

NIGHTSHIFT

Oxford's Music Magazine

Free every
month
Issue 253
August
2016

"We made a lady cry
at one of our shows
once. That's when
we knew we'd done
a really good job."

Cassels

Oxford's punk brothers on
Brexit, musical catharsis and
escaping Chipping Norton.

Also inside this issue:

TRUCK FESTIVAL and **CORNBURY**
reviewed

Introducing **SLATE HEARTS**

plus

Pete Fryer on 50 years of gigs: "Hell's Angels
came to sort us out once."

OXFORD DUPLICATION CENTRE

Supporters of The Local Music Scene offering discounted
services on all CD duplication, printing and packaging



CD DVD BLU-RAY USB DUPLICATION

Highly recommended by Oxfordshire musicians and bands
including Nightshift, Turan Audio, Mother Corona, Evolution Studio,
Clear Water Recording, Blue Moon, The Aureate Act, John Joliffe, The
Shapes, Peepworld, ZURICH and many many others.

PRICE MATCH GUARANTEES ON LIKE FOR LIKE QUOTATIONS
SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS SUPPORTING LOCAL MUSIC

CONTACT US

cheryl@theduplicationcentre.co.uk

01865 457000

29 Banbury Road Kidlington OX5 1QA

Large Car Park

Friendly Supportive Staff



PACKAGING & FULFILMENT

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

THE BULLINGDON

AUGUST 2016
GIG & CLUB LISTINGS

COCKTAIL BAR

OPEN 4PM | £10 PROSECCO & 2.4.1 COCKTAILS EVERYDAY FROM 4PM - 8.30PM | £2.50 COCKTAILS ALL DAY SUNDAY

Wednesday 27th July
Haze
Run with the Hunt
Dyke TV
Slate Hearts
Doors: 7pm

Thursday 28th July
The Rev Peyton's
Big Damn Band
Doors: 7pm

Friday 29th July
Honkey
(FT. Members of Down, Molins, Butthole Surfers)
Desert Storm
The Grand Mal
Doors: 7.30pm

Saturday 30th July
Hope Burden
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 30th July
UKG Fest Tour - Oxford
Mighty Moe (Heartless Crew)
Doors: 11pm

Thursday 11th August
Matt Edwards Band
Doors: 7pm

Friday 12th August
Church of the Heavy Presents
HMF feat Infurious
The Reaper
Social Discharge
Raised by Hypocrites
Doors: 7pm

Thursday 18th August
Speaking in Shadows
Doors: 7pm

Wednesday 24th August
Gwyn Ashton
Troy Redfern Band
Doors: 8pm

Thursday 25th August
Whitney
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 27th August
The Saucy Pear Cabaret Presents
Oxphwoard
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 27th August
P.Y.T (Pretty Young Things)
Disco for the Next Generation
Doors: 8pm

Wednesday 31st August
The Garden
Doors: 7.30pm

Friday 2nd September
Seratoness
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 3rd September
NeverInd
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 10th September
Hell's Gazelles (Album Launch)
Doors: 7pm

Thursday 15th September
Saichi Sugiyama
Doors: 7pm

Monday 19th September
Giles Robson
Doors: 8pm

Thursday 22nd September
The Bay Rays
Doors: 7pm

Friday 23rd September
InHeaven
Doors: 7pm

Monday 26th September
Stevie Nimmo
Doors: 8pm

Wednesday 29th September
Loyle Carner
Doors: 7pm

Monday 3rd October
Red Butler
Doors: 7pm

Thursday 6th October
Ward Thomas
Doors: 7pm

Friday 7th October
The Arkyard Sessions Feat.
Rivers & Robots
Written in Kings
Chariots
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 8th October
Meilyr Jones
Doors: 7pm

Thursday 17th October
Fews
Doors: 7pm

Friday 14th & Saturday 15th October
What Became of us Festival
Gengahr
Willie J Healey
Hudson Scott
Cabbage
Van Zeller
Doors: 6pm & 2pm

Sunday 18th October
All Tvins
Doors: 7.30pm

Thursday 28th October
Pat McManus
Doors: 8pm

Friday 29th October
The Stray Birds
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 22nd October
The Long Insiders
The Shapes
Peerless Pirates
Doors: 7pm

Wednesday 26th October
The Sunshine Underground
Doors: 7pm

Friday 28th October
Ferocious Dog
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 29th October
The Travelling Band
Doors: 7.30pm

Sunday 30th October
The Japanese House
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 5th November
Rob Tognoni
Hell's Gazelles
Doors: 7pm

Sunday 6th October
Tiger Cub
Doors: 7pm

Thursday 10th November
The Mentulls
Doors: 7pm

Friday 11th November
Sara Watkins Trio
Doors: 7pm

Thursday 17th November
Steve Rodgers Band
Doors: 8pm

Thursday 24th November
Federal Charm
Doors: 8pm

Friday 25th November
Mutual Benefit
Doors: 7pm

Friday 2nd December
Dreadzone
Doors: 7pm

Sunday 4th December
Nick Harper and the
Wilderness Kids
Doors: 7pm

Friday 9th December
Catfish
Doors: 8pm

JAZZ
AT THE BULLINGDON
FREE EVERY TUESDAY 1 8.30 PM

2nd August
Guitar Summit
9th August
Ewan Baird Quartet
16th August
Martin Pickett Organisation
23rd August
Hugh Turner Band

29th August
Alvin Roy's Reeds Unlimited
6th September
Rod Kelly Quartet
13th September
Hugh Turner Band
20th September
Alvin Roy's Reeds Unlimited

The Bullingdon
162 Cowley Road
Oxford, OX4 1UE
01865 244516

www.thebullingdon.co.uk
info@thebullingdon.co.uk
facebook.com/bullingdonoxford

NEWS

Nightshift: PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU

Phone: 01865 372255

email: editor@nightshiftmag.co.uk

Online: nightshiftmag.co.uk



HELL'S GAZELLES, 1000 Chains and Twisted State of Mind are among a dozen local metal and heavy rock acts playing **Heavy Metal Friday** this month. The event, which takes place across three venues on Friday 12th August, has been organised by It's All About the Music and aims to showcase some of the new heavyweight acts from around the county at The O2 Academy, The Bullingdon and The Wheatsheaf. While each gig will run as an individual event, a limited number of all-venue tickets are available, priced £12 from Wegottickets.com.

Full line ups for the shows are:
O2 Academy: Hell's Gazelles + 1000 Chains + Twisted State Of Mind + Hope Burden + Repercussions Of Yesterday.
The Wheatsheaf: Force Of Mortality + Man Make Fire + Ways Across.
The Bullingdon: Infurious + The Reaper + Social Discharge + Raised By Hypocrites.
Meanwhile Hell's Gazelles play an EP launch gig at The Bullingdon on Saturday 10th September.

FOPP return to Oxford this month with the opening of a new store in Gloucester Green. The new branch of the CD, vinyl, blu-ray and DVD chain opens at 96-97 Gloucester Green – next door to the site of their old store.



TOY have been added to the line-up for **What Became of Us** in October. The psych-rockers join Genghar, October Drift,

Hudson Scott and Yuck on the bill. The two-day event, organised by promoters Future Perfect, takes place at **The Bullingdon** from **Friday 14th-Saturday 15th October**. Also confirmed are Willie J Healey, Cabbage and Van Zeller. Weekend tickets, priced £20, are on sale now. Visit the What Became of Us Facebook page for details.

LEADER released a video for their song 'Young Again' at the end of July, the first single to be taken from their recent EP of the same name. The band, who have played at Cornbury, Truck and Riverside festivals so far this summer, launched the EP with a sold-out headline show at the O2 Academy in May. They set off on a UK tour in November. More details at facebook.com/leaderofficial.

OXFORD CITY FESTIVAL returns for its fourth annual outing from the 21st-27th November and organisers want to hear from any acts – bands or solo artists of all genres – who want to play. Last year's festival featured over 150 acts across a dozen venues around the city. To apply send them a message on the Oxford City Festival Facebook page.

THE CELLAR host a screening of the classic *This Is Spinal Tap* rockumentary on Monday 8th August as part of their Cinemas Under the Stairs series of screenings. Tickets for the show are £4 in advance or on the door, but with a capacity of just 35, advance booking is recommended. Get yours at cinemaunderthestairs.com

OXFORD CONTEMPORARY MUSIC are looking to recruit a new administrator. OCM, which promotes a variety of contemporary music events across the region, is looking for someone with experience in event organisation and admin, preferably in music, to provide support in marketing, production, finance, fundraising and event management. Deadline



THE PETE FRYER BAND celebrate the 50th anniversary of their first ever gig this month.

Veteran blues singer and guitarist Pete plays a special gig at The Whitehouse on Abingdon Road on Saturday 13th August, backed by his band, including brother Phil Freizinger, who played alongside him at his debut gig in 1966.

Having begun his musical career at the tender age of 16, Pete, who grew up in the Florence Park area of Oxford, has earned the nickname The Legend in local blues circles for his endurance, with over 2,000 gigs under his belt and, talking to *Nightshift* about his life in music, believes he has at least another thousand left in him.

"My love of early 60s rock music made me want to form a band," recalls Pete, "Our first gig was at St James' Hall, though the first proper show was at Florence Park Community Centre. We bought sheet music from Russell Acott's on the High Street and played songs by The Bee Gees, Troggs, Spencer Davies Group, Beatles and Kinks. I had a plastic microphone that night that I smashed against the wall as it went wrong, and we had to sack the drummer that night, as he couldn't play."

Given the length of his career and the number of gigs he's played, Pete has an armoury of stories to tell, particularly from the band's early days.

"We often got into trouble; we were stopped at a village hall gig by the local vicar because I was swinging on the curtain rails dressed only in my underpants, much to the girls' delight. We were pretty crazy at the time and though we weren't that good people would come to see us just to see what might happen.

"We were visited by a gang of Hell's Angels at one show, threatening to sort us out. At the interval I went to talk to them and they said they could play better than us. I got the rest of the band to vacate the stage and told them to go ahead and play. As it turned out they couldn't play a note. After that they loved us and bought us drinks, much to mine and the band's relief."

Though Pete turns 67 the day after his anniversary show, he's in no mood to hang up his guitar just yet.

"I'm enjoying it as much as I ever did. The line up has now changed to include younger blood with the amazing drummer Darren Hason Davies, but my brother Phil is still there from the very beginning and the wonderful Sue Smith, Phil's wife, still on bass. Keith Richard was asked why he was still playing at 72. He said 'we are playing better than ever and enjoying it more'. That applies to me too. It's great to play with such talented and gifted musicians. We're known as a party band that gives everyone a good night out. I'm just looking forward to the 60th anniversary. I've got at least another thousands gigs in me."

for applications is Monday 12th September. For more details of the position, email Victoria Boshier at victoria@ocmevents.org, or call 01865 488369.

AS EVER, don't forget to tune into **BBC Oxford Introducing**

every Saturday night between 8-9pm on 95.2fm. The dedicated local music show plays the best Oxford releases and demos as well as featuring interviews and sessions with local acts. The show is available to stream or download as a podcast at bbc.co.uk/oxford.

Cassels



“I ABSOLUTELY FUCKING hated growing up there. To me it represents stagnation, boredom, narrow mindedness and, essentially, depression. Growing up there I felt a stifling sense of nothingness. Like nothing important, exciting, special or noteworthy was ever going to happen. Plus I didn’t really fit in with many of the people there, and resented the resigned small town mentality most seemed to have.”

JIM BECK, SINGER AND guitarist with Cassels, is eulogising his home town of Chipping Norton with the exhilarating mix of angst, anger and attitude we’ve come to expect from him and the band. While most of the world associates the name Chipping Norton with the CN set, posh people standing next to agars and a picturesque award-winning High Street, Jim’s experience of growing up in the west Oxfordshire town is a world away from that idyll. “That image, while true in some ways, is on the whole, completely off the mark. I’d say Chippy is predominately working class and the really posh people actually live a few miles out of the town itself so they don’t have to mix with the riff raff.”

THOSE WHO HAVE FIRSTHAND experience of Cassel’s virulent blend

of punk, melodic post-hardcore and angular, high-velocity rock, not to mention a lyrical cascade that is a foaming blend of poetry, splenetic rage and highly personal angst, might struggle to reconcile such sounds with a place like Chipping Norton, but the band, formed by Jim and his younger brother Loz some three years ago, are one of a rare breed these days: a rock band with a keen worldview, politically charged and with the will and ability to spit in the face of complacency and ignorance. Having played together since the ages of 12 and 8 respectively, Jim and Loz played their first show as Cassels in Acton in 2013, continuing to gig in the capital before releasing their debut single, ‘Seasick’ on Tip Top Records and a follow-up ‘We Wander In The Night’ on Grebo. At the end of 2014 the brothers began playing in Oxford and were invited by Colin Greenwood to play the Independent Venue Week show at the Jericho Tavern. In 2015 they were picked to play The Oxford Punt before releasing the well-received ‘Hating Is Easy’ on local label Idiot King. The past twelve months have involved more gigging, locally, in London and increasingly around the UK, as well as a set at Common People in South Park. With their underground reputation growing, this month the brothers release a new

four-song EP, ‘You, Us & They’ on Big Scary Monsters.

LOVE FOR CASSELS FROM reviewers and gig goers so far has been unequivocal; the duo’s incendiary live shows – all limbs, guitar shrapnel and furious beats – are a sharp reminder of the incendiary power of rock and roll, drawing comparisons to the likes of Iceage, Dreng and Slaves at times, although there is a taut emotional core to their songs that draws on Jim’s personal fears and frustrations. If Jim planned to escape his home town at the earliest opportunity, Cassels’ songs similarly sound like they’re fighting their way out of a metaphorical prison cell. “It seems to me most teenagers either have a similar experience and leave as soon as they can, or they end up living there for the rest of their lives. And have kids who most likely end up living there for the rest of their lives. Which I find horribly depressing, but some people may find comfort in that,” continues Jim, contemplating the place he no longer calls home but where Loz still resides, at least until he moves away to university. “I think without Jim I’d have little ambition to leave,” adds Loz. “However, I did always find Jim’s drive and determination to move

away as soon as he could very commendable. And when I started to head to London a lot at 15 or 16, playing gigs and meeting people in the city enlightened me to move away massively, and emphasised how mundane Chippy life can be. But, it maybe hasn’t have such a demoralising effect on me as a place as I have a lot of good mates in the area.”

BROTHERS IN BANDS IS something as old as music itself, but Cassels look and sound like a particularly tight fighting unit: it’s just the pair of them, with no other bandmates to dilute the bond, or break up any sibling conflict. Growing up together, we wonder, was one of them more of an influence on the other as far as music was concerned? Was there a particular band they both bonded over first? JIM: “I guess initially we got into music the same way most people do: through our parents. When I was little I loved all the poppy stuff our mum likes. S Club 7 was my first ever gig. Oh yes. And then as I got a bit older the rocky stuff our dad listens to took over. The bands I remember most from our youth are The Who, The Small Faces and Ocean Colour Scene. OCS was the second gig I went to, and possibly Loz’s first. We still both really love those bands. “We’ve never really had any rivalry over music; in fact it’s the thing we’ve probably bonded over most. Generally when we were growing up I introduced Loz to a lot of stuff as the older sibling, but in more recent times it’s started to go both ways.” LOZ: “I think we need to thank Busted as they were the first band that Jim and I truly loved and musically bonded over.”

FROM BUSTED AND S CLUB 7 to what Cassels are now is quite a leap. The vitriol in many of Jim’s lyrics seethes from the songs. The day after the EU referendum he posted some lyrics online, expressing his anger in no uncertain terms. How did the result affect him and Loz, and given the overall demographic of those voting to leave, particularly age wise, how does a young band respond in a way that’s effective? JIM: “Well, obviously we both voted remain, along with the majority of people our age. Loz was in Amsterdam when the result came through, but I just felt horribly

depressed. Like properly down. To the extent where I felt like I can’t lift any of my limbs or work up any energy to do anything because it all seemed so hopeless. I remember the first emotion that came to me when I found out was this feeling of being trapped; trapped on this little miserable island with lots of misinformed, hostile, and often openly racist and bigoted people who I have no wish to come into contact with or be affiliated with. “I actually wrote the lyrics during one of the sleepless nights I had a couple of days before the vote, mainly as a way of dealing with the worry that the unthinkable could happen. That’s the main function I generally use writing for: as a way to articulate my thoughts and as a form of catharsis. “In terms of what happens now, I’m hopeful that Article 50 will never actually come into effect. I think there’s a good chance the general public, fickle as we are, will be distracted by a general election and, depending on who gets in, Brexit will be quietly side-lined. However, I do worry that the rest of Europe now won’t allow that to happen, so me and Loz are currently in the process of applying for German citizenship – our family has its roots there – so we can still move freely across Europe. It would suck beyond belief to never be able to afford to play anywhere except in the UK.” LOZ: “The result really dampened my holiday; that and the England-Iceland score. I remember being told to pipe the fuck down at 5 in the morning by one of the hotel staff as I sparked a loud and drunken debate with my mate who voted out.”

IN THEIR INTRODUCING feature in *Nightshift* last year Jim and Loz expressed frustration that so few new bands and musicians really say anything of importance these days. Do they stick with that and do they feel there’s a real lack of political songwriting at the moment, or has it been forced so underground we don’t hear much of it? JIM: “Yeah, I definitely stick by that, but I’d also clarify that I’m not frustrated by the lack of political songwriting necessarily, but by the lack of lyricism, poetry, sincerity or depth in songwriting generally. I don’t particularly consider us a ‘political band’, it just so happens that I take an interest in politics and have an opinion about what’s going on, so it comes out in my writing. The majority of our songs aren’t political, and I’d hate to get pigeon-holed. “No, what really annoys me is the amount of bands I see who are obviously either a) completely derivative of one particular band or style, b) singing absolute nonsense or the first random words which

came to their heads, or c) are putting on some sort of contrived façade or act. My absolute biggest bug bear is English bands singing in American accents. It just reeks of insincerity and a formulated construct. I understand that a lot of young people growing up in this country who are learning to play music really love music from the States – hell, most of our favourite bands in recent times are all super American sounding emo/hardcore bands – but no matter how much you want to be, the fact is you’re not from California, you’re from Oxford. So sing how you talk. And put some effort into writing the words you sing. Sorry, went on a bit of a rant there, didn’t I.”

THE BAND’S NEW EP COMES out on Big Scary Monsters this month and continues Cassels’ no punches pulled mission, politically, socially and emotionally. EP highlight ‘Well Fed Worms in a

“I am a fairly anxious and pessimistic person, so maybe that’s why I was driven to these sounds in the first place and why the angst-ridden words come so easily”

Graveyard’ in particular is striking – almost like something Thom Yorke would come up with. JIM: “It’s about the numbing effect social media has had on people; how Twitter timelines are filled with humanitarian crises alongside 100 character descriptions of what people have had for lunch. The ease with which we all deal with morbidity and real life horror is quite amazing when you think about it. “In terms of the other tracks: ‘Cool Box’ is about our stepdad, ‘You Us and They’ is about the ongoing systematic destruction of the NHS, and ‘Ignoring All the Tunnels and Lights’ is about living too long - taking the logic of putting a dog down when it gets too old and applying this to humans. All really cheery stuff – there are some real party anthems in there!” Are you primarily driven by rage and angst, and do you think the more personal, emotional side to you sometimes gets overlooked? JIM: “I think that’s often what comes out in Cassels songs as that’s what the set up lends itself to. The guitars are super distorted and Loz has a pretty... *energetic* way of playing, so the subjects often mirror this. However I am a fairly anxious and pessimistic person, so maybe that’s why I was driven to these sounds in the first place and why the angst-ridden words come so easily. “The track ‘Hating Is Easy’ was written in the wake of a break up of a relationship and so is about the infidelities I experienced during that

and how I felt pretty damaged by the whole thing. Plus the track ‘Cool Box’ on our new EP is probably the most personal thing I’ve ever written. In fact a lot of our songs are really honest accounts of bad experiences I’ve been through or bad things I see in myself. So I’d definitely agree that there’s a very emotional side to our songs, and hopefully it doesn’t get overlooked. We made a lady cry at one of our shows once and, as bad as it sounds, that’s when we knew we’d done a really good job. Ha ha!”

FROM VERY EARLY ON Cassels sought to hit the London scene before venturing into Oxford, and continue to play the capital far more regularly than here; this month, though, the brothers launch their new EP with a gig at The Wheatsheaf. Was there a disconnect with Oxford’s music scene when they were starting out, and having had more experience of both now, how have they found

them both compared to each other? JIM: “To be honest we never really got that involved in the Oxford music scene growing up. Maybe it’s partly because Chippy was an hour bus ride away, but mainly we just didn’t know how to go about trying to get gigs in Oxford. Plus we were both too young to go out to gigs on our own really. “I moved to London when I was 19 to get away from home, and it took us a while to find out how the whole thing worked there. Luckily we got to make all of our mistakes in shitty little pubs in places like Acton with no one watching, so when we did start playing in Oxford we started off with better songs and with more of an idea of what we were doing. “We both much prefer playing Oxford now, and I’m honestly not just saying that because this interview is going in *Nightshift*! As it’s a much smaller place maybe it’s easier to get noticed, but regardless the crowds in Oxford always seem to give more of a shit. In the trendier areas of London you can often finish a song and, no matter how good you’re playing, be greeted by a din of uninterested chit chat. But that’s never been the case here – people always seem to actually pay attention, and make the effort to come out to shows. Which is amazing and is something which we really, really appreciate.”

ONE OF CASSEL’S MOST recent London shows was supporting fast-rising Canadian indie stars Car Seat Headrest at a sold-out show at

The 100 Club, the latest in a string of cool acts they’ve shared a stage with. JIM: “It was a bit of a weird one as we got asked to play it out of the blue like three days before the show, and then it turned out it had already sold out and it was at the 100 Club which is like a 500 capacity venue, so it was probably one of the biggest crowds we’d played to. “The show we played the week before the Car Seat Headrest one was probably the best bill we’ve ever been on; that was supporting Meet Me In St Louis, and Vincent Vocoder Voice played too. Both INSANELY good bands. Aside from them, Johnny Foreigner, who are one of my favourite bands ever; Eagulls and Bad Breeding at The Jericho; Kagoule; USA Nails, and Traams.” Playing on *Nightshift*’s Uncommon stage at Common People in may helped introduce Cassels to a wider local audience, with one long-time guitarist acquaintance of ours, witnessing them for the first time, expressing his excitement about the duo in the most excitable terms possible. JIM: “Common People was great, yeah; thanks very much for having us! I was a bit worried no one was going to be there as we were on pretty early on the Sunday, but the tent was full, which was a really nice surprise. Plus we had a guy come and tell us afterwards that he’d only bought a ticket to the festival that day to come and see us, which was pretty mad!” LOZ: “To top it all off, we somehow managed to blag getting onstage with Public Enemy and Primal Scream, and also got Paul Chuckle to throw the Cassels ‘c’. What a guy!”

SO, THE YOUNG MEN FROM the small town with enough angst and attitude for an army; what if we were to give them a gun with one bullet in it; who’d get shot? The answer isn’t what we expected. JIM: Probably someone with a crippling neurological disease who desperately wants to fly to Switzerland to end their life via assisted suicide but can’t afford to do so. Sorry for the morbid answer, but it was a morbid question.” Okay then, let’s be nice; you have a giant chocolate cake to give to a deserving individual; who gets that? JIM: “To you, for being so lovely and putting us on the cover. Now, can I presume the EP will be getting a good review?” Aw shucks, sweet young things after all. Hating is easy for sure, but loving Cassels is easier by far; in fact it’s inevitable.

‘You, Us & Them’ is out now on Big Scary Monsters. Cassels play The Wheatsheaf on Thursday 25th August. Hear them at [soundcloud.com/cassels-official](https://www.soundcloud.com/cassels-official)

RELEASED

MAIIANS

‘Maiians’

(Self released)

Every rose has its thorn, as a wise man (well, Poison singer Bret Michaels) once said. In this case, the rose is the arrival of ‘Maiians’, the long-awaited, eagerly anticipated first album from the best band in Oxford; the thorn is the knowledge that it might also be their last. With members soon to be scattered to the four corners of the globe, the quintet have regrettably had to announce an indefinite hiatus; mercifully they’ve had the decency to sign off with a superlative LP that does justice to their exceptional collective talents.

Listening to the likes of ‘Lemon’ and ‘Huracan’ is akin to being chauffeur-driven by Jon Hopkins to a Battles gig: a smooth, stylish, elegant ride with no clunking gear changes, just gradual acceleration along the autobahn as various reference points (math rock; post-rock; techno; disco; Can; fellow double-drummer fiends Do Make Say Think; Holy Fuck; LCD Soundsystem) whizz past the window, until eventually you arrive at a richly percussive destination. Yes, *that* good. And to think the band started life as a side project.

If there’s anything remotely approaching a disappointment, it’s that the tracklisting follows a trajectory already familiar from Maiians’ gigs,



with ‘Sionara’ and ‘One Of Each’ bookending the album as they do the live set. But then this isn’t an issue for anyone who hasn’t heard or seen them before – and if you haven’t, I’m insanely jealous at the thought of the delights that lie in store.

Maiians have said they’ll continue to collaborate on new music online, but if this record does indeed prove to be an epitaph, then it couldn’t be much more fitting. As for us, we should console ourselves with the thought that it’s better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all; as another wise man (not Bret Michaels) once said.

Ben Woolhead



ZUBY

‘VII’

(Self released)

The thing you have to be wary of when entering the 21st Century multi-media world of Nzube ‘Zuby’ Udezue, the Saudi-raised, Oxford-educated rapper, is that it is a labyrinthine hall of mirrors. His hopes are mirrors; his words are mirrors, and both reflect us while he admires himself in them. Any judgements you care to come up with about Zuby, he’s already ahead of you and has playfully considered them in rhyme on his previous six releases.

On ‘VII’, as before, his smooth, one-octave flow is double/triple tracked and slicker than

F1 tyres, and any sticks and stones of hollow narcissism or egotism are picked up and used to build a thick-skinned house of positivity.

The EP opens with the *tour de force* blur of ‘Glory’, a juggernaut speed rap stretched over what sounds like a sample from ‘Carmina Burana’, and powers on to one of the EP’s highlights, a paean to his major love, the gym, in ‘Moving Weight’, a pulsing, sweat-covered grind extolling every muscle group in the body, where “fellas getting jealous with the weights on my neck,” as he urges “Take a look at these stats / I’m out here moving weight”. It’s a track that should be piped *ad infinitum* into every Bannatyne cross training club on the island.

The philosophical picture of the classic commitment-phobe brought up in a household of high achievers, is outlined in ‘This Is My Life’, where he intones “I’m cool to be an uncle, never want to be a daddy,” but at every succeeding stage there is less the Brooklyn beef of Jay-Z and more the likeable LA freshness of Skee-lo, and he lets his guard down still further in ‘The World vs Me’ where in three nailed-on verses he catalogues many of the inner concerns of, first a loner, then a war torn refugee, and finally a suicidal adolescent (“Man this world is fricking evil, think I better leave it”).

‘VII’ is proof that good rap and hip hop can be well produced without all the stupid lyrics, and that Zuby, with all his promotional merch and twittersphere, is way too fly for all the haters.

Paul Carrera

Sponsored by



RUSALNAIA

‘Time Takes Away’

(Cambrian)

Although she some time ago fled her Oxford nest, Sharron Kraus remains an honorary member of the local music community, one with strong ties to the American folk underground where she lived and toured extensively on her nomadic journey around the world. It was here she met Gillian Chadwick from the band Ex Reverie with whom she formed Rusalnaia, the band intending to meld Sharron’s traditional folk styles with Gillian’s darker rock leanings.

‘Time Takes Away’ is the pair’s second album together and continues their 2008 debut’s procession through the darker waters of pagan folk music. Some of the stuff here, like album opener ‘Cast A Spell’, are pure horror flick soundtrack material, all whispery voices overlapping, evoking the haunted forests of films like *The Witch*, while ‘Take Me Back’ capture the dark, psychedelic atmospherics of The Doors or Trembling Bells.

Chadwick’s influence comes to the fore with more propulsive, almost stoner passages (‘The Beast’), as well as her sweeter, more honeyed vocals, while Sharron’s voice tends to remain dominant, a wonderfully pure, sharp voice that cuts through each song with a precise, haunting grace, reminiscent of Shirley Collins and in particular the late, great Mimi Farina.

There are moments of dappled sunlight here, and ‘Lullaby For a Future Generation’ is a gorgeous, sleepy-eyed reverie, but it’s those bleaker, more oppressive moments where the pair’s witchy magic works best, conjuring a form of timeless folk music a world away from cosy snug bar sessions or the cheery bonhomie of Cropredy, headed instead into shadowy places – hollow hills and dead forests – where fairytales come with a hefty dose of horror. It’s another miniature work of wonder from Sharron, a musician we’ll always be proud to call one of our own, and whose extensive catalogue you should investigate immediately. Though perhaps not alone.

Dale Kattack



TOO MANY POETS

‘Tough on the Tightrope’

(Self released)

Too Many Poets emerged at the start of 2016 as a fully formed rock band, a rumbustious, uproarious force of nature who have gigged for their lives, become festival fixtures and indulged in an extended burst of creative songsmithery. Led by their enigmatic singer Pog, the members of the band resemble each other not one whit and nor do many of their songs – are they metal? Are they goth? Are they something completely new altogether?

This six track showcase of the story so far represents the thrilling ride the band have treated us to.

Opener ‘Tough on the Tightrope’ is a real wig out, recalling the 70s in its roughness and readiness and even staying just the right side of the line demarcating the territory occupied by The Darkness. The melodrama that accompanies a Too Many Poets live set is as present on record as it is in the arena and ‘Pig Society’, aptly named in the wake of recent events on the political scene, recalls late period Damned or Bauhaus – all top hats and inconsistently applied hair dye.

‘Ornaments’ starts more slowly and yet is delightfully melodic as the guitars start mewling in a way so pleasing that less restrained producers might have been tempted to let them noodle on – an idea for the 12 inch perhaps. Then, ‘Only My Illusion’, another slower tune in possession of jangly guitars *a la* Railway Children or All About Eve’s more baroque moments, gives ways to a magnificent caterwaul halfway through and continues the fine tradition of rock songs that change mood completely halfway through, only for the rococo guitar work to be reinstated in the track’s closing moments. Finally, on ‘My Brain Is Missing’ the band try their hand at a bit of squall – reminding us of much missed local scenesters Listing Ships or even My Bloody Valentine.

This is a band that will have been entirely unbothered at being consigned to the graveyard slot at Truck Festival’s perhaps surplus to requirements third day when everybody just wanted to go home – they’ve taken the local scene by the scruff of the neck and given us a good shake – their latest extended recording effort richly fulfils the promise they have shown.

Rob Langham

CASSELS

‘You Us and They’

(Self released)

Cassels make quite the noise, considering there’s just two of them. Brothers Jim and Loz Beck pull off the ‘guitar’n’drums duo’ thing with aplomb, and have a tidy lo-fi sound that drags early 90s alterno-US indie through mid-00s melodics and emo with highly pleasing results. Their vocal style – a kind of angry conversationalist’s English delivered with a knowing lack of drawl – initially grates, but warms up after a few listens. Combined with lyrics that seem overtly wordy, yet impressively personal (they speak of familial difficulties and angsty ‘young folk’s’ issues), this is a band stamped with a recognisable style, even when their vocals are wound into enjoyable, energetic, but not entirely revolutionary music.

That said, there’s still a veritable avalanche of hooks, scratchy grooves and subtle structures interplaying and fighting across the four tracks on this EP. ‘Cool Box’ is a dour and twisty-turny-like-Sonic-Youth exploration; ‘You Us



and They’ is perkier – a bit too damned perky, perhaps; ‘Well Fed Worms in a Graveyard’ is a fantastic 35-second econo blast of neo-hardcore; ‘Ignoring All the Tunnels and Lights’ is a sensitive melodic hug that builds to a chunky finale for a pretty nice set of songs. As a whole, ‘You Us and They’ is free of knowing cleverness, and it’s all the more enjoyable for that.

Simon Minter

THE SAD SONG Co.

‘In Amber’

(Self released)

Nigel Powell is a busy man. Having been on the local scene since the early 1990s, originally with The Purple Rhinos and then Unbelievable Truth, in more recent times he’s been drummer with Frank Turner’s Sleeping Souls, playing 200 or so gigs a year (plus all the rehearsing and recording in between tours), as well as part of Dive Dive. Hence he doesn’t get much spare time to write and record his own solo music, which is why ‘In Amber’ is only his third album under his Sad Song Co. guise since 2003, and his first in nine years.

The Sad Song Co. allows Nigel to indulge a particular musical love that his other jobs doesn’t: prog rock. He’s previously played as special guest to Marillion at their annual fan convention, but while there’s the odd nod to that band’s pastoral prog here, Nigel is as likely to reference Chopin, Jeff Buckley or Steely Dan as early Genesis.

In fact, nine songs squeezed into a neat 37 minutes displays an admirable sense of brevity even as he unfurls his songs with an elaborate attention to arrangement and texture. Opener ‘The Touch Of Us’ arrives with no little portent, all tumbling, beefed-up drums and hollowed-out guitar twang, but just as you’re expecting The National’s Matt Berninger to sway in doomily Nigel’s gently weary tenor, all cracks and hesitancy, takes the song in a new direction altogether.

His overriding sense of melancholy works best on elegant piano-led ballads like ‘Beautifully Possessed’, which in another world could have become one of Beethoven’s piano sonatas, and the similarly expansive, romantic ‘Legacy of Love’, the technical expertise subsumed to gently raw emotion.



Less effective are the muggy, discordant ‘The Ones Who Heal’, which is hurried and ungainly where the others are graceful, and ‘The Only Revenge Worth Taking’ which is simply too shrill and airy.

Far prettier are the solemnly mantric ‘Unbowed’ and the sombre, wintry lament of ‘Moment of Clarity’, while elsewhere ‘Last Dance of the Evening’ ups the mood with its jazzy piano flourish.

The ultimately victory for ‘In Amber’ is the way all the meticulous musicianship is never allowed to be anything more than a springboard for the strong melodies; emotion wins over technicality pretty much all the time. Sad songs indeed, but ones to make your heart swell.

Dale Kattack



G I G G U I D E

Friday 5th – Sunday 7th
SUPERNORMAL:
Braziers Park
If Supernormal takes place on Oxfordshire’s geographical margins – at the picturesque Braziers Park eco community and education centre beyond Wallingford – it also exists on the musical margins, providing a decidedly uncommercial antidote to the musically safe likes of Feastival and Wilderness, preferring to showcase the unusual, the inventive and the downright deranged with an infectious enthusiasm that comes from its artist-curated, not-for-profit ethos. No branding here, and you’ll never feel robbed after visiting the bar or one of the assorted organic food stalls. Instead it’s a weird and wonderful collection of live music and art that leans towards the heavy, psychedelic and unclassifiable. Among the more recognisable names on this year’s bill are Dutch underground punk veterans **THE EX**; legendary American hardcore band **MILLIONS OF DEAD COPS**; pioneering post-punk/jazz drummer **CHARLES HAYWARD**, who plays two sets, one with **ZIG ZAG + SWIRL**, and one with **THE BELL AGENCY**; Justin Broadrick’s monstrous death-drone project **JK FLESH** (*pictured*), and delirious psych-pop ensemble **KNIFEWORLD**. Beyond that the festival is a gentle whirlwind of discovery, from black feminist punks **BIG JOANIE** and wayward musique concrete/jazz trio **TUT VU VU**, through electronic trash trawlers **GIANT SWAN** and freeform wigout outfit **FLOWERS MUST DIE**, to twisted hardcore jungle DJ **SHITMAT** and acid-fried guitar overload crew **CASUAL NUN**. Or how about percussion and visual arts collaboration **ADRENA ADRENA**, Georgian saz player and poet **ASIQ NARGILE**, post-punk percussive minimalists **RATTLE** and experimental vocal artist **IAN WILLIAM CRAIG**, making his first ever European visit. That’s just scratching the surface of a compact but multi-layered and expansive celebration of music and contemporary art’s outer reaches. In short, Supernormal is nothing short of brilliant; time to leave your comfort zone.



AUGUST

MONDAY 1st
TUESDAY 2nd
SPARK’S SIDE OF THE MOON: James Street Tavern – Weekly open mic night.
OSPREY & FRIENDS: St Aldates Tavern – Weekly session from local bluesman Osprey and chums.

WEDNESDAY 3rd
SUMMER SESSIONS: The Cellar – Bassline, garage, house and drum&bass club night.

THURSDAY 4th
DAZY CROWN: The Library – Indie jangle and surf-pop in the vein of Belle & Sebastian and Trembling Blue Stars from Norwich’s Dazy Crown at tonight’s Tigmus show.
MATT HAIMOVITZ + VOICE: St. John the Evangelist – Acclaimed cellist Matt Haimovitz teams up with local female vocal trio Voice for a Shakespeare-themed concert that takes a musical journey through the centuries, stopping off at Hildgard, Philip Glass, Leonard Cohen and Prince among others.
GET LIT: The Cellar – New weekly hip hop club night playing underground US and UK sounds.
CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre – Oxford’s longest running open club night showcases singers, musicians, poets, storytellers, performance artists and more every week.
SPARKY’S FLYING CIRCUS: The Half Moon – Weekly open mic night.
ACOUSTIC THURSDAY: Jude the Obscure – Unplugged open mic night, every week.
BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford – Open blues jam session.

FRIDAY 5th
SUPERNORMAL: Braziers Park – Opening day of the annual music and arts festival, with a quality leftfield bill that includes Justin Broadrick’s JK Flesh; underground hardcore legends MDC and Dutch punk heroes The Ex – *see main preview*
CLUB SODA + KANADIA + DEAR HERO + AMORAL COMPASS + LUKE ALLMOND + SILVER RAVENS: O2 Academy – Local acts showcase with 80s pop-inspired crew Club Soda, plus expansive stadium-pop stars Kanadia, dramatic goth-popsters Dear Hero and lo-fi post-punk people Amoral Compass.
THE DELTA SLEEP + BEARDED YOUTH QUEST + ORCHARDS: Modern Art Oxford – A triple bill math-pop extravaganza outta Brighton courtesy of Idiot King tonight, ahead of ArcTangent Festival, with Big Scary Monsters signings Delta Sleep touring their

debut album ‘Twin Galaxies’ and knocking it out in abstract Youthmovies, At The Drive-In and Don Caballero-influenced style, with math-prog neighbours Bearded Youth Quest and Orchards in support.
NEON TEEPEE + FASHIONPROOF + RICHARD MOORE: The Jericho Tavern – It’s All About the Music local bands showcase.
SPARKY’S SPONTANEOUS SHOWCASE & SPOTLIGHT JAM: James Street Tavern – Live bands and jam session hosted by open mic lynchpin Sparky, tonight with sets from Reverend Black, Blue Fish and Des Barkus.
HIGH ON MAIDEN: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Tribute to the metal titans.

SATURDAY 6th
SUPERNORMAL: Braziers Park – Pig Christ has risen! – *see main preview*
THE BLACK BULLETS + REVELLER + SHOCK! HAZARD + SILENT JACK: The Wheatsheaf – Sleazy, tattoo-heavy rock’n’roll, punk and biker rock from Basingstoke’s Black Bullets at tonight’s OxRox show, the band out on a headline tour after recent supports to Tigertailz and New Generation Superstars. Support from local metalcore crew Reveller and Norfolk’s splenetic punk merchants Shock! Hazard.
THE WHOLLS + WHYTE LYLES + YOUTH CLUB FOR RICH KIDS: The Jericho Tavern – Blues and funk-tinged rocking from Bedford’s Wholls, joined by Witney’s blues Britpop newcomers Whyte Lyles and Foals/Arctic Monkeys-styled indie types Youth Club For Rich Kids.
JOHNNY’S SEXUAL KITCHEN: The Bell, Bicester – Classic rock covers.
KRISSY MATTHEWS: The Brewery Tap, Abingdon – Covers and originals from the local bluesman.
STEAMROLLER: The Red Lion, Islip (*4pm*) – 60s blues rocking in the vein of Cream and Hendrix from the local vets.
STEAMROLLER: Kidlington FC

SUNDAY 7th
SUPERNORMAL: Braziers Park – *see main preview*

MONDAY 8th
TUESDAY 9th
THE EWAN BAIRD QUARTET: The Bullingdon – Free live jazz at the Bully’s weekly club, tonight with local saxophonist Ewan Baird and his band.
INTRUSION: The Cellar – Monthly goth, industrial, ebm and darkwave club night, with residents Doktor Joy and Bookhouse, plus guests.
SPARK’S SIDE OF THE MOON: James Street Tavern
OSPREY & FRIENDS: St Aldates Tavern
WEDNESDAY 10th
BOB WAYNE: O2 Academy – Tongue in cheek

outlaw country from Nashville singer Bob Wayne, mixing up hillbilly folk, blues rock, country and heavy rocking, over in the UK to plug ‘Hits The Hits’, featuring his idiosyncratic takes on Megan Trainor, The Beatles, Bob Marley and Guns’n’Roses, among others.
WAY UP: The Cellar – UK garage, funky house and summer anthems, with DJ Platinum.

THURSDAY 11th
FAIRPORT’S CROPREDY CONVENTION: Cropredy – Madness headline the opening day of Fairport Convention’s annual Cropredy gathering, with sets from Hayseed Dixie and Gryphon – *see main preview*
BIG D & THE KIDS TABLE: O2 Academy – First visit to Oxford for Boston’s eclectic ska/punk/reggae/rap/dub crew Big D, regulars on the Warped tours as well as tour support over the

Thursday 11th – Saturday 13th
FAIRPORT’S CROPREDY CONVENTION:
Cropredy
Not just Oxfordshire’s second oldest music festival (after Towersey) but one of the world’s longest-running events, Fairport Convention’s annual gathering of the tribes has moved on a bit over the last few years, away from its traditional folk and blues roots to embrace a wider spectrum of music, which this year includes Thursday headliners **MADNESS**, possibly the ultimate crowd-pleasing party band with a set of classic ska hits that’s second to none. They’re joined on the opening day by bluegrass rock devils **HAYSEED DIXIE**, taking classic metal and rock anthems down to the roots bar; veteran folk-progsters **GRYPHON**, and urban pop crew **COCO & THE BUTTERFIELDS**. Saturday’s fun is topped by long-running Beatles tribute **THE BOOTLEG BEATLES**, no strangers to Cropredy, plus British folk revival legends **STEELEYE SPAN**; prog-metallers **HEADSPACE**, featuring Ozzy and Sabbath guitarist Adam Wakeman, and blues-rock power trio **WILLIE & THE BANDITS**. Traditionally **FAIRPORT CONVENTION** headline the final night, playing an extended set of classic folk-rock favourites, joined by myriad guests, former members and old friends, climaxing in the mass singalong of ‘Meet on the Ledge’. **RALPH McTELL**, **BABYLON CIRCUS** and psych-folkies **MAIA** are among the day’s supporting cast. If the festival sometimes feels like the world’s largest ever family reunion, that’s part of its appeal. It’s changed, but not too much, and that’s how we like it.



years to Rancid, Mighty Mighty Bosstones and Alexisonfire.
THE MATT EDWARDS BAND: The Bullingdon – The Haven Club hosts local electric bluesman Matt Edwards, playing songs from his new album, ‘Four Berry Jam’.
GET LIT: The Cellar
CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre
SPARKY’S FLYING CIRCUS: The Half Moon
ACOUSTIC THURSDAY: Jude the Obscure
BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford

FRIDAY 12th
FAIRPORT’S CROPREDY CONVENTION: Cropredy – The Bootleg Beatles and Steeleye Span top today’s Cropredy bill – *see main preview*
BERES HAMMOND: O2 Academy – A rare chance to see the Jamaican roots legend in town – *see main preview*
HELL’S GAZELLES + 1000 CHAINS + TWISTED STATE OF MIND + HOPE BURDEN + REPERCUSSIONS OF YESTERDAY: O2 Academy – Part of Oxford’s metal extravaganza night with old school hard rocking and classic metal in the vein of Judas Priest and Led Zep from headliners Hell’s Gazelles, plus melodic metallers 1000 Chains; exuberant thrash and glam-core from Twisted State of Mind and more.
FORCE OF MORTALITY + MAN MAKE FIRE + WAYS ACROSS: The Wheatsheaf – More metal in town with groove-metal riffage from newcomers Force of Mortality, alongside Chipping Norton’s Led Zep-inspired rockers Man Make Fire and Paramore-styled heavyweights Ways Across.
INFURIOS + THE REAPER + SOCIAL DISCHARGE + RAISED BY HYPOCRITES: The Bullingdon – Classic thrash in the vein of Slayer, Metallica and Lamb of God from local boys Infurious at tonight’s Bully leg of the Oxford metal takeover. Thrash and NWOBHM from The Reaper, plus punk/grunge outfit Social Discharge and Witney metallers Raised By Hypocrites.
MARTHA + RAINBOW RESERVOIR + LUCY LEAVE: East Oxford Community Centre – Cracking power-pop and garage rocking from Durham’s Martha – hailing from the excellently-named village of Pity Me – at tonight’s Smash Disco show. The band are out on a headline tour to promote new album ‘Blisters in the Pit of My Heart’ on Fortuna Pop, with their mix of sweet melodies, fuzzgun guitar noise and four-way harmonies drawing comparisons to The Replacements, Weezer and Cheap Trick. Top drawer local support from riot grrl/cheerleader pop-punkers Rainbow Reservoir, and brilliantly wonky noise machine Lucy Leave.
BOSSAPHONIK with OZI OZAA: The Cellar – Dancefloor Latin, Afrobeat, global grooves, Balkan beats and nu-jazz club night, hosted by Dan ofer, tonight featuring a live set from Ozi Ozaa, playing songs in the heritage of Ghanaian music of the last 50 years, featuring an international cast of musicians drawn from Ghana, Nigeria, Spain, Italy, Israel, France and the UK.

SATURDAY 13th
BETTER THAN NEVER + FAULTLINE + ELASEA + CHEROKEE: O2 Academy – Pop-punk from local outfit Better Than Never. Support from Bicester alt.rockers Andensum and garage-blues-rock



Friday 12th
BERES HAMMOND:
O2 Academy
The rise of a new wave of conscious rasta stars like Chronixx shows that the roots and Rastafarian influence on Jamaican reggae remains steadfast even as dancehall has progressed and mutated since the 80s. Kingston’s Beres Hammond is a veteran of 40 years and some 26 studio albums on the soulful rasta-inspired scene, alongside legends such as Bob Marley, Dennis Brown and Peter Tosh. Taking his cue from soul – in particular Otis Redding and Sam Cooke – ska, and early reggae heroes like Alton Ellis, Hammond’s career has included pioneering lovers rock, his rich, soulful voice an enduring presence on Jamaican music since the early 70s – eventually earning him an Order of Jamaica award for services to the island’s music industry. Success and influence has spread beyond his home country, with 90s hits like ‘Is This a Sign’, ‘Respect To You Baby’ and ‘Fire’ earning him hits in the States and the UK, and he’s recorded with subsequent generations of stars, from Wyclef Jean to Buju Banton and Big Youth. Now in his 60s he’s still recording and touring and tonight’s show is a rare chance to catch an often under-celebrated reggae legend in the flesh. The king of lovers rock is joined onstage tonight by Terro Melody and Karen Scholls, while there’s an enviable line-up of local DJs on hand to keep the party going in the form of Sir Sambo Sound, Count Skylarkin and Tony Nanton.

monsters Cherokee.
FAIRPORT’S CROPREDY CONVENTION: Cropredy – Fairport headline the final day of their annual shindig with friends and lovers joining them onstage – *see main preview*
JABRONI SANDWICH + VILI & VILE + BREAKING WAVES: The Wheatsheaf – Psych/groove rocking from Jabroni Sandwich, plus balls-out glam/sleaze rocking from Vili & Vile.

THE OXFORD RECORD & CD FAIR
St ALDATES PARISH CENTRE
40 Pembroke St, St Aldates, OX1 1BP
Saturday 3rd September
10am-4pm
Rock/pop/jazz/soul/reggae/indie/all other genres
Accessories/memoriabilia/books.
Brand new and back catalogue/Rare Vinyl
www.usrfairs.co.uk



Saturday 20th

BESNARD LAKES: O2 Academy

Following in a small but illustrious lineage of married couples in rock music, Montreal’s Besnard Lakes were formed by husband and wife team Jace Lasek and Olga Goreas and named after the rustic Canadian idyll the couple regularly retreat to to write their music. The pair are not alone, mind, surrounding themselves with a band that currently numbers six, who create a sound that is as richly textured as you’d hope for from such an expansive line-up. Theirs is a stately, occasionally majestic mix of psychedelia, prog-rock and shoegaze that shares common ground with Broken Social Scene, Low (another great married couple in rock), 70s-era Beach Boys, Neil Young, Spiritualized and My Morning Jacket. Their landmark 2007 album ‘Besnard Lakes Are The Dark Horse’ featured contributions from members of Godspeed You! Black Emperor, The Dears and Stars and was one of two of their albums so far to be shortlisted for the Polaris Prize back home. While their impact on the UK music scene’s collective consciousness remains limited, those who know them tend to love them unconditionally, and that’s unlikely to change with the release of their latest album, ‘A Coliseum Complex Museum’, another mini masterpiece that proves you can be prog without the pomp and psychedelic without indulgence. Beautiful, ambitious music from a band that the world really needs to wake up to.

THE PETE FRYER BAND 50th

ANNIVERSARY SHOW: The White House

– The veteran bluesman celebrates the 50th anniversary of his first gig – *see main news story*

TURF: The Cellar – House club night.

THE STANDARD: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Rock covers.

SUNDAY 14th

ANNELI LÄHDETÄR + MARK ATHERTON & FRIENDS + THE FIREGAZERS + MARK SOLLIS + SUPERLOOSE: The Wheatsheaf (2.30pm) – Klub Kakofanny host an afternoon of free live music in the Sheaf’s downstairs bar.
TOM IVEY: The Brewery Tap, Abingdon (5pm) – Rock and blues covers and originals.
STEAMROLLER: The Bell, Wantage (5pm)

MONDAY 15th

TUESDAY 16th

HAYSEED DIXIE: O2 Academy – Classic rock and metal covered bluegrass style by the Stateside hillbilly crazies, taking on AC/DC, Queen, Motorhead, Led Zep, Sabbath, The Darkness and

more, with new album ‘Hair Down to My Grass’ featuring covers of Bon Jovi, Europe, Bryan Adams and Blue Oyster Cult.
THE MARTIN PICKETT ORGANISATION: The Bullingdon – The Bully’s free weekly jazz club plays host to the Martin Pickett Organisation.
SPARK’S SIDE OF THE MOON: James Street Tavern
OSPREY & FRIENDS: St Aldates Tavern

WEDNESDAY 17th

LET’S TALK DAGGERS + POLY-MATH + QUADRUPEDE: The Cellar – Idiot King host an ArcTangent Festival warm-up show with a triple bill of math-rock and post-hardcore treats.
SUMMER SESSIONS: The Cellar – Post-gig club night playing bassline, garage, house and drum&bass.

THURSDAY 18th

SPEAKING IN SHADOWS: The Bullingdon – Post-hardcore/emo noise from Nuneaton’s Speaking in Shadows, out on tour to plug new EP ‘The Anchor’. They were planning on releasing their own range of biscuits, but they weren’t very popular. In fact there were Nuneaton. Thanks, we’re here all week.
PETE BOSS & THE BLUEHEARTS + MAD LARRY + THE TOM IVEY BAND: The Wheatsheaf – Big Blues Night Out with local blues guitar veteran Pete Boss, Oxford’s own Slowhand, plus classic r’n’b from Mad Larry.
DEAR HERO + DUKE BRADLEY + THE SKUNK BOY PROJECT + TANNERS POOL: The Library – Tigmus host local gothic popsters Dear Hero, whose drama-laden sound recalls The Cure and Editors at times; three of the band are celebrating their birthday tonight, so expect extra fun and drama. Support from dark and doomy bluesman Duke Bradley, Cardiff’s Randy Newman-inspired songsmith Skunk Boy Project and funky rockers Tanners Pool.
OXFORD ACOUSTIC CLUB: The Jericho Tavern – Unplugged night with Mark Cope, Andre Chaves, Enthieme and more.
GET LIT: The Cellar
CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre
SPARKY’S FLYING CIRCUS: The Half Moon ACOUSTIC THURSDAY: Jude the Obscure
BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford

FRIDAY 19th

DEATH OF THE MAIDEN + OCEAN RUINS + BROWN GLOVE + LAIMA BITE: O2 Academy – Let The Lady Sing showcase of female-fronted bands and female solo acts, tonight in aid of the Young Women’s Music Project. Recent Common People stars Death of the Maiden – the band formed by Tamara Parsons-Baker and Hannah Bruce – headline, with support from Newbury’s atmospheric, country-tinged alt. rockers Ocean Ruin; Gemma Moss’s dark cabaret band Brown Glove, and poetic gothic singer Laima Bite.
VANITY DRAWS BLOOD + PERCEPTION + CONTEK: The Wheatsheaf – Full-throttle metal and hardcore from London’s Vanity Draws Blood at the Sheaf tonight, with tech-metal support from Perception and ambient post-hardcore from Kontek.
SOUL SESSIONS: The Cellar – Disco, funk and soul classics from the 60s and 70s.
KAGOULE: Modern Art Oxford – Idiot King host a free show from rising Nottingham

noisemakers Kagoule, recently signed to Earache Records.
WHYTE LYTES: Fat Lil’s, Witney – The band formerly known as The Haze relaunch themselves with a hometown show, their brand of rock inspired by Paul Weller, Oasis, Stereophonics and Rolling Stones.

SATURDAY 20th

BESNARD LAKES: O2 Academy – Stately psych-rock, prog and shoegaze from Montreal’s husband and wife team Jace Lasek and Olga Goreas – *see main preview*
STRIKE ONE + CALLOW SAINTS + LUKE ALLMOND: The Wheatsheaf – It’s All About the Music showcase night with Didcot’s pop-punk people Strike One; Aylesbury’s melodic rockers Callow Saints, and former Vaguelworld singer Luke Allmond.
MOVE: The Cellar – Bassline, garage and grime club night with Lazcru, B-III and Merman.
DAMN GOOD REASON: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Rock covers.
DRIVIN’ SIDEWAYS: The Brewery Tap, Abingdon – Rocking blues.
HEADINGTON HILLBILLIES: The Oxford Yeoman, Freeland – Bluegrass and Americana from the local regulars.

SUNDAY 21st

MONDAY 22nd

TUESDAY 23rd

THE HUGH TURNER BAND: The Bullingdon – Funky jazz from Turner and chums at the Bully’s free weekly jazz club.
SPARK’S SIDE OF THE MOON: James Street Tavern
OSPREY & FRIENDS: St Aldates Tavern

WEDNESDAY 24th

LOWER THAN ATLANTIS: O2 Academy – Reading and Leeds warm-up show from Watford’s melodic post-hardcore warriors.
GWYN ASHTON + THE TROY REDFERN BAND: The Bullingdon – Blues rock and beyond from Oxford-based Aussie ex-pat Gwyn Ashton, taking inspiration from Hendrix and Page as well as The White Stripes, taking detours into Delta blues and psychedelia as he keeps classic 60s sounds fresh and lively.
FREEMANTLE + KOSHER + SAMUEL EDWARDS: The Wheatsheaf – It’s All About the Music showcase with local psychedelic pop crew Freemantle and more.
WAY UP: The Cellar

THURSDAY 25th

CASSELS + SLATE HEARTS + DYM: The Wheatsheaf – Top notch trio of local stars on the rise, with this month’s cover stars Cassels making their anger felt in spiky post-hardcore style, plus virulent grunge noise from Introducing featured trio Slate Hearts, and DYM, a new band featuring members of Dead Jerichos, playing punk and post-hardcore in the vein of classic Touch and Go and Gringo Records.
WHITNEY: The Bullingdon – Wistful folk and country, sad-eyed boogie, and northern soul from Chicago’s latest musical export Whitney, the band formed by ex-Smith Western guitarist Max Kakacek and Unknown Mortal Orchestra drummer Julien Ehrlich, together –

and sometimes abetted by members of Foxygen et al – mixing buoyant music and bummed-out lyrics to approximate Bon Iver jamming it up with Curtis Mayfield in a backwoods shack. Nice stuff, basically.
DEADBEAT APOSTLES: The Jericho Tavern – Bluesy country hoedown fun from Deadbeat Apostles.
GET LIT: The Cellar
CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre
SPARKY’S FLYING CIRCUS: The Half Moon ACOUSTIC THURSDAY: Jude the Obscure
BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford

FRIDAY 26th

SKYLARKIN’ SOUNDSYSTEM: The Cellar – Count Skylarkin’ takes time out from touring his Disco Shed round the UK’s festivals for his monthly celebration of ska, reggae, dancehall, soul and more.
TOWERSEY FESTIVAL: Thame Showground – The annual folk, blues and more music festival returns, once again at its new home of Thame

Friday 26th – Sunday 28th

BIG FEASTIVAL: Alex James’ Farm, Kingham

Feastival: where chefs become rock stars. Anyone who’s been before will know the adulation – bordering on a hysteria usually reserved for global pop icons – that tends to greet **JAMIE OLIVER** when he turns up on stage at his annual food and music gathering on pal **ALEX JAMES’** farm. Folk here love their pulled pork and sourdough as much as they like a catchy tune. Given that Feastival started out as a food festival with a bit of music as a side dish, it’s become one of the biggest live music events in the county over the last couple of years, and artists of the calibre of **TINIE TEMPAH**, **MARK RONSON** and **KAISER CHIEFS** should ensure another big crowd as much as appearances by **RAYMOND BLANC**, **TOM KERRIDGE** and **NADIYA HUSSAIN**. Plenty of credible stuff on offer musically: **ROISIN MURPHY** in particular, as well as **FOXES**, while the likes of **STEREO MCS**, **REEF** and **THE PROCLAIMERS** should please those who long ago gave up nights stood in sweaty venues for evenings sat watching *The Great British Bake Off*. Plenty of dance and roots action too with sets from **NORMAN JAY**, **DJ FRESH** and **TOOTS & THE MAYTALS**. And if the temptation over the weekend is to scoff artisan cheese and locally sourced burgers until you’re fit to burst, **DICK & DOM** might just be the act to actually split your sides.



Showground. Veteran protest singer and hopeless romantic Billy Bragg headlines the opening day’s celebration, and he’s joined by a line-up that includes Kate Rusby; Holy Moly & the Crackers; Luke Concannon; Lynched; Rusty Shackle and Topette.
THE BIG FEASTIVAL: Alex James’ Farm, Kingham – Mark Ronson, Foxes and Norman Jay kick off Jamie Oliver and Alex James’s annual food’n’music shindig – *see main preview*
HEADINGTON HILLBILLIES: James Street Tavern
OSCILLATORS: The Brewery Tap, Abingdon – Rock, blues, jazz and funk.

SATURDAY 27th

TOWERSEY FESTIVAL: Thame Showground – The Wonderstuff are the star turn on the second day of this year’s four-day festival; the 80s and 90s indie stars joined by The Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain; Edward II; Kris Drever & Jan Carr and Nancy Kerr & James Fagan.
THE BIG FEASTIVAL: Alex James’ Farm, Kingham – Sets from Tinie Tempah, DJ Fresh, Reef and Ella Henderson – *see main preview*
GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES with THE QUENTINS + BLUSHES + ROSE SEGAL: The Wheatsheaf – Fidgety guitar pop and indie funk from The Quentins at tonight’s GTI showcase. Urban-tinged indie from Aylesbury’s Blushes, and acoustic positivity from singer-songwriters Rose Segal.
P.Y.T.: The Bullingdon – New generation disco club night.
PITCH BLACK: The Cellar – Bank holiday techno party with resident DJs.
HEADINGTON HILLBILLIES: The Black Swan
RORKE’S DRIFT: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Rock covers.
ANDY ROBBINS: The Black Swan, Abingdon – Acoustic covers.

SUNDAY 28th

TOWERSEY FESTIVAL: Thame Showground – Towersey takes a turn for the 80s today with Ultravox frontman Midge Ure and punk firebrand turned 6Music DJ Tom Robinson atop the bill. They’re joined by 9 Bach; Nell Brydon; Nizlopi; Andy Kershaw; Bob Fox and Mr B the Gentleman Rhymer.
THE BIG FEASTIVAL: Alex James’ Farm, Kingham – Kaiser Chiefs, Roisin Murphy and The Proclaimers provide Feastival’s dessert course – *see main preview*
BLUES JAM: Fat Lil’s, Witney (3pm) – Open blues jam.

MONDAY 29th

TOWERSEY FESTIVAL: Thame Showground – Fourth and final day of the festival, today featuring The Urban Folk Quartet and Whapweasel among others.

TUESDAY 30th

ALVIN ROY & REEDS UNLIMITED: The Bullingdon – Trad jazz, swing and bop from veteran clarinettist Roy and his reeds band at the Bully’s free weekly jazz club.
SPARK’S SIDE OF THE MOON: James



Wednesday 31st

ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN: O2 Academy

Like a comet, Echo & the Bunnymen come back round every couple of years or so to remind us of just how majestic music can occasionally sound. Previous visits here have included a run-through of their first two albums, ‘Crocodiles’ and ‘Heaven Up Here’ in their entirety, a treat for hardcore fans, while their last time around was in support of 2014 album ‘Meteorites’, their first release since 2009. Emerging out of Liverpool’s astonishingly fertile post-punk scene, The Bunnymen’s dark take on alternative pop, cloaked in a heavy-duty overcoat, inspired as much by Scott Walker’s sweeping gothic portent and The Doors’ doomy poetic rock as punk’s spirit of rock revolution, always had a vision and ambition beyond most of their peers, one that has helped core members Ian McCulloch and Will Sergeant survive the deaths of two of their bandmates in motorcycle crashes and remain the epitomes of rock cool for three decades. Even a truncated list of their classic moments should inspire awe: ‘The Cutter’; ‘Seven Seas’; ‘Over the Wall’; ‘The Killing Moon’; ‘Pictures on My Wall’; ‘Rescue’; ‘Villiers Terrace’. These and many more will doubtless get an outing amid the new songs.

Street Tavern

OSPREY & FRIENDS: St Aldates Tavern

WEDNESDAY 31st

ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN: O2 Academy – Liverpool’s elegant post-punk legends return – *see main preview*
STICKY FINGERS: O2 Academy – Indie rock with a hefty reggae vibe from Sydney’s hippie party starters, over in the UK for a tour ahead of the release of their third album in September.
THE GARDEN: The Bullingdon – Electro-heavy rock’n’roll from twin Californian brothers Wyatt and Fletcher Shears, taking influence from Suicide as well as drum&bass and hip hop to make for a strangely trippy take on sunny Californian psych sounds.
SUMMER SESSIONS: The Cellar

Nightshift listings are free. Deadline for inclusion is the 20th of each month - no exceptions. Email listings to editor@nightshiftmag.co.uk. All listings are copyright Nightshift Magazine and may not be reproduced without permission.

TRUCK

Hill Farm, Steventon

Friday

“We’re running two hours behind,” says the engineer at the Gorwelion Horizons stage, “and twenty minutes ahead”. Oh, thanks, that’s – wait, what? Have we entered some sort of south Oxfordshire Twilight Zone where normal rules don’t apply? Is Didcot power station, the slow dismantling of which continues with a controlled explosion partway through the festival, some sort of mystical key that keeps the laws of logic and science in place? Looks like it, fellow Truck travellers, looks like it. How else do we explain the fact that there are 2500 more people here than in 2015, and yet the site feels open and uncluttered, and there are very few queues? That the ecstasy of a crowd’s response over the weekend occasionally seems inversely related to our ability to remember the music? That the amount we can enjoy the event doesn’t really seem to be linked to the quality of the line-up? That a pint of Hobgoblin is about the same price as it is down the pub, and Truck still allows you to bring your own drinks, whilst other festivals claim they need to charge six quid a pop? Is everything topsy-turvy in this field?

Even getting in confuses us, as we have to come past the main stage, but then walk the entire length of the site before doubling back, meaning that most of our experience of **PUMAROSA** comes drifting on the breeze. It’s good stuff, though, like a chunked-up Candy Says with a brief trip into The Sugarcubes’ witchy scarepop. The charming chaps at Retro-bution Gaming, who are offering Truckers the chance to relive some classic console fun over the weekend, are surprised by our knowledge of the Neo Geo and that our definition of “retro” means *Chuckie Egg* and text adventures, so before we can feel any older, we sneak across to the BBC Introducing Virgins stage for some less contentious classic japes from **KANCHO!** Their two man rock laced with exhortative vocals brings up a marriage between departed locals 50ft Panda and Days Of Grace, but such retro-referencing is unimportant. What *is* important is the fat riffs stomping over the field like corned beef golems with murderous intent. **MONARKS** don’t manage to kick things into gear nearly as well, resembling an emoier Six By Seven. There’s nothing wrong with their set, but it’s unconvincing, like getting a telegram reading “Rock the fuck out” delivered on a silver platter by an aging asthmatic royal retainer.

The main stage seems to be home to some pretty shocking nonsense at this year’s festival, and indeed, the younger clued-up audience seems to treat the Market stage as the place to be, but **ADY SULEIMAN** has got to be about the most egregious offender, with his cruddy unplugged Jamiraquoid reggae soul fluff fouling up the air. On this evidence it wasn’t Curiosity Killed The Cat. It was shame. Still, at least Ady has some songs and only stays onstage for thirty minutes, whereas at the other end of the field there’s a great big trailer full of Boss salespeople in which a man in a stupid patchwork cap plays inane blues licks constantly for the entire weekend. If *Nightshift* were rich we would have just strolled up, bought every piece of mojo artillery in the place, and then smashed it up, set it on fire and used it to cook marshmallows for the Rotary Club volunteers.



Estrons



They may have trouble understanding numbers, but once again the BBC Cymru Gorwelion Horizons tent hides many of the festival’s gems. Not only do **CUT RIBBONS** provide a lovely antidote to the fretwank fraternity – “I don’t think this guitar can go in E, let’s do a different song” – but they play percolated pop laced with melody that resembles Stereolab without the krautrock, or the glory days of Alphabet Backwards when they were all about sherbet and heartache. Cool Michael Nesmith/ Benny from *Crossroads* woolly hat, too.

From here we make a visit to the kids’ tent, where we find a man dressed as a sheriff sitting in the dirt and singing a very slow, dirge version of “I Get A Kick Out Of You”, like a clown having a break-down, and we decide that the very young have far more taste than any of us, especially anyone aged 16-22, who should be setting the world aflame with music. Take **HOMEPLANETEARTH**, a not entirely unpleasant but far from weighty young crusty-pop ensemble who make us think of Back To The Planet. And we’ve not thought of Back To The Planet since 1993. How blissful those 23 years have been. Bastards.

AMAZONS are like The Presidents Of The USA via Then Jericho, except crapper, so we make a trip into The Barn, which now seems to be pretty much sidelined as a stage and which is generally empty all weekend – although perhaps nobody can stand to run the gauntlet past Big Billy Twiddlebollocks and his Boss Box of Bad Blues. **FORTY FOUR HOURS** aren’t strictly great, but they are at least interesting, the two of them dressed in black and ranting politely over wistful piano chords and thin drum machines like Richard Clayderman’s audition

The Big Moon



to join Atari Teenage Riot. Then we notice the boys are twins, and so we’re left with the image of *Jedward: The Rehab Years*.

People are not walking, they are *running* towards the Market tent for **THE MAGIC GANG**, cramming in and dancing like it’s 1999 and it’s going out of fashion and nobody’s watching and there’s no tomorrow. We’ve seriously not seen this many people crammed into a space since we went to the coffee stall: there are eight of them stuffed behind that table, but we still have to ask four times to get a cuppa? Is it a test?

Truck used to be a huge proponent of metal, and whilst Brighton’s **BLACK PEAKS** don’t signal a return to past interests, they are the only decent heavy band we’ve seen at Hill Farm for about three years. They take the most acceptable parts of Noughties metal and weld them firmly to a thrash chassis before spraying it all with the sort Kerrangular post-post-rock we hear a lot of nowadays, and that’s all just fine, but it’s Will Gardner’s vocals that floor us. His harried screams and guttural growls are like a vortex of crows, and he inspires a proper old-fashioned mosh pit in the packed Nest tent from old-school metallers and members of The Club That Cannot Be Shamed.

The local presence is strong at this year’s festival, but **LUCY LEAVE** possibly take the crown. Their crazy paving pop brings together prog, psych and punk with Blur’s sense of a good tune, while the drumming is astonishingly frenetic and jazzy, like Gene Krupa squashing ants for money. If you wondered what it would sound like if Stump, Tiger, Neu! and Hawkwind got together down the pub for



Glitched



Black Peaks



a pint of mild and a game of astronomy dominoes, Lucy Leave’s ‘40 Years’ will give you an inkling.

As if they’ve been playing too much *Tekken* at the Retro-bution tent, two bands in succession take us back to the early 90s. **GLITCHED** give us politics, anger and syndrums in a way that should make Forty Four Hours hang their heads in shame if they’re still backstage at the Barn, and **DMAs** relive that brief moment before Oasis became a tedious brand, when they were still an intriguing mixture of influences culled from diverse sources like the Roses, shoegaze, The Who and Flowered Up. Except, in place of The Beatles DMAs seem to have venerated Simple Minds and The Housemartins. That’s odd and not always successful, but they make a good case for themselves, and everyone in the tent seems to know the words, so fair enough. Plus, the acoustic guitarist looks as though he’s got everyone else’s coats on, perhaps he lost a bet.

Later we catch **MAIIANS**’ excellent set, starting out like Godspeed You! Black Emperor on Sleeping Bag and including a tune that sounds like ‘Papua New Guinea’ arranged by Tom Tom Club, and **BEACH**’s less convincing set that sounds like ‘Hail To The Thief’ played by Fields Of The Nephilim, though they do get points for bringing huge reverb pedals to the Barn: drop them a line about it through coals@newcastle.com.

But, the night belongs to **JURASSIC 5**, who are phenomenal on the main stage, and certainly don’t deserve billing beneath the bloated tedium of **CATFISH & THE BOTTLEMEN**. They might rap about how they take “four MCs and make them sound like one”, but the strength of J5 and all great



Prohibition Smokers Club



hip hop crews is how each member has individual strength and character, throwing their style into a relaxed whole like *Avengers Assemble For Netflix and Doritos*. The whole show, down to the lighting cues, is as tightly drilled and crowd-pleasing as The Moscow State Circus, but the group never loses the handmade, unfussy of classic hip hop. Even the DJ cutting session, the B-boy equivalent of a stadium drum solo and wee break excuse, is tons of fun (there are two DJs, meaning that there are six members of Jurassic 5 tonight, which must have pleased that new-math Gorwelion engineer). Earlier this summer Oxford saw sets from rap demigods Sugarhill Gang and Public Enemy. Jurassic 5 are – whisper it – better.

Saturday

If Black Peaks recall The Club That Cannot Be Named, the Saloon stage is pure Bennett brothers Truck history. Alt-country might boast the most inaccurate prefix in music history, but we won’t hold that against the late-Noughties style acts who fill this corrugated shed with sweet tones, not least the smooth-voiced **STEVIE RAY LATHAM** who starts our Saturday. Later we catch **SAMO HURT & THE BEATNIK MESSIAHS**, in which a man who amusingly resembles an occasional *Nightshift* scribe and Oxford promoter bashes out dirty Diddley country garage in the middle of the floor, like Carl Perkins pan-handling for pennies outside C&A.

From The Alarm to Stereophonics, Wales seems to turn out a lot of big-boned melodic rock. **FLEUR DE LYS** keep this tradition alive and while their clumpy tunes might not win any races, they could

Maiians



melt hearts with an impromptu break dance at the school prom – or perhaps we’ve been influenced by the sort of feelgood films on show in the cinema tent. Do people really pay eighty quid to come to a festival to watch *The Goonies* in a tiny hot enclosure? Apparently so. Probably more fun than watching **NEW LUNA** in fairness, whose generic driving rock has a few tie dye guitar sounds, but is let down by growly vocals that seem to be trying desperately to puff the music up to stadium size. They could have learnt a lot from **PROHIBITION SMOKERS CLUB** over the on the Veterans stage, where ex-Oxford boy Lee Christian is leading a rinsing P-funk Prince-flecked soul revue. Each song is a sticky blast of glam rock and filth... rather like the dressing rooms from 70s *Top Of The Pops* must have been, we now suspect.

For just a moment, the main stage seems to have gone back to a time when bands like Salad and Echobelly seemed genuinely exciting. First up is **ESTRONS**, who are nothing if not steeped in unhinged energy. It’s not quite dirty or loose enough to be punk, but they do find a mid-point between the post-punk riffs of Elastica and the charge of early riot grrl and in vocalist Taliesyn Källström they have a energetic and spellbinding focal point. **THE BIG MOON** are slightly more ramshackle, but that’s when they’re at their best. When they’re rattling through their riffs and they seem as if the wheels are about to fall off, it’s clear to see why they’re being touted as one of the next big things. It’s when they tighten up and skirt too close to Sleeper territory for comfort that things go a little wrong and they’re eclipsed by Estrons’ vigour.

Many of the best bands pull you in two directions

photos by Sam Shepherd

TRUCK cont’d....

at once, and **FLIGHTS OF HELIOS** make a big happy hippy haze into which Joy Division darkness and Chris Beard’s tarnished monk vocals swirl. The placement of **HORNS OF PLENTY** among the crowd for ‘Dynah And Donalogue’ is truly inspired.

The Market Stage is once again fit to bursting as **FICKLE FRIENDS** run through their festival-hardened set. They’ve put the work in, of that there’s no doubt, having played at over 50 festivals in the space of two years. It’s unsurprising then that they’re a well-oiled electro-machine and soon have the tent frugging like there’s no tomorrow. Musically they’re a little like a lightweight Chvrches, but they’ve got a pop edge which makes them irresistible.

Brighton’s **THYLA** sound rather a lot like Belly, which is a very pleasant thing to do. Nothing revolutionary here, but they’re a hell of lot more memorable than the next three acts we sit through, whose names we shall not dignify in print. Instead it’s up to **LUKE SMITH & THE FEELINGS** to make us smile again with their existential Chas’n’Dave schtick. Luke is old-school Truck through and through, out of step with the prevailing ethos: nice, slightly bumbling, and well-loved by a vocal minority; perhaps he’s the Steventon Jeremy Corbyn. Most surprisingly moving moment of the weekend comes from a rewrite of oldie ‘Luke’s National Anthem’, turning it into a lancet sharp anti-Ukip lament.

Luke may not be the epitome of cool, so we are inspired to check the fashion trends: it looks as though 2015’s dungarees and backwards caps are being taken over by crushed velvet crop tops and bumbags. Yep, every tenth person on site has a bumbag, generally worn to the front, which means they should probably be rechristened cash mirkins. The other popular look is “multicoloured wastrel”, as many people indulge in a giant paint fight on Saturday afternoon. It looks as though the paint won. Probably outwitted them. Oh, and some girls seem to have come dressed as Magenta Divine; we won’t try to work out why on earth that should be. Minecraft t-shirts still reign untroubled among the under 10s.

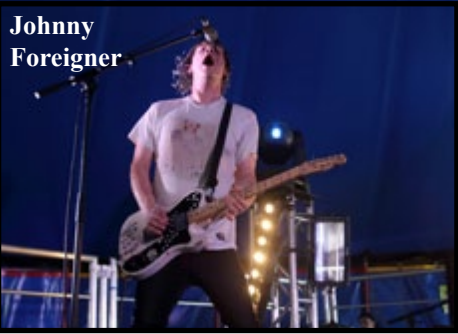
We naturally have to visit **AFROCLUSTER**, in case they sound like Fela Kuti doing krautrock. They don’t, inevitably, but they are a phenomenal rap/funk band, with a cracking frontman, a sashimi slicing horn section, and a rhythm section so far in the pocket they don’t know where to put their keys. It’s an astonishing bubbling groove beast of a band, that is right up there as one of the best of the weekend: score another to Gorwelion Horizons.

Try as we might, we’re unable to get a description of **CIRCA WAVES** from one of their fans beyond when and where they’re playing, proving that they’re only for people who have *no interest in music whatsoever*, so we opt for instrument inventor and cracked poet **THOMAS TRUAX**, a sort of end of level baddy for the sound engineers. Just as Richard Osman should by rights never have been allowed past the gatekeepers of contemporary British mainstream culture for being too odd and clever, Truax should not get a rousing response from a festival that thinks Catfish & The Bottlemen fit for human consumption with his oddly shaped, endearing songs, yet here we are. Top marks.

In Truck’s infancy, the concept of having a legend



of British music headlining the festival was such a bizarre concept that it’s fairly safe to assume that nobody had ever considered the notion. Back in the early days, just having Jetplane Landing and Lapsus Linguae on the bill was cause for excitement. To have **MANIC STREET PREACHERS** topping the bill is just a little bit strange, but it’s testament to the organisers of the festival that it has grown to such an extent. At times the Manics themselves seem a little out of sorts and uncertain of quite what kind of set they should play. They’re relatively quiet tonight, with minimal chat and Nicky Wire’s scissor kicks only getting a couple of outings. They’ve just come off the back of celebrating the 20th anniversary of ‘Everything Must Go’, where they’ve been playing the album in its entirety every night before throwing a few interesting song choices in during the second half to keep fans on their toes. Tonight, they’re not in such comfortable surroundings; they’re playing to an audience many of whom aren’t long term fans, and most likely only know their biggest tunes. When they launch into ‘Motorcycle Emptines’s and follow that with ‘Everything Must Go’, it seems as if they’re opting for a greatest hits set but then they wander off into more unusual territory. ‘Walk Me To The Bridge’, ‘Found That Soul’ and ‘Masses Against The Classes’ are all great songs, but aren’t exactly crowd pleasers. When James Dean Bradfield plays ‘30-Year War’ in an acoustic spot it almost implies that they’re either getting the most out of the trumpet player they’ve hired for the evening or that they’re giving two fingers to the idea of an out and out hits set. They finish with ‘You Love Us’ and ‘Design For Life’, the last of which results in a truly thunderous sing-a-long. It’s a triumphant set, of that there’s no doubt, but perhaps particularly for the hardcore fans here.



Sunday
At Sunday lunch we see some Truckers walking back from McDonalds. That’s quite a stroll; they must really be into that stuff. Perhaps trace elements of bovine faeces are addictive. If that’s the case, they should have saved time and gone to the Barn. **BLADES CLUB** might be nothing multiplied by zero, but young duo **MOTHER ME** are pretty great, floating gaunt harmony vocals over cro-magnon drum machine, twin chiming guitars and a Korg that barely gets touched. They sound a lot like Bauhaus and Oxford’s own D Gwalia, and it’s brilliant to see young people make such bleak music... especially when one of them has glitter on her face.

For the most part Gorwelion Horizons keeps the quality up for the third day. **JUNIOR BILL** take cues from The Specials and The Police, and like all the good Jamaican music they nod towards, have an impeccable sense of musical space, giving songs space to unfurl. **HMS MORRIS**, *Nightshift* favourites from last year, don’t disappoint either, despite once again playing to a mere smattering. Theirs are budget seduction jamz, heavy on the slinky guitar and sleazily buzzing synth; they also have the best beard to falsetto ratio we’ve ever seen at Truck.

As the strength of the sun becomes almost unbearable, **BEACH BABY** take to the main stage. One of them has a Sonic Youth t-shirt on, so hopes are high that they’ll rip into a set of avant garde guitar noise. What they actually do veers from a charged fusion of early 90s grunge and surf-pop, like Mudhoney with all the abrasive edges knocked off and a mix of New Order and The Strokes. To be



honest, avant garde noise is not really what we want right about now. What we want is an ice-cream, some blissed-out tunes and hosing down with a water cannon. The queue for ice-cream appears to have more people in it than are actually attending the festival, and we’ve left our water cannon at home. Beach Baby do have the tunes for the occasion, though.

There was a time when you couldn’t move at Truck for post-rock bands, but these days it would appear that icy introspection and fun with delay and reverb pedals is out. Thankfully nobody has told **YNDI HALDA** who offer a slight chill on this blisteringly hot afternoon over in The Nest. Their songs drift and lilt beautifully, before building towards soaring crescendos that never fail to tug at the heartstrings. That there’s not a glut of similar bands on the bill mean that Yndi Halda’s set stands out as being one of the most immersive and emotive of the weekend and a genuine highlight. Also harking back to the days of yore are **JOHNNY FOREIGNER** and **GNARWOLVES**. They’re the kind of high-impact punk fury that would have torn The Barn a new a-hole a few years back. Now, they’re almost elder statesmen, and their angular fury is at odds with the fare on the two main stages, which means they’re playing to slightly smaller audiences than we might have expected. Still, it’s not how big the audience is, it’s what you do with it, and both bands invoke a mini-riot as they blitz anyone brave enough to pop their heads into The Nest.

ABATTOIR BLUES are named after a Nick Cave LP, but they could well connect with earlier Veterans stage booking Too Many Poets and



their self-defined “graveyard grunge” genre. There’s certainly a similar grunge feel, although the Brighton band edge more towards the dirt encrusted while keeping some melodic noise hidden in the guitar avalanche: think The Jesus Lizard & Mary Chain. The vocalist, however, knuckles about the songs as if he’s in some Fugazi-shaped hardcore band, and we’re not sure it really fits together: still, we’ll never turn down some proper savagery.

FORMATIONS are an odd lot; they start their set with a muscular dubby rock stomp that has a slight Tackhead flavour, before building to an elastic rap rock verse that’s Vaguely Against The Machine, and then flipping sideways into a chorus that consists solely of the word “drugs” yelped over and over in a mad-eyed falsetto. Their next tune features some Jan Hammer synth disco, and we have them pegged as a weapons grade version of old Oxford funk merchants Rubber Duck, with a slight hint of Holly Johnson. Not unequivocally any good, then, but a lot more intriguing than some of the stuff that has wafted from this stage for three days. Guff like **BLOSSOMS**, who are to Climie Fisher what Wolfmother are to Led Zeppelin. They have a song that sounds like Pet Shop Boys’ classic ‘Domino Dancing’ has been squeezed through a character killing mangle, and the whole thing’s so like a benighted mid-80s Radio 1 roadshow we just want a crack at the snooker quiz to try to win the chance to cut our own ears off.

Following such a bland set, **JACK SAVORETTI** benefits considerably. Ordinarily we’d find his Cornbury-friendly acoustic equally tedious, but today, he sounds positively edgy. When he engages



that gruff aspect of his vocal range he somehow manages to sound like Rod Stewart at his filthiest (in vocal terms obviously, not that weird album cover for ‘An Old Raincoat Won’t Ever Let You Down’). And just as we begin to worry that the sun is affecting our faculties, **EVERYTHING EVERYTHING** hit the stage and remind everyone that pop doesn’t need to be bland and uninteresting. It can be edgy, angular and awkward and still have huge hooks that dig in. A case in point is the glacial but funky ‘MY KZ UR BF’, which features relatively early on and acts as a catalyst for the crowd to lose their collective minds. After that, there’s no stopping them, and it’s perhaps not overstating it to suggest that it’s Everything Everything should have wrapped the main stage up for the weekend. Not being blessed with stage presence or snake-hipped electro pop, **KODALINE**’s earnest plodding simply couldn’t follow them.

Plodding wearily along Steventon’s long cobbled causeway, we reflect that the truly unpredictable acts this year were brought in by BBC Oxford or BBC Cymru or were slipped in on the Veterans stage, as opposed to the often safe picks on the main stage, but it’s hard to take a stance against large, friendly, appreciative crowds, who are clearly loving so much of what they see, and not shy of losing the odd braincell/shoe/fragile fragment of dignity expressing it. We’ve certainly had fun, and saw a fair amount of strong music, and feel certain that we’ll be back for truck 2017. In two years. But also twelve months early.

Words: David Murphy, Sam Shepherd and Jane Norris.

photos by Sam Shepherd

CORNBURY FESTIVAL

Great Tew Park

Friday

Nightshift tends to approach Cornbury with a degree of trepidation, the line-up tending towards the safer side of sedate at times and a crowd that wouldn't survive thirty seconds in the moshpit at Download (this year's Download moshpit being an actual pit, filled six foot deep with liquid mud).

But we've high hopes this year, having seen that headlining the Riverside stage on Saturday night are **MAYHEM**. The idea that Cornbury Festival has booked Norway's most notorious church-burning black metal butchers is a shock, we'll admit, but not an unwelcome one.

Corpsepaint liberally applied, and with our trusty hunting wolves, Geri and Freki, in tow, we head for the middle shire idyll of Great Tew, Burzum blasting from the car stereo, visions of last year's endless rows of camping chairs in the arena and dining tables with candelabras in the campsite cheerily cast aside. This year, Cornbury is gonna *ROCK!*

Before that though, "pop will eat itself", claimed David Quantick in an *NME* article that subsequently gave its name to Clint Mansell's 80s grebo band. Pop music, from the Beatles, through Bowie and onto Beyonce has always been about reinvention (okay, and unit shifting, drugs, sex and premature deaths through "misadventure"). Last year's Cornbury highlight, Trevor Horn, knew that more than most. Pop should always be shiny, not covered in cobwebs and body odour.

In some circles, such striving forward in search of new and interesting sounds appears to have been forgotten. On the evidence of this weekend, pop has not only eaten itself, but has also taken quite an impressive dump in the rather posh personal toilet block that is available at a very reasonable price to those who can afford such things. Digging up the past and recycling it as cover versions (not re-interpretations) is the order of the weekend, but is that what we really want? Well, as it turns out, yes, quite a few people are more than happy to immerse themselves in the comfort of what they already know.

Someone who clearly knows how to stay safe and please an audience is **STELLA PARTON**, a country artist who despite having 22 albums under her belt, is best known as Dolly Parton's sister. Despite having a considerable pedigree of her own, Stella seems to sense that most of this audience would rather her sister was there and opts to run through 'Jolene', 'Islands In The Stream' and 'Down From Dover'. It's an odd move and if

knowing how to please an audience results in playing songs your more famous sister wrote rather than your own, then we're glad we're not able to hear Stella Parton's thought processes. **PORT ISLA**'s middle of the road rock might be a little safe, but at least they're not trapped in a sibling shadow nightmare. It's the kind of thing that might soundtrack a teen-drama, but a teen drama where everything turns out okay at the end if 'Alive' is anything to go by. There's a moment when they chuck in a flute solo and everything goes a bit 'Hocus Pocus'; if there were more forays into Dutch prog in their set, they be onto a winner.

Ska always goes down well at Cornbury, so it's good to see **THE BEAT** making the most of the occasion and getting people up and moving. For most, 'Mirror In The Bathroom' is the key moment of their set, but for at least one gentleman, the highlight will always be the pert buttocks of the girl on stilts that wanders past the stage just as the band launch into their trademark tune.

It's only a few weeks since **PEERLESS PIRATES** and **SOUL II SOUL** last popped up in a field in Oxford with both bands appearing at the inaugural Common People festival. Today, they're both as effective as they were in South Park. The Pirates draw a healthy crowd to the Riverside Stage and while their covers ('Swords Of A Thousand Men' amongst them) get the biggest reaction, their own swashbuckling, black tooth grinning shanties hit the spot too. Soul II Soul, meanwhile, jazz things up a little, but still get the field blissed out with the likes of 'Back To Life'.

Reality can be harsh and three years ago, when **WILKO JOHNSON** last played Cornbury, he was on his last legs. After a terminal cancer diagnosis, he'd booked a farewell tour and was hitting the boards for the last time. That he's here this weekend seems to be nothing short of a miracle, and his set is as full of vigour and life as you'd expect. All clanging chords and twitchy demeanour, Wilko is clearly on great form. He thanks the doctor that saved his life, and who he met at the festival when he played here last, and it's an emotional moment. We later meet the good doctor Charlie Chan himself, who is a gifted raconteur and all-round lovely chap. The most important thing we learn from him (other than a pretty neat Van Morrison tale) is that it is always worth getting a second opinion. There's only one needed for Johnson's set though, and that's that he's absolutely charged and

engaging tonight.

Closing Friday night is **JAMIE CULLUM**, and it's fair to say his laidback jazz is at odds with the frenetic attack of Wilko, but he wins the crowd over with ease. It's perhaps a little lounge for a headline set, but if in doubt it's advisable to bring out the big guns, and in keeping with the theme establishing itself this weekend, he drops in Taylor Swift's 'Shake It Off' and Radiohead's 'High And Dry'. Taking a tip from Ms Swift, we shake him off and head to the campsite.

Saturday

Shaking off a hangover is easier said than done, but **THE 2-TONE ALL-SKAS** are just what's required. With a large crowd on their feet and ready to moonstomp, they pick up where Hope And Glory left off last year with a rousing set of covers (of course) from Toots & the Maytals and Max Romeo to The Specials, while avoiding the obvious hits.

There was a time when **TURIN BRAKES** seemed to be ubiquitous. Not only that, but they'd seemingly lost all that early promise and become increasingly bland with every passing moment. Today they're a real breath of fresh air, and their country-tinged indie feels somewhat spiky compared to what's come before today. 'Painkiller' is an absolute earworm but for some reason it's 'Emergency 72' that digs in deep, with the endless repetition of 72 becoming something of a mantra throughout the rest of the day.

Following them on the Songbird stage is **LUCINDA WILLIAMS**, and looking at her heavy eye shadow she's one step away from having corpsepaint on; clearly she's a Mayhem fan too. She's always been an intriguing voice and is rightly recognised as an alt-country pioneer. Unlike many artists who reach a certain vintage and begin to dial it in, she's continued to morph and change. Most recently her album 'The Ghost Of Highway 20' found her following a similar but different path to that taken by Springsteen (on 'Nebraska') and latter day Johnny Cash. Today, she's in that stripped back, craggy and darkened mode. It's perhaps a little introspective and harsh for a festival performance at times, but she's spellbinding nonetheless.

The return of **ALL SAINTS** is something that's hard to get too excited about, but only an idiot, or the most hardcore corpsepainted black metal fan would deny that they were in possession of a fair few solid gold pop nuggets back in the day. Within the space of five minutes they've turned the main stage into a 90s disco, and the hits just keep coming. It's impossible to argue with big dumb pop songs, although it is possible to suggest that

'Under The Bridge' (another cover) is absolutely awful. Weirdly it gets the strongest reaction of their set. Cornbury *really* does love a cover version.

But now is the hour: time for some black metal worship, and **MAYHEM** on the Riverside stage. Only something is amiss. In place of dense dry ice, treble-heavy guitars and guttural roars, there seems to be an Imelda May tribute act. It seems that the idea of a lack of Imelda May – the Queen of Cornbury after all – on the bill was too much for the organisers to bear, and so they've plumped for the next best thing. To be fair they do a great job but boy are our faces red. Or they would be were it not for the corpsepaint.

We make a sharp exit, intending to go and set fire to the church in Great Tew to make up slightly for the lack of satanic rock action, but on the way encounter **BOOKER T**. He might not have his MGs with him tonight, but he absolutely has the tunes. 'Green Onions' is a joy, albeit in a slightly laid back form and 'Soul Limbo' never fails to raise a smile. Perhaps the most interesting moment comes, unsurprisingly, in the form of a cover. Switching from Hammond to guitar, Mr T plays a quite beautiful and stripped back version of 'Purple Rain'. His guitar playing in particular is stunning, it's languid and provides a dreamlike backing to his vocals. It's an emotive moment in the midst of a set crammed with feel good tunes.

BRYAN FERRY has rarely been about feeling good: from 'Slave To Love' to 'Oh Yeah' – both played tonight in a hit-strewn headline set – the crown prince of glam-turned-crooner *extraordinaire* has always been about the darker side of love. Which makes tonight's triumphant climax all the more impressive, and if *Nightshift's* highlight is Roxy classic 'Ladytron', the biggest cheers come – ta da! – for a brace of covers: 'Smoke Gets In Your Eyes' and 'Jealous Guy', albeit songs Ferry has made his own over the years. The set is everything we hoped and expected from the man, and as we head towards the village, petrol and matches in hand, we almost forgive him for spawning the odious Otis. Almost

Sunday

Having missed out on a church visit last night we start Sunday with some choral action in the form of **THE TUNELESS CHOIR**, who are exactly what you expect: a choir, who can't sing. Formed on a Nottingham housing estate, they belt out covers (surprise!) of Bon Jovi, Soft Cell, Tom Jones and The Monkees among others with gusto enough to hide any lack of actual vocal talent, and if it all feels like we're trapped in a sing-off between a drunken hen party and a terraceful of



non-league footie fans, it's a genuinely fun and uplifting start to the day. By this point in the weekend of course a few punters are ambling around like zombies: zombies who like their brains presented to them with a nice side salad, seasoning and a mango foam, but zombies nonetheless. Even their somewhat addled state, it's not unfair to suggest that these poor ambling, still tipsy souls have more life to them than **THE ZOMBIES**, the classic 60s band who have been reanimated for the day. Initially the idea of the band getting together for a few tunes is genuinely exciting, but they lack any semblance of genuine life. They commit the ultimate heritage band *faux pas* of declaring they're "going to play you some new songs we've written," and their between song chatter seems to take longer as they progress as they name-drop relentlessly. Gentlemen, the songs should speak for themselves; it doesn't matter what Paul Weller thinks about them. 'Time Of The Season' sounds decent enough today, as does Colin Blunstone's solo 'I Don't Believe In Miracles' but before then we've been rendered half comatose by assorted extended blues and honky tonk jams.

Last year, we weren't particularly enamoured with **THE SHIRES**, but this year they're a completely different

proposition. Assured and confident, and armed with a catalogue of country songs tinged with a light pop aesthetic, they shine today. 'Nashville Grey Skies' is a particular delight and shows just why they're the only band from the UK to have played *The Grand Ole Opry*, whilst their cover (bing!) of Fleetwood Mac's 'Dreams' shows off the perfection of the vocal interplay between Ben Earle and Crissie Rhodes. Back on The Riverside, **THE INFLATABLES** are bringing today's dose of ska. As per usual, it's infectious and soon has everyone up on their feet. It got us to wondering if perhaps a few real ska legends might not go amiss here in future.

We miss American-Iranian bluegrass star **RAMIN** but imagine he's a bit noodly (nah, sorry, that worked better as a spoken gag) and seeking shelter from a brief downpour we head to the comedy tent to catch **NISH KUMAR**. His riffing on the fact that nobody knows the name of Coldplay's drummer, and when people say they hate Coldplay, what they're actually saying is that they hate Chris Martin raises a few smiles. It's when he asks the audience who they've seen that the laughs roll right in, though.

"Bryan Ferry" "Any good?" asks Nish. "No. He can't fucking sing, lost it



mate," is the answer. "Ah, who else are you looking forward to?" "No one." It's a bit of a harsh summation, but then the prospect of **JAMES MORRISON**'s bland jangling acoustic hell is looming large. The only plus point is that it isn't James Blunt. Conversely, **SEAL** is a real treat. Leading with 'Crazy' and 'Killer', it appears that he's opened with all his heavy hitters early on, but with that immaculate voice, he could sing James Morrison's set list and it would sound amazing. He saves 'Kiss From A Rose' till later, which gives the set some balance, and of course, finds times to run through a couple of covers in the shape of Tears For Fears' 'Everybody Wants To Rule The World' and 'Mad World'.

Perhaps the strangest covers (Boof!) of the weekend come from **SAEDLY DORUS & THE HOOLIE BAND** on the Riverside stage. Imagine a ceilidh run by Chic and The Bee Gees? That's what they do. And if we're too far gone to do-si-do our partners to the strains of 'Nightfever' it's fun watching similarly ungainly folks actually attempt to.

Closing the festival is yet another covers band. But **BJORN AGAIN** are not just any covers band, they're

such a successful idea that there are multiple versions of the act all over the world. Frankly when your set consists of nothing but solid gold pop songs, it can't possibly fail, and Abba are far and away the greatest pure-pop band to ever grace the planet.

Where Bjorn Again succeed is not just in their faithful renditions of Abba's songs, but in their between song chatter and jokes. The self awareness and saucy postcard humour that pervades their show gives them an edge. The business of ensuring everyone has a great time is important, but that they don't take themselves too seriously means that this is more than a straight up po-faced homage. The result is a packed Songbird stage at the end of the festival going absolutely nuts. We didn't get the Mayhem we hoped for, but it looks like we've got our crazy Scandinavian party band after all.

Quite what this all means for Cornbury is difficult to judge. Clearly everyone loves a cover, and when they're done to Bjorn Again's standard it's hard to deny the nostalgia and fun. It'd be nice to see a little more adventure from bands though, and more commitment to original material. Sometimes people need to be challenged a little. So, how about a little black metal next year?

Words: Sam Shepherd, Dale Kattack

photos by Sam Shepherd



LIVE

IRREGULAR FOLKS SUMMER SESSION

Hogacre Eco Park

When Irregular Folk rechristened themselves as Irregular Folks last year it signalled that any connection with traditional folk music was long gone, if it existed in the first place; here, instead, is a haven for musicians who can't be pinned down to any pigeonhole. Today's mini festival takes place inside an elaborately decorated Bedouin tent, which enhances the exotic range of acts on show, few of which come anywhere close to what most people would class as folk music. Headliners **STEALING SHEEP** have their roots in the wyrd/pagan roots

revival but their live show has as much in common with Krautrock and psychedelic electro-pop (with hints of 80s stars Japan at times), with an emphasis on colour and exploratory fun rather than earnest authenticity. Local star **JESS HALL** is possibly the most straightforward folk-pop act on show, but her seductive solemnity, given an added layer of gravitas by Barney Morse-Brown's cello, exists on another level. If 'Sea Song' is a pure, simple pleasure, a capella versions of 'I Will Give My Love and Apple' and 'Black Is the

Colour' are simply stunning. Stirring solemnity too from **WATER PAGEANT** whose superbly understated sadness conjures images of Bon Iver writing notes from an east Oxford backstreet. **WHISKEY MOONFACE** play folk music but from lands far away, their gypsy swing fired by New Orleans street jazz, while **HAUS KHAS CONNECTION**'s traditional roots are based in Indian temples and classical music rather than Cotswold folk clubs; initially slightly fractured, their set blossoms once sarangi player

Suhail Yusuf Khan shifts from an elongated display of virtuosity into more coherent songs, a dancer elegantly enacting the stories out front. Three acts today, though best sum up the Irregular Folks ethos of idiosyncratic adventure. Compère for the day **PAUL FOOT**, with his terrible dress sense and even worse hair, is a hilarious improvisational raconteur, whether contemplating the size and shape of Michael Gove's penis, or explaining how best to exact revenge on B&B owners, his surreal monologues turning the day into a strange and fun journey towards places you never anticipated or imagined. Dutch-born, Norwegian resident **JESSICA SLIGTER** provides possibly the most polarising set of the day, a few in the crowd disorientated by her stark, industrial soundscapes and dramatic spoken word passages, bassy-heavy synth pulses and imperious vocals full of melodrama, making her sound like a Weimar-era cabaret star fed on a diet of Patti Smith's poetry and dropped into a Throbbing Gristle gig at the moment they start playing 'Hamburger Lady'. Those who do stick around are rightly mesmerised; this is incredible stuff. But the absolute star of today is **WAITRESS FOR THE BEES**, the musical incarnation of Canadian singer and viola player Emma Hooper, who is not just a musical genius – looping strings, bowed saw, beats and vocal ticks into a rich, buzzing carousel of sound over which her bright sing-song voice dances playfully as she sings about dinosaurs and insects – but a genuinely fascinating presence, explaining each song's backstory to reveal a mind possessed of both childlike enthusiasm and professorial knowledge, the songs themselves injecting humour, warmth, deep pathos and a sinister undercurrent into tales of stick insects, mayflies and brainwashed ants, the gloriously sad highlight of a genuinely stunning set a tale of an aquatic dinosaur whose neck was too long and fragile to ever fully leave the water, so the creature was condemned to spend its life eating rocks to stop itself floating to the surface. Not the sort of subject matter you expect from your average pop song, but one that sums up the unpredictable ethos of Irregular Folks on a day where genre boundaries are inventively broken down, expectations are gently shattered and a good handful of magic fairy dust is scattered over a quiet corner of Oxford. *Dale Kattack*

hello oxford! we are open



96 - 97 gloucester green
oxford, oxfordshire OX1 2DF

vinyl • cds • dvds • blu-ray • books

@FoppOxford



#gettofopp

fopp.com



OMMADON / LEGION OF ANDROMEDA / DRORE

The Wheatsheaf

Many moons ago *Nightshift* had a device we called a brutalometer that we used to take to Truck Festival back in the days when The Club That Cannot Be Named ran the Barn stage, to gauge the rising levels of musical intensity in there. We decide to dust it off for tonight’s gig and it’s in the red within seconds of Drore’s opening set as Taz Corona-Brown unleashes her inner Kat Bjelland and the band unleash a form of sonic hell that sounds like doom metal waking up on an aeroplane that’s plummeting to earth at a rate of knots and is kicking and screaming to get off. It crashes and burns in gloriously incendiary style. Shortly after we discover the brutalometer shivering beside the bar, demanding a triple vodka and ricin in anticipation of Tokyo’s Legion of Andromeda. And well it might. This is terrifying, an astonishingly immersive onslaught: oppressive strobe lighting and even more oppressive music – an iron foundry clang underpinning an incendiary guitar storm and

nightmarish Balrog vocals that take Carcass’ bludgeoning grind and Godflesh’s industrial *sturm und drang* and crank it up to bursting point. It’s an unrelenting dissonant battering of the senses and it’s the most gloriously bleak and brutal thing we have ever heard. In the far corner our brutalometer has wet itself with fear and had a litter of kittens. We adopt two of them and name them Geri and Freki after Odin’s hunting wolves. Because after this spectacle we’re all up for invading the land of the ice giants. How Ommadon follow that is anyone’s guess, but they rise to the task. Theirs is a crushing brutality of a different kind – a slowly rising tide of sludge and doom that pitches glacial synth drones against ominous beats, a simmering guitar dirge and death growl vocals to rise like Sunn0))) reimagined by a tribe of Uruk Hai, their set a single unstoppable track that matches the insistency of their recent album. As a dazed and delirious crowd head for the door, we find our brutalometer melted into a puddle of molten metal and burnt out wiring. It died so that we could experience this astonishing spectacle. Such sweet suffering. *Dale Kattack*

JULIET & THE RAGING ROMEOS

The Wheatsheaf

The night after 52% of the UK’s population voted to turn its back on Europe, Reading band Juliet & The Raging Romeos, whose members are variously drawn from Italy, Spain and Slovenia, are displaying a welcome lack of English reserve and playing like they don’t care what anyone else thinks. In particular ebullient singer Angela Benedetti, who spends half the set pirouetting and headbanging around the stage, pulling her hair into a stragglng mess and for all the world looking like a sugar-crazed six year old who’s hit the dancefloor at her first school disco. The other half of the set she spends shrieking like a punk rock banshee into the mic, a pocket battleship of a singer whose sometimes strident tones occasionally recall Hazel O’Connor or even Penetration’s Pauline Murray, belting out the lines “Why won’t you look at me?” even as it’s difficult to take your eyes off her.

No doubt that she’s the star of tonight’s show, as the band crank out a basic but fun approximation of some of the second wave of punk bands: teenagers and twenty-somethings liberated by the Pistols but without the uniform or genre awareness that punk too quickly developed. Their awkwardness is appealing, and if they can sometimes sound like they’re winging it on the tune front, there are enough big choruses dotted throughout the set to keep interest levels up. In particular recent *Nightshift* Demo of the Monther ‘Second Chance’ with its kittenish sense of fun, and an unexpected but hugely enjoyable cover of The Lovely Eggs’ ‘I Just Want Someone To Fall In Love With’. The band are always at their best when they’re at their quirkiest, and it’d be good to hear them twist more of their songs into odd shapes, as they do with bolshy set highlight ‘Good Girl’; if they can then we could have a real gem of a band on our hands. Only a fool would turn their back on such a prospect. *Dale Kattack*

THE BRIAN JONESTOWN MASSACRE

O2 Academy

Ondi Timoner’s fantastic 2004 film *Dig!* charts the contrasting fortunes of two American bands united by friendship and divided by rivalry: The Dandy Warhols, who over the eight years the movie was filmed rise to modest mainstream success, and The Brian Jonestown Massacre, who seem perpetually on the brink of similar success only to somehow contrive to screw everything up spectacularly. The latter’s figurehead, Anton Newcombe, is the film’s undoubted star – an irascible egomaniac/megalomaniac even by rock’n’roll’s notoriously high standards. Twelve years on, has he mellowed? Has he fuck. The show is barely ten minutes old and he’s already threatening to throw down the stairs an audience member who had the temerity to shout out a request. Also on his ever-lengthy shitlist tonight are baby boomers; the imminent EU referendum; Taylor Swift; Spotify, and his own guitarist and keyboard player (whom he verbally scolds like a demon headmaster admonishing an errant and cowed pupil). With his white shirt, beads and enormous tufty, greying sideburns, Newcombe now resembles John McCririck if he’d amassed a stockpile of horse tranquillisers and subsequently developed a Christ complex while on a gap year in India. Many of those present tonight are evidently convinced he’s the messiah rather than just a very naughty boy. *Nightshift* is somewhat less certain. If Newcombe is indeed a genius, then that genius lies either in the ability to hoodwink people into thinking he’s a genius or (more charitably) in the ability to effortlessly pastiche and condense fifty years of music history into a two-and-a-half-hour set. The Velvet Underground

are an obvious cornerstone, but there are also variously shades of The Rolling Stones (particularly on ‘Who?’); The Charlatans; The Kinks; The Doors; the thuggish stomp of Oasis circa ‘Definitely Maybe’; Spiritualized (hardly surprising for a band whose second album was called ‘Methadrone’) and The Stone Roses (the accurately titled ‘Pish’, taken from 2015’s ‘Mini Album Thingy Wingy’, a release apparently named by Russell Brand). The Brian Jonestown Massacre even have their very own Bez: Joel Gion, who is dressed like a hipster docker and introduced by Newcombe as “the man” but who fulfils his percussionist duties with yawning indifference rather than goggle-eyed relish. Newcombe doesn’t even try to hide the fact that he’s built a career on cribbing answers from other people’s exam papers at the School of Rock; one of his compositions boasts the brazen moniker ‘Here Comes The Waiting For The Sun’. And yet ultimately you can’t dispute either the improbable longevity of that career (26 years and counting, with albums number 15 and 16 on their way) or the band’s popularity, reflected in the fact that tonight’s show is sold out. *Dig!* may have implied that The Brian Jonestown Massacre lost the battle, but subsequent history suggests they’ve won the war. Indeed, this is perhaps even something to be celebrated: in an era of carefully stage-managed plasticky automatons delivering precision-guided product and platitudinous soundbites to a target demographic, Newcombe is arguably just the sort of entertainingly cantankerous, hubristic, uninhibited, unpredictable rock star we need. *Ben Woolhead*

SMART GUITARS

... RESTRING ...
... REVALUE ...
... REBORN ...

- Guitar, amp and pedal repairs, custom modifications, strings and accessories
- Collection and delivery service available

CONTACT DAVE SMART
smartguitars@ntlworld.com • 07710 216368

 **www.masterhythm.co.uk**
08765 224245 info@masterhythm.co.uk

*** JULY + AUGUST SPECIAL OFFER ***
5 for the price of 4 REHEARSALS
30m² naturally lit space - FREE BACKLINE INCLUDED!!

Also available - Practice Booths, 3 hrs for £25!! (Pro Rate)
Professional drum tuition and drum kit hire

COOZ RECORDS

www.coozes.com

THE HIGHEST SPEC STUDIO IN OXFORD:
PROTOOLS HDX, NEVE SUMMING, PMC'S

PROBLEMS WITH YOUR HOME MIX?
UPLOAD YOUR MIX ONLINE FOR A FREE
MIX REPORT PACKED WITH ADVICE!

PRO BAND PROMO & VIDEO SERVICES
EQUIPMENT HIRE

T: 01865 236117 Unit 36 Curtis Ind Est
E: help@coozes.com N. Hinksey Lane OX2 0LX

*"The Best Sounding
Live room in Oxford" - Not My Day*

CLEARWATER RECORDING

WWW.CLEARWATER-RECORDING.MOONFRUIT.COM

Mike Abbott
Manager

Office 01865 766112
Mobile 07818 342173

For live recording in Oxford.



Studio Focus Recording



www.studiofocusrecording.com - 01235 868089



EASY STAR ALLSTARS

The Bullingdon

It was 2006, three years after their cult classic debut ‘Dub Side of the Moon’, perennially popular with the post-rave comedown crowd, that New York reggae group Easy Star All Stars’ second album ‘Radiodread’ – their take on Radiohead’s ‘OK Computer’ – dropped. It makes sense, therefore, on its tenth anniversary, to bring it to the home of the ‘Head

who are, it appears, fans, with Jonny Greenwood describing their version as “truly astounding”. Thus billed, we are expecting the whole album, start to finish. This is a hunch strengthened when they start with ‘Airbag’, though sadly without roots legend Horace Andy on vocals, but if you’re going to do that you’d need to bring along Toots & the Maytals,

Morgan Heritage and Sugar Minott: the last a particular challenge as he is no longer alive. It says a lot for the Easies that they can drum up such talent; other albums include contributions from U-Roy, Michael Rose, Max Romeo and Steel Pulse. To a particularly receptive crowd, warmed up by Skylarkin’ and Natty, a live roots band that win

new fans here tonight, ESAS also play numbers from ‘Sgt Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Dub Band’ and (Michael Jackson’s) ‘Thrillah’ plus ‘Dub Side...’. They also play ‘High and Dry’ from ‘The Bends’, an anniversary single release that includes a version of ‘Karma Police’, with which they end tonight. The Bullingdon’s stage is as full as it’s been since... probably the last Rabbit Foot Spasm Band gig, with two dedicated vocalists, a two-piece horn section, as well as keys, bass, guitar (whose operator is not afraid to let rip a few spangly solos, and a surprisingly moving version of Marley’s ‘Redemption Song’ on his own, both activities generally frowned upon in this scene: the latter to the reggae stringsmith what ‘Stairway to Heaven’ is to the rock one and usually best avoided) and massive drum kit. Tonight they showcase a brand new original tune named ‘True to Jah Love’; for the unaware, they do have an album (‘First Light’) and EP (‘Until that Day’) of non-covers under their belts. The Easies were never going to have to work too hard to make this one a success, and probably could have sold out the O2, where we saw them last here a few years ago, with their musicianship, well honed skills, élan and sheer groove factor, not to mention solid source material.

Leo Bowder

MAIIANS

The Cellar

Tonight isn’t the final Maiians gig as such, but it will undoubtedly be a long while until we see them together onstage again. The quintet are soon to be spread across three continents, but at least they’ve left us with a lasting souvenir of their two-year existence in the form of their fantastic eponymous album, although it will be shows like tonight that live longest in fans’ memories.

Unsurprisingly tonight’s gig is rammed to the rafters, which gives it the feel of a club night hothouse – the heatwave outside only exacerbating the humidity – something that suits Maiians perfectly. They’re a live band built for a rave; beyond the finest funk outfits it’s genuinely rare to see a band who operate as an organic unit like this, on the one hand so liquid and effortless, on the other well drilled and determined; odd to think they began life as something of a side project when every human part here syncs so well.

They start out if not hesitantly, in no hurry to get going, an elongated intro creating a sense of denied gratification, before they kick in with a loping funk groove, a driving insistency building up to euphoric peaks, somewhere

between Krautrock cool and Ibiza chill, like Kraftwerk’s ‘Tour de France’ set on a tropical island. If the packed throng and the venue’s low ceiling means some of their subtleties get a little lost in the mix, few seem to care too much as bodies begin to move and the rhythms gel into something more solid, more urgent.

At their absolute best – which is pretty much most of the time – Maiians are like the soundtrack to a futuristic space documentary where a star ship of the imagination heads off into galaxies unknown – so pretty much Carl Sagan’s *Cosmos* for the post-rave generation. Sure there are passages where the band settle too comfortably into pensive, jammed-out electro-funk, like a stoned Holy Fuck, but just lie back into the groove and you’re never far away from another tripped-out journey along some Balearic highway.

‘Lemon’ is the absolute highlight of tonight’s gig, but the set is, typically, a single free-flowing journey, and if it’s a journey that’s finally ended, let there be a monument set at its finish: veni, vidi vici: they came, they saw, they took us into space, man.

Dale Kattack



OXFORD'S INDEPENDENT MUSIC HUB

ALL THE LATEST RELEASES ON CD, VINYL & DVD
NEW & PRE-OWNED STOCK, LIVE MUSIC IN-STORE, TICKETS

PLUS MOSTRO COFFEE

WE'RE MORE THAN JUST A RECORD SHOP!

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK 101 COWLEY ROAD OX4 1HU

01865 793 866 info@truckmusicstore.co.uk
TRUCKMUSICSTORE.CO.UK

NEW OFFERS IN-STORE


EVERY COMPLETED MOSTRO LOYALTY CARD EARNS YOU A FREE COFFEE AND A £1 TRUCK STORE VOUCHER!

PLUS SELECTED NEW RELEASES GIVE YOU A FREE STAMP ON YOUR MOSTRO CARD; A LITTLE REWARD FOR SUPPORTING NEW MUSIC!



The Cellar

Music history begins underground.




cellaroxford.co.uk
twitter.com/CellarOxford
facebook.com/TheCellar.Oxford

It is an offence to store, display this notice on the ground/structure it is erected on if it is not of 2009.

The Cellar

est 1999

Home of Oxford's Cutting Edge Music Scene



Frewin Court, Off Cornmarket St, Oxford

THE CELLAR.

OXFORD'S FINEST INDEPENDENT MUSIC VENUE



LIVE MUSIC AND DANCE CLUB

INDIE, ROCK, HOUSE, GARAGE, TECHNO, DISCO, D&B, DUBSTEP
HIP-HOP, REGGAE, SKA & MORE....

THE CELLAR
FREWIN COURT
OXFORD
OX1 3HZ
WWW.CELLAROXFORD.CO.UK

MUSIC HISTORY BEGINS UNDERGROUND!

BLACKWELL'S MUSIC



OXFORD'S
ONLY
CENTRALLY
LOCATED
MUSIC SHOP



Oxfords oldest music shop is the place to visit for

- Rock, Pop & Chart CDs from £5
- DVDs, giftware & t-shirts
- A selection of vinyl and record players
- A range of instruments & accessories
- 3 for 2 on selected sets of guitar strings
- Printed music and books
- An ongoing programme of musical events

☎ 01865 333581

✉ music.ox@Blackwells.co.uk

🏠 Blackwells.co.uk/oxford

🐦 @blackwellsmusic

📘 fb.com/blackwellsmusic

53 Broad Street, Oxford, OX1 3BQ



THE WHEATSHEAF

Saturday 6th – OXROX

THE BLACK BULLETS

REVELLER + SHOCK! HAZARD + SILENT JACK 7:45pm

Friday 12th August - IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MUSIC

FORCE OF MORTALITY

MAN MAKE FIRE + WAYS ACROSS 7:45pm

Saturday 13th August – OXROX

JABRONI SANDWICH

VILE & VILE + BREAKING WAVES 8pm

Thursday 18th August – BIG BLUES NIGHT OUT

PETE BOSS & THE BLUE HEARTS

MAD LARRY + TOM IVEY 7:45pm

Friday 19th August – TWO FACE PROMOTIONS

VANITY DRAWS BLOOD

PERCEPTION + CONTEK 7:45pm

Saturday 20th August – IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MUSIC

STRIKE ONE

WEDNESDAY 24th August – OXFORDSHIRE MUSIC ROOMS

FREEMANTLE

THURSDAY 25th August – IDIOT KING

CASSELS

8pm

Saturday 27th August – GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES

THE QUENTINS

8pm

The Wheatsheaf 129 High Street, Oxford OX1 4DF / www.facebook.com/wheatsheaf.oxford

Dr SHOTOVER: Noo Yawk Noo Wave

Whaddaya see, whaddaya know? OK, park butt and geddem in, buddy. Yup, mine's a large Jack, and gimme a Schlitz chaser. [Manly glugging and belching]. Who? SHADOVER? Nope, he ain't here today. Hadda go downtown to pick up, uh, a shipment, know what I mean? He may be a while, but I'm takin' care of business in the East Indies Club for him for a couple days, got me? Yeah, yeah, whadever... but, fact is, there's gonna be some CHANGES round here. All them fag drinks are out for starters. Noilly Prat? What is THAT? Triple Sec, Crème de Menthe, Cour-WAZ-I-AY?? Wa-lah - too French!

There won't be no more frilly-panty-waist PRAG RACK on the jukebox, neither. We're gonna get some good NYC sounds on there – Dictators, Contortions, Heartbreakers, Ramones, Voidoids. In fact, we are changing the sign that says [puts on mimsy falsetto voice] 'East Indie-Windies Club' into [growly baritone] 'DOWN AT THE ROCK AND ROLL CLUB'. Yeah, like the song of the same name by Mr Richard Hell. We don't tolerate no gender bender glam shit. Waddaya MEAN, the Noo Yawk Dolls dress up like dames?? I know David Johansen PERSON-ALLY, and there ain't nuthin trala about HIM, no way! [Adjusts leatherette bomber jacket, swigs bourbon and belches the intro to Heart of Glass]. Jeez, disco sucks, don't it? Tell you another thing [leans closer] – you never see no Bee Gees at CBGB's! Know whad I mean? Next month: NO WE DON'T



Girl in flares: 'Gee, Handsome Dick, what does CBGB OMFUG stand for?' Handsome Dick: 'Uhh, nobody actually knows, doll-face'

INTRODUCING....

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

Slate Hearts

Who are they?

Grunge three-piece Slate Hearts are Ellis Currell (*vocals/bass*); Ed Gallyot (*guitar/backing vocals*), and Will Grant (*drums*). Originally hailing from Aynho, the band formed because “Will knew Ellis, and Ellis had some songs but couldn't play guitar very well, while Ed, who can play guitar like Bez from Happy Mondays, was in a band with Will.” The trio jammed out 'Message in a Bottle' by The Police (“it was a beautiful mess”) and went on to play their first gig at a pub jam session. “The chemistry was immensely sexual, so we decided to seek out a gig in Oxford and try our luck on the scene.”). After an early gig at The Wheatsheaf the band's debut recordings were awarded Demo of the Month in *Nightshift* and they played at this year's Oxford Punt. Last month the band released their debut EP, 'Blood Fluff'.

What do they sound like?

Grunge. But grunge as God / the Devil / Kurt Cobain / Mark Arm intended. Harking back to the first flowing of that vibrant, virulent scene where punk attitude was welded to Sabbath riffs and kicked out with more attention to energy and angst levels than polished production values. Various sullen and hysterical, the band keep it brutal while always sticking close to a song's melodic core. In their own words they are “Noisy, thrashy and whiney.”

What inspires them?

“Emotion; energy; pain; love; Jeremy Corbyn; the sort of thing that makes teenagers cry over The Smiths.”

Career highlight so far:

“Being picked to play the Punt with so many other great Oxford bands and getting the opportunity to support God Damn the next week at The Cellar.”

And the lowlight:

“Back in the Chad Channing years of Slate Hearts we were led to believe we were playing a 40-minute set at a buzzing town festival. We turned up at an after-school woodwind concert, which had an electric drum kit, no amps



and a five-minute slot. We swiftly fled in the cars and a nice cold pint at the Winchester waiting for it to blow over.”

Their favourite other Oxfordshire act is:

“Lucy Leave, obviously!”

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

“‘An Awesome Wave’ by Alt.J – the first genuinely unique album to make it to the mainstream in our recent memory.”

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

“Supporting Cassels at their EP launch at The Wheatsheaf on the 25th August. Expect noise, hooks, sweat and broken strings.”

Their favourite and least favourite things about Oxford music are:

“There's loads of gigs and plenty of bands that we enjoy playing with. We've made plenty of good friends in under a year that we wouldn't have met if it wasn't for the scene right now.”

And the lowlight:

“There's a lack of Eagle IPA on tap at most venues.”

You might love them if you love:

Nirvana; Placebo; Queens of the Stone-Age; The Wytches; Pixies; Mudhoney.

Hear them here:

soundcloud.com/slate-hearts-uk

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

20 YEARS AGO

Musical geniuses – they're a funny old bunch aren't they? August 1996 brought two of them to town with decidedly mixed results. On the one hand we had the unearthly trip hop maverick star **Tricky** playing **The Zodiac** in pitch darkness. Well, okay, he had a single purple light on stage but only the first two rows of a sold-out crowd had any chance of seeing what was going on on stage. Still, on a night when half of Cowley Road was blacked out by a power cut, the lack of onstage light reflected Tricky's decidedly downbeat set that eventually ends with a bizarre, rambling twenty-minute encore featuring an invisible guest rapper. One of the odder shows we've witnessed in town over the years. Still, at least Tricky actually made it to the stage, unlike this month's other genius visitor – **Gil Scot Heron**, whose tragic descent into heroin addiction meant he vanished from the venue before show time, never to return, even as the gig promoter scoured the surrounding area in a borrowed ice cream van.

Elsewhere this month we saw the likes of **The Frank & Walters**, **Thrum** and **King Prawn** at **The Point**, with legendary dubmeister **Mad Professor** at The Zodiac, where he was supported by enduring local reggae heroes **Dubwiser**. Other local names to try and remember included **Manyeung**; **The Nicotines**; **Charley Street**; **The High Waist** and **Flatpig**.

10 YEARS AGO

Talking of weirdo maverick geniuses, the big release as far as Oxford was concerned in August 2006 was **The Young Knives**' debut 'Voices of Animals & Men', on **Transgressive Records**. Back then the trio were one of the hottest properties in pop, heading their own musical and fashion revolution. *Nightshift's* review of the album pulled no punches in its praise for the record: “Genius; there, we've said it,” it began, before concluding “So there we go, Oxford's brightest stars belong to the world now. No chance of them not spreading their wings and flying; there's not a cage could contain them.” At the same time **Winnebago Deal** were unleashing (yes, we said unleashing) their album 'Flight of the Raven', the punk/garage/metal duo doing what they always did best – playing fast and loose with a straight bat and a bunch of songs about whisky and fighting. God, how we miss them. Another significant local release this month was 'Flowers By the Roadside' by **The Family Machine**, their ode to road fatality memorials that has endured as one of Oxford's genuine cult anthems. Gig-wise, we welcomed the astonishing vocal talents of Argentinean singer **Juana Molina** to town at **The Phoenix Picturehouse**, while Oregon's folk-rock pioneer **M Ward** was at The Zodiac. Nashville's **Hayseed Dixie** were

THIS MONTH IN OXFORD MUSIC HISTORY

making their first visit to Oxford at The Zodiac, and it's fitting that the band are back in Oxford again this month at the O2, exactly a decade on.

5 YEARS AGO

While it's always good to celebrate the visit of musical greats to Oxford, sometimes we have to look back and swallow down a bit of sick as we remember those who've sullied our venue's stages. In August 2011 it was **Lostprophets**, whose show at the **O2** came just months before singer Ian Watkins was arrested and later jailed for multiple sex offences against kids. The band were already on a downward spiral at this point in their career and we hope he's rotting away nicely in prison somewhere. Rather nicer folks making the journey to town this month included regular visitor **Jeffrey Lewis**, who was playing at **The Cellar**; **Ron Sexsmith** was at the O2, while the late, great **Ian McLagan** from The Small Faces and Faces was at **The Bullingdon**, having previously headlined **Truck Festival**. On the festival front the still fledgling **Supernormal** was starting to make a name for itself on the margins of the scene, with **Cindytalk**, **The Cravats**, **Skullflower**, **Gnod** and **Black ABBA** gracing the small but perfectly formed stages at Braziers Park. It's now our favourite small festival and you should go this year. Yes you should.

Appletree Studios
Celebrating 30 Years
 Oxfordshires longest running recording studios
www.appletreestudios.com
01844 237916
 Come and see why so many Oxfordshire artists use Appletree

WAREHOUSE STUDIOS
 Recording and rehearsal studios
 3 Rehearsal rooms
25 years of quality recording

Tel: 07876487923
 Email: info@warehousestudios.com
www.warehousestudios.com

EVOLUTION
 RECORDING STUDIOS

We're a new 1000 sq. ft. recording, tracking and mixing facility in Oxford featuring, at our heart, a beautifully refurbished and awesome-sounding Trident Series 80B console.

Experienced Engineers, Session musicians and Producers in-house.

Call us for rates or to arrange a visit. Special rates for local unsigned bands.

Services Include

Recording and Mixing • Voice-overs • Producing and Programming • Film, TV and Advertising Music • Audio Post-production • Songwriting and Session Musicians

01865 203073
info@evolutionstudios.co.uk
www.evolutionstudios.co.uk

Glasshouse Studios

Three state of the art rehearsal rooms. For bookings. Call Jamie on 07917685935

Glasshouse studios, Cumnor, Oxford
glasshousestudios.org

DEMOS

Sponsored by



DEMO OF THE MONTH

NO DICE GRANDMA

Last minute stand-ins at The Punt when Being Eugene had to pull out, if Witney's No Dice Grandma suffered any nerves it never showed as they obliterated the room with a barrage of angular math-core that was equal parts At The Drive-In, That Fucking Tank and some obscure calculus engraved on a sheet metal shiv. Like fellow mathematically-minded noisemakers Masiro, NDG manage that fine balance of being all clever and intricate in a way that makes non-muso types feel inferior, and nasty bastard exciting in a way that makes actual muso types feel lacking in the trouser region. Four tracks here, titled 'Gum', 'Teat', 'Brick' and 'Bee', reflect their no-nonsense approach to internal wall demolition by sound alone – music trapped in an enclosed space and intent on getting out no matter what. Chug, chug, chug, grind, clang, about turn, zzzzzzpsh, verdang! That's how it goes, but obviously with other bits that go griiiiing or kkkkkrrrrrrssssskkkkk! Or just sound like a helicopter plummeting into a smoked glass skyscraper. If you want fancy lyrics to review we suggest the Times Poetry Review or something. This is more about that place where riffs go to mate and spawn new baby riffs. Probably ones with tiny razor-sharp claws and teeth. Turn it up another notch will you. Bit more. Aaaand some more. That's better.

BAWS INC.

When, eventually, someone publishes a book of the best Oxford music lyrics, two names should feature prominently: Richard Ramage from The Relationships (and previously The Anyways and Here Comes Everybody), and Mac, imposing but genial anchorman of The Jericho Tavern and The Point through the 1990s, as well as the imposing but genial face of at least half a dozen bands since that time. While Mr Ramage captures a very English sense of wistful regret and romantic sadness, Mac is all caustic whimsy and observational surrealism. With Baws Inc – a band featuring assorted members and ex-members of Les Clochards, Medal, The Candyskins and more – he continues his journey into punk-informed guitar pop that's equally goodtime and sourtimes, 'Dr Ink' here a litany of life crimes/achievements of the eponymous subject that sounds like Carter USM's 'Sheriff Fatman' remade and remodelled by a garage rock band formed by Mark E Smith, Noel Gallagher and even

Demo of the Month wins a free half day at Soundworks studio in Oxford, courtesy of Umair Chaudhry. Visit www.umairchaudhry.co.uk/nightshift

a cameo from John Lydon. If we missed the entire point it's probably cos he's well smarter than we'll ever be.

OLD ERNIE

Old Ernie – the solo bedroom musical project of David Kahl – has seemingly made it his mission in life to test *Nightshift* with a succession of very, very long one-track demos that refuse to conform to accepted notions of melody, choruses or any of that fancy frippery. His last offering was a glowering fourteen-minute dirge that was all set for Demo of the Month until the silly sod decided to start singing at the end and ruined everything. Mainly because he couldn't sing. So, where to next? How about a seventeen-minute dirge? With no tune or choruses or any of that. Go on son, fill yer boots. Boring old musical traditionalists and fans of uplifting house music should probably leave the room at this point as David/Ernie rumbles, grinds, groans, whispers, screams, spangles and generally fannies about in a fractured, lo-fi, doomy kind of fashion for the next quarter of an hour and the rest, making the aural equivalent of a sponge cake that just collapsed on one side the moment it came out of the oven and has been decorated by oozing black icing. Mary Berry would despair, but then you're unlikely to find Mary Berry down the front at a Godflesh or Nurse With Wound gig, so what does she know? It's messy, the portions are too big and chunks of it have fallen off but the bits that aren't burnt are surprisingly tasty.

TREVOR WILLIAMS

Trevor Williams has been pretty quiet in recent times, having previously been one of the most prolific contributors to the demo pile – and Demo of the Month on two occasions. So after a prolonged hiatus he returns but only with a one song demo, and he hasn't discovered a previously unmined hardcore drum&bass element to his music in the interim. Oddly enough, while this song was written and recorded several months ago, it's lyrics feel rather prescient in the current political climate, with the lines "You are not a leader / You are not the boss / Don't give me directions, when I'm lost" applicable to both the EU referendum and the Labour party leadership battle. Trev's always been more a singer of the heart though, so it's probably more personal and this song, 'Along the Way', treads his trademark path of emotionally engaged semi-acoustic thrum, reminding us a little bit of Turin Brakes at times. The rhyming can be a bit forced and we'd like to hear more of the female backing singer who adds extra

pop sweetness to the end of the song, but Trev will always be a welcome presence in this small corner of the world.

REUBEN'S ROCKET

And hey, here's another sensitive young man who's a regular feature in the demo pages. Reuben's Rocket – the musical incarnation of Ollie Base – is on his fifth demo now, putting his lack of music career progress down to "my decision to bugger off and do a degree". Progress there has been though, since Ollie's songs, and his singing, have gradually strengthened with each new recording. While he retains the same air of romantic, wistful soulfulness he's had since his first songs – recorded when he was barely into his teens – now he sounds considerably less like the self-pitying sap left sat on the stairs at the party, more like the dashing young troubadour who's holding court by the campfire in the back garden – making the girls go giddy in their tummies, probably wearing a hat at a jaunty angle and sporting a week's worth of stubble. Nick Drake is possibly still an influence but Ollie sounds less starry-eyed now, closer to Jose Gonzalez, particularly on the pillow-soft 'Slow As You Sleep'. Ollie might ponder his lack of progress up the music industry greasy pole, but he shouldn't worry too much – at this rate he'll be a global superstar within twenty years.

WANDERING WIRES

Wandering Wires. Good name, sounds like a weird Philip K Dick short story. "We are a new jazz/electronic fusion duo," they inform us, which again sounds quite promising. But, hmm, what's this? Some lightweight jazzy piano plonking and a loungy shuffle on the drums... not sure this is the mad, experimental fusion we were ho... hang on, is someone playing 'Popcorn' by Hot Butter in the background? Must be one of those pesky pop-up ads you get on clickbait websites. *Nightshift* quickly closes down Bored Panda and Mycatisadeathmetalguitargod.com. No, it's still there. That'll be the electronic fusion bit, then. And it's gradually taking over, and here comes the obligatory sax solo. At least it's a distraction from the piano plonking, which in the grand scheme of experimental jazz fusion tends to make Jamie Cullum sound like Ornette Coleman and Alice Coltrane ripped to the tits on high-grade skunk trying to teach Sun Ra a lesson in being a proper nutcase. Things gradually get better, though, to the point we find ourselves almost sucked into Wandering Wires' wandering world, cheeky electro elves beaver away in the undergrowth beneath otherwise standard jazz parts, at one point reminding us a bit of Penguin Café Orchestra as they wobble and glide around the foothills of the high peaks they have their eyes on. There's a promise of more fun things to be had here, but right now it's all a bit too easy does it.

Send demos for review to: Nightshift, PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU, or email links to editor@nightshiftmag.co.uk, clearly marked Demos. IMPORTANT: no review without a contact address and phone number; no more than four tracks on a demo please. If you can't handle criticism, please don't send us your demo. And don't fucking whine about your review on Twitter either, else we'll print a screenshot and make you look like a prize tit.

CODY NOON

At least Wandering Wires' music does actually wander somewhere, unlike this seemingly never-ending somnambulant noodlefest that, if we're being really generous, sounds like Explosions In The Sky bollocks to the point of comatose on Ketamine, tuning up for all eternity. Come on people, post-rock was never meant to be this dull – it was meant to be a trip into the unknown as far as music was concerned. Did Bark Psychosis or Flying Saucer Attack sit around pondering what it'd be like to soundtrack a bowl of tinned soup slowly cooling over the course of a particularly drizzly weekend, or did they imagine new universes of guitar noise and strange song arrangements? We'll leave that for you to contemplate as we endure six and half minutes of slightly distorted guitar dirge and some tinny funeral beats. And golly goody gosh, when that's finally over, there's another one exactly the same, and two more identical to that to follow for pudding. In all, half an hour of grey, wet musical fog. It might be atmospheric, but then so are exhaust fumes, and right now the idea of slipping into oblivion as we're overtaken by carbon monoxide seems like a pretty reasonable option. Maybe the whole thing is that finest of experimental music clichés – the soundtrack to an imagined film. In this case more than likely a low-budget indie flick consisting entirely of a depressed teenager sat staring at a litter-strewn canal in some benighted post-industrial wasteland. At night. Forever.

THE DEMO DUMPER

MISS

Ah yes, good, some funky blues. The absolute best sort of music. The delicious, nutritious sonic equivalent of marzipan bathed in a sachet of Domino's barbeque sauce and served with a sprig of deadly nightshade and a can of warm of Tuborg. Slurp, slurp, plug, plug; please sir, can we have some more? Dig those recycled Led Zep riffs. Thrill to the piercingly shrill vocal performance – and it is a performance – of a singer who might well be Rob Halford's annoying sister. And simply marvel at the funky vibes. Marvel at them. Do it. Or maybe just do yourself in, to escape the grinding inevitability of it all. This, we imagine, is the music that Theresa May has in mind to play at us every waking hour after she's herded us all into giant concrete observation pens where signs of deviance will be rooted out and punished in ways that will make being trapped in a snowbound cabin for six month with Andrea Leadsom feel like one of Motley Crue's aftershow parties. Anyone who mentions 1984 is deluded; MISS are clear evidence that it's still actually 1974.

Interzone House
 74-77 Magdalen Rd
 Oxford OX4 1RE

REHEARSAL ROOMS
 Available 7 days a week • From £26 for 3 hours
 Centre of town location with car parking
 Backline hire available on request

for bookings and enquiries please call
01865 240250

24 hour text & phone 07851 400618

Shonk
Recording Studio

Full Backline Available
 Great Sounding Live Room
 with Natural Light
 Special Rates For Local Bands
www.theshonk.com
shonkstudio@gmail.com - 01865 203 922

TURAN AUDIO.co.uk

Professional, independent CD mastering

Artists mastered in the studio last month include;
RHYTHM STUDIO, MARCUS CORBETT, THE KINGS OF OUTER SPACE, MARK SPRINGER, LOWLY HOUNDS, BECKY HOLLOWAY, GRAHAM PARKER, COCHORRO GRANDE, NIRVANA, THE BYRDS, AC/DC, GUNS N ROSES, FOREVER NEVER, URBAN DOGS, YOUNG ROMANCE.

01865 716466 tim@turanaudio.co.uk

COURTYARD RECORDING STUDIO

2 Tracking Rooms. Superb Control Room with: NEVE 5106 32 Channel Console. ProTools HD3 MTR 90 2" 24 Track Tape Machine. Vintage EMT Plate Reverb Loads of Brilliant Outboard Gear Loads of Great Mics, Vintage and Modern Old School Akai/Roland Synth Modules Upright Piano, Fender Rhodes, Amps and great vibes. Residential recording studio in Sutton Courtenay.

www.courtyardrecordingstudio.co.uk
 In-house producer: Ian Davenport www.ian-davenport.co.uk
Email: kate@cyard.com
Phone: Kate on 01235 845800

TAD STUDIOS

www.tadstudios.co.uk
www.facebook.com/tadstudios

Two fully equipped rehearsal rooms located just off the A34 near Bicester:

- Mapex kits
- Fender/Marshall/Ashdown amplification
- 1kw PA system and microphones
- Backline included with room
- Fully maintained equipment
- Tea and coffee making facilities
- Doorstep parking
- Convenient hourly booking
- Open 7 days a week, 8am – Midnight
- Introduce a band / block booking / student deals
- Book by phone / e-mail / Facebook for your convenience

Four hours from £30!
 Call **07882569425**, e-mail info@tadstudios.co.uk or find us on Facebook to make an enquiry / booking

Fri 22nd Jul • £8 adv
The Callow Saints
+ The Deadbeat Apostles

Sat 30th Jul • £7 adv
Skeletor Ft.
Bloodshot + Infuriated
+ Contek + A Nightmare Upon
Us + Alas Black Arches

Fri 5th Aug • £8 adv
Club Soda + Kanadia
+ Dear Hero + Amoral Compass
+ Silver Ravens + Luke Allmond

Wed 10th Aug • £12 adv
Bob Wayne
+ Harry Pane

Thu 11th Aug • £12 adv
Big D and the Kids Table

Fri 12th Aug • £8 adv
Church Of The Heavy
+ Hell's Gazelle's + 1000 Chains
+ Twisted State Of Mind
+ Hope Burden
+ Repercussions Of Yesterday

Fri 12th Aug • £35 adv • 10pm
Beres Hammond

Sat 13th Aug • £8 adv
Better Than Never
+ Fault Line
+ Elasea + Cherokee

Tue 16th Aug • £15 adv • 7.30pm
Hayseed Dixie

Fri 19th Aug • £8 adv
Death Of The Maiden
+ Ocean Ruins + Brown Glove

Sat 20th Aug • £10 adv
The Besnard Lakes

Sat 20th Aug • £10 adv • 11pm
Klass Vybz: Oxford meets London
+ King Tubbys + Allan Brando +
2xclusive + White Magic Sound

Wed 24th Aug • £12 adv
Lower Than Atlantis
+ Milk Teeth

Wed 31st Aug • £10 adv
Sticky Fingers
+ Tom Forbes

Wed 31st Aug • £26.50 adv
Echo & The Bunnymen

Fri 2nd Sep • £8 adv • 6.30pm
Elvana - The World's Finest Elvis Fronted Tribute to Nirvana
+ Get Loose + Ravens

Sun 4th Sep • £12 adv
Broken Brass Ensemble
+ Count Skylarkin

Thu 15th Sep • £8 adv
Moon Hooch

Fri 16th Sep • £8 adv • 6.30pm
Homeplanetearth
+ Roberto Y Juan + Little Red

Sat 17th Sep • £8 adv
The Hummingbirds

Sun 18th Sep • £10 adv
Sundara Karma

Thu 22nd Sep • £29.50 adv
Gary Numan

Fri 23rd Sep • £14 adv • 6.30pm
G2 Definitive Genesis

Fri 23rd Sep • £13 adv • 6.30pm
Rat Boy

Wed 28th Sep • £12 adv • 6.30pm
The Warlocks
+ Dead Rabbits

Thu 29th Sep • £16 adv
Wild Beasts

Thu 29th Sep • £8 adv
The Magic Gang

Fri 30th Sep • £8 adv
I Cried Wolf
+ The Colour Line

Sat 1st Oct • £18.50 adv
Beth Orton

Tue 4th Oct • £20 adv
The Kills

Tue 4th Oct • £10 adv
Ne Obliviscaris
+ Oceans of Slumber

Wed 5th Oct • £16 adv
The Hypnotic Brass Ensemble

Thu 6th Oct • £18 adv
LUNA

Fri 7th Oct • £12.50 adv • 6.30pm
UK Foo Fighters Tribute

Tue 7th Oct • £30 adv • 6.30pm
UB40

Sat 8th Oct • £22.50 adv • 6.30pm
From The Jam

Sun 9th Oct • £20 adv • 7.30pm
Union J

Mon 10th Oct • £20 adv
We Are Scientists

Tue 11th Oct • £12 adv
AURORA

Thu 13th Oct • £20 adv
Bars and Melody

Thu 13th Oct • £17.50 adv
Dead Kennedys

Fri 14th Oct • £8 adv • 6.30pm
Little Brother Eli
+ Roberto Y Juan + Lucy Leave

Sat 15th Oct • £12 adv • 6.30pm
The Smyths - The Queen is Dead 30th Anniversary Tour

Sun 16th Oct • £20 adv
Lisa Hannigan
+ Heather Wood

Tue 18th Oct • £12.50 adv • 7.30pm
Lonely The Brave
+ Tall Ships

Wed 19th Oct • £15 adv • 6.30pm
Michael Kiwanuka

Thu 20th Oct • £11 adv
JP Cooper

Fri 21st Oct • £15 adv • 6.30pm
Glass Animals

Fri 21st Oct • £11 adv • 6.30pm
Guns 2 Roses

Sat 22nd Oct • £12 adv • 6.30pm
The Doors Alive

Sat 22nd Oct • £22.50 adv • 6.30pm
Buzzcocks

Sun 23rd Oct • £10 adv
Spring King

Mon 24th Oct • £13 adv
Sunset Sons

Tue 25th Oct • £13.50 adv
Hawklords

Wed 26th Oct • £18 adv • 6.30pm
Steve Mason

Thu 27th Oct • £13.50 adv
Teleman

Fri 28th Oct • £20 adv • 6pm
The Christians
30th Anniversary Tour

Fri 28th Oct • £10 adv • 6.30pm
Gentleman's Dub Club

Sat 29th Oct • £22.50 adv • 6.30pm
Afro Celt Sound System

Sat 29th Oct • £6 adv • 10pm
Garage Nation Halloween Party

Tue 1st Nov • £14 adv
Niccolò Fabi

Tue 1st Nov • £16 adv
Local Natives

Thu 3rd Nov • £12 adv
Dance Gavin Dance
+ Good Tiger + Jonny Craig
+ Kurt Travis

Fri 4th Nov • £8 adv • 6.30pm
The Vryll Society / Hidden Charms

Sun 6th Nov • £17.50 adv • 7.30pm
Alien Ant Farm
+ (HED) p.e + Sumo Cyco
+ Kaleido

Thu 10th Nov • £18 adv • 7.30pm
Jon Boden

Fri 11th Nov • £16 adv • 6.30pm
Roachford

Mon 14th Nov • £15 adv • 7.30pm
The Low Anthem

Wed 16th Nov • £16 adv • 6.30pm
Pete Dinklage & The Mighty WAH!
+ Fifteen Lions

ticketweb

GET TICKETS AT TICKETWEB.CO.UK

o2academyoxford.co.uk

190 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4 1UE • Doors 7pm unless stated
Venue box office opening hours: Mon-Sat 12pm-4pm
ticketweb.co.uk • wegotickets.com • seetickets.com • gigantic.com