideas are coagulating into something more solid, but for starters, it’s a highly promising first broadcast from Planet Strange.

ORIGAMI ROBOT

Hailing from north Oxford, Origami Robot tell us they’re usually an acoustic folk band but have taken up messing with evil electronic things for the sake of these new recordings. It stands them in good stead too, ‘Hold Steady’ wobbling in on a nice Vangelis-like synth line, the song wafting and drifting into focus and continuing to hang in the air hazily – some might say lazily – around the singer’s breathless vocal scurry as he laments the fate of an ex whose new lover can’t possibly be treating her as well as he did. There’s an air of quiet desperation about the whole thing and it makes for a pretty and memorable piece of pop. Holding onto that morsel of magic proves to be a test for Origami Robot; ‘All I See’ is more stuttering, less elegant, with the merest passing hints of Wire and Talking Heads about its mid-80s indie-pop sound, overall riding closer to Prefab Sprout, but by the time they reach ‘I Was Eaten By A Tiger’, they’ve lapsed into standard sub-Stornoway

Demo of the Month wins a free half day at Silver Street Studios in Reading, courtesy of Umair Chaudhry. Visit www.silverstreetstudios.co.uk/nightshift-demo-of-the-month/

indie-folk territory, revealing the chinks in the singer’s armour. Not unpleasant at all, but hardly as memorable as that opening number. So there’s your lesson, people: more synthesizers. Always more synthesizers.

SUGAR DARLING

Another band who could do to use their synths a bit more. Sugar Darling’s CD sleeve has a photo of a dead bat pinned to a wooden fence on it, so we initially suspect they might be goths, but demo opener ‘Crater Crown’, after an unassuming intro, collapses into view by way of a disjointed-to-the-point-of-mangled (much like that poor bat) electro-funk post-punk squall and shudder and we think the fun’s about to commence. And then it’s like they just lose the will to fight, drifting off into spangly psych-folk contemplation before disappearing into nothingness while we sit around wondering quite what happened. The second track, ‘F#1’, is a minute of tumbling floor toms under a Tuvan throat singer that serves little purpose and ‘Hawaii’ is little more than a mumbled flutter and stumble through... well, we’re not really sure. Nothing resembling a proper tune or anything approaching the hellbound noise we’d hoped this would be all about. It’s like as soon as the bat died, they lost their powers, like Brandon Lee in *The Crow*. But then, right at the death, they burst, like a ripe cyst, back into life and we’re off down that crazy electro-noise path again for a few very brief seconds. None of this demo makes sense. And we quite like that. We’d like it even more if they played the lunatic card – and those mad babbling synths – a bit more in future.

TRAMP AVIATORS

Then again, there are some people who would do well never to even look at a synthesizer through a shop window, let alone use one. The Tramp Aviators are a duo from Faringdon who nestle nominally in the acoustic folk and blues scheme of things, which would be harmless enough as they strum and grumble anonymously for the most part, until, on ‘Happy Song’, they decide to lace their humdrum observational musical musings with synthetic strings that feel like discovering a rusty syringe in the middle of the stale cheesecake you were about to polish off. Horrible, but perhaps designed to detract listeners from the overstretched vocals that have suddenly gone from growly and doleful to near hysterical. These four songs seem to be divided into two types: ones that sounds like Chas and Dave or Billy Bragg with any semblance of cockneyness or character polished away, and those that sound like a busker covering a half-forgotten Levellers tune. The latter, with the odd nod to skiffle, are marginally preferable; the former feel

like the sort of friendless dullard who tries to strike up conversation in the pub and who, while you wouldn’t go as far as to smash a bottle over his skull, you just want to go and bother someone else. Sadly the sort of pub we’re talking about here is unlikely to have ‘Nag Nag Nag’ by Cabaret Voltaire on the jukebox, so we can’t even scare the bugger away with some proper bastard noise.

SOCRATES III

A side project offering from ToLiesel guitarist, One Note Forever Records chap and general nice bloke around town Tom Jowett, Socrates III is a long, long way from the big-hearted country rocking of his main band. In place of chiming guitars and bold choruses is harsh minimalist electronica and microtonal drones. Lead track ‘Anjo de Pernas Tortas’ is named after the nickname of the Brazilian footballer Manuel Francisco dos Santos, rated as one of the greatest dribblers of a ball ever, but a man who drank himself to death after a turbulent life. Instead of nimble musical footwork or cataclysmic sonic destruction to reflect the man’s career and character, the piece is a scowling, trembling dirge that more resembles liver scarring and the DTs than any fancy ball play, and so is probably a sadly fitting tribute in its own right. ‘Kalle; Dream/Nightmare’ is a softer affair, stary guitar intercut with barely audible newsreel commentary, sounding like an incidental off-cut from a This Mortal Coil album for its first half, before billowing into a My Bloody Valentine-like guitar snowstorm that never quite threatens to blow the windows in and dissipates before it reaches a satisfying crescendo. With ‘The Lone Star’ Tom comes closer to the Americana of ToLiesel, a lonesome electric guitar instrumental that’s possibly what a Texan campfire shoegaze session might sound like. Which isn’t something you can say about many bands.

BLEDIG

What’s this, what’s this? More minimalism? More drones? Anyone would think it was autumn and the heady days of carefree summer pop music and disco dancing were over and gone and only the sad swirling soundtrack to falling leaves was allowed. Truth be told it suits us lifelong miserablists just fine. Hearing children playing happily in the park is sheer torment, a hellish cacophony to be drowned out by non-stop playing of old Sisters of Mercy and Throbbing Gristle bootlegs. So welcome Bledig, the moniker of Richard Brinklow, a man well known in these parts as a member of local Polydorb signings Medal and before that, epic electro-rockers Bubbleman, now resident in Brighton (working as a coastal lock keeper, which sounds like the sort of bleakly solitary career *Nightshift* might enjoy), and seemingly inspired by staring out to sea all day to create music that’s equally soporific and startling. ‘Psychoanalysis’, for example, carries a distinctly uneasy ambience with its pastoral strings and shifting patterns of

*Send demos for review to: Nightshift, PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU, or email links to 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. And don’t fucking whine about your review on Twitter either, else we’ll print a screenshot and make you look like a prize tit.*

electronic hum and drift. ‘First Love Then Confusion’ lives up to its title, somnambulating pianism giving way to discordant sax skronks and jarring beats as it unravels, sounding like the soundtrack to *Bladerunner* might have if Vangelis had composed it in a post-drum&bass world. ‘February (Here Comes the Onslaught, Let’s Make Love)’ similarly pulls itself apart at an almost stately pace, lulling you to sleep so it can tie your shoelaces together before waking you to tell you the house is on fire and you have to get out, like, *right now*. There’s a whole album’s worth of this stuff on Richard’s Soundcloud and we end up listening to the whole lot (we particularly love ‘Siren Song’, which reminds us of the very excellent Salem) by which time it’s gotten late and it’s all a bit dark and slightly chilly. Which are exactly how we like it. Sterling work, sir.

THE DEMO DUMPER

LESBIAN WEDNESDAYS

After the last two months’ slightly depressing demo piles, this month’s has been of reasonable quality; even the less thrilling ones have been inoffensive enough. Until we get to this pointless shambling shithheap of an offering. A quick glance at Lesbian Wednesdays’ Facebook page shows there’s six of them, though other than the irritating shouty bloke and the girl who giggles at the end of each track, we’re not sure what the rest of them actually do. Their Facebook feed also suggests they think the word ‘moist’ is inherently hilarious. Which we guess it might to a thirteen year old simpleton whose only exposure to humour is *Two Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps*. The ramshackle rubbish tip of guitars and drums that heralds the band’s arrival is as bearable as they get, suggesting they just failed to grasp the concept of The Velvet Underground after half hearing a conversation about them from two rooms away. From here we’re into angsty, confessional performance narrative with musical accompaniment as irritating bloke person explores his sexual failings in graphic detail over what sounds like a Grade II piano student’s attempt at Eric Satie. He probably imagines himself as a cool post-*Inbetweeners* reincarnation of Holden Caulfield, but more than that he sounds like Horrid Henry grown up as a sexually-frustrated sixth-form poet. Premature ejaculations, awkward hard-ons in maths lessons. It’s all so risqué. “I’m worthless,” he concludes in a rare moment of self-awareness. “The last number isn’t a proper song,” we’re told. But then, none of them are. In fact there’s a sneaking suspicion the whole thing is a less than elaborate joke in a deliberate attempt to get in the Demo Dumper. If so, well done, you succeeded. Go on, you can Instagram this review and celebrate your ironic genius. After which, your parents would quite like you to get back to growing the fuck up, please.



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