



# NIGHTSHIFT

**Oxford's Music Magazine**

**Free every  
month  
Issue 246  
January  
2016**

# WHO TO SEE

*Oxford promoters  
pick the acts they think  
you should hear in 2016*

Also in this issue:

**PRIMAL SCREAM, PUBLIC  
ENEMY & SUGARHILL GANG  
for COMMON PEOPLE**

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# THE BULLINGDON

## JANUARY 2016

Thursday 31st December  
**Barberama Presents:  
New Year's Eve Extravagant**  
Doors: 8pm

Tuesday 5th January  
**Jazz at the Bullingdon:  
Alvin Roy's Reeds Unlimited**  
Doors: 8.30pm

Tuesday 12th January  
**Jazz at the Bullingdon:  
Guitar Summit**  
Doors: 8.30pm

Saturday 16th January  
**Freerange Roots Presents:  
Field Frequency Soundsystem**  
Doors: 11pm

Tuesday 19th January  
**Jazz at the Bullingdon:  
Hugh Turner Band**  
Doors: 8.30pm

Friday 22nd January  
**The Indelicates  
The Mechanisms  
We are a Communist**  
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 23rd January  
**Bossaphonik:  
Lokkhi Terra**  
Doors: 11.30pm

Sunday 24th January  
**Disco Loco**  
Doors: 5pm

Monday 25th January  
**Jeremy Loops**  
Doors: 7pm

Tuesday 26th January  
**Jazz at the Bullingdon:  
Alan Barnes with  
The Oxford Jazz Quartet**  
Doors: 8.30pm

Wednesday 27th January  
**The Defiled**  
Doors: 7pm

Thursday 28th January  
**RavenEye**  
Doors: 8pm

Friday 29th January  
**Pulse:  
Guv, Sub Zero  
Upgrade, Unknown MC**  
Doors: 11pm

Saturday 30th January  
**Eliza & The Bear**  
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 30th January  
**Simple:  
Dense & Pikka**  
Doors: 11pm

Monday 31st January  
**The Dreaming Spires  
Lewis & Leigh  
Deadbeat Apostles**  
Doors: 7pm

Monday 1st February  
**Billy Walton Band**  
Doors: 8pm

Tuesday 2nd February  
**Jazz at the Bullingdon:  
Martin Pickett Organisation**  
Doors: 8.30pm

Friday 5th February  
**Aoife O'Donovan Trio**  
Doors: 7pm

Friday 5th February  
**Organised Fun:  
Max Graef  
Damiano Von Erckert**  
Doors: 11pm

Saturday 6th February  
**Soul Devotion  
The Shapes  
DJ Vinto**  
Doors: 8pm

Monday 8th February  
**The Sherlocks**  
Doors: 7pm

Tuesday 9th February  
**Jazz at the Bullingdon:  
Stuart Henderson Band**  
Doors: 8.30pm

Thursday 11th February  
**PINS**  
Doors: 7pm

Friday 12th February  
**SEIO:  
DJ Luck & MC Neat**  
Doors: 11pm

Saturday 13th February  
**Free Range Roots:  
Abi-Shanti  
Roots Guidance**  
Doors: 11pm

Tuesday 16th February  
**Jazz at the Bullingdon:  
Rod Kelly Quartet**  
Doors: 8.30pm

Thursday 18th February  
**Ryley Walker with  
Danny Thompson**  
Doors: 7pm

Friday 19th February  
**20th Anniversary of  
BACKROOM BOOGIE:  
60s, 70s, Funk Soul Disco Night**  
Doors: 9pm

Saturday 20th February  
**Blossoms  
The Vryll Society  
Viola Beach**  
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 20th February  
**Simple:  
Altern 8**  
Doors: 10pm

Monday 22nd February  
**Sam Kelly Band  
feat. Gregor Hilden**  
Doors: 8pm

Tuesday 23rd February  
**Jazz at the Bullingdon:  
Alvin Roy's Reeds Unlimited**  
Doors: 8.30pm

Wednesday 24th February  
**Sundara Karma  
Beach Baby**  
Doors: 7pm

Friday 26th February  
**Jungle Caravan**  
Doors: 10pm

Monday 29th February  
**Eric Bell Thin Lizzy**  
Doors: 8pm

Tuesday 1st March  
**Jazz at the Bullingdon:  
Hugh Turner Band**  
Doors: 8.30pm

Friday 4th March  
**Submotion Orchestra**  
Doors: 9pm

Saturday 5th March  
**Keep Hush Presents LEAN:  
Part 3. Innamind Recordings  
Gorgon Sound**  
Doors: 11pm

Saturday 5th March  
**Las vs Karma  
Kursk vs Quest  
Host: Sun of Selah**  
Doors: 11pm

Thursday 10th March  
**Fickle Friends**  
Doors: 7pm

Friday 11th March  
**Will Johns  
Malaya Blue**  
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 12th March  
**Simple:  
Shanti Celeste**  
Doors: 11pm

Sunday 13th March  
**Martin Harley  
& Daniel Kimbro**  
Doors: 7pm

Monday 14th March  
**Tradgedy:  
All Metal Tribute to  
the Bee Gees & Beyond**  
Doors: 7pm

Friday 18th March  
**CC Smugglers**  
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 19th March  
**The Total Who Show**  
Doors: 7pm

Monday 21st March  
**Ben Poole  
Stevie Nimmo**  
Doors: 8pm

Thursday 24th March  
**Girls Names**  
Doors: 7pm

Friday 25th March  
**While She Sleeps**  
Doors: 7pm

Monday 4th April  
**J W Jones**  
Doors: 7.30pm

Friday 8th April  
**Hot Club of Cowtown**  
Doors: 7pm

Thursday 14th April  
**Rob Tognoni**  
Doors: 7pm

**The Bullingdon**  
162 Cowley Road  
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Sat 9th Jan • £13 adv • 8pm  
**Quadrophenia Night**  
+ The Atlantics  
+ DJ Drew Stanstall (The Specials)

Sat 16th Jan • SOLD OUT • 6.30pm  
**Daughter**

Fri 29th Jan • £15 adv  
**Big Narstie + Fekky**

Sun 31st Jan • £18.50 adv  
**FM**

Fri 5th Feb • £12 adv • 10.30pm  
**Fluid**  
+ Flava D  
+ DJ Q  
+ Royal T  
+ Elijah & Skilliam

Fri 5th Feb • £8 adv  
**Uprising - BBC Introducing**  
Feat: **Pixel Fix & More**

Sun 7th Feb • £28 adv • 6.30pm  
**The Game**

Mon 8th Feb • £15 adv  
**Villagers**

Tue 9th Feb • £16.50 adv  
**Gabrielle Aplin**

Wed 10th Feb • £13 adv  
**Tesseract**  
+ The Contortionist  
+ Nordic Giants

Thu 11th Feb • £23.50 adv  
**An Evening With  
Fun Lovin' Criminals**

Fri 12th Feb • £22 adv • 6.30pm  
**John Grant**

Fri 12th Feb • £10 adv • 11pm  
**SASASAS**

Sat 13th Feb • £17 adv • 6.30pm  
**Lissie**

Sun 14th Feb • SOLD OUT • 7.30pm  
**Nathaniel Rateliff & The  
Night Sweats**

Mon 15th Feb • £12.50 adv  
**Ezra Furman**

Mon 14th Feb • £22 adv  
**Let The Lady Sing feat.  
Vienna Ditto**  
+ Crystallite  
+ Callow Saints  
+ Khamsina

Sat 20th Feb • £12 adv • 6pm  
**Little Comets**  
+ Hippo Campus

Thu 25th Feb • £18.50 adv  
**Stiff Little Fingers**

Thu 26th Feb • £11 adv • 6pm  
**CASH (Payin' Respect to the  
Man In black) With Full Live  
Band**

Sun 28th Feb • £12 adv  
**Fat white Family**

Sat 5th Mar • £17.50 adv • 6pm  
**Reef**

Thu 10th Mar • £14 adv  
**Limehouse Lizzy**

Fri 11th Mar • £14 adv • 6.30pm  
**Emmy The Great**

Sun 13th Mar • SOLD OUT  
**Wolf Alice**

Mon 14th Mar • £22  
**Scot Bradlee's Postmodern  
Jukebox**

Tue 15th Mar • £17.50 adv  
**The Coral**

Fri 18th Mar • £12 adv • 10pm  
**Switch Presents:  
What Hannah Wants**

Sat 9th Apr • £23.50 adv • 6.30pm  
**Ben Haenow**

Mon 11th Apr • £15 adv  
**Jack Garratt**

Wed 13th Apr • £21.50 adv  
**Newton Faulkner**

Wed 13th Apr • £21.50 adv  
**Space**

Fri 22nd Apr • £22 adv • 6pm  
**The Icicle Works**

Fri 22nd Apr • £25 adv • 6.30pm  
**Billy Ocean - "When The  
Going Gets Tough" 30th  
Anniversary Tour**

Fri 29th Apr • £12.50 adv  
**The Hip-Hop Shakespeare  
Company Presents  
Richard II**

Sun 1st May • £16.50 adv  
**Lethal Bizzle**

Wed 4th May • £21 adv  
**The Bluetones**

Wed 11th May • £18 adv • 6.30pm  
**Rend Collective**

Sat 21st May • £16 adv • 6.30pm  
**Mike Peters presents The  
Alarm - Declare Your  
Strength Tour 2016**

Sat 16th July • £10 adv • 6.30pm  
**The Southmartins (Tribute  
To The Beautiful South &  
The Housemartins)**

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

Sat 8th Oct • £22.50 adv • 6.30pm  
**From The Jam  
"The A & B Sides"**

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

Sat 17th Dec • £12 adv  
**Leatherat Christmas Party  
Party**

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## o2academyoxford.co.uk

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# NEWS

**Nightshift: PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU**

**Phone: 01865 372255**

**email: editor@nightshiftmag.co.uk**

**Online: nightshiftmag.co.uk**

**THE OXFORD PUNT** returns for another voyage this year. The annual showcase of new local music takes place on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May, featuring 20 local acts across five venues in the city centre on one night. As with the last two years the Punt takes place at The Purple Turtle, The Cellar, The Wheatshaf, The Turl Street Kitchen and The White Rabbit. Organised by *Nightshift* since in 1997, the annual Punt has provided early exposure for Foals, Stornoway and Young Knives amongst others and last year featured sets from Maiians, Rainbow Reservoir, Balkan Wanderers, Zaia, Cassels, Peerless Pirates and more. Acts wanting to play this year's Punt can apply from now. Please send music links to **editor@nightshiftmag.co.uk**. Clearly mark your email Punt. Alternatively, send a CD to Nightshift Magazine, PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU. Again clearly marked Punt. *You must include a contact phone number with your application.* All acts must be from Oxfordshire and can't have played the Punt in previous years. Deadline for entries is the 10<sup>th</sup> March.

**INDEPENDENT VENUE WEEK** returns at the end of January. The third annual nationwide celebration of small live music venues takes in 120 venues across the UK, running

from Monday 25<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> January, with this year's ambassadors Wolf Alice taking over from Frank Turner and Phil Selway. The Oxford leg of the week takes place at **The Cellar**, which has run as a dedicated independent music venue for over 40 years, **The Bullingdon**, currently establishing itself as a major tour stop-off for bands since its refurbishment, and **The Jericho Tavern**. The Bully's IVW line-up features Jeremy Loops (*Mon 25<sup>th</sup>*); The Defiled (*Wed 27<sup>th</sup>*); Raveneye (*Thu 28<sup>th</sup>*); Eliza & the Bear, plus Simple featuring Dense & Pikka (*Fri 30<sup>th</sup>*), and Dreaming Spires (*Sat 31<sup>st</sup>*). On Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> The Cellar host a BBC Introducing show featuring Maiians, with supports from Willie J Healey and Rosie Caldecott to be confirmed. As well as regular partners The PRS For Music and The Musicians Union, this year's IVW has teamed up with two charities helping people with disabilities and learning difficulties to access live music. Attitude Is Everything works with venues and artists to improve accessibility to gigs, while Stay Up Late is a gig buddy scheme for people with learning difficulties. Find out more about IVW at **www.independentvenueweek.com** and on **Facebook - independentvenueweek**.



**PRIMAL SCREAM, PUBLIC ENEMY AND SOUL II SOUL** are among the first acts to be confirmed for **COMMON PEOPLE** in May. **Primal Scream** will headline the Sunday of the inaugural 30,000-capacity event in **South Park**, which runs over the weekend of the **28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> May**. They'll be joined on the main stage by Southampton's r'n'b hitmaker **Craig David** and his new band TS5; New York hip hop legends **Public Enemy** (*pictured*); local hero **Gaz Coombes**; Mercury-nominated rapper **Ghostpoet**; hip hop pioneers **The Sugarhill Gang**, and 80s-styled rockers **Don Broco**. Saturday's headline act is yet to be announced but on the main stage that day will be enduring soul stars **Soul II Soul**; Devonian singer-songwriter **Jamie Lawson**; London pirate station crew **Kurupt FM**; Latin-flavoured funksters **The Cuban Brothers**; cockney knees-up duo **Chas & Dave** and, for some reason, lycra-clad fitness maniac **Mr Motivator**. Beyond the main stage there will be a dance big top. Saturday's action is a takeover by seminal reggae DJ **David Rodigan**, while on Sunday **Hospitality** host the stage. And we're particularly proud here at *Nightshift* to have been asked to curate the Uncommon stage, which will be exclusively set aside for Oxfordshire acts. Beyond the live music and DJs, Common People – which is run by the people who organise Bestival, Camp Bestival and last year's Southampton-based Common People, including DJ Rob da Bank – will feature myriad circus, street music, theatre, a jam bar, kids activities and more. Common People will run as a twinned festival with the main stage and big top line up swapped between the Oxford and Southampton sites. Talking about the festival, Gaz Coombes said, "I'm really excited to be playing; it's great that it's happening in my hometown too – it means I can just crawl home afterwards." Tickets for the weekend are on sale now, priced at £27.50 (including booking fee) for adult day tickets. Weekend and family tickets are also available at **oxford.commonpeople.net**

**WILKO JOHNSON** will make an emotional return to **Cornbury Festival** next summer. The guitarist is one of a number of names announced for the Friday of the festival, which runs over the weekend of the **8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> July** at **Great Tew**. **Jamie Cullum** will headline the Friday night, and is joined on the bill by **Soul II Soul**, **The Beat**, **Lemar**, **Port Isla**, **JD & the Straight Shot**, and **The Dunwells**. British r'n'b legend Johnson played the festival in 2013 at the end of what was to be his farewell tour after he was diagnosed with late-stage pancreatic cancer and decided not to undergo chemotherapy, preferring to go out doing what he's always love best – gigging. Incredibly Wilko made a full recovery and remains one of the most energetic live performers in the country, even at the age of 68. The former Dr Feelgood man was the subject of Julien Temple's acclaimed film *The Ecstasy of Wilko Johnson* in 2015. Cornbury organiser Hugh Phillimore spoke to *Nightshift* and revealed that Wilko's appearance in 2013 played a significant part in his subsequent recovery: "We're so pleased he's coming back to Cornbury; after all it's where he met our friend, amateur photographer and cancer surgeon Charlie Chan, who eventually persuaded him to seek a second opinion on his diagnosis – so we saved a rock 'n' roll legend!" The line-up for Saturday and Sunday of Cornbury are expected to be announced in March, but tickets for the event are on sale now at **www.cornburyfestival.com** or on **0844 338 0000**.



**TOO MANY POETS** release their debut EP this month. The band, who won *Nightshift*'s Demo of the Month with their demo version of the EP in December, release the four-song 'Relying on Reflections' on the 15th January on Elevant Music. The local quintet play a hometown launch gig at The Library on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January. More info at **elevantmusiclimited.com**.

**IDIOT KING** are looking for demos from local bands wanting to play their regular gig nights. The local record label and promoters have recently hosted Oxford shows for Chad Valley and Blacklisters. Bands of any genre, but tending towards the noisier end of things, interested in playing should email **idiotkingpromotions@gmail.com**.

**APPLETREE STUDIOS** celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> birthday this month. The recording studio, near Brill, is now the longest running studio in Oxfordshire. It was set up in 1986 by musician Phillip Goss, who remains at the helm. To celebrate the studio's anniversary Phil is offering special deals for local bands. "Things are as busy as ever at the studio," said Phil, "which is a sign of a good vibrant music scene in the area, so a big thank you for all the Oxfordshire

artists who have used Appletree over the last 30 years; here's to the future." Give him a call on **01844 237916**, or visit **www.appletreestudios.com**.

**TOLIESEL** are set to undergo an indefinite hiatus. The local alt. country rockers, who featured on the cover of *Nightshift* back in November 2013, are going their separate ways with bassist and producer Gabriele Catalano moving back to his native Italy and concentrating on his solo electronic work, while singer Jack Olchawski will continue with his solo My Crooked Teeth project and imminent fatherhood. "We decided to take a break from the band, so that Gabs can focus on his move back to Italy, I can focus on becoming a dad," Jack told *Nightshift*. "We do intend to return. Unofficial word is a free show and general knees up next summer. Our two EPs are streaming online now, along with our 'Dear Prudence' cover, a remix for 'The Light', and the video for recent single, 'Bones'."

**AUDIOSCOPE** raised £2,500 for Shelter at its 2015 event. The annual mini festival, which featured sets from Plaid, Gazelle Twin, Part Chimp and Taman Shud amongst others at the Bullingdon



**DREAMING SPIRES** celebrate their nomination for three awards at the inaugural UK Americana Awards in February with a hometown show this month. The band, helmed by brothers Robin and Joe Bennett, have been shortlisted for Best UK Act, Best UK Album, for 'Searching For the Supertruth', and Best Instrumentalist, for Joe. The award nominations come in the wake of a successful year for the band in 2015 which saw them touring The States, including playing as part of AmericanaFest in Nashville, and recording at Ardent Studios in Memphis – the studio previously used by Big Star and REM. They followed this with a headline UK tour and a TV debut on the Andrew Marr show. Talking to Nightshift about the band's year, Robin said, "Searching for the Supertruth picked up some very kind reviews, and we played all over the UK. Add to that making our TV debut, playing at AmericanaFest, recording at Argent and singing a deal with Last Chance Records while we were there, made it a great year for the band. We're up for Artist and Album of the Year, and Joe is up for Instrumentalist of the Year at the awards. There's debate about what UK Americana actually is, or whether such a thing can even exist, but judging by the mix of artists collected under that banner in the US, it mainly seems to mean quality music with thoughtful lyrics, so we're happy to be part of it. Joe and I have also been moonlighting playing with Saint Etienne and as part of Sarah Cracknell's solo backing band too, playing in venues like Cadogan Hall in London, Brighton Dome, and even a tour of Greece! No idea what's going to be happening in 2016 but I hope it'll be even busier on the music front." Dreaming Spires play at the Bullingdon on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> January, with support from Mississippi-Welsh duo Lewis & Leigh, currently being tipped by Rolling Stone as one of Americana's rising stars. Tickets are £8 in advance. Visit **thedreamingspires.net** for more info.

in November, has now raised over £31,000 since it began in 2001. Nice work, Audioscope people.

**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**. **OXFORD GIGBOT** provides a regular local gig listing update on Twitter (**@oxgigbot**), bringing you new gigs as soon as they go live. They also provide a free weekly listings email. Just contact **oxgigbot@datasalon.com** to join.

Black & White Music Presents

# EZRA FURMAN

**+ SUPPORT**

## MON 15 FEBRUARY 2016

**O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY OXFORD**

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Doors: 7:00pm

Ages: Under 14s Must be accompanied by an adult over 18 years old at all times.

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OXFORD

# TIPPING POINT

*The start of a new year is always a good excuse to gaze into a metaphorical crystal ball and ponder who's going to be the band to break through into the big time. But because Nightshift spends its every waking hour (and this beast never sleeps), telling everyone what to listen to, we thought it'd nice to ask some of our favourite local promoters, labels, youth project workers, radio show producers and general good eggs tell you who they're looking forward to hearing more of in 2016. So, for once, don't take our word for it - take it from the people working at live music's coal face. They know stuff.*



Rosie Caldecott

## LIZ GREEN (BBC Oxford Introducing)

“My recommendation is singer-songwriter **ROSIE CALDECOTT**. I first listened to a few tracks from her debut album ‘Inside Out’ in July of this year and was immediately hooked. Reminding me of rainy days spent watching Doris Day movies, her voice conjures more mournful notes but remains just as magical as that of the American movie star. The song arrangements are even more compelling - jaunty piano, harp and orchestral strings providing the perfect backdrop for her vocals. Tracks like ‘Blizzards’ and ‘Physical Phrases’ make me want to pick up a guitar, learn the lyrics and try and play them for myself.

## ZAHRA TEHRANI (Young Women's Music Project)

“**ALLY GUPPY**. She is a spoken word genius, guitarist and singer-songwriter. Apart from being in Oxford's Youth Orchestra, juggling school and many different music projects every night of the week, Ally somehow finds time to work on her own songs; expect a new set of tracks and hopefully a release of her music in 2016. Also **BURT COPE**. Burt produces dance music; he has just started gigging and showing Oxford what he's made of at the ripe old age of 16. After an amazing set at Cowley Road Carnival with one of the biggest audiences to date he is mastering his craft and performance, so expect lots of shows by him and the release of an EP in 2016.”

## OLI STEADMAN (Tigmus)

“**WATER PAGEANT**; obviously every knows they're awesome; every track on their album is a winner, and both members are very experienced: Lizzie has worked in theatre for years, and Nick has played with Ralfe Band among other projects. I love their patient approach, gradually building up their album and fitting everything into place before exposing this lovely music to the world.

**CHARLIE CUNNINGHAM** is rapidly becoming a household name. I first saw him in October 2013 headlining the Oxford Arts Circus. That night, his already massive fanbase of about 40 students all crowded into the East Oxford Community Centre to hear fantastic flamenco renditions of his own material, as well as covers and standards, including a tear-jerking bit of ‘Moon River’. Since then he has only played one headline gig in England; the rest have been support slots in crazy places like the Albert Hall, with Rodriguez. He'll no doubt have a huge hit album on his hands this year. **HOMEPLANETEARTH**. They first sent me demos in 2014 to get a Tigmus gig, and I loved their approach. There was an unpolished diamond of songwriting. Tigmus funded the recording of their first EP. To me this feels like the keenest, most energetic young band in town right now and they have a huge joy of gigging. ‘Phat Phil’ is their new single which boldly combines elements of Foals and Alt-J, under a very confident vocal performance from Josephine Panton, who's only 17 years old.” “Finally **OXFORD MAQAM**. I first met band leader Tarik when the Maqam supported Stornoway at our early gigs. I've been blown away by their sets at Sofar Sounds and other intimate local gigs, where you can get up close and see some incredibly virtuosic playing of traditional instruments. Percussionist Philippos Demetriou is probably the best drummer in Oxford right now. It's hard to tip such a strongly formed band which plays such certain music, but you can bet that, Tarik having just gone full-time with this project, 2016 will be another year of great success for them.”

## OLI HEWER (Smash Disco)

“We're lucky to have put on a ton of killer local artists this year; many of them have made names for themselves already, which makes us happy, but if you're after something totally new, **THE BECKONING FAIR ONES** really impressed us: it was only their second gig and we'd only heard a rough demo, but they were fucking badass. We're looking forward to seeing what's next for them.”

## IAN MITCHELL

### (All Will Be Well)

“**CLUB SODA**, from Abingdon, remind me of the Flaming Lips a bit. I love the candy-pop electronica feel to it all. Also from Abingdon are **ALL IS WORTH**, who have a new EP out in 2016, which is a real progression for them; they remind me of the good parts of David Kit. And, from Henley, there's **LOUISE PETIT**; she has loads of solid tunes. She's a bit MOR in parts but her music has a subtle darkness to it, which I love.”



## SAMANTHA TOMLIN

### (OxRox)

“My vote definitely goes to **HELL'S GAZELLES**. They're very talented young chaps with a great front man in Cole Bryant. To me they're by far the best rock/metal band to come out of Oxford for many years. They are also very keen to play far and wide, not just in Oxford. They definitely have the look, the talent and the ambition to go far and I for one am looking forward to seeing their rise to success.”

## RICHARD CATHERALL

### (Gappy Tooth Industries)

The spanking new band: **CHEROKEE**. Bass. Drums. Thumping. Naughty words. Big tunes. Mudhoney. Another quadruple rum? Don't mind if I do. The act whom more people should see: **CLARK & MOORE**. They've not been going that long, although both were in the excellent Script, Punt stars of yesteryear, so they're not precisely new. Lovely vocals, beautiful melodies, the odd swooning sax and sweet looping tricknology – last seen in Oxford with Duotone joining in on cello, which is as near to a seal of quality songwriting approval as you can get. The act that isn't really new, but is worthy of revisiting: **ORANGE VISION**. Yeah, sure they were basically okay at first, but at some point in 2015 they became serious contenders, with all the swagger, bounce and cheap reverb any post-baggy neo-psych band could ask. Book a return appointment now.”



## HANNAH BRUCE (Ark-T)

“For me the most exciting up and coming act is dub/reggae/dance-inspired band **ZAIA**. I caught them at this year's Punt and I fell in love with their incredible live show and their great EP, ‘Challenge 145’. With an album in the works, they're ones to watch out for. If you're into music with deep subjects and meaning, Oxford's hip hop scene is

where you should be looking. I recommend the collective **INNER PEACE RECORDS**, who are making some great waves in the scene. Terao's self titled LP is a particular highlight this year for me.”

## CHRIS OAKES (The Strummer Room Project)

“Banbury's **RAVENS** play 60s/70s garage rock with a shot of 80s/90s punk. They take further inspiration from modern indie bands like Kings of Leon and Muse, incorporating epic guitar solos with a grungy sneer. They've played a few gigs in north Oxfordshire and are planning to hit Oxford in the new year. **THE SHADES** are a new band writing songs in the vein of early Rolling Stones and The Yardbirds, also putting their own spin on some old classics from the likes of Elmore James, Howlin' Wolf and Muddy Waters. The band are led by Punch Drunk Monkey Club frontman Bradley Taylor whose delivery reminds me of a young Jagger. Also, **FAULT LINE**, a Bicester-based alternative rock band formed from the remnants of Andensum. The band have spent around 18 months perfecting their debut EP and are now heading out on the road.”

## NICK ANDREWS & TORY WAGG (Oxford Gigbot)

“If Jack White remade *The Commitments* with an Oxford band you'd get somewhere close to **LITTLE BROTHER ELI**'s particular blend of groove-driven blues-rock. They blast onto the stage, louder than expected from their folk-gent look, and instantly pull the audience in with an infectious desire to get down and dance. Big funky basslines, a smattering of Americana and some serious guitar solos earn them a good-time band reputation, but it's when they come off the mics and indulge the crowd with stunning harmonies that their truly soulful roots shine through. With US country/folk gigs pulling big Oxford crowds in recent months, local folkers **LOUD MOUNTAINS** might well be on to something. Brothers Kevin and Sean deliver hooks and harmonies with real warmth and charm on-stage, and the songwriting is refreshingly confident and uplifting. Quite possibly the best of the bunch from the strong local Americana scene (and with bonus points for actually being American).”

## JAKE PELL (O2 Academy)

“2015 was a ground breaking year for **LEADER**, from Witney. Highlights included playing Cornbury Festival, impressing at BBC Introducing's Uprising showcase at O2 Academy Oxford, releasing single ‘Live Like Kings’, and taking on management. The band are recording their third EP due for release in May. With numerous Radio 1 plays over the last year, **PIXEL FIX**'s new track ‘I Want You The Same’ has been a favourite of Huw Stephens amongst others. Their first London headline December show at The Waiting Room London sold out in three days, encouraging a follow-up show for February at The Barfly. The band have a bright future and will be returning to Oxford for a very special show in February. Banbury's **I CRIED WOLF** are a local metal band on the rise. Recently signing to Crooked Noise Records, they've have been touring non-stop since the release of their ‘Hollow Heart’ EP earlier this year. The are securing some great slots and are sure to be on some big line-ups next year.”



## JOAL SHEARING

### (The Wheatsheaf)

“I've been a big fan of **CAMERON A.G.**'s for a long time. He's now playing with a full band which hasn't drained the songs of any of their charm. I expect 2016 to be a big year for him and cannot wait for the EPs which are scheduled for Spring. Other acts I would include in ones to watch are **TOO MANY POETS**, **I CRIED WOLF**, **THE AUREATE ACT**, **CHEROKEE** and **DRORE**.”

## MATT SAGE (Catweazle)

“I always struggle with this concept, as I genuinely believe that everyone's got something worth sharing. It's so hard to single out who is the ‘better’, but some acts I'd recommend are **DITTE ELLY**: a captivatingly beautiful singer who evokes ethereal, hushed snowflake-soft forests deep in the mystic far North, and is shortly to release her debut album. Exquisite listening. **ROSIE CALDECOTT**: a wise and winsome young songwriter who is also a visual artist of extraordinary gift. Rosie has also just released her debut album, recorded by Tandem Festival's Nicholas O'Brien, and it is a thing of naive elegance. **LAURA THEIS**: Munch-born songwriter and story teller whose songs are totally unique and really quite wonderful, conjuring up a spookily quaint world of monsters, mermaids, spiders and murdered ex-lovers. And it is impossible, once she entreats you, not to sing along. **WILL MASON**: his singing and songwriting style call to mind a young Ray Davies – pretty great stuff coming this way. **MATT CHANARIN**: sweet, soulful, classy songs in the vein of Paul Simon, Eric Clapton and Labi Siffre. **CLAIRE LE MASTER**: it's been one of the joys of this job to witness at very close quarters so many fledgling artists really hone their skills and develop their craft. Claire is a great example of this. She always had a great voice, and her songs are really starting to sparkle now too. **SAM TAPLIN**: a wonderfully erudite synthesis of Alex Turner, Jake Thackray and Tom Lehrer, none of whom come close to describing his uncommon faculty of composing poignant, charming and laugh-out-loud hilarious songs. **RAYMOND BURKE**: since Catweazle turned twenty, we can now hand out Catweazle honorary doctorates. So far, only two have been awarded. One went to Patty Dale, an American woman who sings old blues songs, and the other to Dr Raymond Burke. Raymond, who is probably in his sixties, sounds to me like an Irish country and western Ron Sexsmith: all quavering tenor and soft, sad, sentimental songs, strummed out on a yellow charity shop plastic guitar. I'd like to take a road trip across America, just so I could have Raymond's music to accompany me.”

## PENNY MARSH

### (Haven Club)

“**AUTUMN SAINTS**; they're an Anglo-American three-piece who are all teachers at Cherwell School. I chased them down Cornmarket after they played the Cellar and asked them if they would play as support for Moreland & Arbuckle at The Haven last July. Atmospheric, meaningful songs from a band that has influences from Johnny Cash to The Sex Pistols. Powerful stuff.” Having just heard them again at a City Festival gig I love them even more, they are quite mesmerizing. Also, **THE MATT EDWARDS BAND**. I spotted them playing a gig in Oxford two years ago and asked them to support Buddy Whittington, a big name on the Blues scene. Matt, from Thame, writes and plays his own compositions which are based in the blues but with a lot of rock and funk thrown in too. They have just released a very successful album, ‘Four Berry Jam’, and play a lot around the UK. They have a busy year ahead with a headline at the Half Moon, Putney, a slot at the Wallingford Blues & Beer Festival and a headline at the Haven Club. **HELL'S GAZELLES** are metal you can take home to your Mum; they're a four piece from the Thame area that I spotted at a Metal for the Masses gig, after which they went on to win a slot at Bloodstock last year. Cole Bryant's Judas Priest-esque vocals and stage presence combined with Nath Digman's stunning guitar held together with with fab drumming from Luke Evans and throbbing bass from Dan Podbery combine to form them into a strong rock/metal/ blues outfit. I have had them to support my rockier bands, like Virgil and the Accelerators, and The Brew. They are just in the process of recording an album. Look out world!”

## MARK ‘OSPREY’ O’BRIEN

### (It's All About the Music)

“The bands I hold for great things are **THE AUREATE ACT**, with their mash up of prog, melodies, and even a hint of Talk Talk, particularly vocally, and also the outstanding **CHEROKEE**, a duo who sound like there's five of them. It's real 21<sup>st</sup> Century rock in my ears. In the solo department **LOUISE PETIT** is a fine singer-songwriter who holds the audience in her hands when she performs.”



Louise Petit

## MICHAEL CHILCOTT

### (Idiot King)

“I'm going for **MASIRO**; they are releasing a new EP this year and from what we've heard it's going to be a corker. Super technical but not in an off-putting way. Also **CASSELS**; they've obviously been making a name for themselves for a good year now but I really think they could blow up in 2016. Add to those **DRORE**, who we really like from what we've heard, and **THE BECKONING FAIR ONES**; we're really excited to hear more from these guys.”

# RELEASED

## THE EPSTEIN

### ‘Finally Forgive’

(Self released)

If too many British Americana acts sound like they’re trying far too hard to sound like they come from Appalachia or Laurel Canyon, Epstein singer Olly Wills simply opens his heart and lets the wilderness out; he doesn’t need to try, it comes naturally. Of course Wills has had the luxury of living and working on a farm in Wyoming where the landscape and wide-open skies inspired his songwriting, but you don’t write songs like this by luck. ‘Finally Forgive – the lead single from forthcoming album ‘Burning Branches’ – rides into town on a rollicking skiffle rhythm but it’s as big-hearted and romantic as we’ve come to expect of The Epstein, managing to turn something approaching heartache into something big and bold and heroic. Essentially it’s Gloria Gaynor’s



‘I Will Survive’ in a plaid shirt, heading into the forest to dance with the wolves. Good to have them back.  
**Dale Kattack**



## GREAT WESTERN TEARS

### ‘Not the Losing Kind’

(Self released)

If The Epstein are the open-hearted face of homegrown Americana, Great Western Tears are its downhearted, disconsolate twin. If The Epstein are ready to head off along the Appalacian Trail, Great Western Tears are sat in a Las Vegas strip bar staring at the bottom of a whisky bottle, contemplating a life or a love that got away. Like The Epstein’s Olly Wills, Great Western Tears’ David Waterhouse has spent time travelling around the States, but it’s Nevada and Big Sur that colour his songwriting landscape; ‘Not the Losing Kind’ finds gambling as a metaphor for love, both David’s rich, gravelly voice and the lonesome harmonica evoking a darker, bluesier kind of country-folk. The porch slide blues of ‘Misty’ is only marginally more optimistic but again captures a sense of barely fathomable loss: a troubled young couple separated not just by distance but by the fog of the Californian coast. We should be past being surprised by how authentic the best of the local Americana acts sound, but if Great Western Tears originated from the Mid West rather than east Oxford, they’d be

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## BRIGHT WORKS

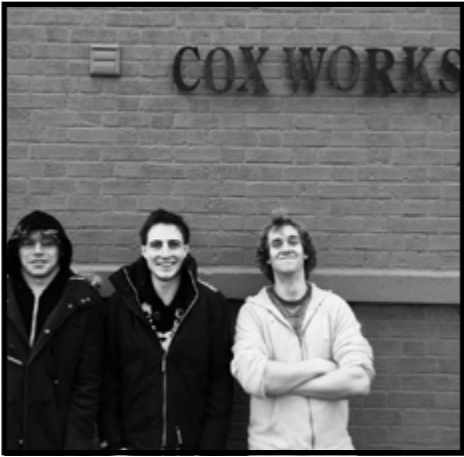
### ‘Cox Works EP’

(Self released)

Internet research tells me that “Bright Works is a four-piece mafrobeat band from Oxford, UK. They play catchy pop riffs in odd time signatures and have a poet for a lead singer.” The Soundcloud page for this latest collection of theirs is tagged with a variety of terms including ‘math’, ‘rock’, ‘Foals’, ‘Edmund’ and ‘Fitzgerald’. There is also a Scottish recruitment agency called Brightwork, and a product design studio based in Cheddar called Bright Works. So far, so enlightening. The recruitment agency and product design studio are, I’m pretty sure, not relevant here. The self-definition as a band somehow aligned with Foals, math rock and whatever is involved in the history of both of those things is relevant, but only in that they don’t particularly need to do this. They’re idiosyncratic enough, and demonstrate here enough *nous* and creativity, to not need these somewhat artificial connections.

Opener ‘Darkness, Wow!’ and third track ‘Up’ are modern twists on mid-80s jangle-pop, all light, skittering rhythms and heartfelt lyrics, the latter delivered in the uniquely awkward-yet-strident vocal style of frontman Liam. As with all of Bright Works’, um, works, they have a charming world music/African pop edge, which brings with it a sense of optimism and joy that’s not particularly easy to create with this deft a touch. ‘Gamble Careful’ – with jumbling lyrics that revolve around the words ‘gamble’, ‘careful’ and ‘deficit’ – may be something to do with economic impropriety, but it’s hard to be sure. It does, though, have an enjoyable baggy-esque bassline meandering at its core, providing a solid backbone to the lighter tones of guitar and vocals. Finally ‘Sikhism’, the most *full* of the tracks here, builds around a repeated keyboard tone to hint most in this EP’s entirety at that Foals thing of high energy, churningly rhythmic solidity, with spiky guitar melodies ducking and diving around each bar. What’s apparent across these four tracks is, yes, music that seems at least obliquely influenced by the inventiveness and experiment of math-rock and Oxford’s most recent big stars. The band is, however (and not simply because of the enormously individual style of their vocals) not far off being adequately and simply described as “sounding like Bright Works.”

**Simon Minter**



## HUCK & THE XANDER BAND

### ‘Alexander the Great Pt.III’

(Self released)

In this, the third volume of their ‘Alexander The Great’ series, Huck And The Xander Band (fronted by singer-songwriter Huck Astley) continue the story of a young gay kid in love, strung out, ostracized and hunted in the American Deep South. A Southern-Gothic folk opera: ‘Dramericana’, as the tag on Soundcloud reads.

Aside from a pointless, distracting spoken word piece, Astley, to his credit, doesn’t sacrifice music for the story he’s telling, which must have been a temptation: the fatal desire to let character, plot and language override sound. Rather, the songs are largely approached as disparate, surreal evocations of places and emotions and in this regard he does succumb to one of the pitfalls of musical storytelling. In his eagerness to set tones and moods he resorts to superficial atmospherics. Good ideas and compelling passages are scuppered by plodding and overwrought moments of musical static. Opener ‘Alexander’ features a crushing mid-section sandwiched between a dull opening and an overlong close, but in ‘The Spirit’, a haunting, old-lonesome-West themed whistling rises jarringly from nowhere, freezing everything around it, the song building from this harrowing quiet to a brutal climax. Cheap studio effects are no substitute for something so chilling, so genuinely desolate. It can stop you dead.


Throughout, there seems to be an attempt to compensate for the occasional blandness of the music with theatrical vocal gymnastics. Rather than making the music more distinct or compelling, it’s merely a distraction. It’s also ineffective and, as shown in ‘Alexander’ when Astley spits out the line “Something tells me my God will be just” with palpable venom, not necessary either.

The best pieces of conceptual music – Curtis Mayfield’s ‘Superfly’; Fucked Up’s ‘David Comes To Life’; The Roots’ ‘Undun’ – use character, plot and genre conventions as mere jumping off points to plumb real emotional depths. It’s disappointing that Astley rarely explores the depths his material offers, because there are truly compelling ideas hinted at. Overall, though, what you’re left with are gothic superficialities, rather than something truly gothic.

**James Dawson**

# The Cellar

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# GIG GUIDE

## FRIDAY 1<sup>st</sup>

New year, same shit.

## SATURDAY 2<sup>nd</sup>

**SUNDAY 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
**MOON LEOPARD + BEARD OF DESTINY + DES BARKUS + MARK BOSLEY: Donnington Community Centre (6pm)** – The free monthly live acoustic music session returns for the New Year, with sets from psychedelic country outfit Moon Leopard, bluesman Beard of Destiny, rock’n’blues fella Des Barkus, and gothic-folk troubadour Mark Bosley.  
**THE MIGHTY REDOX: The Prince of Wales** – Oxford’s swamp blues, psych-pop, festival funk and ska veterans get straight back into the groove

*Saturday 16<sup>th</sup>*  
**DAUGHTER: O2 Academy**  
If you were hoping to ease yourself gently into 2016 gigging life then maybe Daughter’s dreamy, wandering dynamics might seem to be the answer. Or perhaps not if the opening lines of their latest single ‘Numbers’ is anything to go by: “Take the worst situations / Make a worse situation.” It’s typically bleak fare from singer and songwriter Elena Tonra, whose bruised attitude to romance and toxic relationships was evident on her band’s acclaimed debut album ‘If You Leave’ (typical line: “I want you so much / But I hate your guts”), while ‘Lifeforms’ from that album entered into even darker waters with its ruminations on unwanted pregnancy and abortion. But then of course the music is a joy, if a woozily downbeat joy, a fragile, brooding form of understated pop that swims in the warm, dense textures of Explosions in the Sky or even Sigur Ros at times. Little wonder they ended up signed to 4AD, who have retained them for second album ‘Not To Disappear’, out this month. For all their insular sound and Tonsa’s tales of bitterness and disgust there’s been a lot of love for Daughter, from Huw Stephens’ early support to an appearance on *Letterman*, a tour support to Damien Rice and songs on the soundtracks of everything from *Grey’s Anatomy* to *Skins* and even the Tour de France coverage. Their last visit to town two years ago, at The Town Hall, was a spellbinding show and we’ll expect nothing less this time round.



# JANUARY

with their first gig of 2016.

## MONDAY 4<sup>th</sup>

**TUESDAY 5<sup>th</sup>**  
**ALVIN ROY & REEDS UNLIMITED: The Bullingdon** – Trad jazz, swing and bop from veteran clarinetist Alvin Roy and his reeds band at the Bully’s first free Tuesday jazz club of 2016.  
**SPARK’S SIDE OF THE MOON: The James Street Tavern** – Open mic night, hosted by Sparky.

## WEDNESDAY 6<sup>th</sup>

**THURSDAY 7<sup>th</sup>**  
**ECHO4FOUR + MIDNIGHT RUN + LUKE ALLMOND: The Jericho Tavern** – It’s All About the Music showcase night.  
**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre** – Oxford’s oldest and best open club night heads into another new year, showcasing singers, musicians, poets, storytellers and more every Thursday.  
**SPARKY’S FLYING CIRCUS: The Half Moon** – Sparky’s open mic night.  
**ACOUSTIC THURSDAY: Jude the Obscure**  
**BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford**

**FRIDAY 8<sup>th</sup>**  
**KLUB KAKOFANNEY with THE SHAPES + THE STRING PROJECT + MOON LEOPARD + MARK ATHERTON & FRIENDS: The Wheatsheaf** – First Klub Kak of the year sees 60s-styled r’n’b, 80s alt.rock and new wave pop from The Shapes, plus psychedelic country from Moon Leopard and inventive classical, folk and hip hop mash-up from The String Project.

**SATURDAY 9<sup>th</sup>**  
**QUADROPHENIA NIGHT: O2 Academy** – A night of music dedicated to The Who’s cult 1979 mod movie, with live music from The Atlantics, and a DJ set from former Specials and Prince Buster saxophonist Drew Stansall, playing mod, 60s soul, ska and 2-Tone tunes.  
**REVELLER + HIGH RISE + KONTEK: The Wheatsheaf** – Splenetic metalcore rage from Reveller, blowing any residual festival cobwebs away good and proper.  
**PHIL BEER: Tiddy Hall, Ascott-under-Wychwood** – Feast of Fiddles virtuoso Beer comes to the Wychwood Folk Club.

**SUNDAY 10<sup>th</sup>**  
**TOO MANY POETS: The Library** – Gothic indie rock in the vein of The Twilight Sad and Echo & the Bunnymen from recent Demo of the Month winners Too Many Poets, tonight launching debut EP ‘Relying on Reflections’.

## MONDAY 11<sup>th</sup>

**TUESDAY 12<sup>th</sup>**  
**JAZZ SUMMIT: The Bullingdon** – Jazz guitar at the Bully’s free weekly jazz club.  
**INTRUSION: The Cellar** – Monthly goth, industrial and ebm club night.  
**SPARK’S SIDE OF THE MOON: The James Street Tavern**

## WEDNESDAY 13<sup>th</sup>

**THURSDAY 14<sup>th</sup>**  
**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 15<sup>th</sup>

**TENTH LISTEN + SHOTGUN SIX + VIOLENT CHIMES: The Wheatsheaf** – Melodic punk and skatecore from Tenth Listen.  
**THE DURAN DURAN EXPERIENCE: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Tribute to the new romantic survivors.

## SATURDAY 16<sup>th</sup>

**DAUGHTER: O2 Academy** – Bruised romance and spectral wanderings from the 4AD stars – *see main preview*  
**SWIM THE ATLANTIC + HELL’S GAZELLES: The Wheatsheaf** – The local 90s rockers reform for a one-off show in tribute to their late bass player Steve Gore, with all proceeds going to Sobell House hospice. Fronted by veteran local musician and sound engineer Spike, who’s worked with Sinéad O’Connor, Newton Faulkner and Hudson Taylor, and featuring former Little Fish drummer Neil Greenway, their melodic stadium pop, new wave and blues rock drew comparisons to Elvis Costello, Robert Palmer and Lenny Kravitz back in the day. They’re joined for tonight’s reunion by Black Candy’s Luke Rickett, and Jimmy ‘Evil’ Hetherington from Suitable Case For Treatment and Komrad. Great support from rising young rockers Hell’s Gazelles with their blend of NWOBHM and 80s glam, coming in somewhere between Judas Priest and Hanoi Rocks.  
**CRYSTALLITE + CHEROKEE + PAPA NUI + THE QUENTINS: The Bullingdon** – It’s All About the Music showcase with old school melodic rockers Crystallite, garage-grunge duo Cherokee and fidgety indie-funkers The Quentins.  
**FREE-RANGE ROOTS presents FIELD FREQUENCY SOUND SYSTEM: The Bullingdon** – Bass bin bothering dub and roots from the long-serving homegrown sound system.  
**THE MIGHTY REDOX + PUPPET MECHANIC: The Black Swan**  
**THE MIGHTY CADILLACS: The Brewery Tap, Abingdon** – Classic blues and rock’n’roll.  
**NAMELESS: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Rock covers.

## SUNDAY 17<sup>th</sup>

**CLAIRE LEMASTER + DAN McKEAN + FIREGAZERS + THE JESTERS + MATT SEWELL & JULES: The Wheatsheaf (2.30pm)** – Klub Kakofnney host a free afternoon of live acoustic music in the Sheaf’s downstairs bar.  
**THE MIGHTY CADILLACS: The Bell, Wantage**  
**RAISED BY HYPOCRITES: Fat Lil’s, Witney**

## MONDAY 18<sup>th</sup>

**TUESDAY 19<sup>th</sup>**  
**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: The James Street Tavern**

## WEDNESDAY 20<sup>th</sup>

*Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup>*  
**LOKKHI TERRA: The Bullingdon**  
Bossaphonik has been a shining beacon for world dance and fusion music in Oxford for eleven years now, bringing close to 100 acts from around the globe to town in that time, but club organiser and DJ Dan Ofer reckons Bangladesh’s Lokkhi Terra are the best band Bossaphonik has ever hosted. Helmed by Bangladeshi-British pianist and composer Kishon Khan, the ten-strong ensemble take traditional Bengali baul music and take it for a ride through several worlds of sound, from Cuban rumba, Brazilian samba, Afrobeat, funk, Indian classical and Latin-jazz. Horns and keys sit comfortably alongside tablas and congas, guitars and drums and both Bengali and Cuban female vocals to provide a super-fusion sound that’s a continents-spanning smorgasbord of sounds. Of course, all this could only have come together in the world’s most multi-cultural city – London, where all these different communities have come together, bringing their traditional sounds with them. Lokkhi Terra’s various musicians have serious pedigree, having between them played with Hugh Masakela, Bjork, Bellowhead, Ska Cubano, Ibrahim Ferrer, Tony Allen, Gilles Peterson’s Havana Cultura, The James Taylor Quartet, Dele Sosii and more. They’ve played at WOMAD regularly, as well as frequent sold-out shows at Ronnie Scott’s and even played the closing ceremony of the South Asia Games, so tonight’s show – at the Bully rather than Bossaphonik’s traditional Cellar home – is a rare, intimate venue for a band that brings a whole world of music with it.



## THURSDAY 21<sup>st</sup>

**ANDRE CHAVES + AGS CONNOLLY + LOUISE PETIT + PEIRQUIN: The Jericho Tavern** – Acoustic singer-songwriters showcase from It’s All About the Music, with locally based Portuguese musician Andre Chaves, and Witney’s excellent Ameripolitan star Ags Connolly.  
**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre**  
**SPARKY’S FLYING CIRCUS: The Half Moon**  
**ACOUSTIC THURSDAY: Jude the Obscure**  
**BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford**  
**DANNY & THE CHAMPIONS OF THE WORLD + LOUD MOUNTAINS: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Americana and 60s West Coast pop from Danny George Wilson and co.

## FRIDAY 22<sup>nd</sup>

**THE INDELICATES + THE MECHANISMS + INTO THE ETHER: The Bullingdon** – Weimer-era cabaret, scathing electro-pop, steam punk pirates and general theatricality as Sussex’s Brecht & Weill-inspired songsmiths The Indelicates go head to head with Oxford’s “immortal space pirates” The Mechanisms and industrial synth-rockers Into The Ether for a sci-fi triple feature night out on the rings of Saturn.  
**CHURCH OF THE HEAVY with 1000 CHAINS + VIOLENT CHIMES + TRAUMA UK + 13 BURNING: The Wheatsheaf** – Local heavy rock and metal showcase night from It’s All About the Music.  
**REBECCA FERGUSON: The New Theatre** – The former Duchess of York sings the songs of Billie Holiday and big band classics. Gotta pay for the upkeep of them palaces somehow.

## SATURDAY 23<sup>rd</sup>

**BOSSAPHONIK with LOKKHI TERRA: The Bullingdon** – World folk and funk fusion, stretching from Dhaka to Havana at tonight’s Bossaphonik special – *see main preview*  
**KNOCK OUT KAINE + HEARTBREAK REMEDY + HELLION RISING: The Cellar** – More heavy goings on courtesy of OxRox with former *Kerrang!* Best New Unsigned Band Knock Out Kaine out on tour to promote second album ‘Rise of the Electric Jester’, following supports to Status Quo and Steven Adler, drawing comparisons to Queen and Guns’n’Roses in their pursuit of that classic 80s debauched rock sound. They’re joined by Cumbrian rockers Heartbreak Remedy, mixing up punk, funk and blues with big rock riffs.  
**GODSBANE + DEAD A THOUSAND TIMES + REMNANT + VIOLENCE IS GOLDEN: The Wheatsheaf** – Heavy rocking from Viking metallers Godsbane and more.  
**PAUL DOWNES: The Swan, Ascott-under-Wychwood** – Wychwood Folk Club hosts veteran singer and acoustic guitarist Paul Downes – a long-time playing partner of Phil Beer and Steve Knightley, who’s also played as part of The Arizona Smoke Revue and The Joyce Gang, but now out on tour to promote his third solo album.  
**THE GUNS’N’ROSES EXPERIENCE: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Tribute band.

## SUNDAY 24<sup>th</sup>

**DISCO LOCO: The Bullingdon**

## MONDAY 25<sup>th</sup>

**JEREMY LOOPS: The Bullingdon** – Lively, inclusive mix of hip hop, funk, folk, and blues from the Cape Town eco-activist, back in town



*Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup>*  
**THE DEFILED: The Bullingdon**  
They were the first band ever to play a gig on a free-floating iceberg, and when guitarist Aaron Curse left the band in 2014 they killed him off in a video. Fair to say that London’s The Defiled enjoy a bit of rock and roll theatre. Course they do: they look like extras from *Mad Max*; they’ve toured with The Murderdolls, Skindred and Deathstars; *Kerrang!* hailed them as saviours of UK metal, and *Metal Hammer* awarded them Best New Band at their Golden Gods awards. Throw in the requisite Download, Sonisphere and Bloodstock appearances and The Defiled are rock beasts to their core. Their core being an industrial beating heart that’s inspired by Ministry and Nine Inch Nails as much as it is by Machine Head. In fact you’ll unearth everything from classic synth-pop to metalcore amid their anthemic noise and this month they’re off on a UK tour to promote new album ‘Running In Circles’. Saying all that, the video to their song ‘As I Drown’ does remind us of that video of goths dancing to the *Thomas the Tank Engine* music, and if you spend over £50 on merch at their website they’ll send you a special Defiled snow globe for free, but really, all this just makes us like them even more.

after supporting Twenty One Pilots at their sold-out show at the O2 in November.

## TUESDAY 26<sup>th</sup>

**ALAN BARNES & THE OXFORD JAZZ QUARTET: The Bullingdon**  
**SPARK’S SIDE OF THE MOON: The James Street Tavern**

## WEDNESDAY 27<sup>th</sup>

**THE DEFILED: The Bullingdon** – Iceberg-riding, snow globe-touring industrial metal terror from the London noisemongers – *see main preview*  
**SARAH DE WARREN + DOLLY MAVIES + FRANKIE McCRACKEN + CLAIRE HODGKIN: The Wheatsheaf** – Female singer-songwriters showcase from It’s All About the Music.

## THURSDAY 28<sup>th</sup>

**MAIIANS: The Cellar** – Independent Venue Week show, curated by BBC Oxford Introducing and featuring local tripped-out electro instrumentalists Maiians, plus more tbc.  
**RAVENEYE: The Bullingdon** – Hard-rocking blues from Raveneye at tonight’s Haven Club show, fresh from supporting Slash on tour around Europe, Canada and the States, as well as dates with Deep Purple. The band are fronted by Norfolk’s young blues starlet Oli Brown, who’s played at the Haven before under his own name,

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Tingewick Village Hall, Friday 29th January. 7.30pm

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The Bullingdon, Friday 5th February, 7pm

Aoife O'Donovan Trio  
+ support

Tingewick Village Hall, Friday 26th February. 7.30pm

Dan Stuart  
+ Fernando

Tingewick Village Hall, Saturday 27th February. 7.30pm

Angel Snow &  
Matthew Perryman Jones  
+ support

The Bullingdon, Friday 8th April, 7pm

Hot Club of Cowtown  
+ No support

The Bullingdon, Thursday 21st April, 7pm

Richmond Fontaine  
+ Fernando

The Bullingdon, Friday 6th May, 7pm

Cale Tyson Band  
+ Loud Mountain

The Bullingdon, Saturday 11th June, 7pm

Police Dog Hogan  
+ support

The Bullingdon, Friday 21st October, 7pm

Stray Birds  
+ support

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the singer and guitarist having won best new artist, best singer and best album at the British Blues Awards in recent times as well as playing in John Mayall’s band.  
**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 29<sup>th</sup>**  
**VOODOO VEGAS + NEW GENERATION SUPERSTARS + THE BLACK BULLETS: The Wheatsheaf** – Classic rock and metal and glam in the vein of Led Zep, Judas Priest and Guns’n’Roses from south coast rockers Voodoo Vegas at tonight’s OxRox show, the band back in Oxford after supporting Y&T here last year as well as going out on tour with Status Quo, Uriah Heap and The Answer, and now out on a headline tour to promote recent EP ‘Hypnotise’.  
**BIG NARSTIE + FEKKY: O2 Academy** – Award-winning Brixton grime star Big Narstie comes to Oxford, having proved to be one of the genre’s most eclectic protagonists – featuring on records by NDubz, Professor Green and Example, as well as releasing two EPs of Britpop covers along the way and playing the part of an agony aunt, Uncle Pain, on Youtube.  
**PULSE: The Bullingdon** – Hip hop and grime club night with Guv, Sub Zero, Upgrade and more.  
**MAD LARRY + AUTUMN SAINTS + SKA MEISTERS + CHASING DAYLIGHT + GET LOOSE: The Jericho Tavern** – 60s r’n’b from Mad Larry at tonight’s It’s All About the Music show, plus bluesy rock Autumn Saints.

**SATURDAY 30<sup>th</sup>**  
**ELIZA & THE BEAR: The Bullingdon** – Expansive, euphoric afropop-inflected indie-folk from the London starlets, drawing comparisons to Arcade Fire and Dry The River, out on tour ahead of their new album in the spring.  
**GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES with CHEROKEE + ELEVANT + LUCY LEAVE: The Wheatsheaf** – A particularly noisy edition of musical monthly Gappy Tooth Industries tonight, with local grunge-garage duo Cherokee cranking it out in pleasingly Mudhoney-inspired style, alongside Liverpool’s splendidly frenetic tech-grunge-post-punk crew Elevant nodding

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frantically to Tool and The Mars Volta. Spiky, fuzzy hypno-rockers Lucy Leave open the show, reminding us of The Wedding Present’s noisier trips as well as Pixies and Pavement’s indie-noise fun.  
**SIMPLE presents DENSE & PIKA: The Bullingdon** – A rare opportunity to see previously mysterious electro duo Dense & Pika (aka producer, DJ and Hypercolour honcho Alex Jones and Chris Spero, better known under his Glimpse guise), the pair having emerged on the back of a series of acclaimed white labels to record for Drumcode and Hotflush, as well as remix Leftfield, Digitalism and Disclosure, while eventually being coaxed to play live at Fabric, Trouw and Panorama.  
**PRINCESS SLAYER + JOHNNY & THE BRIDES + MARK COPE + ULYSSES WELLS: The Jericho Tavern** – Electro-pop, r’n’b and hip hop from Surrey’s Princess Slayer at tonight’s It’s All About the Music show.  
**THE SHADES + JAMBUSTERS + DANIEL EAGLE: The Wheatsheaf, Banbury** – 60s-flavoured r’n’b in the vein of The Rolling Stones, Yardbirds and early Beatles from The Shades.  
**THE OTHER BEATLES: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Tribute band.  
**THE MIGHTY CADILLACS: The Woodman, North Leigh**

**SUNDAY 31<sup>st</sup>**  
**FM: O2 Academy** – Classic hard rock from the reformed 80s survivors, touring their ninth studio album, ‘Heroes & Villains’.  
**THE DREAMING SPIRES + LEWIS & LEIGH: The Bullingdon** – The local Americana stars play a hometown show at the end of a year that’s seen them touring the States, including AmericanaFest, and be nominated for three awards at the inaugural UK Americana Awards. That includes a nomination for Best Album for ‘Searching For the Supertruth’, their acclaimed second album, a timeless blend of traditional country, Big Star, The Band and Buffalo Springfield. UK/US duo Lewis & Leigh support.  
**PAUL CARRACK: The New Theatre** – The blue-eyed soul singer returns to Oxfordshire following his appearance at Fairport’s Cropredy Convention last summer.  
**TOM IVEY + SCOTT GORDON BAND + SAL & TONY + NIKKI PETHERICK + PURPLE MAY: The Wheatsheaf (3:30-7:30pm)** – Free live unplugged music.



photo by Ian Wallman

STORNOWAY / CHARLIE CUNNINGHAM

St John the Evangelist

Charlie Cunningham is from Bedfordshire and lives in London but in recent years has spent much of his time in Seville and the influence of traditional Spanish music runs deeply through his music, in particular the flamenco flourish of his guitar playing, his fingers nimbly picking and plucking the strings or tapping out a rhythm on its body with understated virtuosity. But it’s his voice that’s the real star of the show, a warm, rich tenor that fills even this open, ornate venue, the sometimes hymnal nature of his romantic songs at odds with his blokey good humour. He’s already toured with King Creosote and a couple of nights before this gig he supported Rodriquez in London, and you feel we’ll be hearing a lot more of Charlie Cunningham in the months to come.  
Stornoway, it’s fair to say, don’t do gigs. They do events. Previous hometown shows have taken place in intimate pool halls and the grandiose Sheldonian

Theatre, and this run of dates follows a series of shows at nature reserves around the UK. Dark, sticky gig venues just don’t suit Stornoway’s music. The band appear for the first song up on St John’s high balcony for the first song, the lush four-way harmonies of ‘Josephine’ accompanied only by simple acoustic guitar. This show is intended to promote their new ‘Bonxie Unplucked’ acoustic EP but really it’s a full-on electric Stornoway concert. While the stripped-down take on ‘The Road You Didn’t Take’ perfectly suits the song’s sense of longing, and brings out much of the subtle invention that infests each and every Stornoway song, the near orchestral sweep on ‘The Coldharbour Road’ simply takes your breath away, the song like the giant swell of an Atlantic storm, the aching violin line a seabird riding the tempest. Utterly captivating and not a little humbling in its simple majesty. It’s nearly equalled though by the hazy, almost

psychedelic shimmer of ‘Farewell Appalachia’ and the gorgeously optimistic but autumnal ‘Fuel Up’, and its melancholic twin, ‘End of the Movie’. Of the unplucked tracks the bright-eyed and bushy-tailed ‘Get Low’ and the open-hearted ‘Between The Saltmarsh and the Sea’ stand out, although it’s inevitable set closer ‘Zorbing’ that gets even this politely enthusiastic crowd jiggling in their seats. Lest you think Stornoway playing in a church is a sombre occasion, there’s plenty of humour too: from Brian Briggs’ getting the crowd to make animal noises to test the church’s acoustics, to self-deprecating tales of David Attenborough turning down the invitation to come and see a gig and Bill Oddie wanting to video the band in the middle of a Bonxie nesting site.  
If Stornoway regularly use the wonders of nature – from animals and birds to the sea and mountains – as metaphors for love and life, the higher the band’s career rises, the more spectacular their horizon becomes. Quietly, gently awe-inspiring.  
*Dale Kattack*

THE MEN THAT WILL NOT BE BLAMED FOR NOTHING

The Bullingdon

Steampunk really is one of the strangest musical genres or sub cults of recent generations. While even hardened goths happily walk the streets in broad daylight, you’d be hard pressed to discover a full-grown man dressed as a cross between a 19<sup>th</sup> Century explorer and a 22<sup>nd</sup> Century airship pilot browsing the fresh grocery section on Sainsbury’s. Obviously it exists beyond the confines of music, its adherents imagining they exist in a fantastical alternative universe, one designed by Mervyn Peake, Terry Gilliam and Philip Pullman, but its musical arm has made inroads into Oxford’s music scene, notably with the regular gig gatherings at The Gardeners Arms in Jericho, while tonight the Bully hosts London’s The Men That Will Not Be Blamed For Nothing, a quartet who promise to put the punk into steampunk.  
And punk it is, albeit punk if it had emerged in Dickensian times, bearded singer Andrew O’Neill, in period hat and aeronaut goggles, coming on all Jimmy Pursey by way of a London pea souper, raw Sham 69 chords and occasional Sabbath riffs knocked out with blunderbuss subtlety in songs

decrying the political corruption and social conditions of a time gone by – from ‘Not Your Typical Victorian’, and ‘Doing It For The Whigs’, with a wit and venom that makes them sound like a particularly raucous episode of *Horrible Histories: Vile Victorians*. For all the shouting and buzzsaw noise they’re pin sharp lyrically, particularly on a song about Isambard Kingdom Brunel, though they can be equally daft, as on ‘The Gin Song’, and when O’Neill gets out a saw to play, they show they can do musically clever and subtle too.  
Of course, at its core, it’s grown men in fancy dress playing pretend, bawdy drinking songs for backstreet alehouses, but there’s the very essence of rock and roll in a nutshell: as soon as you stop being able to be silly, you’re halfway to death, and if you’ve ever imagined Lionel Bart’s *Oliver!* gene spliced with *The Great Rock’n’Roll Swindle*, TMTWNBBFN’s mahogany and leather time machine is waiting to take you home.  
*Dale Kattack*

## REIGN OF FURY / GHETIKA / RETRIBUTION

### The Wheatsheaf

Metal tried evolving once, but it didn't really work out. With the advent of nu-metal somehow it just managed to get dumber, and when it tried to get smart and throw in a load of technique, it lost its soul (which is far worse than selling it to Satan). Retribution are dead set on returning metal to the cave, where it might set about working of the mysteries of fire. Essentially they borrow heavily from the heavier end of the spectrum of 80s metal, throw in a little tech, and bare-chested homo-eroticism for good measure. There's nothing new here, but it is rollicking good fun.

Ghetika's black metal meets rock and roll meets morris dancing mash-up is gloriously entertaining, but mainly because they are apparently completely unaware that they're so close to crossing the line into parody. Resplendent in corpse paint, and growling at the audience in that low rumble that was once shocking but is now ubiquitous, they bash through a set that, whilst unchallenging, conjures up fond memories of Kvelertak's first album. The problem

is, they're far too happy. Bands in corpse paint shouldn't be smiling and growling thanks to the bar staff, not during a set anyway. They should be sacrificing virgins, or giving praise to the dark lord, or some adequately evil act. It's nice to see the return of the pointy-headstock guitar, as modelled by the likes of Dave Mustaine when the Big Four ruled the world. Reign Of Fury like a pointy-headed guitar, and evidently they liked it when the Big Four ruled as well, because their set appears to have been concocted in the Bay Area somewhere between 1983 and 1986. They're not quite at Slayer or Metallica levels, but had they existed during the period, they'd have fitted in quite well alongside the likes of Sacred Reich, Forbidden or Xentrix. There's little in the way of meddling with the blueprint, but as with all the bands tonight there's no need to mess with the formula if it works so well. It's a bit of a timewarp, but sometimes the past can be a fun place to visit for a night. *Sam Shepherd*

## TEN FE / THE AUREATE ACT / JOHNNY PAYNE

### The Jericho Tavern

Johnny Payne is strumming a hollow-bodied guitar whilst wearing one of those country shirts with breast pockets that look like smiley mouths. The melancholic rocking tunes are good, and Johnny's voice is excellent (as anyone who remembers Deer Chicago will attest), but he is perhaps rather too in awe of all things American. It's fine to write songs about travelling the States or walking the Brooklyn Bridge, but slipping in US terms when there are decent English ones lying around (tail-lights, gas stations, diner checks) just seems like trying too hard. This is a minor anglophile niggle, though, and we look forward to catching Johnny soon with his backing band... hopefully they'll play 'Cilantro Faucet Recess Thumbtacks'. The Aureate Act's opening number mixes the proggy poise of vintage Genesis, the bucolic coolness of Talk Talk, and snatches of King Crimson's abstract blow-outs. It is, frankly, a vast mess, as is the rest of the set, with tempo changes grinding gears, random guitar notes bubbling up unpredictably like swamp gas, and rippling piano jarring against hyperactive basslines: perhaps they've taken the advice of some gig-hardened Sun Tzu who counsels "if your enemy can't work out what you're supposed to be playing, they can't tell when

you've done it wrong". Despite being a huge indigestible curate's omelette, the set leaves us fascinated, and intrigued to revisit a band with more ideas and references than they seem to be able to marshal. Perhaps they will win this war, after all. After a fifth column in the audience has closed the curtains that bisect the Jericho, thus forcing us all into a dark space before the stage, and London's Ten Fe start their grinning, bouncy pop, tonight's Tigmus show suddenly has the feeling of an event. Or possibly a cult recruitment exercise. Like a never-ending strip-lit airport travelator, their bright songs just chug on relentlessly, repeating tiny catchy motifs above elementary basslines. At their best, they are like a krautrock cross between The Stone Roses and Boney M; at their worst they're like a squeaky clean mixture of Flowered Up and Climie Fisher. We honestly aren't sure whether a closer shoving the melody from 'I'm A Believer' over bits of 'Where The Streets Have No Name' is wonderful or imbecilic, but the trio have such presence and self-belief it's hard to argue. Perhaps Sun Tzu told them, "play every venue like it's a sold-out stadium". Sun Tzu, by the way, was nicking the takings while those curtains were closed and changing his phone number. *David Murphy*

## FOOD Holywell Music Room

Subdued lighting and a stage crowded with laptops, electronic gizmos, and a variety of percussion greets what is sadly a smallish turnout for a band with an impressive pedigree. Food started out as collaboration between one Brit and three Norwegians way back and quickly became noted for very cool free jazz, which steered clear of the aggression that sometimes features in this music. When in 2006 two of the Norwegians left the kitchen, saxophonist Iain Ballamy and drummer Thomas Strönen decided to carry on as a duo. They'd already been experimenting with electronics in their music but this accelerated, so now they're as likely to be found under avant garde electronica as in the jazz section. Tonight's gig begins acoustically though, with Bellamy's sax issuing a brief, gloriously pure clarion call (he's a fantastic player of ballads). This leads into an opener of about 45 minutes of continuous sounds (so no starter, straight into the main course) with the duo improvising and drawing on material from their latest album. This consists of recorded improvisations filleted and pared down by Strönen in the

studio. So they're improvising on improvisations: music making can't get anymore organic, surely. Their less-is-more approach seems to softly coax the processed sax loops and brush drum strokes, the ambient hisses and drones and samples (including, in the latter part of the gig, fairground noises and what sounds like a beating heart) gently into the room. Their acoustic playing weaves in and out of the various atmospheric textures with Bellamy blowing into an electronic wind instrument as well as his sax, and Strönen using bells, blocks, and a gong, and then punching through the soundscape with staccato rim shots. A melody might flicker brightly before subsiding and being succeeded by another. Despite moments when they sound like a low-key Sigur Ros or even Polar Bear, Food impressively show they are originals who continue to find new ways of making beguiling music after many years of playing together. They certainly serve up a sophisticated meal, though one that will have given more satisfaction to fans of nouvelle cuisine than anyone craving steak and chips. *Colin May*

## HAPPY MONDAYS O2 Academy

No-one's apologising for feeling excited tonight. From modest roots in Manchester in 1980 Happy Mondays became a legend that far outstripped mere musical talent; their jaw-droppingly reprehensible behaviour never stopped them producing a clutch of classic albums that zigzagged across genres like a car trying to outrun cops on a motorway. The inevitable implosion in 1994 was followed over time by a couple of partial reformations, but tonight we have six out of seven of the classic line-up with only keyboardist Paul Davis absent, replaced by a local lad called Dan. This tour marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 'Pills 'n' Thrills and Bellyaches', the album that came to define the 1990 Madchester vibe of ecstasy, raving and (at least up North) impossibly baggy trousers. All the band look a lot healthier than they deserve as Shaun Ryder launches into the opening lines of 'Kinky Afro' that once seemed to sum the band up: "Son I'm thirty, I only went with your mother 'cos she's dirty, and I don't have a decent bone in me, what you get is just what you see yeah". Bez's trademark backwards dancing is still an essential part of the whole performance, while Rowetta Satchell belts out her lines with a voice that could stir the dead. Yet the

truly key ingredient remains Mark Day's guitar playing, integral to the songs just as it seems completely removed, mixing up rhythm and lead, from indie chops into Beefheart-like Delta blues slide excursions, always making perfect sense. Gary Whelan's drumming retains its infectious blend of Manchester 80s indie and 70s urban funk, while Shaun surprises us by seeming to remember all his lyrics. 'Step On' brings the biggest cheer as the ageing ravers in the crowd rediscover memories of dancing in fields at dawn, but there was always more to the band; in fact the first two albums owe more to Hank Williams and Lead Belly than acid house. The whole set is far more enjoyable than many expected, and performed with greater maturity and gusto than their headline set at Glastonbury 1990, though that may be down to their reported abstinence from the drugs they were once constantly associated with. After a spirited encore of 'Wrote for Luck', always better without the remix enhancements, the band exit the stage leaving Bez at its edge, with outstretched arms and bug-eyes, yelling "Oxford! Oxford!" It's as though, having neatly recaptured some past magic, he can't bear to lose it all again. *Art Lagun*

## CHAD VALLEY / OSLO PARK / MAIIANS / ESTHER JOY LANE

### The Bullingdon

For a decade so regularly derided, the 1980s continues to exert a strong gravitational pull on modern musicians. Every act tonight finds a wormhole back to those times, even if many of them weren't even born then. Esther Joy Lane probably owes the least debt to that decade, although her gorgeously smooth, sultry soul voice regularly reminds us of Sade and Tracy Thorn. An early start to the gig means we only catch her last couple of songs but 'You Know', with its emotional discomfort and breathless vocal, feels like a barely suppressed panic attack and is irresistible. While it's become a cliché to say so, Maiians' gigs are like a trip in every sense. Exploring the cosmic end of electronic music, propelled ever onward by two live drummers, occasionally dipping into languid, tropical breakdowns before building itself up again, their set possesses a similar dynamic to a rave, the blissed-out grooves and shifting back projections – motorways, planes, unfurling foliage, fractals – reinforcing the acid house feel of their sound. Closer 'Lemon' is a distillation of everything they do so well: meandering elegantly but with certainty of purpose to some pre-dawn chillout club to give the party a serious kick up the backside in the company of Fuck Buttons and Banco de Gaia. If Maiians spent their 80s tripping their nuts off at cool raves, Brighton's Oslo Park spent theirs hoping no-one would discover their secret stash of Level 42 records and Kajagoogoo posters. This is the sort of music, we remind ourselves, that gave the

80s such a bad name. Chugging out a vaguely post-Foals form of indie funk, they manage to make it all the way through their set without once hinting at a memorable tune, although there's a brief moment of promise when their finale number threatens to be Simple Minds' 'Someone, Somewhere In Summertime', before quickly disolving into something Spandau Ballet left behind when they stopped being new romantics and turned into Wet Wet Wet. Chad Valley has always had an unabashed affection for 80s pop, to the point he titled one of his EPs 'Equatorial Ultravox'. His 80s retro trip is a fine balancing act between the good, the bad and the ugly of that decade. Joined tonight by Texan singing partner Pamela Martinez and backed by three light towers that make the stage look like a mini-me version of Gary Numan's old sci-fi stage sets, this is the last night of a three-month American, European and UK tour, and a homecoming show for Hugo Manuel. At his best his woozy, wowsy electro-pop and r'n'b is luxurious and seductive, euphoric set-pieces touching base with Ryuichi Sakamoto, Arthur Russell and even Future Sound of London, but much of the material from new album 'Entirely New Blue' features Autotuned vocals or lapses into George Michael balladry, stripping it of Hugo's usual characterful invention. Such invention was a big part of the best bit of the 80s whatever the detractors claim. Hopefully Chad Valley's future journeys back to that time remind him as much. *Victoria Waterfield*

## JULIA MEIJER / KONE / WATER PAGEANT / RICHARD NEUBERG

### The Jericho Tavern

With two of the acts on the bill having enjoyed breakthrough years in 2015 and Julia Meijer returning after a hiatus following her triumphant show at the 2014 Punt, tonight's activities promise to provide a memorable coda to an excellent year of Oxford music. Richard Neuberg kicks things off with a set of Michael Stipe-inflected vocals and intricate guitar and does a good job of pleasing a reviewer's companion brought up in Nashville, Tennessee – no mean achievement. Enter Water Pageant, flush with the success of their terrific debut album 'Outlines'. Given the packed itinerary, it will have been a tricky decision narrowing down the twelve songs on the LP to only half that number but the band rise to the occasion, the influence of Sufjan Stevens even more to the fore live than on record. It's a set indebted very much to Stevens' delicate, folk tinged 'Carrie and Lowell' vintage than the experimental 'Age of Adz' that we are treated to. Opener 'Seamstress' does a good job of evoking the Wessex world of Thomas Hardy, concertina tugging in the background. Kone up the amps a few notches with a selection of songs that show some level of

development since their recent Bullingdon showpiece. Their decision to air *Nightshift* top twenty fiver 'No Colour World' early in that previous performance was mildly questioned in these pages but here they choose to not even include it at all, opting instead for a variation that recalls swamp rock, punk funk and The Fall as well as indie innovators of different eras, Salad and Prinzhorn Dance School. Still, it's 'Bauhaus Table' that emerges as a highlight, closely rivalled by the lugubrious 'Case Studies'. Julia Meijer is here to launch double A-sided single 'Oceans'/'England' and ably assisted by a full band including Seb Reynolds of Flights of Helios, it's a sequence high on atmospheric. Meijer's gorgeous vocals complement many different layers of sound and the guitars chime perfectly with keyboards. The track 'London' is one of the gloomier numbers but 'Oceans' is jauntier and it's an effervescent, upbeat set indeed. Any of the songs would fit perfectly in a compilation of music from Sweden, Julia's homeland – think the Concretes or The Cardigans at their best. *Rob Langham*

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Dr SHOTOVER - This article has multiple issues [Dr S backs into the East Indies Club Bar shaking his fist]... And STAY OUT! [Turns]. Ah, there you are. Horrible little Dickensian Christmas urchins. Thank God THAT’s all over. Too, too ghastly. Brrr, worse than my summer 2011 visit to the Hoodieford Estate in Tottenham. Pass me a drink. GLUGG, GLUGG, GLUGG. Let me tell you, that’s the last time I go to an Alphabet Backwards gig. Now, where was I? Oh yes, New Year’s resolutions. Well, that’s easy. NONE. Unless you count my firm decision to drink loads more in 2016, expand my range of exotic Seventies drugs, and listen to some of the Incredible String Band albums I’ve never heard, e.g. *The Magician’s Wibbly-Wobbly Trousers*, *Are We All Tiny?*, and *COOEEE Princess Harriet*. No, you’re right, maybe I’ll just get the expanded box set of *In Search of Space* outtakes instead. What’s that? Have I experienced *The Force Awakens* yet? Ha ha, you wouldn’t ask that if you’d sat next to me at a *Nightshift* Christmas Curry Night... Talking of which, can’t wait till the next one. If Our Esteemed Editor can find a place that will still have us. We seem to have closed down all the ones where you used to be able to bring your own booze. Wonder what happened THERE...? Cheers! Line ‘em up! Down the ruddy old hatch!

Next: month: Bridge of Mince Pies

GERTCHA! Chas ‘n’ Dave wish you a Right-On New Year.

# INTRODUCING....

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

## LITTLE RED

**Who are they?**  
Little Red are an Oxfordshire / Berkshire based alt-folk trio, formed by Hayley Bell (*vocals*), Ben Gosling (*vocals; bass; guitars; drums; keyboards; production*) and Ian Mitchell (*vocals; guitars*). They formed in 2014 and have released four records so far. Their most recent EPs, ‘The Huntsman’, and a remix EP ‘Teeth, We Have’, featuring re-workings by the likes of Tiger Mendoza and Foci’s Left, were released last month on local label All Will Be Well Records.

**What do they sound like?**  
Little Red inhabit the shadowy woodland realm of dark folk, taking traditional folk sounds for a walk into the forest where they can be menaced by wolves and unknown terrors. New EP ‘The Huntsman’ is equally sweet, and foreboding. Their mix’n’match approach to vocals duties – including guest turns – and three-way harmonies keep thing fresh, while the inventive electronic remixes of ‘Teeth, We Have’ cast new shadows on their music.

**What inspires them?**  
“We like to make our music very visual. Lyricism and sound that illustrates stories of the darker sides to life. We aim for a contrast between sounding quite sweet and sounding quite menacing; however, lyrically, I would like to think that there is an extra layer to consider. Mass drownings, visceral knife crime and stories about wolves seem to be where we are right now.”

**Career highlight so far:**  
“The recent review in *Nightshift* for the two new EPS meant an awful lot, as we respect the publication and the work that is being done. Besides that, playing Oxford Town Hall for Oxford Folk Festival and playing live on BBC Radio was a real pleasure. Also, seeing our album in the shops for the first time was rather surreal and wonderful.”

**And the lowlight**  
“Playing in noisy pubs that lack proper, engaged audiences – something we

have done very little as Little Red, thankfully.

**Their favourite other Oxfordshire act is:**  
“Our label buddies and live collaborators Club Soda. Tom and Nathan’s new stuff is sounding awesome.”

**If they could only keep one album in the world, it would be:**  
“‘Desire’ by Bob Dylan. Tunes like ‘Hurricane’, ‘One More Cup of Coffee’ and ‘Isis’ are the closest thing anyone will get to penning the perfect song.”

**When is their next local gig and what can newcomers expect?**  
“We premier our new EPs at The Bullingdon in February. Expect new tracks from the EPs as well as some of the singles from the other records.”

**Their favourite and least favourite things about Oxford music are:**  
“Oxford is a small city with a lot of heart. We are thrilled to be part-based in a city where there is so much musical history and culture. Institutions like Truck Store, *Nightshift* and venues like The Bullingdon and O2 offer a real opportunity for bands to start taking things a little more seriously. Alternatively, it can feel a little cliquy– the community can feel smaller than it actually is at times if you don’t remember to look around once in a while.”

**You might love them if you love:**  
Isobel Campbell & Mark Lanegan; The Staves; PJ Harvey; Elliot Smith; First Aid Kit; Tom McCrae.

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# ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

## 20 YEARS AGO

Following on from the news that **Ride** were set to split after the release of fourth album ‘Tarantula’ (see last issue), *Nightshift*’s January 1996 issue looked forward to the local bands that might be following in the footsteps of Ride, **Radiohead** and **Supergrass** this year. Among the names mentioned were **The Egg**, **Beaker**, **The Bigger the God**, **Wonderland**, **The Relationships** and **Dustball**, who would all go on to varying degrees of success before disbanding or mutating into other acts, with trance-funk crew The Egg – who still exist in a slimmed-down form, now based in Bristol – enjoying the best fortunes, including having their track ‘Walking Away’ bootlegged by **David Guetta** and reaching Number 3 in the charts on the back of its use in a Citroen advert, featuring an ice-skating robot car.

Despite it being January there was a clutch of local releases out this month, not least a single release for Radiohead’s ‘Street Spirit (Fade Out)’, which had topped *Nightshift*’s end of year Top 20 the month before. Also out, and chartbound, was ‘Whole Lotta Love’ by **Goldbug**, featuring vocals from Oxford singer **Sandra McKenzie**, which went to Number 3. This month also saw album releases for electronic experimentalists **B So Global** and **Omlo Vent**, whose **Jon Seagroatt** and **Ian Staples** are still out there at the far reaches of musical adventurism, performing as Red Square, with improv supergroup **Non-Stop Tango** and myriad other projects.

The fact that **Shed Seven** were probably the most notable name in the gig guide this month tells you everything you need to know about how quiet January 1996 was.

## 10 YEARS AGO

A decade on from being tipped as newcomers to watch **The Relationships** were still going strong in January 2006, playing at **The Exeter Hall** in Cowley alongside **Les Clochards**, who are still going strong. As is **Ally Craig** who was also playing the now defunct venue this month. These days he fronts oddball popstrels **Bug Prentice**, but back then he was sharing a stage with **Rebecca Mosley**, who was a big favourite of *Nightshift* and who we’d love to hear more music from at some point in the not too distant future.

This being January, we were looking forward to the new acts set to become household names on the local scene. Amid a slew of names were a bunch of youngsters called **Foals**, who’d recently changed their named from **The Edmund Fitzgerald**, having mutated from their original incarnation of **Elizabeth**. Their later career didn’t turn out too shabbily. Other names in the pot of hope included **Harry Angel**, **The Keyboard Choir**, **Holiday Stabbings**, **And No Star**, **Where I’m Calling From**, **Belarus**, **Witches** and the utterly fantastic and very much missed **Degüello**, who we’d dearly love to come back to life, if only for one gig one day. Make it happen!

Last month **Part Chimp** made their overdue return to Oxford, still remembered as the loudest band ever to play in town, and it was exactly a decade ago that they made their reputation, headlining a four-way bill of utter noise carnage at **The Wheatsheaf** alongside **Hey Colossus**, **Todd and Lords**. Our ears, and the Sheaf’s foundations, have never been the same since. Biggest gig of the month though, was the double bill of **Corrosion of**

## THIS MONTH IN OXFORD MUSIC HISTORY

**Conformity** and **Clutch** at **The Zodiac**.  
Interestingly, Zodiac owner **Nick Moorbath** is quoted in the January 2006 issue of *Nightshift* denying rumours that the venue is set to be sold to the **Academy Music Group**. “Gossip and speculation, that’s all it is,” he told us, “the only thing that is definite is that the Zodiac will undergo a major refurbishment next year.” Shortly after, it was sold. To the Academy Music Group.

## 5 YEARS AGO

Talking of bands being reincarnated, January 2006’s *Nightshift* found **Dive Dive** on the cover, three quarters of the band having made their name as Dustball all them years previously. **Tarrant Anderson**, **Nigel Powell** and **Ben Lloyd** had been given time off playing with **Frank Turner** as **Sleeping Souls** to reconvene with singer **Jamie Stuart** and release their third album ‘Potential’, four years after ‘Revenge of the Mechanical Dog’. Their association with Turner had earned them a deal with Xtra Mile and having spent years on the road playing someone else’s songs, they were kitten-keen to be back playing their own material for a while. “I was more satisfied playing to sixty people fifteen minutes after the doors opened last night that I was to 1,500 people with Frank later in the evening, because the music had something of me in it,” said Nigel of the difference between playing with Dive Dive and The Sleeping Souls. A year after the feature Nigel would be playing to an audience of around a billion as Frank and band played the London Olympics opening ceremony. Doesn’t matter what Morrissey sang, here at *Nightshift* we love it when our friends get famous.

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# DEMOS

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## DEMO OF THE MONTH

### FIREGAZER

There's a sweet cartoon drawing on the cover of this CD depicting a bunch of musicians sat around a campfire with the ghosts of a Native American, a caveman and an astronaut, but initially at least it's the welcoming warmth of a pub snug bar that greets you, singer and accordionist Alan Foulkes leading a loping folk shanty in the form of 'Freedom Fly', fiddle player Mike East adding to the rootsy party vibe as Firegazer waft easily through similar territory to The Waterboys' 'Fisherman's Blues'. They continue in this mood for 'Father's Gun', and while it's gently persuasive you're starting to wonder where, if anywhere, it can go that hasn't been done a thousand times before. But then a shadow falls across the songs and Firegazer achieve the depth and elegance you feel they were striving for, and by demo closer 'Stolen Land' with its incessant, metronomic beat, Foulkes' vocal incantations and squalling fiddle climax, they're in an even darker, more fascinating place to where it all started and the spirit of that Native American seems to be getting in on the act. Through it all, it's Foulkes' accordion playing that is the real star turn, bringing out the natural warmth of the instrument while being ready and able to take it into darker waters with admirable invention. Draw the blinds, stick another couple of logs on the fire and crack open that bottle of Laphroaig – we'll be right over.

### THE FACTORY LIGHTS

We'll always make time and space for a local band who can take us on a lyrical guided tour of their wee corner of Oxfordshire, whether it's Supergrass's trippy tales from Shotover Hill, ATL?'s more tawdry memories of living in a Lucy House or Stornoway's surreal imagined zorbing journeys down Cowley Road. The Factory Lights is a side project of Shapes singer and local band veteran Ant Kelly and chums, taking a personal trip down memory lane, which in his case is a small side street in a Cowley that no longer exists as he lived it. So we get 'The Old School Wall' with its tale of a schooldays

*Demo of the Month wins a free half day at Soundworks studio in Oxford, courtesy of Umair Chaudhry. Visit [www.umairchaudhry.co.uk/nightshift](http://www.umairchaudhry.co.uk/nightshift)*

love affair in Temple Cowley, which could just as well be a musical love letter to Van Morrison or even Elvis Costello. The country-ish 'Tender Touch' feels like a polite Shire nod to Springsteen's small town blue collar love stories, while the chirpy 'It's Alright' is Ant's attempt to emulate the 60s r'n'b sound of The Small Faces, a band who themselves immortalised Oxford in 'Itchycoo Park', although when Ant later sings 'I'm Feeling High', he's less concerned with dropping a tab in South Park, instead celebrating the joy of watching his kids playing in the back garden. It's a perfect encapsulation of a songwriter who deals with the intimate concerns of everyday life with understated and delicate skill and an almost avuncular presence. Seriously, songs from and about Oxford are never going to be claustrophobic industrial noise storms are they? Not even songs about Didcot.

### THURSTON BANE

We really, really, hoped that Thurston Bane was a band inspired equally by Sonic Youth fretmangler Thurston Moore and brutish Batman baddie Bane – something of the claustrophobic industrial noise storm we were just saying that The Factory Lights weren't. It isn't, of course. It's an actual person called Thurston Bane who, by the sound of this demo, is more likely to sing you gently to sleep while making you a nice cup of tea rather than punch you mercilessly in the gut with an iron fist and an angular guitar chord. 'The Last Boat' starts us off well, a sad-eyed ballad of regret that reminds us a tad of John Cale (always a good thing), before he sticks his foot on the throttle for the upbeat rattle and skiffle of 'Freight Train' that feels too flat and tame to be the out-of-control runaway ride down the tracks we'd hoped for. Thankfully he seems to learn his lesson and retreats back to his piano for another maudlin ballad that suits his tremulous voice far better. Seemingly back on course he then sullies himself in almost gobsmackingly awful fashion with the stunted blues ramble that is 'Old Father Time'. It barely resembles the voice we'd just warmed to, sounding flat and off key. Demo closer, 'It's Hard For a Farmer to Find a Wife', sounds like John Cale singing a particularly bleak nursery rhyme version of The Wurzels' 'I've Got a Brand New Combine Harvester'. After which we're struggling to work out which is the real Thurston

Bane: he's not the malevolent musical terrorist of our initial hopes, and we hope he isn't just the tuneless dirgmeister of 'Old Father Time', so we're hoping in future he'll unmask himself more fully as the plaintive balladeer of his best moments.

### ROBERTO Y JUAN

After the panning Balloon Ascents chap Henry Soothill got in last month's demo pages, here's a rather more satisfying and successful side project from that band in the form of guitarist Robin Christensen-Marriott and chums, supposedly following a more Latin-influenced sound but on this evidence, simply taking Balloon Ascents' eclectic electro-indie-dub-folk-funk-pop for a wander down a grassy side track. Opener 'Pick Up the Sack' sounds pretty much like one of BA's more introverted picks with its glitchy, wandering rhythm, hip hop beats and airy mumble of a vocal, but the laidback, twinkling 'Blaaah' stumbles further into South American folk-pop. With oddly unstable rhythms coupled with little by way of a hum-along tune, there's the feeling this is a not entirely fully thought through attempt to experiment with BA's already not entirely straightforward pop, but that doesn't mean it's a waste of anyone's time. For all its lackadaisical (lack of) dynamics, there's a sunny, ambient charm about the better songs here, but maybe a decent dose of peyote might help this trip meander into more striking places.

### THE FIXATION

Last time we reviewed The Fixation we wondered at what point teenage bands decided that aspiring to be bland, attitude-free *X-Factor* wannabes was the way forward. Whether our less than sage words of advice had any effect on them, even to rile them enough to elicit some serious rock and roll response, is anyone's guess. Let's view the evidence. Well, maybe it did. There's certainly far more punch about these three tracks, armed as they are with more than a few droplets of Arctic Monkeys' uptight ire. Definitely an improvement for a band who we previously suggested might lose to 5 Seconds of Summer in a punch-your-way-out-of-a-wet-paper-bag competition. The singer in particular sounds a bit narked about something. Thing is, improvement though it might be to not remind us of Lawson any more, sounding a like a dirgy version of Arctic Monkeys with all the tunes removed probably still isn't something to be aspired to in the great scheme of things. Let's be kind and call it a partial success.

*Send demos for review to: Nightshift, PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU, or email links to [editor@nightshiftmag.co.uk](mailto: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.*

### VAGUEWORLD

We've pretty much missed the boat with this one, seeing as Vaguelworld have now disbanded as their members head off to university, but since the band made this recording with the studio time they got from winning Demo of the Month earlier in the year it feels fitting to review it anyway. That the song they recorded is called 'Fuck This' might be seen as a comment on the whole packing it in for further education, particularly as singer Luke Allmond laments "No-one will listen to these songs," but as they chant "Don't forget this," you detect a bit of fight, a sense of "we'll be back" about them, and as the song fuzzes politely through the sort of musical territory Dive Dive's softer songs once did, we're all set to bid them bon voyage and good fortune in their studies. But then they finish the song with the line "And fuck off *Nightshift*," which displays a callous lack of gratitude for the nice things we said about them last time. Well hey, fuck off yourselves Vaguelworld; nothing like burning a few bridges to keep you warm in the winter. Hope you get into a whole heap of student debt. Have fun paying for your next studio session with that hanging over you.

## THE DEMO DUMPER

We'd merrily hurl Vaguelworld into the dumper for their petty spoilt kid brattishness alone, but luckily for them there's always some musical shitmonger just around the corner with a bucket of aural offal that renders all comers redundant in the race to the bottom of the barrel. Christ, where to begin – particularly since Roadside Member don't seem to know where to end. Simultaneously sterile and rancid bluesy rock with nary a spark of life or originality about it, an elongated, strangled act of onanistic self-immolation that sounds like all the discarded floor sweepings and boring ballady bits of Poison, Bon Jovi and Ugly Kid Joe developing the most basic level of sentience and deciding to carry on where those monstrosities last left off. We genuinely believed, or at least hoped, that this kind of overwrought, histrionic musical cock omelette had become extinct when the 1980s were consigned to the dustbin of history. We've always been prone to delusional optimism. But hey, credit where it's due – they've gone and called themselves Member, which at least saves us the effort of having to.

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