



NIGHTSHIFT

Oxford's Music Magazine

**Free every
month
Issue 231
October
2014**

**"Nothing makes our hearts
sink more than a soppy
boy/girl acoustic duo"**



THE AUGUST LIST

**Oxford's first couple of
porch folk come down
from the hills.**

Also in this issue:

Introducing **PEERLESS PIRATES**

SPRING OFFENSIVE split.

OXFORDOXFORD cancelled

plus

All your Oxford music news, previews and
reviews, and six pages of local gigs.

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

THE BULLINGDON

OCTOBER 2014

Friday 2nd October

Duchess
Russian Cowboys
One Wing Left
Cpr
Momento
Doors: 8pm

Saturday 4th October

Tom Vek
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 4th October

Fonti & Mighty Moe
(Heartless Crew)
Doors: 11pm

Tuesday 7th October

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
Stuart Henderson Quartet
Doors: 8.30pm

Thursday 9th October

The August List
Co-pilgrim
Vienna Ditto
Doors: 7pm

Friday 10th October

Chuck Prophet
& Mission Express
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 11th October

Dan Croll
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 11th October

Simple:
Boddika
Doors: 11pm

Sunday 12th October

Humour Tumour
Comedy Club
Doors: 7pm

Monday 13th October

The Haven Club:
Matt Edwards Band
Tom Mitchell Trio
Doors: 7pm

Tuesday 14th October

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
Alvin Roy's Reeds Unlimited
Doors: 8.30pm

Thursday 16th October

Billy Lockett
Doors: 7pm

Friday 17th October

Bad for Lazarus
(Ex members of The Eighties Matchbox B-Line Disaster)
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 18th October

Agness Pike
Mary Bendytoy
Phyal
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 18th October

Bedrock
Oxford's Rocking Club Night.
Release Your Inner Dinosaur!
Doors: 11pm

Monday 20th October

The Haven Club:
Billy Walton Band
Doors: 7pm

Tuesday 21st October

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
Guitar Summit
Doors: 8.30pm

Thursday 23rd October

Dave & Phil Alvin
Doors: 7pm

Friday 24th October

The Travelling Band
The Shapes
Swindlestock
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 25th October

Ella Martini
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 25th October

A Nite of Music:
White Magic Sound
Jag 1
Likkle Platnum
2xclusive Crew
Doors: 11pm

Monday 27th October

The Haven Club:
Spellkasters
Doors: 7pm

Tuesday 28th October

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
Alvin Roy's Reeds Unlimited
Doors: 8.30pm

Friday 31st October

Halloween Special!
Peerless Pirates
Port Erin
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

Friday 7th November

Amber Run
Fyfe
Kimberly Anne
Pixel Fix
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 8th November

Do The Ska
Doors: 7pm

Sunday 9th November

Humour Tumour
Comedy Club
Doors: 7pm

Tuesday 11th November

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
Hugh Turner Band
Doors: 8.30pm

Saturday 15th November

Wittstock Fundraiser
Doors: 7pm

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

MacMillan Cancer Research Fundraiser:
Salvage / I Cried Wolf
Evavoid / Godsbane
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

Saturday 29th November

A Nite of Music:
Gappy Ranks
White Magic Sound
Doors: 11pm

Sunday 30th November

3 Daft Monkeys
Doors: 7pm

Tuesday 2nd December

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
Stuart Henderson Quartet
Doors: 8.30pm

Friday 5th December

Dreadzone
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 6th December

Simple:
Pangaea (Hassle Audio)
Doors: 11pm

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 Berry/Mark Freeman/Bary Evans
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 20th 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

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

A Nite of Music:
White Magic Sound
House of Roots
Doors: 11pm

Tuesday 30th December

Jazz at the Bullingdon:
Guitar Summit
Doors: 8.30pm

Monday 30th March

The Haven Club:
Ben Poole
Doors: 7pm



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NEWS

Nightshift: PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU

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Online: nightshift.oxfordmusic.net



WILD SWIM provide the soundtrack for *Fast Track*, a new play which runs at The North Wall in Summertown this month. Jamie Jay and Carlos Posada from the band have composed the music for the play, written by Catriona Kerridge and directed by Lucy Maycock, and will perform it live at each performance from the 2nd – 4th October.

The pair's work comes as Wild Swim—who won BBC Introducing's Band of the Year Award in 2013 – prepare to return to action after university courses finished. Jamie told *Nightshift*, "I finished uni this summer, and am now permanently based back in Oxford, which is great for the band. The album recordings have been put on the backburner, but the songs we wrote for it are still very much in play. I guess we thought we should regroup after we had all finished our other commitments, then do something smaller and stronger like an EP, with a view to doing an album much later on. So we're currently in the studio getting the EP down, which will hopefully come out sometime early next year.

"The play, *Fast Track*, is looking really great. Carlos and I have done some musical work for Lucy Maycock's productions in the past, but this will be our first original score. We'll be performing live throughout the play. There are even some songs interspersed over the course of the action, which will hopefully add to the overall feel and tone of Kerridge's wonderful script. We've had a fantastic time working with such inspiring and unique people in such an inspiring and unique space; there's a very distinct sense of family in Maycock's productions."

Tickets for *Fast Track* are on sale now, priced £12 (£10 concessions), from www.thenorthwall.com.

OXFORDOXFORD FESTIVAL was cancelled a week before the event was due to take place last

month. The festival, due to be held in South Park at the end of September, with a day of live music featuring The Klaxons, Gaz Combes and Katy B among others, was planned as the first in a series of annual festivals in the park, but poor ticket sales and issues with one of the main acts apparently left organisers with no option but to pull the plug.

A statement on the festival site said, "A number of factors in September, including an uncertainty with a previously confirmed artist, alongside poor local ticket sales, have forced this decision. The whole team, including partners, has tirelessly worked around the clock to try to make the event work, but unfortunately we are not in the position to continue any further." Ticketholders can get refunds from point of purchase.

STORNOWAY have added a second night to their concert at the Sheldonian Theatre next month. After their show at the historic theatre on Thursday 13th November sold out in a matter of hours, the band added a second show on Wednesday 5th. The concerts mark the fifth anniversary of Stornoway becoming the first non-classical act to play at the Christopher Wren-designed venue. Tickets for the show are on sale exclusively through Wegotickets.com, priced £18 (+booking fee).

Mean while the band's Pledgemusic campaign for their third album, currently being recorded with producer Gil Norton, is ongoing. Visit www.pledgemusic.com/projects/stornoway to contribute and maybe nab yourself a treat.

GLASS ANIMALS release a new single this month. 'Hazy', released on the 13th October on Paul Epworth's WolfTone label, is the latest track to be taken from the band's debut album 'ZABA', which has now been streamed 8million times globally. Following on from their showing at Bestival, Glass Animals toured in the US throughout September and will head off on a UK tour, starting in Liverpool on the 10th October. Visit glassanimals.eu for more gig dates.

KLUB KAKOFANNEY celebrate their 23rd anniversary with a weekend of live music this month. The long-running club night takes



SPRING OFFENSIVE look set to split following a final show in Oxford. Although the band say their parting of the ways is not definitely permanent they have no plans to work together for the foreseeable future.

Speaking to *Nightshift*, guitarist Theo Whitworth, explained the band's decision to go on indefinite hiatus: "After November, all five of us are going to start spending our time on other things. We have no plans to play any more shows, or to record any more music. We can't say that these things will definitely never happen again – our astrology skills aren't what they could be – just that we can't promise you'll hear anything from us after 2014. We put more years than we care to name into the all-consuming musical dream factory, and in return it gave us an album and a half, two EPs, a sackful of singles and recordings, endless touring to incredible places, a carbon footprint the size of a medium-sized country, five sets of dusty lungs and unhappy livers, and a load of truly amazing friends and fans. And we wouldn't give any of it back, no matter what you're offering. We cannot think of a better way to have spent this time. We did it all ourselves, and we are very fucking proud. We've loved every minute, which, in a weird and unexpected way, is why we decided we just had to take a break."

Having formed at school in Oxfordshire, Spring Offensive rapidly rose to become local favourites, selling out a series of hometown shows, playing various festivals, touring Europe, gracing the cover of *Nightshift's* 200th issue in 2002 and earlier this year released their acclaimed debut album, 'Young Animal Hearts', financed by an inventive Pledgemusic campaign that even gave fans the opportunity to be kidnapped by the band. Last year they relocated to London but remained an Oxford band at heart, and they will play their final show at the O2 Academy on Thursday 20th November

"There'll be old songs and a few surprises," promises Theo, "come and sing along with us. Who knows when we'll get to do it again."

Tickets for the O2 show should be on sale soon from the venue box office. Check the band's Facebook for updated news.

over the Wheatshaf over the weekend of the **3rd-5th October**. Friday night features sets from Osprey's OX4 Allstars, These Are Our Demands, Gemma Moss and Purple May, while Saturday night sees Fracture, Knights of Mentis, Des Barkus and Charms Against The Evil Eye performing. Sunday takes the form of a free session in the downstairs bar from 2pm, with sets from Puppet Mechanic, Twizz Twangle, Beard of Destiny, Les Clochards and Moon Leopard.

AUDIOSCOPE returns next month. The mini-festival, which since its inception in 2001, has raised £30,000 for homeless charity Shelter, takes place on Saturday 8th November at The Jericho Tavern; the line-up will be announced in early October. The festival, renowned for its adherence to leftfield and esoteric music, has previously featured the likes of Four-Tet, Wire and Damo Suzuki. Visit www.audioscope.co.uk for tickets and line-up news.

NEWS



DUOTONE release their long-awaited third album next year. The “band”, the work of cellist Barney Morse-Brown, will release ‘Let’s Get Low’ in March 2015. If you can’t wait til then, Barney will be playing at Oxjam this month, launching the city-wide takeover at the Turl Street Kitchen at 3pm. He will also be joining in Catweazle’s 20th anniversary celebration at the Holywell Music Room on Saturday 1st November. Find out more at www.duotonemusic.com.

THE DREAMING SPIRES present a special screening of the documentary *Big Star: Nothing Can Hurt Me* this month as part of The Ultimate Picture House’s autumn programme. The Dreaming Spires, formed by Truck Festival founders Robin and Joe Bennett, will bookend the screening of the film about the highly influential Memphis band, featuring previously unseen footage of the band, with sets of their own songs and Big Star

HUDSON TAYLOR join Oxford supergroup **Burning Bees** and a host of other local acts for a charity gig at the Isis Farmhouse this month. The gig, titled **We Love Highfield**, which aims to raise money for the Highfield Adolescent Mental Health Unit at the Warneford Hospital, takes place at the Isis Farmhouse, near Iffley Lock on **Saturday 4th October**. Irish folk-pop brother Hudson Taylor signed to Polydor earlier this year and will support Jake Bugg on his UK tour later this month. Burning Bees, fronted by singer Stuart Hobbs, feature Candyskins former drummer John Halliday, The Samurai 7’s singer Simon Williams, Zodiac founder and sometime Ride keyboardist Nick Moorbath and erstwhile Sinead O’Connor bassist and current tour engineer for Newton Faulkner Spike Holifield in their ranks. They’re joined by **The Family Machine**, **ToLiesel**, **Jess Hall**, **Peerless Pirates**, **Talc Daemons** and more. Tickets, priced £20, are on sale from Wegottickets.com.



numbers on Friday 3rd October at the east Oxford cinema. Tickets are on sale now, priced £10, from www.uppcinema.com

PEERLESS PIRATES release a new single this month. ‘El Gringo’ b/w ‘For Queen & Country’ was *Nightshift*’s Demo of the Month in August and is now available to download from soundcloud.com/peerless-pirates. And you can read more about the band in this month’s Introducing feature on page 21.

OXFORD MUSIC FESTIVAL has announced the names of the first acts to be announced for November’s week-long celebration of Oxford music. Desert Storm, Balloon Ascents, The August List, Peerless Pirates, Knights of Mentis, Vienna Ditto, Man Make Fire, Northeast Corridor, The Kites, Twat Daddies, The Sea The Sea, The Mighty Redox, The Shapes, Death of Hi-fi, Crayon, The Matt Edwards Band and Go On, Do It, Jump will be joined by a host of other acts at venues across the city in the week of the 25th-30th November. Bands wanting to play should visit the Oxford City Festival page on Facebook.

JONQUIL, FIXERS AND TOLIESEL contribute to the soundtrack of a series of travelogue videos being serialised online by Family Machine frontman Jamie Hyatt. The singer quit his job at



CATWEAZLE CLUB celebrates its 20th anniversary with a special show at The Holywell Music Room next month.

The weekly club has earned a reputation as the best open mic night in Oxford, showcasing local and travelling singers, musicians, poets, storytellers, performance artists and more every Thursday at East Oxford Community Centre, which has been its home for the past decade. It has been hailed in *The Times* and *Guardian* as well as on Radio 4 as an essential part of Oxford’s cultural make-up.

Musicians **Matt Sage** (*pictured*) started Catweazle in 1994 after moving to Oxford from London, initially at the Victoria pub in Jericho, before moving to Jude the Obscure and later Northgate Hall and the Wheatsheaf, before finding its current home. He talked to *Nightshift* about the club’s beginnings and longevity and what has made it such an essential part of the local scene, offering an intimate and welcoming outlet for aspiring local artists, including Stornoway and Foals’ Yannis Philippakis, who made their earliest live outings at Catweazle.

“I’m not sure how we have lasted so long, to be honest. I’ve just kept turning up every week and so, thankfully, have quite a few other people. Those weeks and months have somehow turned into twenty years. Many of those who come – both audience and performers – tend to feel very fondly about Catweazle, and have made it their own. This has helped the club to grow some deep and sturdy roots in our community. Since 1994, it hasn’t really changed at all – and I think that may well be part of its charm.

“We don’t actually have a mic, so we are not really an open mic at all, we are more of a listening space. This is the crucial difference: as a musician myself, I have always felt that performers being heard is of the utmost importance, and it may be counter-intuitive, but for this to happen you don’t need a PA, you just need to create an environment and a culture in which simply listening to the performers is normal. At Catweazle, we almost always have a packed room in which you can clearly hear every note and phrase of the performer. There is nothing in the way, no barrier between performer and audience. That’s what makes Catweazle different. “It’s been both exciting and a drag to change venues. We have been in East Oxford – our eighth venue – for ten years now. Cowley Road is the real centre of Oxford, and it feels like home to us. The community centre is still on vulnerable ground as we speak, but we aim to be there for the foreseeable future.

“We had our tenth birthday at the Holywell because someone at Northgate Hall – our home at the time – had gone on holiday with the keys, and with only 48 hours to sort out an alternative, I got lucky. This time we’re there by design and we are going to have around 20 different acts, friends old and new, to help us celebrate this quirky little creative community of ours, in suitably spectacular fashion.

“I think it’s the atmosphere, the deep sense of community and the trust that even if one or two people on the bill are not your cup of tea, there will always be something on that is guaranteed to blow your mind that keeps people coming back to Catweazle every week. It is these factors upon which our reputation has been built, and that is also a reliable reason that people feel inspired to come – and to keep on coming.” *Catweazle’s 20th anniversary celebration takes place at the Holywell on Saturday 1st November. Tickets, priced £10, are on sale from Wegottickets.com. The weekly club takes place every Thursday at East Oxford Community Centre. Visit catweazleclub.com.*

PMT on Cowley Road to travel round the Greek Islands with two friends, recording their adventures on camcorders, the results of which can be seen in ten-minute snippets at c90dreams.wordpress.com. The all-Oxford soundtracks to each episode also feature Manacles of Acid, Message to Bears, The Family Machine, Beta Blocker and the Bodyclock and We Aeronauts.

DONNINGTON COMMUNITY FESTIVAL runs over the afternoon and evening of Saturday 11th October. The mini-festival, in its second year, features a full day of free live acoustic music at Donnington Community Centre in Townsend Square. Acts playing include Des Barkus, Beard of Destiny, Charms Against the Evil Eye, Daisy, Mark Atherton and Friends, Moon Leopard, Oxford Ukuleles, Phil & Sue, Richard Brotherton, STEM, Superloose, and Tony Batey.

THE JACK RUSSELL in Marston is set to close this month to make way for flats, leaving the weekly blues jam without a home for the foreseeable future. The Thursday jam has been running for over 15 years at various venues and organisers are looking for a suitable venue. Hopefully some good news next month.



A TRIBUTE TO DELIA DERBYSHIRE provides the centrepiece of Oxford Contemporary Music’s autumn series of Pioneers events. The shows aim to acknowledge significant pioneers in musical history through live performances, art installations and films.

Delia Darlings host the Derbyshire evening at **the North Wall** on **Thursday 9th October**, the Manchester collective having composed several new pieces of music inspired by the electronic music legend, part of the BBC’s

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

Radiophonic Workshop and best known for creating the theme tune to *Dr Who*. Unrecognised and unrewarded in her lifetime, Derbyshire died in 2001 but has lately been hailed as one of the most important figures in electronic music. As part of the event there will be new musical compositions by Daniel Weaver, artist Andrea Pazor will be creating digital visual artwork, and there will be live performances by Caro C and Mailis Ni Riain, as well as an immersive audio-visual collage of the Delia Derbyshire gallery and a

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.oxfordmusic.net.

showing of the award-winning *Delian Mode* film by Kara Blake. Talking about the event OCM programmer Tim Ferguson Hand said, “This is something I’ve wanted to do for a while, to acknowledge some of the individuals within contemporary music who have had a significant impact, perhaps people who are lesser known or are generally seen not to have had the recognition they deserve. Delia Derbyshire is a case in point really, employed by the Radiophonic Workshop, who produced huge amounts of electronic music and effects for the BBC, she arranged the *Doctor Who* theme tune into the version we’re familiar with. Her influence has spread far and wide, from Aphex Twin to Sonic Boom. As well as this she was a woman in electronic music at a period when it was predominantly male and was turned down for some jobs because of it too. Many people have heard of Berio or Stockhausen but I’d put Delia up there with them in terms of intellect and creativity.” Tickets for the event are on sale now, priced £14 (£10 concessions) from www.ocmevents.org.

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.

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A quiet word with THE AUGUST LIST

photo: Johnny Moto



“WE HAVE A PORCH, BUT IT would be difficult to fit a rocking chair under it. It also leaks profusely so we prefer to sit in the lounge.”

KERRALEIGH CHILDS, ONE half of married couple musical duo, The August List, has just dispelled *Nightshift*’s possibly overly-romantic vision of the pair laid up in a hammock of an evening, banjos and harmonicas in hand, composing more of their fabulously rustic backwoods porch folk.

Still, a battered old sofa in the living room will have to suffice. Just so long as there’s a large, sad-eyed dog sat on it. And maybe an elk. And a racoon.

BECAUSE WHILE THE AUGUST List – Kerraleigh and husband Martin – do conform very closely to our idealised picture of their existence, living in a converted barn on a hillside in rural Oxfordshire (not far from Chinnor to be precise), to listen to their music, you’d think they’d just stepped out of the Catskill Mountains of New York State, or a log cabin in the middle of North Carolina.

The pair’s songs are steeped in classic Americana: homely but unsettling, based on traditional

acoustic instruments but occasionally invaded by more modern sounds, and run through by rock’n’roll energy and attitude. Their recent single, ‘All To Break’ was described by *Nightshift*’s reviewer as Black Sabbath’s ‘Paranoid’ reinterpreted by Dolly Parton, while the couple’s signature tune, the steely ‘Forty-Rod Of Lightning’ is as close to The White Stripes as it is to Johnny Cash and June Carter.

Both songs appear on The August List’s debut album, ‘O Hinterland’, released this month on Ubiquity Project Records, home too to Vienna Ditto, another local male-female duo bringing a traditional American music tradition up to date and into an Oxfordshire setting.

WHAT REALLY SETS THE August List apart, though, is the vocal partnership between Kerraleigh and Martin. Unlike say, The Handsome Family, to whom they’re often and justifiably compared, the two share equal billing when it comes to singing, either taking it in turns to lead the line, or duelling or harmonising with a chemistry that only two people who have grown into their music together can muster. While Martin is understated and a little hangdog, Kerraleigh’s voice

is startling, akin to a young Loretta Lynn. Put together they are, in their own words, an acoustic bullet to the heart.

DESPITE THEIR CURRENT standing as Oxford’s favourite “backwoods porch-folk” act, The August List’s roots lie in Dorset where they lived until they moved here a couple of years ago. The pair met during the making of a film that Martin was directing at a time when Kerraleigh had ambitions to be an actress.

“I thought it would be a good idea to shoot a low budget version of one of my scripts and Kerraleigh came on board as she was starting out as an actress,” explains Martin, “the film was terrible and it hospitalized me with stress and malnutrition. I was funding it and doing everything from directing it to feeding everyone. I gave myself two weeks to film a full-length feature film with no real experience and soon realised I had bitten off far more than I could chew. The only good that came from it was that we had met each other, got together and, a few years later, got married.”

Despite those early difficult circumstances, it didn’t take the pair long to realise they had plenty in

common. Kerraleigh: “When we met, Martin had a vast collection of music. Pretty much all weird Americana stuff. He’d play me Silver Jews and I didn’t get it; I listened to Metallica. But, the more I was exposed to it, the more it seeped into my blood and then I would go out hunting for stuff. The Jenny Lewis album, ‘Rabbit Fur Coat’, *really* got to me: the lyrics, the songs and who she is really inspired me. I still do still occasionally listen to Metallica very loudly, though.”

Taking their name from a Willard Grant Conspiracy song, The August List left their Dorset roots and set up camp in Oxfordshire.

Martin: “We’re both from Dorset but I was already living in Twickenham due to work when I did my film down in Dorset and met Kerraleigh. She moved up with me, then we moved near Maidenhead. After a couple of years our landlord got divorced and needed us out of the Maidenhead house, so we found a tiny barn thing to rent on a hill in the middle of nowhere in Oxfordshire and we took it straight away. It meant we could play music loud day or night and the whole rustic environment suited us down to the ground and fed us creatively as well.”

EARLIER THIS YEAR

Nightshift featured another West Country-born singer, Jess Hall, on the cover, and she talked about the similarities and differences between there and Oxfordshire and how they inspired her words and music; we wonder if there is similar inspiration for The August List, or if American songs and stories and landscapes, particularly the isolation and wilderness, more infect their songs. Kerraleigh: “Our songs come out of us and they are our thoughts and feelings and dreams and ideas. But the framework that we present them in is a mythical Americana setting. The influence of America on us is much greater than that of England. From films, novels, TV, music and culture, we get sustenance from Stateside stuff more than the home-grown counterpart. We got married in North Carolina on the side of the Smokey Mountains and the service took place outside a wooden cabin by a creek because that’s just how it’s done there! We then spent time immersing ourselves in America’s back porch; we drove to towns that aren’t really on the tourist trail. We saw Raymond Fairchild play banjo while a 90-year-old man, who the day before we saw sleeping on a bench, did some Appalachian clog dancing in front of him, we saw some of that old weird America. We saw elk and bears and nature on a grand scale that’s both beautiful and dangerous and we find those things infecting our songs and we just run with it.”

MOVING TO OXFORDSHIRE, how did the couple find the local scene?

Martin: “We’ve been here two years now and we love the Oxford scene. When we arrived we were daunted by it, by the bands and the promoters and the venues. We would try and get a gig, but found that you needed to be gigging in Oxford to get a gig in Oxford. So for a while it was a vicious circle, but if you’re an unknown quantity, it’s understandable for a promoter to not want to take the risk. At the time we had just recorded our first EP, ‘Handsome Skin’, and we were scared to approach *Nightshift* and Truck Store, but without the support of those two institutions we would never have got any gigs here. Truck Store helped to push that EP and *Nightshift*’s kind words (‘Handsome Skin was a Demo of the Month back in January 2013) meant that all of a sudden we were getting booked to play shows, which was fantastic. Matt Chapman and Seb Reynolds have also helped us a lot, Matt from his Truck days and the Tertium Quid nights he put on, and Seb, through his Pindrop enterprise, has helped us with gigs and getting us out to a wider audience. We also found

Tamara Parsons-Baker quite an inspiring force in the music scene, doing her ATP nights for all the right reasons. BBC Radio Oxford really support us and the whole Oxford scene in general. Oxford seems built to help and nurture bands.”

MUSICALLY AMBITIOUS

from the off, The August List recorded that first demo at the legendary Toerag Studios in London with Liam Watson, who had engineered The White Stripes’ ‘Elephant’. Working with someone of that calibre must have been exciting and daunting. Kerraleigh:” We were really naïve when we went to Toerag. We had been going a while but hadn’t recorded anything. We didn’t know any recording studios and if we just went to one we found on the internet,

“We saw elk and bears and nature on a grand scale that’s both beautiful and dangerous and we find those things infecting our songs and we just run with it.”

we had no way of knowing if it was any good as at the time we really didn’t know any other musicians to ask. Both of us are absolutely useless with technology, so recording ourselves at home was not going to happen. So we thought, ‘what studios in England have we heard of and like the results of?’ Top of the list was Liam Watson and Toerag. We loved ‘Elephant’, we loved The Kills, Holly Golightly, Billy Childish and Dan Sartain. We sent him an email with a video of us playing a few songs and we thought we’d never hear anything back, but he responded straight away and before we knew it, we were in east London at this legendary studio. We spent a day recording a song with him as producer and it was a baptism of fire, recording onto 2” tape, all analogue gear, all the reverb coming from a reverb room upstairs and Grammy awards knocking around. It was crazy that this was our first time recording ourselves! He seemed to enjoy himself and he invited us to do a two-day session with him. We went back but we just weren’t ready. We didn’t have the songs, we weren’t proficient enough and he kind of lost patience with us and nothing came out of that session. We did learn a hell of a lot and we went away and worked on songs, grew a stronger set and started to learn what we wanted from the recording process. He still calls us from time to time to see how we are and what we’re up to. We’ll be forever grateful to him for the experience.”

JUST AS TOERAG REMAINS committed to the old analogue way of recording music, so The August List,

live at least, are committed to staying acoustic, with an array of home-made instruments, while trying to rock out. Martin: “We like the directness of being acoustic. We can play the same show even if there’s a power cut or we’re outside somewhere. There’s very little to get between the audience and the song, so we’re forced to make what there is good, and the song the best we can make it, because there isn’t going to be a twenty minute electric guitar solo to cover anything up. At the same time, we don’t want to bore the crowd, so we went about adding as much texture as we could with harmonicas, melodicas, stylophones, kick drums and percussion. The drum is from the 1950s and cost us about £30 on ebay, the tambourine machine I made from some wood and a kick drum pedal and all the other bits we use are cheap

children’s toys! For us to perform as a duo, we now have the maximum amount of stuff we can comfortably manage to carry around with us from car to stage without breaking our backs or collapsing from exhaustion.” Saying that, you’ve got electric guitar on ‘Long Division’ on the album, and synths on a few tracks. Do we get to shout “Judas!” at you next gig? Kerraleigh: “Ha ha! Before we play live we always say to each other, ‘play fuckin’ loud!’, as a jokey nod to that! We never want to rule anything out of the recording process; the first EP has a bit of pedal steel on it and mandolin. We used to perform ‘Long Division’ with just acoustic guitar and basic drum beat, but it always sounded like it could be bigger and so it was the one track on the album that we spent a longer time arranging to give it a more widescreen feel.” And this month, to celebrate ‘O Hinterland’*s* launch the pair will ditch the habit of a lifetime and play a set with a full band, featuring many of the musicians who played on the album, as well as a few guest appearances. Martin: “It’s going to be very different. We wanted to do at least a couple of shows where the songs sound like they do on the record. We asked everyone who played on the album if they’d be willing to give it a go live and they all foolishly agreed. So we have bass, electric guitar and drums; the most basic ingredients of a band there is, but it’s all a new experience for us. It’s a novel concept to have to play in time with others!”

DESPITE BEING A MARRIED couple, with the musical and onstage

chemistry that can bring, Kerraleigh and Martin say nothing makes their hearts sink more than a soppy boy/girl acoustic duo taking to the stage. How hard do they find it to get a balance right in the way they interact on stage? Where do they feel they fit in with the onstage chemistry and humour of, say The Handsome Family or The Lovely Eggs, and the OTT soppieness of Trevor Moss and Hannah Lou, and what’s the single worst crime a musical couple can commit on stage?

Kerraleigh: “We don’t have a shtick on stage; nothing is planned in the way we interact with each other. We are just very conscious that there is sometimes a perception of boy + girl + acoustic guitar = nausea. We always wanted to have a bit of rock’n’roll attitude to how we play and not be whispering twee love songs at each other. If we are feeling talkative on stage then the humour is often deadpan and that is something The Handsome Family do really well – the feeling that these jibes at each other could escalate later into a full blown row! I think if Trevor Moss & Hannah Lou are also conscious of that perception but then play on it and exaggerate it, then that is cool – it’s just the opposite way of dealing with your presentation to how we do it.”

Who are the best and worst husband and wife couples in music?

Martin: “Best are The Handsome Family, Low, Sonic Youth – before the divorce! – The White Stripes, Carter/Cash, Holly Golightly & The Brokeoffs, Shovels & Rope, Jenny & Johnny. The worst are normally a married couple at an open mic. That can be painful.”

So, how close are you really to that romantic idyll of living together on a woody hillside and making music together?

Kerraleigh: “Pretty close. We got lucky to stumble on finding the barn thing for rent. It’s nice to see horses and cows out of the window rather than people. We don’t socialize that much, we always feel a bit out of place so it’s nice to have a bolt hole where we can perfect our hermit skills.

Can you imagine having half a dozen kids who all grow up to be in a country-folk band together? Martin: “That’s a frightening thought. We’d have to get a bigger barn. They could all wear dungarees with their names on and straw hats. No shoes of course. They’d be called The Oxford Hillbillies and drive a 1922 Buick Flatbed truck. I would take a purely managerial role.”

‘O Hinterland’ is out now on Ubiquity Project Records; The August List launch the album at the Bullingdon on Thursday 9th October. Visit [soundcloud.com/theaugustlist](https://www.soundcloud.com/theaugustlist) to hear songs, or find them on Facebook.

RELEASED

THE AUGUST LIST

‘O Hinterland’

(Ubiquity Project Records)

From Dorset, via Berkshire, The August List now find themselves in residing in Oxford, but their sound is far more transatlantic. “I’m gonna travel south by south west,” sings Martin Child on ‘Long Division’, a statement that hints at the place where many of these songs have their hearts. Like Witney’s Ags Connolly, The August List are adept at adopting a Southern States feel to their sound while not compromising their authenticity, which is testament to the strength of their songwriting.

It’s perhaps inevitable that the husband and wife duo of Martin and Kerraleigh Child will draw comparisons to Brett and Rennie Sparks (otherwise known as The Handsome Family), but there are definitely similarities between them. The interaction between Martin and Kerraleigh both musically and vocally appears to operate on an almost instinctive level, and the content of their songs, if not quite as grotesque as The Handsome Family’s, still deals predominantly with the darker and more painful aspects of life. Don’t be misled however, The August List are rarely truly dour; in fact, it’s quite easy to miss the emotional resonance of their lyrics as they’re often delivered with exquisite vocal melodies and inspired harmonies. ‘Cut Yr Teeth’ is a toe-tapping, almost pop effort that tries its best to be upbeat and generally succeeds. ‘Open Trunk Blues’ finds Kerraleigh accumulating emotional baggage and assessing her life with a vocal delivered in tones that are an engaging mix of Kate Pierson and Steve Nicks, and possesses a sublime hook that almost obscures the meaning of what she’s singing about. Similarly the foot-stomping ‘Snake In The Eagle’s Shadow’ is almost too much fun.

Pay more attention, however, and the album is a morass of regret, love, loss and sadness. Interestingly, there seems to be a theme within



the lyrics of burying problems (‘High Town Crow’; ‘All To Break’) or putting emotions in a box rather than dealing with them (‘Wooden Trunk Blues’; ‘Long Division’). All of which means that eventually, there will surely be an album further down the line where the band really purge.

Still there’s some touching introspection to be found here, most notably on the standout ‘Ticking Of The Clock’. Delicate guitar and banjo work provide a haunting backdrop for Martin and Karraleigh to examine the fleeting nature of life and love, which turns out to be heartbreaking in the end, naturally. The powerful balladry of ‘Red Light On The Tower’ switches through the emotional gears effortlessly and serves as a testament to The August List’s songwriting skills as it makes clever use of vocal layering to ensure maximum impact.

If all that sounds too much, there’s always ‘Forty-Rod Of Lightnin’”s hoe-down singalong to perk things up a little. Ultimately, this is an assured and quite stunning debut from The August List; what comes next could be very special indeed.

Sam Shepherd

MIKE ABBOTT

‘Comfort Zone’

(Self-released)

Having spent the last 15 years since leaving his native Yorkshire playing bass for various country acts around the UK, Mike Abbott has finally decided to back tentatively into the spotlight himself, with this, his first release; a collection of seven classic country covers and five of his own originals, penned with partner Mary Shakespeare. Recorded at his east Oxford (shed) studio, with the generous help of a very long list of all-star local musicians and female backing singers, ‘Comfort Zone’ is a sometimes faltering and at other times captivating love letter to the last 70 years of country music.

Abbott’s unique vocal style – which I can only describe as five parts Willie Nelson and five part the gruff tones of the ‘Mahna Mahna’ Muppet song – puts a new slant on such Hall of Fame

tearjerkers as ‘Emma Jean’s Guitar’, ‘Catalogue Dreaming’, and JB Coats’ ‘The Sweetest Gift’, but the real joys of this album are the clever phrases on his own numbers and how well they stand up against the grand tradition of wry country lyric writing; most notably his up to date take on the impersonal internet, in ‘Modem World’ and the wonderful sing-along of ‘Status Single’ (“No Dear John letter / No goodbye note / Just Status Single / was all she wrote”).

It’s often said that a comfort zone is a beautiful place but nothing ever grows there. With really good alternative versions of Don Williams’ ‘She’s In Love With a Rodeo Man’ and Dylan’s ‘Forever Young’ tucked in here too, there are definitely seeds in the ground.

Paul Carrera

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BLANKDREAD

‘Blankdread’

(Self-released)

Andrew Jones, aka Asher Dust, the man behind Blankdread, has been around the Oxford music scene for a long time, bouncing tirelessly around genres with an almost stream-of-consciousness schedule of releases that have taken in hip-hop, trip-hop, grime, punk and more.

‘Blankdread’ is available free through Bandcamp, where it’s tagged as “bastardised dub jazz spokenword”; not a bad approximation for this free-wheeling, consciousness-expanding set of tracks. Over recent years it seems as if each Jones/Dust release has formed an ever-busier combination of everything that went before, both in his own music and in everything he’s listened to. Kicking off with the offbeat jazz drum hits of ‘Beautiful Black SheepLE’, the album is as much a confusing mess as it is a glorious evisceration of one man’s musical vision. Although there’s a unique and familiar vocal voice – rooted in dubby hip-hop – at its core, the music takes in terse, noisy alt-jungle (‘I Smoke Weed And I Chat Shit’; ‘Too Much Anger Is Causing Me Pain’), inverted ragamuffin toasting (‘Buffum Baffum’), elegant blues-inflected soul-hop (‘We Are Fucked Anyway’) and, well, music that is categorisable only by an increasingly lengthy list of nouns.

The chaotic nature of the music is helped no end by precise arrangements and production. It’s easy to overlook the complexity and skill involved with this kind of noise; Public Enemy’s Bomb Squad and Beck’s production team on ‘Midnite Vultures’ spring to mind. Overall it feels rather light-hearted and experimental, albeit with some contemporary or disturbing lyrical pepper spray (mentions of ISIS, the confrontational sounds of ‘Dutty Nigga (Suh Dem Seh’), and it’s far from easy listening. It is, however, rewarding and fascinating.

Hip-hop has been pulled almost to breaking point in many directions over the past thirty years; ‘Blankdread’ feels almost new, which in that landscape is no small feat.

Simon Minter



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G I G G U I D E

WEDNESDAY 1st
KOBRA & THE LOTUS: O2 Academy – Anthemic, operatic metal from classically-trained Canadian singer Kobra Paige and band, over in the UK to promote new album ‘High Priestess’, having been signed by Gene Simmons and supported Kiss, Def Leppard and Judas Priest along the way.
OUTER LIMITS: The Cellar – Dubstep, garage and bass club night with a set from Rinse FM’s

Saturday 4th
TOM VEK: The Bullingdon
When Tom Vek arrived on the scene back in 2005 with his debut album ‘We Have Sound’, on the at-the-time cool Go! Beat label, and subsequently turned up on The OC and the soundtrack for Grand Theft Auto, it seemed the young graphic design graduate from Hounslow, born Thomas Vernon-Kell, was going to hit the big time. Instead he promptly vanished, of his own volition, from the music industry for six years, and by the time he returned in 2011 with the long-overdue follow-up, ‘Leisure Seizure’, even many of his most ardent fans had forgotten he ever existed. But then, Tom Vek has never been an easy one to second guess, as his music regularly demonstrates. Possessed of a Beck-like dedication to eclecticism, he can be garage rock one moment, synth-pop the next and anything in between, while his obviously meticulously planned albums exude a feeling of being haphazardly thrown together. Via lurching guitars and electronic squiggles, hints of Aphex Twin and LCD Soundsystem mingle uneasily with Iggy Pop and Weezer on new album ‘Luck’, and he’s not afraid to let his distinctly unmusical voice hold centre stage, and he’s a refreshingly unpredictable artist within the boundaries of the traditional rock song. Make the most of tonight’s show – his first Oxford visit for nine years – it may be the last you see of him for a decade or so.



OCTOBER

THURSDAY 2nd
JIMMY LA FAVE & THE NIGHT TRIBE: St Alban’s Church – Empty Room Promotions hosts Austin singer-songwriter La Fave, with his self-labelled “red dirt” style of music, adding a lively classic rock’n’roll kick to traditional country-folk and blues, a style that’s seen him compared to Bob Dylan, Woody Guthrie and Bruce Springsteen.
WAYNE HUSSEY: O2 Academy – The former Mission singer and Sisters of Mercy guitarist heads out on a solo tour, playing songs from his new album, ‘Candlelight and Razorblades’, as well as tracks from across his band career.
CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre – Oxford’s longest-running and best open mic club builds up to next month’s 20th anniversary celebration with a weekly showcase of singers, musicians, storytellers, poets and performance artists.
THE MIGHTY REDOX: The Wheatsheaf – The veteran local swamp-blues crew open their monthly account with a free unplugged show in the Sheaf’s downstairs bar.
HURR SOUNDS: The Cellar – House, garage and drum&bass club night.
OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon
OPEN BLUES JAM: The Jack Russell, Marston

FRIDAY 3rd
KLUB KAKOFANNEY with OSPREY’S OX4 ALLSTARS + THESE ARE OUR DEMANDS + GEMMA MOSS + PURPLE MAY: The Wheatsheaf – Kicking off a full weekend of celebrations for its 23rd anniversary, Klub Kak plays host to local scene stalwart Osprey and his band, alongside pensive rockabilly noisemakers These Are Our Demands, and freakazoid burlesque popster Gemma Moss.
FROM THE JAM: O2 Academy – The ones who aren’t Paul celebrate the 35th anniversary of ‘Setting Sons’ by playing it, without Paul.
SWITCH featuring DUKE DUMONT: O2 Academy – Deep house and techno from Blasé Boys Club honcho Duke Dumont at tonight’s Switch club, the DJ and producer best known for Number 1 hits ‘Need U (100%)’ and ‘I Got U’.
DUCHESS + RUSSIAN COWBOYS + ONE WING LEFT + MOMENTO: The Bullingdon – Samba-pop and Township dance from musical sunshine band Duchess, alongside funk-pop crew Russian Cowboys and indie rockers One Wing Left.
SKYLARKIN SOUNDSYSTEM: The Cellar – Count Skylarkin’s monthly reggae, dancehall and rocksteady rave-up, with live band to be confirmed, plus the Count and chums on the decks.

PEERLESS PIRATES + VIENNA DITTO + THE OTHER DRAMAS: The Jericho Tavern – Rockabilly, rollicking indie and spaghetti western-themed fun from this month’s pirate-obsessed Introducing stars, alongside sci-fi voodoo blues from Vienna Ditto and sweet-natured acoustic pop from The Other Dramas.
OKTOBERFEST: The Beacon, Wantage – Two-day beer and music festival in south Oxfordshire, with sets across the weekend from Reckless Sleepers, Adie Cant, Andy Robbins, Back 4, The Black Arrows, Blame Fate, Cam Cole, Jordan Jones, Justin Thomas, Natuma Duo, Nina Schofield, Sara Robelo, The Star Men and UK Tapestry.
BLURD: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Blur tribute.
DISCO MUTANTES: The Library – Disco, boogie and house club night.

SATURDAY 4th
HUDSON TAYLOR + BURNING BEES + THE FAMILY MACHINE + TOLIESEL + JESS HALL + PEERLESS PIRATES + TALC DAEMONS: Isis Farmhouse – Charity all-day in aid of Highfield Adolescent Mental Health Unit, featuring a headline set from Dublin’s musical brothers Harry and Alfie Hudson-Taylor, the folk-pop duo gearing up for a tour support with Jake Bugg and the release of the debut album, having made their name busking on the streets of their hometown. They’re joined by local supergroup Burning Bees; indie-folk heroes The Family Machine; Americana starlets ToLiesel; folk singer Jess Hall; roustabout indie rockers Peerless Pirates and bluesmen Talc Daemons, plus more.
TOM VEK: The Bullingdon – Impassioned, eclectic electro-rock chaos from the disappearing man – *see main preview*
ROBYN HITCHCOCK: St John the Evangelist – The Psychedelic troubadour brings his new ‘The Man Upstairs’ album to town – *see main preview*
FONTI & MIGHTY MOE: The Bullingdon – Garage, dancehall and drum&bass from the one-time Heartless Crew duo.
ULTIMATE GENESIS: O2 Academy – Classic Genesis tracks performed by Los Endos.
JOHN WHEELER: The Cellar – The Hayseed Dixie frontman takes time out from his bluegrass rendering of classic rock and metal anthems to go out on a solo limb, travelling into jazz, punk, funk and electro.
THE ORIGINAL RABBIT FOOT SPASM BAND + BALKAN WANDERER + ANASTASIA GURBUNOVA: The Jericho Tavern – Oxford’s finest gin joint-rocking hot jazz and jump blues outfit host a Cold War and Soviet Russia-themed party, so you can queue at the bar for bootleg vodka and stale bread and dance to the band’s authentically 30s-sounding New Orleans r’n’b until the KGB cart you off to the nearest Gulag.
KLUB KAKOFANNEY with FRACTURE + KNIGHTS OF MENTIS + DES BARKUS + CHARMS AGAINST THE EVIL EYE:

The Wheatsheaf – Second night of Klub Kak’s birthday celebrations with bluesy indie rockers Fracture, Americana ensemble Knights of Mentis, rock’n’roll trouper Des Barkus and indie pop people Charms Against the Evil Eye.
WHAT YOU CALL IT, GARAGE: The Cellar – UK garage, bass and grime club night
TRASHY: O2 Academy – Big pop hits, kitsch faves and dancefloor fillers at the returning weekly club night.
SYNTRONIX: Fat Lil’s, Witney – 80s synth-pop hits.
BLACKTHORN + BEWARETHISBOY: James Street Tavern – Traditional British folk.
THE SAM KELLY TRIO + KELLY OLIVER: Tiddy Hall, Shipton-under-Wychwood – The Wychwood Folk Club hosts rising singer and former *BGT* finalist Sam Kelly, recalling Seth Lakeman in his approach to folk traditions.
OKTOBERFEST: The Beacon, Wantage

Saturday 4th
ROBYN HITCHCOCK: St John the Evangelist
Robyn Hitchcock is the English psychedelic troubadour’s English psychedelic troubadour. From his days in The Soft Boys, through the creative highs fronting The Egyptians, to his extensive run of solo recordings, he’s never lost his tight but genial grip on a very peculiar sense of whimsy and humour. A year after his last studio album, ‘Love From London’, Hitchcock has again teamed up with legendary producer Joe Boyd – whose credits include Fairport Convention, Nick Drake and REM as well as being the man who plugged in Bob Dylan’s electric guitar at that gig back in 1965 – for ‘The Man Upstairs’, his twentieth solo release (give or take), mixing up new original material with a selection of covers. These range from the characteristically obscure (I Was A King’s ‘Ferries’), to better known cult classics like The Doors’ ‘The Crystal Ship’ and Psychedelic Furs’ sublime ‘The Ghost In You’. To each he brings the deep, rich autumnal mood that has lately become his stock in trade. Robyn has been a semi regular visitor to Oxford over the years, including a notable visit to the Academy in 2007 where he was joined by most of REM, while Radiohead watched on from the front row. It’s a measure of the man’s standing as an inspiration for generations of musicians and if he’d balk at the idea of being a national treasure, such a status can’t be far away.



SUNDAY 5th
KLUB KAKOFANNEY with PUPPET MECHANIC + TWIZZ TWANGLE + BEARD OF DESTINY + LES CLOCHARDS + MOON LEOPARD: The Wheatsheaf (2pm) – Rounding off the Klub Kak birthday weekend with a free afternoon session in the downstairs bar.

MONDAY 6th
SOUTHERN: O2 Academy – Dark, airy country-blues from Belfast’s brother-sister duo.
ERJA LYTINNEN BAND: The Jericho Tavern – Return to the Famous Monday Blues for Finnish guitarist Erja who has earned herself an enviable reputation as a rising blues star in her native country as well as working with British blues stars like Ian Parker and Aynsley Lister.
CHRIS LESLIE: Nettlebed Folk Club – The Fairport Convention and Feast of Fiddles chap returns to Nettlebed after last year’s sold-out solo show.

TUESDAY 7th
SUPERSUCKERS: O2 Academy – Eddie Spaghetti brings the noise, and his Stetson, to town – *see main preview*
JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon – The Bully’s free weekly jazz night returns, tonight with The Stuart Henderson Quartet.
A METAL RUBBER BAND: The Loft, Old Fire Station – Oxford Improvisers perform John Grieve’s piece for scraped metal and balloons. Probably not one for Mumford and Sons fans.
REICHENBACH FALLS + DUOTONE: The Old Fire Station – Country rocking from Reichenbach Falls, alongside Duotone’s cello’n’loops soundscaping.
RECOGNISE: The Cellar – Launch night for new house, disco, funk and garage club night.
OPEN MIC SESSION: James Street Tavern

WEDNESDAY 8th
PATENT PENDING: O2 Academy – The New York state pop-punk veterans come to town as part of a UK tour to promote new greatest hits mini album, ‘Mario & the Brickbreakers’, coming in somewhere between Green Day, NOFX and Blink 182.
CRAYON + DON’T GO PLASTIC + IDEAL KOALA + RAYZO: The Wheatsheaf – Indie rocking pitched partway between Radiohead’s awkward electro-tinged doodling and Belle & Sebastian sweetness from Crayon, plus funtime punk rocking from Don’t Go Plastic and cello’n’drums duo Ideal Koala.
OXFORD ACOUSTIC CLUB: The Jericho Tavern – Unplugged night with sets from Ben Avison, Samuel Edwards, Lucy Almond and Hugh McManners.

THURSDAY 9th
DELIA DARLINGS: The North Wall – A special tribute to electronic music genius Delia Derbyshire – the woman behind *Dr Who*’s timeless theme tune, but a musical visionary beyond that particular piece. Sadly a genius and visionary who was never fully recognised in her lifetime. With the discovery and examination of her extensive archive of music, which proves just how far ahead of the curve she was in the 1960s, Manchester’s Delia Darlings host an evening of music inspired by her work, plus art, visuals and films. Essential viewing.



Tuesday 7th SUPERSUCKERS: O2 Academy

If you describe yourselves as “The greatest rock’n’roll band in the world,” and title your Best Of album ‘How The Supersuckers Became the Greatest Rock’n’Roll Band in the World’, you’ve got to be pretty good. And Supersuckers are pretty good. Very good. Sometimes brilliant. They must have been doing something right to last over a quarter of a century, release five albums on SubPop during that label’s grunge peak, and record and tour with Willie Nelson. Although they formed in Arizona in 1988, Supersuckers will forever be known as a Seattle band, relocating there a year later and joining in with the emerging first wave of grunge, playing alongside Mudhoney et al. While they never completely left grunge behind, the band – forever helmed by bassist and singer Eddie Spaghetti – moved more and more towards a country-inspired sound, their mix of heads-down, no-nonsense rock attitude and energy earning them the ‘cow-punk’ label. They’re a band who embrace cliché and overkill as old friends, from the Stetsons on their heads to the pick-up trucks in their videos, and they rock in a way that has never been in or out of fashion. After a brief hiatus a few years ago, the band reconvened for tours with Thin Lizzy and Nashville Pussy and now they’re off around Europe for a series of headline club dates. Come on, how can you not love a band with lyrics like “you can use my dick as a walking stick”?

THE AUGUST LIST + CO-PILGRIM + VIENNA DITTO: The Bullingdon – This month’s *Nightshift* cover stars launch their debut album, ‘O Hinterland’, with a full band show at the Bully where they’ll be joined by fellow local country crew Co-Pilgrim and sci-fi voodoo blues duo Vienna Ditto.
NINE BELOW ZERO: O2 Academy – The near-legendary r’n’b pioneers return to Oxford after supporting The Stranglers here back in March, founding singer and guitarist Dennis Greaves still leading the band’s high-energy blues charge alongside fellow 9BZ veterans Mark Feltham and Brian Bethall. Having hit a creative and commercial peak in the early-80s with albums ‘Live At The Marquee’ and ‘Don’t Point Your Finger’, it’s always been live that the band have made their reputation.
JOHN OTWAY & WILD WILLY BARRETT: Old Fire Station – The old punk-era sparring partners reunite for the first time in many years to promote *Rock’n’Roll’s Greatest Failure – Otway the Movie*, the pair having enjoyed their sole chart hit together, ‘Really Free’, in 1977 before going on to joint and solo careers buoyed by a



Friday 10th

BOSSAPHONIK 10th ANNIVERSARY PARTY: The Cellar

We love a good birthday party here at *Nightshift*, and in the same month that Catweazle celebrate their 20th anniversary, the very excellent Bossaphonik are putting up the bunting for their 10th. As host Dan Ofer made clear in last month's *Nightshift* feature on local club promoters, Bossaphonik is in a field of one as far as promoting jazz-world-dance sounds in Oxford. Which is a shame in a way but then again maybe not when they've been doing it so well for so long. A host of acts who would never otherwise have come to Oxford have passed through the Cellar's doors since 2004 and tonight's celebrations will bring three of the best back to town in the form of Dele Sosimi's Afrobeat Orchestra (*pictured*), Wara, and the Dunajska Kapelye Duo. Sosimi is the UK's chief ambassador for Afrobeat, taking in West African hi-life, funk and jazz, to create a richly polyrhythmic music. Dele played for seven years with the legendary Fela Kuti before leading his own band, recently signed to the hip WahWah45s label and fresh from their Hackney residency where epic four-hour sets are the norm. Wara take Cuban salsa and timba and fuse it with British funk, hip hop, soul and reggae for a fusion that's heavy on the grooves, while opening the night, The Dunajska Kapelye Duo bring some gypsy jazz to the party, featuring Polish violin virtuoso Piotre Jordan and Oxford graduate and multi-instrumentalist Zac Gvirtsman. As well as the live music, Bossaphonik's resident DJs will be bringing the world's dancefloor to the Cellar, just as it has done for a decade now.

serious cult following. Otway celebrated the 25th anniversary of that hit in 2002 with a second chart success, 'Bunsen Burner', but few if any rock stars have made such a virtue of enduring non-success. If you've witnessed either or both of them in action before, you'll know what to expect. If not, see them at least once before you or they kick the bucket – such unabashed onstage lunacy is a sadly rare thing. **BRIGHTWORKS + JACK & THE GIANTS + JEFFERSON DUKE + BLUESHIFT: The Cellar** – Afrobeat-inspired electro-indie from Brightworks at tonight's It's All About the Music showcase. **PETER ANDRE: The New Theatre** – Pointless fucking twat. **CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre** **THE PETE FRYER BAND: The Wheatsheaf** – Blues rocking from the eccentric local veteran.

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon **HURR SOUNDS: The Cellar** **BAD REIGN + JACK LITTLE + ROB LANYON: The Bell, Bicester** – Hard rock and metal from Bad Reign at tonight's Strummer Room Project show.

FRIDAY 10th

BOSSAPHONIK 10th ANNIVERSARY PARTY: The Cellar – The world jazz dance club celebrates its decade anniversary in style with The Dele Sosimi Afrobeat Orchestra and more – *see main preview* **CHUCK PROPHET & THE MISSION EXPRESS: The Bullingdon** – Return to town for the cult Americana songsmith – *see main preview* **SWITCH featuring DIGITAL SOUNDBOY: O2 Academy** – The O2's weekly electro club night plays host to the label behind Shy FX, B Traits, Youngman, Macus Visionary and more, with an electric approach to electronic dance, from drum&bass and dubstep to funky and house. **EMPTY VESSELS + CARDINAL + PEERLESS PIRATES + FRACTURE: The Wheatsheaf** – Riffastic proto-metal blues rocking from Empty Vessels, rekindling the spirit of Led Zep, Blue Cheer and Hendrix, alongside timber-rattling indie-rockabilly ne'er-do-wells Peerless Pirates and Arctic Monkeys-styled indie rockers Fracture. **LORD MOUNTAINS + BILLY T'RIVERS + OHUKI + WALTZ IN THE SHALLOW END: St Aldates Tavern** – Daisy Rodgers Music and Bear on a Bicycle team up to host an Oxjam fundraiser upstairs at the St Aldates Tavern. There's pop-friendly Americana from Lord Mountain; a solo set from local country-bluesman Billy T'Rivers; ukulele orchestra action from Ohuki and Belle & Sebastian-meets-Buddy Holly fun from Waltz in the Shallow End. **WHOLE LOTTA DC: Fat Lil's, Witney** – AC/DC tribute.

SATURDAY 11th

DRY THE RIVER: O2 Academy – London's expansive indie-folksters on the rise return to town having previously headed the bill at Gathering, increasingly defying the early Mumford comparisons with a rockier sound that's closer to Arcade Fire and My Morning Jacket, following up the launch of their own Mammoth beer with new album 'Alarms In The Heart'. **DAN CROLL: The Bullingdon** – Sleek, exuberant afro-pop-tinged electro balladry from the Liverpoolian singer and former nightclub bouncer, out on tour to promote his debut album, 'Sweet Disarray', following a tour support to Haim. **SIMPLE with BODDIKA: The Bullingdon** – The Bully's long-running house and electro night hosts Boddika, the solo guise of Al Bleek, one half of drum&bass faves Instra:mental and head honcho of Nonplus Records. **K-LACURA + MORASS OF MOLASSES + CONTEK: The Cellar** – OxRox present a night of metal with Didcot's thrash-core crew K-Lacura pulling no punches in their pursuit of The Riff. They're joined by Reading's Morass of Molasses. **DONNINGTON COMMUNITY FESTIVAL: Donnington Community Centre (2-10pm)** –

The genial Jeremy Hughes hosts a full day of free live acoustic music, from blues and folk to Americana and psychedelia, with sets from Des Barkus, Beard of Destiny, Charms Against the Evil Eye, Daisy, Mark Atherton and Friends, Moon Leopard, Oxford Ukuleles, Phil & Sue, Richard Brotherton, STEM, Superloose, and Tony Batey. **LEVEL 42: The New Theatre** – Last time we previewed a Level 42 gig in these pages we received a hilariously unhinged missive from one of their superfans, informing us that "Mister Mark King would be very angry" with what we'd written. Turns out Mister Mark King actually has an injunction against said superfan which, given you'd imagine Level 42 would be glad that anyone at all is still interested in their soulless, dated cod-funk-pop bilge, goes to show just how deranged the fella is. Should we be worried? Worried that maybe he'll turn up at Nightshift Towers armed with his green biro and a couple of pounds of high explosives strapped to his body, determined to show us the error of our ways and a shortcut to the afterlife? Possibly, but being blown to smithereens is surely preferable to having to listen to one single minute of one of Level 42's godforsaken slap-bass-riddled shitstorms. In fact the only thing that could make this month worse is if UB40 are coming to town too. Oh.... **OUT OF HARM'S WAY + ORANGE VISION + MOGMATIC: The Wheatsheaf** – Album launch show for Out Of Harm's Way. **TRASHY: O2 Academy** **FRESH OUT THE BOX: The Cellar** – Glowstick rave night with Shades of Rhythm. **THE PETE FRYER BAND + HEADINGTON HILLBILLIES: The Red Lion, Eynsham** **DIRTY EARTH BAND: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Rock Covers. **STEAMROLLER: The Vine, Cumnor** – Blues rocking from the local veterans.

SUNDAY 12th

NICK MULVEY: O2 Academy – The former-Portico Quartet chap returns to town to promote debut album 'First Mind', with his intimate brand of folk-pop, having previously gone out on tour with Laura Marling.

MONDAY 13th

MATT EDWARDS + TOM MITCHELL: The Bullingdon – Blues rocking from local singer and guitarist Matt Edwards at tonight's Haven Club show. **SUBVERSE: The Cellar** – Techno, and house club night Subverse celebrates the premiere of Pillowman at the Oxford Playhouse. **MARTIN CARTHY & DAVE SWARBRICK: Nettlebed Folk Club** – Two of the founding fathers of the British folk revival of the 60s team up again, singer and guitarist Carthy, the lead man of UK folk and renowned interpreter of traditional tunes, alongside former Fairport fiddler Swarbrick.

TUESDAY 14th

BLIND: The North Wall – Beatbox theatre production featuring UK beatbox champion Grace Savage. **JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon** – Free live jazz from local veteran Alvin Roy & Reeds Unlimited. **INTRUSION: The Cellar** – Goth, industrial and

ebm club night with residents Doktor Joy and Bookhouse. **OPEN MIC SESSION: James Street Tavern**

WEDNESDAY 15th

ALEXIS TAYLOR: The Bullingdon – Rearranged from June, the Hot Chip pop boffin returns to playing solo in support of his new album, 'Await Barbarians', the follow-up to 2008's 'Rubbed Out'. While he has form in jazz improv (previously working with Pat Thomas and Charles Hayward in About Group), early indications are that his new album is a more intimate form of the electro-pop he's made his name for. **SPARKY'S JAM NIGHT: James Street Tavern**

THURSDAY 16th

THE ORB: O2 Academy – All the old classics, from 'Pretty Woman' to 'I Drove All Night' – *see main preview* **BILLY LOCKETT: The Bullingdon** – Earnest,

Friday 10th

CHUCK PROPHET & THE MISSION EXPRESS: The Bullingdon

Empty Room Promotions continue to do what they have long since done best – bringing the cult heroes of Americana to Oxford. None more so than Chuck Prophet, back in town after his show at this same venue a year ago. Chuck is a very much in the A-list of cult American roots-rock heroes, having made his name in the 1980s fronting Green On Red, before going solo in the 90s. Since then he's played alongside Jonathan Richman, Warren Zevon, Lucinda Williams and country singer Kelly Willis, widely renowned as a master of the Telecaster, a versatile guitarist inspired by the likes of Dick Dale, Neil Young and Clarence White, while in his own right he's pursued a career that's found favour more with critics than the public at large, in the main due to his unwillingness to get too comfortable or play too fully to fans' expectations. Notable high points over the years have been 'Age Of Miracles', where country and rock'n'roll mixed unexpectedly with blues and hip hop, and the political 'Let Freedom Ring', which, like Springsteen, took the disenfranchised blue-collar worker as a starting point for a wider comment on American society. Comparisons to Ray Davies, Tom Petty and Alex Chilton point to the high esteem the man is held in, but over a 30 year career, he's never been anything other than his own man.



studiedly dishevelled young man plays acoustic guitar and opens his heart with thrilling consequences. Probably. We stopped listening after about a minute and a half. **LORRAINE MCCAULEY & THE BORDERLANDS: Albion Beatnik Bookstore** – Lush folk music from the Scottish and northern English traditions from singer McCauley and her band in the intimate confines of Albion Beatnik bookstore. **CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre** **OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon** **A TRUST UNCLEAN + I, THE DECIVER: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Death metal and grindcore from rising local stars A Trust Unclean.

FRIDAY 17th

GUNS 2 ROSES + METALLICA RELOADED: O2 Academy – Double dose of rocking tribute acts. **SWITCH featuring SHADOW CHILD: O2 Academy** – Deep house and bass from Simon Neale/Dave Spoon in his Shadow Child guise at tonight's Switch, the Rinse FM DJ best known for his hits 'Bad Girl' (with Lisa Maffia) and 'Baditude'. **BAD FOR LAZARUS: The Bullingdon** – Dirty garage-rocking and scuzzy punked-up Motown from Brighton's Bad For Lazarus, who have supported Liars, The 80s Matchbox B-Line Disaster and Winnebago Deal along the way. **ABSOLUTE BOWIE: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Tribute band.

SATURDAY 18th

OXJAM TAKEOVER: Various venues – The annual Oxfam fundraiser takes over The Cellar, Wheatsheaf, Purple Turtle, Turl Street Kitchen and White Rabbit, with myriad local bands and solo acts on show – *see main preview* **EAGULLS: The Jericho Tavern** – Noise. Buckets of noise. Giant buckets of noise – *see main preview* **AGNESS PIKE + PHYAL + MARY BENDYTOY: The Bullingdon** – Lunatic, theatrical thrash-metal from Agness Pike, whose heavy-duty Anthrax and Machinehead-inspired noise is offset by frontman Martin Spear's surreal lyricism and performance. Heavy-duty grunge-rocking from Phyal and industrial gothic rocking from Mary Bendytoy in support at tonight's One Gig Closer to Wittstock fundraiser. **BEDROCK: The Bullingdon** – Skeletor launches its new rock and metal club night, playing everything from old rock anthems to new metal tunes. **PASTEL FRONTIER + ATREVIDO + WILFUL DREAM + BIG TROPICS: The Wheatsheaf** – Oxjam takeover night. **ROOTS RAMBLE: The Chester Arms** – Swindlestock, Francis Pugh and the Whisky Singers and guests head off on another moving musical feast, taking Americana and country blues to the masses, starting at the newly re-opened Chester Arms, to The Star, via the Fir Tree. **TRASHY: O2 Academy** **EXTRA CURRICULAR: The Cellar** **THE PETE FRYER BAND: The George, Littlemore** **DAMN GOOD REASON: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Classic blues-rock covers. **PETE JOSHUA: The Swan, Shipton-under-Wychwood** – Local singer Joshua, a veteran of



Thursday 16th

THE ORB: O2 Academy

The first thing a friend of *Nightshift* asked when they saw The Orb were playing in town was, "I wonder if they sound any good when you're not stoned out of your mind." It's a fair question given the band, in their early-90s heyday, were the head music of choice for anyone keen on some blissed-out tripping or spliffing, and their spectacular showings at Glastonbury back then were woosily religious experiences. In a way they were the rave generation's Pink Floyd, as much about the elaborate light shows as the music, the whole thing transcending a simple gig, but slightly reliant on the audience's altered state.. While Alex Paterson remains at the helm of the band, fellow founder Jimmy Cauty, alongside Kris Weston and a host of others, have been and gone. From the trippy, ambient dub vibe of their finest albums – notably 'The Orb's Adventures Beyond the Ultraworld' and 'U.F.Orb' – with their sci-fi motifs, the sound has changed as members have come and gone, and few will remember 'Cydonia' with too much fondness as vocals and 'proper' songs took over. Thankfully a return to form came with the likes of 'Baghdad Batteries', its minimalist electro feel closer to Kompakt Records' output and Paterson's first love, Kraftwerk. So we guess it'll be some kind of a trip whether your poison of choice is finest mescaline or a nice mug of cocoa.

the 60s folk scene, comes to the Wychwood Folk Club.

SUNDAY 19th





Saturday 18th

EAGULLS: The Jericho Tavern

Guitar music is, we're forever being told, dead or at least dying. Usually by people who are incapable of looking beyond the upper echelons of the mainstream where its corpse can be smelled slowly decomposing. Even the most cursory glance further down and you'll discover all manner of green shots emerging, not least from the UK, whether it's Royal Blood, Hookworms, Dreng, Evil Blizzard or myriad others. Chief amongst the latest new breed are Leeds' Eagulls, a band who look like first year marketing degree student and who sound like the rage and angst of an entire generation is being funnelled through their guitars and words. Singer George Mitchell is seemingly incapable of a singing style anything less than obstinate fury (think an unhinged Robert Smith wrestling with his inner Jaz Coleman), while the band's squalling super-fuzzed melting pot of grunge, goth, hardcore and post-punk is a wall of joyous noise, one that loosely joins the dots between Joy Division, Bauhaus, The Horrors and Nirvana. The band had barely put their debut album out earlier this year than they were going out live on Letterman in the States, and if there's anything at all right about this world, Eagulls won't be playing gigs this intimate ever again, so damn well make the most of it. See, even we're getting slightly furious now. Good work, Eagulls.

MONDAY 20th

HEATHER PEACE: O2 Academy – The actress – who's cropped up in everything from *Emmerdale* and *Corrie to London's Burning* and *Waterloo Road* – returns to her first love, music, the classically-trained pianist and singer touring her new album, 'The Thin Line', which features anthemic single 'We Can Change'.
THE BILLY WALTON BAND: The Bullingdon– Blues-rock in the vein of Hendrix, Clapton and Stevie Ray Vaughan from the New Jersey guitarist, who has played around his local scene since his early teens, jamming with Springsteen, Gary US Bonds and Double Trouble along the way.
THE SHEE: Nettlebed Folk Club – The six-strong Scottish all-female folk and harmony group make the trip into the heart of the Shire with their clog-led traditional songs and instrumentals.

TUESDAY 21st

JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon – Guitar Summit perform at the Bully's weekly jazz club.
BALKAN WANDERERS + RODNEY QUAKES + WEDNESDAY WOLVES: The

Cellar – Balkan folk from Balkan Wanderers.
OPEN MIC SESSION: James Street Tavern
RECOGNISE: The Cellar

WEDNESDAY 22nd

RIXTON: O2 Academy – That whining, that awful whining – what is it? Is it a rusty hinge? Is it the wails of the eternally tormented? No, it's Rixton. And that other sound you can hear – that unpleasantly gloopy sound – that's us scooping our brain matter out with a spoon so we're lobotomised enough to hear Rixton without serious psychological damage.
THE STEPHEN GREW QUARTET: St Michael @ the Northgate – Oxford Improvisers hosts jazz pianist Stephen Grew's band.
THE DEPUTEES: The Jericho Tavern – Bluesy rocking in the vein of Cream and Hendrix.
ROB LANYON + KATY JACKSON: The Banbury Cross, Banbury – Strummer Room Project and Banbury Folk Club team up.

THURSDAY 23rd

DAVE & PHIL ALVIN: The Bullingdon – Famously combative brothers Dave and Phil Alvin reunite for their first studio album together since 1985, an album of covers of Big Bill Broozy songs. Back in the 80s they were helming renowned Californian rock-rockers The Blasters, mixing up blues, rockabilly, r'n'b and punk. Alvin left at the band's peak to pursue a solo career that saw him playing with the likes of The Gun Club as well as making his own records, but, as Dave said, "We argue, but never about Big Bill Broozy", and they're back together to breathe new life into the legendary pre-war blues man's songbook.
GIRL POWER + MEN OH PAUSE + CAM A.G: The Library – Virulent hardcore of the old school from Girl Power at tonight's Smash Disco, taking their cues from Discharge and Halo of Flies, and joined tonight by Brighton's brooding lo-fi post-punk crew Men Oh Pause, as well as a debut show from local singer and guitarist Cam A.G.
CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre
OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon

FRIDAY 24th

SKELETAL FAMILY + SALVATION: O2 Academy – Double dose of vintage goth tonight as Yorkshire's early-80s doomsters Skeletal Family return with original vocalist Anne-Marie Hurst, the band amongst the first wave of goth bands in the UK, making a darkly witchy noise in the vein of Siouxsie and the Banshees and Xmal Deutschland and touring with The Sisters of Mercy before Hurst went off to form Ghostdance with the Sisters' guitarist Gary Marx.
MAN MAKE FIRE + KYSHEA + THE MARK + LAST RITES: The Wheatsheaf – Heavy blues-rocking from Man Make Fire and old-school metal from Last Rites.
SWITCH featuring CALLIGRAPHY: O2 Academy – House, bass and techno club night.
THE TRAVELLING BAND + THE SHAPES + SWINDLESTOCK: The Bullingdon – Return of Manchester's rootsy psychedelic folk-pop collective, in the vein of Crosby, Stills and Nash and The Band. They're joined by local 60s-styled r'n'b crew The Shapes, and rootsy

Americana crew Swindlestock.
SURREAL PANTHER: Fat Lil's, Witney – Tribute to LA comedy rockers Steel Panther.

SATURDAY 25th

MAVERICK SABRE: O2 Academy – Hackney's Anglo-Irish rapper-turned-soul-singer returns ahead of his new album, the follow-up to 2012's 'Lonely Are the Brave', trying to find a place between his early jazzy hip hop roots and a more slick and soulful vibe. His former flatmate Plan B remains a major influence, alongside Amy Winehouse and Professor Green.
PALM READER + MUTAGENOCIDE + SANITY LOSS + DEVIL INSIDE + TWISTED STATE OF MIND: O2 Academy – Skeletor's monthly metal showcase brings Woking's dark-edged metalcore crew Palm Reader to town; they're joined by tech/thrash tyrants Mutagenocide, Aylesbury's metalcore merchants Sanity Loss and local teenage grunge-metallers Twisted State of Mind.
GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES with MENDOZA & GRIFFITHS + MOTION STATIC + PUPPET MECHANIC: The Wheatsheaf – A one-off collaboration between local techno-trip-rock-hip-hop sound mashers Tiger Mendoza and former-Witches and Eeebleee frontman-turned-poet Dave Griffiths at tonight's GTI, the two acts coming together to launch their new EP. Evenings mainman Mark Wilden joins them on stage alongside a host of other guests. More mash-up noise in support from London's Motion Static, blending dubstep, electro, metal and punk into a sort of post-Atari Teenage Riot noise soup. Rather more sedate sounds to open tonight's show in the form of local literate pop types Puppet Mechanic, leaning towards the likes of Lloyd Cole and Prefab Sprout.
ELLA MARTINI: The Bullingdon – Sultry pop and r'n'b from the local singer.
SAVAGE MESSIAH + THE MORE I SEE + BLACK LIGHT MACHINE: The Cellar – OxRox metal night with London's thrash merchants Savage Messiah, signed to Earache and on tour to promote fourth album 'The Fateful Dark', having previously supported Soulfly, Onslaught and Overkill.
WHITE MAGIC SOUND: The Bullingdon
THE MIGHTY REDOX + HEADINGTON HILLBILLIES: James Street Tavern
TRASHY: O2 Academy
EXTRA CURRICULAR: The Cellar
SHEPHERD'S PIE: Fat Lil's, Witney – Rock covers.
STEAMROLLER: The Nag's Head, Abingdon

SUNDAY 26th

KIDS IN GLASS HOUSES: O2 Academy – Cardiff's punk power-pop crew return to the Shire as part of their farewell tour after their showing at Truck Festival back in July.
EMPEROR YES: The Cellar – Quirky psychedelic electro-pop from Alcopop! Records new signings.
LEIGH ALEXANDER + MEGAN JOSEPHY + LAIMA BITE + MOORE & CLARKE + ECHOIC + MARK ATHERTON & FRIENDS: The Wheatsheaf (2pm) – Free afternoon of unplugged music hosted by Klub Kakofanny and featuring Beaverfuel's potty-mouthed troubadour Leigh Alexander, sultry gothic folk singer Laima Bite and more.

SUNDAY SESSION: Florence Park Community Centre (2-5pm) – Live music and family activities.
BLUES JAM: Fat Lil's, Witney (3pm)

MONDAY 27th

THE SPELLKASTERS: The Bullingdon – Pete Green's rhythm section, The Pirates, reform with new singer Pete Edmunds for some high-energy r'n'b in the vein of Dr Feelgood at tonight's Haven Club show.
UB40: O2 Academy – There's a rat in the kitchen, what am I gonna do? I know, chop UB40 into tiny pieces and feed them to the rat. Rat promptly dies of bad reggae poisoning. Problem solved. Time for a nice glass of red, red wine.
CHRIS WHILE & JULIE MATTHEWS: Nettlebed Folk Club – The two former-Albion Band singers and current leading ladies of English folk return again to Oxfordshire's premier folk club.

Saturday 18th

OXJAM TAKEOVER: Various venues

Back for its annual takeover of assorted venues in the city centre, Oxjam Oxford forms part of a network of similar events across the UK, raising money for the anti-poverty charity. This year the event follows the exact same route as May's Oxford Punt with The Cellar, Purple Turtle, Turl Street Kitchen, White Rabbit and Wheatsheaf involved. The Cellar hosts a dedicated reggae takeover with **Jamatone, Zaia, Jah Lion Movement** and **The Dublings**, while Turl Street Kitchen is home to assorted local solo artists and duos, including **Duotone, Megan Henwood, Sam Brett, Lisa Kenny** and **Helen Sanderson White**. The White Rabbit too makes room for mostly solo acts, with *Nightshift* fave **Jordan O'Shea (pictured)** joined by **Andy Robbins, Little Red** and **Phil Alexander**. Between them The Purple Turtle and Wheatsheaf feature a selection of local bands, from indie to blues, prog to electronica, with the likes of **Noe & the Pastel Frontier, Big Tropics, Loud Mountains, Little Brother Eli, Sinking Witches, Zurich, Leader** and **Wilful Dream** among those playing. Like the Punt, it's a good way to wander around seeing and hearing stuff you've maybe not picked up on before, and with all the ticket money (all-venue wristbands are a tenner) going to Oxfam, everyone's a winner, right.



TUESDAY 28th

DEAD PREZ: O2 Academy – Politicised rap from the underground stalwarts – *see main preview*
RAW IN SECT + ANNERO + RETRIBUTION + I, THE DECEIVER: The Wheatsheaf – Ultra-heavy-duty prog-thrash from Athens' Raw In Sect at tonight's metal night, alongside local death-thrash crew Annero and more.
JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon – With Alvin Roy & Reeds Unlimited.
OPEN MIC SESSION: James Street Tavern

WEDNESDAY 29th

ROCKSOC NIGHT: The Wheatsheaf – Live rock and metal from the Uni rock society.

THURSDAY 30th

ALASTAIR ROBERTS + JESS HALL: The Cellar – A welcome opportunity to witness Scottish folk singer Alasdair Roberts in an intimate venue, the one-time Appendix Out experimentalist now one of the finest interpreters of traditional Scottish folk tunes around, starting with is superb 'The Crook of My Arm' album, and most recently 'A Wonder Working Stone'. And as if that weren't treat enough for you, he's joined tonight by local folkstress Jess Hall, the recent *Nightshift* cover star playing her songs of the sea from her debut album 'Bookshelves'.
LIMEHOUSE LIZZY: O2 Academy – Thin Lizzy tribute.
CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre
REDLANDS PALOMINO COMPANY: Fat Lil's, Witney – Country-rockers Redlands Palomino Company return to the Shire after their show for Empty Rooms earlier in the year, evoking memories of Gram Parsons and Emmylou Harris.
OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon
CALL MR ROBESON: The Old Fire Station – Musical tribute to Paul Robeson amid a play telling the story of the singer, actor and civil rights activist's incredible life.

FRIDAY 31st

SUBWAYS + MAX RAPTOR: O2 Academy – Double headline tour with Welwyn Garden City's enduring pop-punk trio The Subways returning to town alongside Burton's brutal, militant but melodic rock and roll warriors Max Raptor, kicking it out in the vein of New Model Army, Therapy? and Queens of the Stone-Age.
SWITCH featuring GORGON CITY: O2 Academy – The O2's weekly electro club night hosts north London production duo Gorgon City, the pair's smooth, soulful deep house anthem 'Ready For Your Love' having gone Top 5.
PORT ERIN + PEERLESS PIRATES + RAE



Tuesday 28th

DEAD PREZ: O2 Academy

While it's easy to believe hip hop has descended into a sterile quagmire of bling, beefs and booty calls, the fringes continue to produce some of the most intelligent and politicised lyricists around. Dead Prez – New York duo stic.man and M-1 – have been firing broadsides from those fringes for close on two decades now, their militant socialist and pan-African ideology recalling Public Enemy at times (check out the song titles - 'Police State'; 'Propaganda'; 'We Need a Revolution'). Though there's a tendency to lapse into the clichés of rap vocabulary at times, the messages are clear and the targets of their ire often highly specific, from the US school system to alcoholism and their affects on black Americans. The duo are best known for their anthemic 'Hip Hop', and they worked with Kanye back on 2004's 'Revolutionary But Gangsta', but their dedication to various political causes has always overridden the lure of fame and they remain on those fringes. As much as their militancy Dead Prez are renowned for their exuberant live shows, where dollar bills are burned and fruit is thrown to audiences – with messages to eat healthily – and the mix of diatribe and critique with more affirmative clarion calls make them one of the most potent rap acts around.

ZOE: The Bullingdon – Folk-tinged pop from Wiltshire's Port Erin at the Bully tonight, with Peerless Pirates playing the last of half a dozen local shows this month to promote new single, 'El Gringo'.
TELEGRAPHER + JUNKIE BRUSH + BLACK TISH: The Wheatsheaf – Scary Halloween noise-making at the Sheaf tonight with dissonant cacophony makers Telegrapher going up against firebrand punk rockers Junkie Brush.
RECKLESS SLEEPERS: The Hollybush, Osney – Halloween party with the local psychedelic folk-rockers.
HEADINGTON HILLBILLIES: James Street Tavern
STRAIGHTEN OUT: Fat Lil's, Witney – Stranglers tribute.
STEAMROLLER: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford

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CATE LE BON

O2 Academy

There’s simply no-one else like Cate le Bon. With a voice, a way with a tune and, let’s be honest, the looks, to be an A-List pop star, she’s chosen the road less travelled with a vengeance.

Hailing from Carmarthenshire, her

voice found her described early on as “the Welsh Nico,” but it’s more versatile than that suggests, a heady, playful mix of sadness, imperiousness, mischief and devil-may-care that can find it soaring or simply veering into all manner

of odd corners while remaining a thing of genuine wonder. As for her songs, le Bon seems unwilling or unable to simply let them settle into anything resembling complacency, stabbing sweet fairytale melodies with shards of howling

psychedelic grunge, or persuading them to wander eerily and prettily into the deep, dark woods, forgetting quite what they set off to do in the first place. In this she wears her love of The Velvet Underground, with their obstinate refusal to bow to The Rules, on her sleeve, and ‘Sad Sad Feet’, her sole pick tonight from superb debut album, ‘Me Oh My’, has more than a hint of ‘Sunday Morning’ about it.

But you’ll never quite pin her down. The nursery rhyme clarion call of ‘Are You With Me Now’, the humming, buzzing bouncy castle psych-rock mantra ‘Sisters’, and the rarefied, almost folky lament of ‘No God’ are musical siblings, immersed in their creator’s gene pool, but not ones you’d ever recognise as such from the family portrait.

Such wilful waywardness stands Cate le Bon in good stead as far as making her stand out from the crowd goes: if anyone chose to try and follow her they’d be lost within moments, and if it’s held her back as a commercial proposition – despite the enduring love of 6Music and others for her music, tonight’s show is sparsely attended – you imagine she cares slightly less than a jot. She’s happier hanging out and collaborating with her mates, whether Gruff Rhys, or H Hawkline and Sweet Baboo, who make up her backing band and with who she plays bass and keys during their support set. It’s artists with this attitude that are remembered for years, decades later: the ones who ploughed their own furrow or stood their ground. And tonight, however reserved and self-deprecating she might appear on stage, Cate le Bon proves yet again she is worth every second of your time.

Dale Kattack

BUNKFEST 13

Wallingford

Bunkfest has grown from a marquee in a pub car park to a full-blown festival that fills Wallingford’s big open space, the KinCroft. With its main sponsor still a local removals firm, locals running it and pubs and clubs across the town also hosting gigs, part of Bunkfest’s charm is that despite its expansion it retains the feeling of being a community celebration that is more fish and chips than celebrity chef, and amazingly it continues to be almost entirely free.

The music is predominately of the folk and roots variety but the first act to catch our ear is a young jazz vocalist, **FLEUR STEVENSON**, who possesses a very natural feel for a jazz standard. She’s one of several female voices away from the main stage this year who have something to offer: **JESS MORGAN**, from Norfolk, has an American inflection to her powerful back-of-the-throat vocals, which she combines with a driving guitar style. **LOUISE JORDAN**, another singer songwriter, has a purer voice, a bit like a young Joan Baez, plus a quirky set list, while **ROSIE EDE** is confident and relaxed fronting her folk-rock band. No doubt **KATY ROSE BENNET** would be on this list too, except unfortunately we miss her set.

The headliners all deliver this year. The formerly Oxford based **BAKA BEYOND**, self-described as “the original Afro Celt dance band”, are possibly better heard outdoors than in and on Friday night their jangly Congolese style guitar riffs and Baka chants prove as uplifting as ever and

it’s happy, smiling faces all around.

On Saturday night the alternative folk and world band **3 DAFT MONKEYS** feature fine fiddle playing and a drummer pounding away just with his hands, but their set is made by the huge crowd, including a substantial quota of men in dresses, who make it beyond the beer tent and work themselves up into a dance frenzy.

Sunday night is less tumultuous, even though **TARRAS** are much improved on last year when they occupied the same slot but seemed tired. They use keyboards in their take on fusing the traditional and contemporary and we find the more contemporary they are the better they hold our attention.

None of the headliners match the telling lyrics and intensity of **MARTYN JOSEPH**, though. Sometimes labelled “the Welsh Bruce Springsteen”, and with a concern for social justice, he intersperses songs about profiteering bankers, the state of religion, and what has befallen Palestinians with poignant songs of love, friendship, and hope and a burst of ‘Dancing In The Dark’. He’s never going to be everyone’s cup of tea but he truly seems to leave it all out there in what is undoubtedly the set of the weekend.

However after that we’re in need of a bit of light relief, so thanks to **PETE ORTON** for his take-off of Morris Dancing. It’s definitely the belly laugh of the weekend and, like Bunkfest itself, a whole lot of good fun.

Colin May

LUKE SITAL-SINGH

O2 Academy

A couple of days before seeing him live, I came across an interview with Luke Sital-Singh, in which he professed surprise at the fact that in his graduating class (of music students), he alone had made notable headway into the industry. Indeed, it’s difficult to pin point exactly why he’s succeeded where so many others have failed, the twin behemoths of every early music success (good luck and good contacts) aside.

It’s not immediately evident when the set starts either. Opener ‘I Have Been a Fire’ builds from a gentle guitar intro to a vast, falsetto-ridden chorus, and, though pleasant, and vaguely Buckley-esque, the lyrics are tepid, and it’s hardly remarkable. That he cites Damien Rice as a major influence is almost a given; a few songs into the set it’s difficult not to draw a straight comparison, particularly through the weight of emotion he infuses into every line. Later on he brings out another instrumentalist, whose second guitar rounds out the sound – alongside accompanying vocal harmonies – and a slight percussive element to his playing means the lack of a drummer isn’t a palpable limitation.

YELLOW FEVER / BIG TROPICS /

BE GOOD

The Wheatsheaf

In a world that’s increasingly market-tested one of the great pleasures of small gigs is not knowing what to expect. When Be Good take to the Daisy Rodgers stage, most often frequented by well-kempt indie poppers, we hadn’t predicted reverby late-50s balladry that sounds as if it should be about milkshake and eroticised motorbike crashes. They deliver this post-doo wop very well, throwing in a little surf tremolo, some brash 80s colours and even a droplet of grunge slackness, and if it sometimes feels as though Marty McFly put the band together by nipping into his high school prom at ten year intervals, the effect is surprisingly cohesive: a few more gigs to settle the nerves, and another couple of tunes as strong as ‘I’d Have Told You Anything’ and we’ll have a real contender. A few years ago Big Tropics’ sound would have been an eyebrow-raiser too, but inexplicably in recent years the default setting for young bands in this town seems to have become sterilised, wipe-clean soul-pop in the vein of 5 Star and New Edition. While this isn’t necessarily a bad thing –



photo: JChris Blizzard

Part way through the set, he plays an earlier song, ‘Honest Man’, and though it might be “just about love”, as so many of his songs are, it’s more raw and subtly vulnerable than anything he’s played yet. This is later echoed in another early song, ‘Luna’, about a stranded killer whale he read about in the paper, and which he introduces as one that “didn’t make the album, as songs about killer whales don’t tend to do very well.” And therein lies the crux of the problem. In focusing on what “will sell well” (no doubt on label advice), Luke has swapped unpolished chords and eccentric subject matter for epic choruses and songs about girls, and in the process, lost whatever it is that made him stand out in the first place. He finishes with ‘Fail For You’, a simple ballad, full of delicate guitar and vocals that soar then drop to almost nothing. And while lyrically languid – he rhymes the lines “this is getting hard to bare / I don’t think you even care” – it manages to retain some of that musical fragility that separates him from being just another honey-voiced acoustic guitar-welding songwriter, singing songs about love.

Caroline Corke



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PREGNANT / LIMBO KIDS / AFTER THE THOUGHT

The Cellar

After The Thought – the music-making moniker of Matt Chapman-Jones – surprises us by delivering a short set of accessible pieces, built around simple motifs that seem a world away from the complex layers of textured sound that typified his early appearances. Some even bring to mind late-period Cabaret Voltaire, when they decided they wanted to be a pop band after all. He finishes with two new numbers, the first a touch soporific, but ‘Walker’ ends proceedings keeping the simple theme but introducing some welcome chunky beats.

Limbo Kids have been described as indie-disco, a label that sinks the heart of anyone who lived through the first wave of either musical episode. Typically heralding chirpy, upbeat Level 42-style songs with irritatingly fiddly guitar, this, sadly, is precisely what we are served up. Things look up when they take the tempo down and allow themselves a bit of freedom, but despite a bassist practising some nice footwork and a very, very good drummer they need to listen to the wonderful Fickle Friends for some ideas on how to reinterpret 80s pop with a touch more panache.

Hailing from northern California and making their first trip to the UK, Pregnant is

essentially the work of one Daniel Trudeau, best known for understated, lo-fi music with minimalist guitar, bleeps and percussion with repeated snippets of random sounds, the result often pleasingly fragile but difficult to really engage with. However, tonight’s show bears little resemblance to last year’s ‘Your Song’ album or this year’s ‘Lyre Bird #1’, where he collaborated by email with a dozen musicians around the world to produce a Steve Reich-style piece of iteration. In contrast, we have three people playing keyboards, guitar and digital percussion, still inhabiting musical margins but now with a bombastic rhythmic base. The performance is dominated by a female singer whose strong voice and slinky, expressive dance moves suggests a total departure from earlier incarnations. Despite being much more accessible musically, there remains something intangibly unsettling about the event, in a similar vein to Ultraista, the recent project involving Radiohead producer Nigel Godrich. Trudeau seems bent on keeping us guessing as to what’s going on in his head, and there seems to be plenty there to keep us all occupied.

Art Lagun

THE KITES / BRIGHT WORKS / DUCHESS / TOO MANY POETS

O2 Academy

We only catch two songs of Too Many Poets’ set, but it’s enough to realise the singer’s Smith t-shirt is misleading. Unlike their none-more-indie recent demo, live the band tend more towards the proggy end of 70s rock, hints of 10cc creeping in at times. Which is no bad thing, and while there’s a tendency for instruments to wander over each other, there are decent songs to be found beneath.

Such is Duchess’ exuberance and featherlite musical nature we expected to bump into them at every festival over the summer. Instead they’re left to bring a little light to the altogether darker interior of the O2. With four percussionists in their ranks (including a giant mounted drum that we keep thinking is a cask of ale), their mix of township dance and samba is sweet and simple. “This song is about cooking for people to make them fancy you,” announced singer Katie Herring before ‘Oven Time’, while set closer ‘South Parade’ “isn’t about anything deep or complicated, it’s just about dancing.” They’re true to their mission statement. If we say they’re as infectious as Ebola, don’t take that the wrong way, they’re also as irresistible as a cherry and sunshine sponge. Possessed of a similar afro-pop feel as Duchess, Bright Works replace that band’s summery good vibes with a hysterical level of angst. Where Duchess play fast

and loose, Bright Works’ funk is uptight and urgent, stabs of post-punk electro puncturing any party-starting ideas. It’s great stuff, a well-structured set at its best when the singer unleashes his inner Billy MacKenzie, but they could do with a bit more stage presence, and a note to the bassist – when you’re singer’s talking to the crowd, it’s time to keep your mouth shut. Kites singer Owen Stepney would have no truck with such insubordination. He’s the centre of attention and don’t we know it. He’s a big show-off with bad hair – something pop music always needs more of – and seemingly has his eye on bigger stages already. He might get them too if the band play their cards right. With a mix’n’match approach, they find space for clean-cut guitar pop, afro-favoured dance, lightweight funk and the odd moment of scouring rock, managing to squeeze passable covers of Foals and Bombay Bicycle Club into their set. They’d do well to avoid the gruff, gnarly old blues bits, which are frankly fucking awful, and stick to the poppier pieces that have a sizeable contingent of kids down the front dancing in a way that’s rare at any gig, never mind one by a local band. With a few sharper songs still needed in their set, The Kites might not be flying high just yet, but they’ve certainly caught a breeze and are on the rise.

Dale Kattack

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APPLE CRUMBLE

Radiohead declare war on U2

RADIOHEAD are considering injecting their next album directly into people’s brains while they sleep.

AT
Thom Yorke has promised to visit every home on the planet in the dead of night, or at least the more middle class ones, and probably student halls of residents, to neurologically impregnate his new songs after **U2** upped the global mega-band arms race by gluing copies of their **‘Songs Of Innocence’** onto every computer hard drive in the western world. The album can only be removed with the use of special Bono-Begone solution, available exclusively from a small hardware store in Dublin at a cost of £10 a can.

LEAST
Radiohead allegedly started the whole album giveaway escalation thing back in 2007 when they invited fans to “pay what you like” for **‘In Rainbows’**, upsetting the entire music retail apple cart in the process. Despite the fact that most downloaders only paid a penny for a copy, the band still made more money than they would have if they’d put it on Spotify.

IT
Since this landmark moment bands have tried to come up with more and more inventive ways of getting their music heard, including a number of



Don’t look now but he’s standing at the foot of your bed.

Oxford acts. Earlier this year local indie rockers **Spring Offensive** set about kidnapping random local music fans until they handed over a tenner for debut album ‘Young Animal Hearts’, while **Gaz Coombes** threatened to play gigs consisting only of random electronic bleeps unless a million people signed a legally-binding pledged to buy the next Supergrass album. Folk singer **Jess Hall** said she’d force feed fans clotted cream scones and fresh sponge cakes until their livers collapsed if they failed to buy copies of ‘Bookshelves’ from her pantry-based

record label, and in the most startling episode, rapper **Rawz** proclaimed he would release a new album on the first day of every month until someone bought the last one.

WASN’T
Thom Yorke plans to begin his round-the-world-or-at-least-the-more-affluent-suburbs tour later this month in order to “get in there before Santa, who quite frankly looks like a bit of an amateur when it comes to sneaking into people’s bedrooms and leaving them stuff they probably don’t want.” His mission is expected to last over two months, leaving no time for any gigs or festival appearances. Instead Radiohead will promote the new album with an abstract art installation at **Tate Modern** involving a video of a stovepipe-hatted Thom feeding £20 notes to a gyrating dolphin.

KASABIAN
In an almost immediate response U2 have pledged to distribute their next album, ‘Bono and Chris Martin in a Sinking Boat – Who Do You Throw Overboard First?’, via the population’s anuses. The album will be chemically infused into toilet paper where it will enter people’s bloodstreams via a process of osmosis. “Shit comes out, shit goes back in,” someone might have said.

THE WHEATSHEAF

Friday 3rd October – KLUB KAKOFANNEY 23rd ANNIVERSARY WEEKENDER

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Saturday 4th October

FRACTURE

KNIGHTS OF MENTIS + THE MIGHTY REDOX + DES BARKUS

CHARMS AGAINST THE EVIL EYE 7pm/£5

Sunday 5th October

ANTON BARBEAU + MOON LEOPARD + TWIZZ TWANGLE

THE BEARD OF DESTINY + LES CLOCHARDS 2:30pm / Downstairs Free Entry

Friday 10th October – MD PROMOTIONS

EMPTY VESSELS

CARDINAL + PEERLESS PIRATES 8pm/£5

Saturday 11th October – OUT OF HARM’S WAY (EP LAUNCH)

ORANGE VISION

MOGMATIC + GRIM 8pm/£5

Saturday 18th October – OXJAM TAKEOVER

THE PASTEL FRONTIER

ATREVIDO + WILFUL DREAM + BIG TROPICS 8pm/£4.50

Friday 24th October – IT’S ALL ABOUT THE MUSIC

MAN MAKE FIRE

KYSHERA + THE MARK + LAST RITES 8pm/£6

Saturday 25th October – GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES

MENDOZA + GRIFFITHS

MOTION STATIC + PUPPET MECHANIC 8pm/£4.50

Tuesday 28th October – MURDER OF CROWS PROMOTIONS

RAW IN SECT

ANNERO + RETRIBUTION + I, THE DECEIVER 8pm/£5

Wednesday 29th October

ROCKSOC

STUDENT ROCK NIGHT

Friday 31st October

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DR SHOTOVER – The Dr Is In

Autumn draw(er)s on, and there is a seasonal chillax in the air. While to many this might mean kicking piles of leaves and cheery conker-playing urchins (though, careful, people, one *can* be arrested for urchin-kicking), it also indicates that there is a new Doctor on the block. No, *I’m* not leaving the East Indies Club, Belvedere... stop smirking fatuously and get a pint in, oaf. Here’s an audio clue... DIDDLE-ee-dee, DIDDLE-ee-dee, DIDDLE-ee-dee WEE-OOO. Ah, is that a pint of Manning’s Gusset I see materialising before me? Put it down there on the wipe-clean formica bar, Belvedere. Excellent, excellent. *[Slurp-o]*... Yes, it’s true, they originally asked *me* to star in Dr Who this time round. I had to turn ‘em down when I realised there would be no swearing, no drinking... and no Karen Gillan. Plus, one would have to endure the constant hawk-eyed scrutiny of such local Whovians as our Esteemed Editor, Dave ‘BBC’ Gilyeat, Jon ‘BFI’ Spira and Mark ‘DADGAD’ Bosley. What’s that, Lucan? THE WHO? No, we’re not talking about THE WHO, you deaf old prannet. You’re as bad as Captain Beaky Townshend himself. Still at least HE can see for miles, whereas YOU... you are a total waste of space. And time. Almost as bad as the person who wrote that song which goes ‘All that she wants, Is another baybee’ over a simpering cod-reggae beat, or the composer of that nauseating nasal litany - ‘These are the fings, The fings we lost, The fings we lost, In the fire fire fire’. I’d love to set *them* on f***ing fire fire fire... if only if I could get my hands on them. More drinks, Bell-end, I mean Belvedere...? Good idea. Make mine a Padbury this time. With a Louise Jameson chaser. *[Slurp-o, slurp-o]*... Mmm, scrumptious.

Next month:
Dame Judi Dench – Thirteenth Doctor?

Now, repeat after me, ‘Is that your sonic screwdriver, Dr S?’... *this time with more expression and less hilarity, please.* (Companion for Dr S – auditions continue).

INTRODUCING....

Peerless Pirates

Who are they?
Peerless Pirates are a pirate-obsessed indie-surf-rockabilly band from Oxford made up of Cliff Adams (*vocals / guitar*); Kyle Mundy (*guitar / vocals*); Stu Green (*bass*), and Barry Short (*drums*). Named after the bowling team Cliff’s dad was in in the 1960s, as well as the band’s fondness for rum, they formed in 2008, originally as a three-piece fronted by Cliff, before becoming the quartet we know now in 2010, and have become staple favourites in *Nightshift* and on BBC Oxford Introducing. Their debut EP ‘Thieves & Miscreants’ earned them two sets at Glastonbury in 2013. A follow-up, ‘Nelson’s Folly’ followed while ‘El Gringo’, *Nightshift*’s Demo of the Month in August, is released as a single this month.

What do they sound like?
A rollicking, roustabout, shiver-me-timbers mix of classic 80s indie – particularly The Smiths – rockabilly, surf-rock, eastern European folk music, and spaghetti western soundtracks. Cliff’s flamboyant baritone leads a swashbuckling charge over Kyle’s sing-song guitar lines and the band’s freight-rain rhythms. “Rum-soaked fun” is a phrase often – and justifiably – bandied about. If you’ve forgotten the time when indie sounded *fun*, here’s your chance to get re-acquainted.

What inspires them?
“History – historical tales and adventures in combination with modern day trials and tribulations. There is a great deal more romanticism in the storytelling about historical events but, paradoxically, modern day occurrences can also be referenced under a historical umbrella. I find tales of love, heroism and devious wrongdoing to be eternally inspiring even if they are delivered behind a veil of black humour.”

Career highlight so far:
“Playing two shows at Glastonbury last year. Both ourselves and The Stones were Glastonbury virgins. They got a slightly bigger crowd than us if truth be told. That was so unexpected.”



And the lowlight:
“The dark days between the demise of the first band and the kickstarting of the new. I almost couldn’t be bothered and the guitars started to gather cobwebs.”

Their favourite other Oxfordshire act is:
“Of bands who are currently still playing Sinking Witches were particularly impressive when we shared a bill with them recently.”

If they could only keep one album in the world, it would be:
“These days, we’d be lost without anything by Mad Dog Mcreea, who consistently provide us with perfect pre-gig limbering up music.”

When is their next local gig and what can newcomers expect?
“Friday 3rd October at the Jericho Tavern, and the 10th at The Wheatsheaf. Expect a lot of energy, a great deal of rum and a frenzied desire to dance.”

Their favourite and least favourite things about Oxford music are:
“The thing that strikes us the most about the Oxford music scene is the passion everyone seems to share for live music. It’s a rare thing these days and should be bottled. Least favourite by far is the parking. Have you ever tried to do a gig at The Cellar?”

You might love them if you love:
The Smiths; The Ukrainians; The Monochrome Set; Adam & The Ants; The Shadows; Ennio Morricone.

Hear them here:
www.peerlesspirates.com

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

20 YEARS AGO
‘The Day the Music Died’ ran the headline news in October 1994’s edition of *Curfew* magazine. The new owners of the legendary **Jericho Tavern**, the Firkin chain, were set to end the pub’s musical history in a complete revamp. Meanwhile, across town, a crisis was brewing at **The Oxford Venue**. Issues between the venue’s licence holder and promoters Nick Moorbath and Adrian Hicks, were coming to a head as the council cut its capacity to 250 over safety issues. The situation at The Jericho would become part of a campaign by local music fans to keep the venue alive, promoter Mac having put the Jericho, and Oxford, on the musical map through the early 90s and helped launch the careers of Radiohead and Supergrass. The campaign would rumble on for another three months before “progress” won the day and a new theme pub took the place of a great venue. Similarly the Venue would close, to re-emerge bigger, better and stronger as **The Zodiac** the following year. All this doom provided the backdrop for one of the brightest times for Oxford bands. **Radiohead** released their new single, ‘My Iron Lung’ on Parlophone this month, while **Ride** released ‘I Don’t Know Where It Comes From’ on Creation, and **Heavenly** continued to be genial godparents of indie music as they released ‘The Decline & Fall Of Heavenly on the seminal Sarah label. While we pondered where the next generation of Oxford stars would cut their teeth, highlights of the month ahead featured visits to town for **These Animal Men**, **Collapsed Lung**, **The Hoodoo**

Gurus, **dEUS** and **The Flying Medallions**, while local names in the gig guide included emerging Britpop stars **Thurman** and **The Candyskins**.

10 YEARS AGO
As we all know the local scene did survive, and a new generation of local stars were born. One of whom was **Winnebago Deal**, who were on the cover of *Nightshift* in October 2004, blasting holes in sold brick walls with their sonic violence, while violence similarly permeated the duo’s lyrics as they recounted tales of whisky, knife fights and redneck truckers. This month Ben Perrier and Ben Thomas released their latest album, ‘Dead Gone’, on Double Dragon, recorded in America, produced by the great Jack Endino, who had previously worked with Nirvana, Tad and Mudhoney. “It was insane. We never expected to pull that one off. We worked in a residential studio outside Seattle where Soundgarden and Foo Fighters recorded. As soon as we got off the plane Jack was driving us to see Mudhoney play to 50 people.” The uncertainty of good things happening in the local scene was still never far from the surface as the news this month that **Passion FM** were axing their local music show, **The Fortnightly Fix**. In the days before BBC Introducing, the show, hosted by Lee Christian, was the sole outlet for local acts to get on the radio. In slightly happier news **Catweazle Club** was celebrating its 10th birthday, the long-running open mic club run by Matt Sage at the time ensconced in the **Northgate Hall**. “For many it has become a community focus, somewhere that’s a bit more

THIS MONTH IN OXFORD MUSIC HISTORY

personal and heartwarming, “ said Matt of the club that played host to some of the earliest public performances from **Stornoway** and **Yannis Philippakis**, among others.

5 YEARS AGO
By now firmly established as local heroes, **Stornoway** announced plans to become the first non-orchestral band to perform at the historic **Sheldonian Theatre** this month back in 2009, a feat they are set to repeat this year to mark the fifth anniversary of an occasion that remains one of the greatest gigs by a local band we can remember. Stornoway also released a new single, ‘Unfaithful’, this month, a re-recorded version of the lead track from their ‘Good Fish Guide’ EP. “A band who seem to conjure epic, timeless pop songs from the earth with enviable ease, “ ran our typically enthusiastic review. Enthusiasm was high too for the return to town of **Bat For Lashes** at the **O2 Academy**, as well as the likes of **Idlewild**, **The Big Pink** (as part of the inaugural **OX4** event, a precursor to Gathering) and **Noah & the Whale** at the same venue, while over in the demo pages, a bunch of newcomers called **Spring Offensive** were narrowly beaten to Demo of the Month by Banbury’s **Scholars**. “In ‘Between One and One-Nine-Four’, they have an indie disco classic in waiting, guitars twitching and twinkling beneath a vocal that spits out its opening line and carries a sneer with it throughout... who knows how far they might go,” ran the review. Last we heard they’d gone as far as London, but we still like to call them our own.

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DEMOS

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DEMO OF THE MONTH

THE PINK DIAMOND REVUE

After last month's, let's be honest, pretty wretched demo pile, we had high hopes that this month would balance things out. Come on, the world's an increasingly festering shithheap of religious lunatics, nationalist scumbags and planet-destroying fucknuts, so we need good music to cheer us up and stop us simply opening up the cutlery draw and throwing ourselves upon the shiny sharp things inside, ending it all in a bloody, thrashing mess, screaming like a pig in a war. A sound a fair few of those demos closely resembled. Sadly it's not to be; you're as likely to witness a moment of defensive brilliance from Manchester United this season than you are to unearth musical genius amid this bunch. But there's one, gleaming exception. The Pink Diamond Revue. Who aren't even from Oxfordshire, but from Caversham and so possibly shouldn't count. But then we remembered there's a Caversham team in the *Oxford Mail* Boys league, and that Ox-Berks border is somewhere near there, so they earn honorary exception status and take their place atop the pile like a golden orb resting on top of a fresh dung heap. Mix up a dense, doomy palette of robot beats, shimmering surf guitar, queasy electronic wobbliness and stuff that goes hiss and psst-choooo and top it off with a disembodied voice describing a death-row inmate's final meal, and some floaty harmonies that seem to have been nabbed off The Grumbling Fur's last album and what have you got? Something approaching absolutely bloody brilliant, is what. It's psychedelia in its very purest form, music designed to induce invasive fractal patterns in the corner of your vision when you shut your eyes, a bit of vaguely eastern weirdness snaking around the disorientating mix'n'match tapestry. In two short tracks here, Pink Diamond Revue conjure more originality and carefree wonder than most of the other acts this month combined will ever come up with if you gave them til Christmas 2025 and force fed them magic mushrooms for breakfast every day.

SEX WITH YOUR X

"FAO Nice people at *Nightshift*," begins the accompanying letter to this four-song effort. They'll be bloody lucky to find one of those. It's wall-to-wall bastards here at *Nightshift*

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/

Towers. We even have weekly seminars on spite and bile, lest anyone should soften in their worldview. Only this morning we pointed at a Labrador puppy and laughed until it cried. Sex With Your X don't sound like the sort of band you'd laugh at. Not to their faces anyway. They even declare that the recordings are a bit rough round the edges because they spent all their money on real ale and are too old to care what we think. There is a sozzled and slightly haggard feel to these songs, bullish blues rock doorstops that sound like they were hacked out of a nearby mountain by burly men armed with sledgehammers and the names of their former wives tattooed across their broad, hairy shoulders. They're like the meeting point between John Mayall's Bluesbreakers and 80s politico-punks Anti Pasti – earthy and unsubtle, the singer's fags'n'whisky-etched voice draped across the thundering pub rock chords like a pitbull snoozing on a sack of spanners. Their token ballad is a bit of a mishit and they're far more effective when they're simply churning up the turf around them like on 'Take You Away'. Final number 'If I Just Go' seems to be an existential contemplation of suicide, though so gruffly is it delivered you wonder if the band are planning to simply eat themselves to an early grave at the local kebab van. Meaty, in every sense of the word.

LUKE PAOLO

"There are two reasons why our offering may be unsuitable for a demo review: (a) we are based in Reading, not Oxford; (b) our music is a bit past the 'demo' stage and is all set to be released in the form of a debut EP," announces Luke Paolo, missing the point that the main reason it's unsuitable for demo review is it's likely to induce a coronary in the hapless reviewer who is terminally conflicted over whether to laugh uncontrollably, fly into a terrible rage or simply go and lie under a heavy boulder until the sun takes our eyes and the buzzards our innards. The combination of tinkling jazz lounge ivories, a hefty baritone with all the poise of a hippo on a trapeze, and an approach to lyrical poetry that makes him out of Kasabian sound like WB Yeats (sample: "*Clear water, clear water Clear water, la la la la la / Clear water, clear water / Oh clear water, la-dee da-dee da-dee da-dee da*") gives the abiding impression of a sturdy heffer trying to give birth to a grand piano. The likes of 'Beads on the Floor' might want you to imagine you're wasting away the wee small hours in a run-down gin joint with Tom Waits and Leonard Cohen but it's closer to being stuck in a lift with Jamie Cullum after he's spent the afternoon

winning a charity baked bean eating contest: comical and fetid in equal measures. Anyway, we'll leave you with this pearl of wisdom: "*You told me that I'm an alien / You said to me, 'I'm stronger than you!'/ You rode that bull, rode it in the moonlight / I wish I could be like you / I'm gonna ride your bull, but I'm still an alien / You said to me, 'get off my bull!'/ But I'm riding your bull, riding bareback / Riding along, riding like you.*" Oh yes, absolute bull.

QUEST ENSEMBLE

"*Moments in time, crossing paths, footfall of the past and present...*" so runs the introduction to this lot's Bandcamp page. Is it still legal to shoot hippies within the city walls after sunset? After which they witter on a bit about ancient leper colonies and urban underground spaces and music that is "*rooted in a sense of place that inspires the sound and imagination of their stories.*" What's wrong with just telling us you're a classical piano and strings trio, and let us enjoy the music without imagining it being made by pretentious jellyheads on an extended trust fund jolly? Then again given we're culturally illiterate gibbons whose knowledge of classical music starts with that one they used on the Hovis advert and ends with the Torvill and Dean tune maybe we need it all explained to us in short, easy to understand words. As it is, it's quite nice and reminds us a bit of Steve Reich in its more minimal, rhythmic moments, and Penguin Café Orchestra at others, but you can't dance to it and no amount of Jack Daniels will convince us it's as good as Stravinsky's 'Firebird Suite'. Or 'Ace of Spades'.

LITTLE RED

Time for something a bit more restrained. Even Little Red's name suggests timidity and they are indeed a slightly mousy folk outfit: pretty, dappled, traditional-sounding harmony-based songs that peek out from their safe little nest into the bigger, scarier world of rock'n'roll just occasionally. The threesome are at their best when they strip things down and stick to rustic wanderings and wonderings, the male-female vocal interaction keeping things fresh, though they'd do well to give Hayley Bell a more prominent role for the most part. 'The Garden' sees them bring almost surfy electric guitars to play, which suits them well, and the autumnal 'Cures' is sweet, though the upbeat 'The Cause' feels awkward and merely makes you think about how The August List can do this kind of stuff far better. Such comparisons aside, we're grateful for a few moments of simple, unpretentious music that's hard to dislike.

GODSBANE

It wouldn't be a demo page without a bit

of metal. Metal being something that's generally guaranteed to shake us out of any doldrums the rest of the pile might suck us into. I mean, how can you resist a band called Godsbane? Particularly a band called Godsbane who have a song called 'Valkyrie'. This one's gonna rock like supper time in Hades. Hmm, except it doesn't seem to. It rocks, but slowly. Heading over to the band's Facebook page we learn they're inspired by Nordic folk music and myths as well as Viking metal bands like Turisas. So 'Valkyrie' feels less like a modern metal blast as something unearthed from more distant times, a lost Led Zeppelin opus found encased in a burial barrow. It's a slow-burning slab of heavyweight folk-rock injected with just enough of Meshuggah's brittle grind to make it battle-ready. 'Shadow of the Storm' similarly feels like an older strain of metal with its twin guitar attack reminiscent of Iron Maiden. They never tip into prog, though you feel they're tempted at times, and keep themselves and the listener on their toes with multi-part songs that, while not quite the berserkers you perhaps hope they would be, kick it out with enough power to hold their heads up in the halls of Valhalla.

THE DEMO DUMPER

TREVOR'S HEAD

And here's how to get all of the above completely tits-up wrong. Trevor's Head boast a list of influences that should have any sane human salivating: Stooges, Motörhead, Sabbath, Clutch, Queens of the Stone-Age, but appear blissfully ignorant of the things that make each of those bands such cranium-crushing fun. Like not sounding like a workaday pub-rock act for starters. Or sounding like all the progress rock music has made since 1974 never happened. Bands like this tend to win regional battle of the band competitions because they're highly proficient and the judges are lost-in-time imbeciles who vomit at the mere mention of words like dubstep or loop pedal. We've heard exactly the same demo five hundred times before and will hear it again a thousand times more before God in his mercy allows us to exit this plane of sonic suffering and ascend to a higher place where experimentalism and imagination aren't dirty words. Man alive, this is terrible. Especially 'Chemical Bible', hideously dated, histrionic, overlong balls-out macho blues-rocking of a kind that we thought Palaeolithic man had eradicated alongside Neanderthals. 'The Deceiver' is possibly worse: tight-jeaned, perm-haired musical arse gas from a time when mammoth skin loinclots were still this season's must-have fashion accessory and the musical instrument of choice was a discarded jawbone smashed against a nearby rock.

*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 Facebook either; else we'll print a screenshot and make you look like a prize tit.*

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Switch - Digital Soundboy
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