



NIGHTSHIFT

Oxford's Music Magazine

**Free every
month
Issue 255
October
2016**

B

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G

PRENTICE

**“One of the
best things
music can do
is surprise
me, and how
could anyone
predict an
Ivor Cutler
song?”**

**Sweet songs and nasty noises
with Oxford's oddball pop trio.**

Also inside this issue:

**Introducing TWISTED STATE OF MIND
KLUB KAKOFANNEY turns 25
RIP 'Dr Didg'
UNDERSMILE announce split**

plus

**All your Oxford music news, previews, reviews,
and eight pages of local gigs for October**

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THE BULLINGDON

OCTOBER 2016 GIG & CLUB LISTINGS

Sunday 2nd October

Alan McGee's Musicians Against Homelessness
Paves
Neo Homeless Man
Ramona Rosa

Doors: 7pm

Monday 3rd October

Red Butler

Doors: 7pm

Wednesday 5th October

Native Soul feat. Pangolin
Macaco Project
Connor Patterson & Threadsun

Doors: 8pm

Thursday 6th October

Ward Thomas

Doors: 7pm

Friday 7th October

The Arkyard Sessions Feat. Rivers & Robots
Written in Kings Chariots

Doors: 7pm

Friday 7th October

Nigel Garage Feat. DJ Pied Piper

Doors: 8pm

Saturday 8th October

Meilyr Jones

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 8th October

Simple Presents
Nick Hoppner

Doors: 10pm

Sunday 9th October

Idles
Slate Hearts
Wardens

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 12th October

Fews

Doors: 7pm

Friday 14th & Saturday 15th October

What Became of us Festival
Gengahr, Yuck, Toy
Willie J Healey, Hudson Scott
Cabbage, October Drift, Van Zeller

Doors: 6pm & 2pm

Friday 14th October

What Became of Us Afterparty

Doors: 10pm

Saturday 15th October

Free Range Roots
Meets Dub Politics

Doors: 10pm

Sunday 16th October

All Tvbins
31Hours

Doors: 7.30pm

Monday 17th October

Hollis Brown

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 20th October

Pat McManus

Doors: 8pm

Friday 21st October

The Stray Birds

Doors: 7pm

Friday 21st October

Disco Ma Non Troppo
DJ Closed Stack
DJ Mangrove
DJ Rail Replacement Bus Service
Virtual DJ

Doors: 10pm

Saturday 22nd October

Rawdio
Bladerunner
Saxxon
Rizzle
Big Nang

Hollie-May

Hosted by MC Carasel

Doors: 10pm

Saturday 22nd October

The Long Insiders
The Shapes
Kuiper

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 27th October

Raveneye

Doors: 7pm

Friday 28th October

Ferocious Dog

Doors: 7pm

Friday 28th October

Tripwire Presents
PHI

Doors: 10pm

Saturday 29th October

The Travelling Band

Doors: 7.30pm

Saturday 29th October

Organised Fun Feat. Fouk and Crackazat

Doors: 10pm

Sunday 30th October

The Japanese House

Doors: 7pm

Wednesday 2nd November

Scout Killers
Blitzkrieg City
Daily Thompson

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 3rd November

Traams

Doors: 7pm

Friday 4th November

Audioscope Presents
Nought
Tomaga
Rhys Chatham's "GuitarTrio"

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 5th November

Rob Togoni
Hell's Gazelles

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 5th November

Simple Presents
Happa & Lone

Doors: 10pm

Sunday 6th November

Tiger Cub

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 10th November

The Mentulls

Doors: 7pm

Friday 11th November

Sara Watkins Trio

Doors: 7pm

Friday 11th November

SEIO Feat. Sunship

Doors: 10pm

Saturday 12th November

Buried in Smoke All Dayer

Doors: 12pm

Saturday 12th November

Free Range Roots

Doors: 10pm

Sunday 13th November

Frank Carter and The Rattlesnakes

Doors: 7pm

Friday 18th November

The Neville Staple Band
The Paradimes

Doors: 9pm

Saturday 19th November

The Showhawk Duo

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 19th November

Bossaphonik

Doors: 10pm

Monday 21st November

Fickle Friends

Doors: 7pm

Wednesday 23rd November

SN Dubstation

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 24th November

Federal Charm

Doors: 8pm

NEWS

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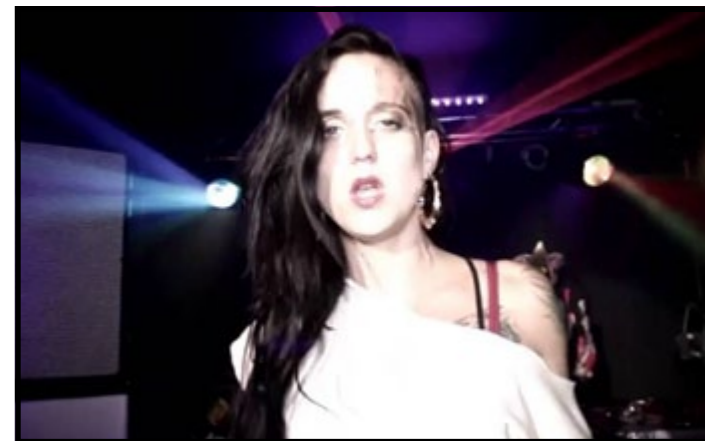
UNDERSMILE have announced they have split up. The band put up a statement on their Facebook page on the 16th September that said, "We've decided, as friends, that Undersmile has come to an end as of today. We're all hugely proud of what we've achieved with the band. We've been honoured and humbled by the support we've received from fans of the band and the international doom community as a whole in the seven years that we've been together. With so many things going on in our lives at the

moment we don't have the time and energy necessary to move the band forward."

The band, formed by singer-guitarists Hel Sterne and Taz Corona-Brown, along with bass player Ollie Corona-Brown and drummer Tom McKibbin in 2009, were renowned for being one of the most extreme bands ever to come out of Oxford. Their early gigs regularly saw them clearing venues of all but the hardest of gig goers, but as their reputation grew and the band began touring further afield, including tours across Europe, notably supporting Dylan Carson, they attracted a huge following and earned regular rave reviews for their original formed of sludgy, tectonic doom-metal that was described in one *Nightshift* feature as "a spectral moan from the cellar of a haunted dolls house."

Undersmile released two studio albums, 'Narwhal' in 2012, and 'Anhedonia' in 2015, as well as various EPs and split releases. 'Anhedonia' was hailed as "a doom masterpiece" on its release.

Taz and Ollie continue to play together in their band Drove, but for now, Oxford's venues are going to be quieter, safer, and far less exciting places.



OXJAM CELEBRATES ITS TENTH ANNIVERSARY with a full day of live music across ten stages in east Oxford on **Saturday 15th October**.

The Oxford Oxjam Takeover runs from midday to midnight, featuring over 50 live acts and DJ sets. Participating venues are East Oxford Community Centre (both rooms); Fusion Arts; The Library; The James Street Tavern; The Ultimate Picture Palace; Joe Perks; The Star; Truck Store, and Annie Sloan's upstairs gallery.

Among the acts performing are: Lowws; Death of Hi-Fi (*pictured*); Half Decent; Kancho; Masiro; The Beckoning Fair Ones; Kid Kin; After The Thought; Tiger Mendoza & David Griffiths; Hummingbird; Slate Hearts; Homeplanetearth; Be Good; Atlanta Swim; The Great Western Tears; Little Red, Ghosts in the Photographs; Moogiemann & the Masochists; Egrets; Esme Neale; Holy Moments; Luke Allmond; Overdog; Green Hands; Cosmosis, Sssh! The Deaf Have Aids vs Manacles of Acid; Esther Joy Lane; UNMAN; Balkan Wanderers; Dan Rawle; Cherokii; Roberto y Amigos; The Factory Lights; Crime; Amoral Compass; The Deadbeat Apostles; Ute (acoustic); Rose Segal; The Outside; a Young Women's Music Project takeover; The Dreaming Spires; Austin Lucas; Jess Hall; No Dice Grandma; The Fusion Project; Storyteller, and Progressively Less Elephant DJs.

Oxjam Oxford, this year sponsored by local construction company Basil Wyatt & Sons, is part of a n annual nationwide web of events raising money for Oxfam's anti-poverty work around the world. All-venue tickets, priced just £8 (+bf), are on sale now from **Wegotickets.com**, or on the day. Wristband exchange will be at East Oxford Community Centre from 11am. Regularly updated news will be on the Oxjam Oxford Facebook page.

On Friday 7th October Sofar Sounds host their own Oxjam benefit at a secret venue that will be made known to ticket holders the day before the show. Visit their Facebook page to find out more.

Abingdon hosts an Oxjam takeover on Saturday 29th October at The Unicorn Theatre. Kanadia, Coldredlight, All Is Worth and Sophronie will be performing. Tickets from the theatre and Remade Guitars.

GRAHAM WIGGINS 1962-2016

Tributes have been paid to Graham Wiggins, aka Dr Didg, who has died at the age of 53. Graham's passing was announced by his bandmates on Facebook on September 8th, with a statement that read, "It's with a heavy heart and sadness that we announce the unexpected passing of our dear friend and amazing musician Graham Wiggins (a.k.a. "Dr Didg") on September 7th. We have no details at this time other than he passed in his sleep. This is quite a shock to us. We've had nothing but amazing times and learned a lot through our travels with Graham. He was one of the most well-informed and classiest people you could know."

Born in New York, Graham earned a doctorate in physics from Oxford University and made his name as a pioneering didgeridoo player on the local scene – and far beyond – through the 1980s and 90s before moving back to the States in 2000. Having formed the band Outback with guitarist Martin Cradick in 1988, fusing traditional Australian aboriginal music with modern sounds, he later led Dr Didg, releasing some 15 albums and touring around the world. He invented a keyed didgeridoo while studying for his doctorate,



earning him the nickname Dr Didg, and his skills earned him a slot playing with The Grateful Dead, as well as becoming a staple of the UK festival scene.

Among those to pay tribute were local musicians and mastering engineer Tim Turan, who said, "I first met Graham when he came to my house in 1989 to record the track 'Dingo Go' with Martin Cradick, which got released on their first CD. I went on to record many performances of Outback, but one particular show they asked me to video. It was at the Jericho Tavern in 1991. Graham brought with him a huge gas tank and an ignition

source. All during the show he would emit these huge blasts of fire during the performance. The temperature in the room became unbearably hot and it was a minor miracle that the whole place didn't burn to the ground. Huge balls of fire rising from the stage at random intervals during the show it; wasn't really pyrotechnics it was just pyro in its purest form. I helped him purchase a portable DAT machine and microphone to take to Australia and asked him for some ambiances if he got the chance. He came back three months later with a two hour tape just for me as a thank you. Full of natural ambiances, rainstorms, thunder etc. I was knocked out at his generosity. He was a great musician to work with."

Graham's friend and former manager Jon Bell added, "Whilst everyone knew what a phenomenal didg player he was, skills honed by his living with a tribe of Aborigines in the Northern Territories for three months, few realise what a wonderfully gifted and classically trained pianist he was too. I'm lucky to have a tape of Graham playing an extraordinary beautiful version of The Grateful Dead's classic 'Dark Star' on piano. I shall miss him and his dry wit."

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11th October

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NEWS



BLACK SKIES BURN

release a split EP next month and are set to tour with Napalm Death in 2017.

The local grindcore crew release 'Brian Blessed Are The Sick' with Bristol's Hategrind on the 31st October on Grindscene Records. The EP includes a Black Skies Burn cover of Extreme Noise Terror's 'Deceived', which has become a highlight of their live set. The EP was produced by local noisemeister Umair Chaudhry.

In March next year the band head off for a tour of Ireland with Napalm Death, having previously supported Sepultura over there. Guitarist Chris Marks said, "We Still can't believe we have been handed the opportunity to support our biggest influence, not once but three times!" Visit www.blackskiesburn.co.uk.

UTE are set to reform for a one-off gig in December.

The former *Nightshift* cover stars split in 2011 when drummer Joe Gibbs moved to Canada, with singer Ollie Thomas going on to form The Old Grinding Young before going solo under the name Salvation Bill, while bassist Michael Chilcott formed Kancho! and co-runs Idiot King Records and promotions.

The reunion show will be part of Idiot King's Christmas party on Friday 16th December at The Cellar, in aid of the Michael Barry Fund.

Lucy Leave and Slate Hearts support. Talking to *Nightshift* about the reunion, Michael said, "People are often asking about whether Ute will ever play again. Joe's been living in Canada for the last few years but he's coming back later in the year, and we kind of thought it would be a good time to get together and play all that old nonsense again and see if anyone is genuinely still interested. It's gonna be interesting to try and remember those songs again but we're really up for the challenge."

Ollie added, "I went to go and play through some of the Ute tunes and on the way to my guitar I was thinking things like, 'this is going to sound great' and 'I can't wait,' then I tried to play one of the songs and I couldn't. I watched a video of myself

playing it but the camera didn't show my fingers. Other than that one song, I am really excited about playing with Joe and Mike again; so many of my favourite moments in my 20s were with those guys."

Ahead of their full reunion, Ollie and Mike play an acoustic Ute set at this year's Oxjam Oxford takeover on Saturday 15th October.

NIKKI LOY releases her third album, 'Pivotal', on the 14th October. The local singer-songwriter plays a hometown show at SAE in Littlemore on Thursday 20th October, which follows a UK tour support to Westlife's Shane Filan. The SAE show will be a full band gig for Nikki. Tickets are on sale now at www.nikkiloy.com

NOUGHT make a rare return to Oxford in November. The band, helmed by guitar virtuoso James Sedwards, currently playing as part of Thurston Moore's band, play The Bullingdon on Friday 4th November for Audioscope. Support comes from Tomaga and Rhys Chatham's Guitar Trio. In the absence of a full Audioscope festival this year, the gig will be a fundraiser for homeless charity Shelter.

SOFAR SOUND host two live music events this month, including a free session for children. The regular Sofar Sounds Session takes place on Friday 7th October. As is typical of Sofar shows, venue and acts are announced to ticket holders two days before the gig, with this show acting as a fundraiser for Oxjam.

On Saturday 15th October, Sofar host a kids music session as part of The New Theatre's Family Open Day. The session runs from 10am to 1pm and entry is free. Visit www.sofarsounds.com/oxford for more details.

SOUNDWORKS STUDIOS is relaunched this month with renowned local producer and engineer Umair Chaudhry going into partnership with Soundworks owner Danny Burbridge.

Danny ran the studio alongside the late Dave Norland for many years, working with myriad local bands and pioneering community projects for young musicians as well as homeless musicians and those with mental health issues.

Umair previously worked at Keynote and Silver Street studios and has for a long time offered free studio time to the winner of *Nightshift*'s Demo of the Month each month, which will continue.



KLUB KAKOFANNEY celebrates a quarter of a century of gigs this month. The long-running club night will host three days of live music over the weekend of the 7th-9th October at The Wheatsheaf.

Klub Kakofanney began in October 1991 with the aim of recreating the spirit of free festivals in Oxford venues, and has proudly continued its open-minded, anything-goes policy ever since. The monthly not-for-profit club has been forced to move venues a couple of times in its long history but has found a stable, loving home at The Wheatsheaf for the past 15 years.

The celebration weekend kicks off on Friday 7th with sets from Somerset's techno-punk crew UK:ID, Cherokii, Smiley & the Underclass and Charms Against the Evil Eye. The fun continues on Saturday evening with Peerless Pirates, Callow Saints, Vienna Ditto, The Mighty Redox and Osprey, and winds down on Sunday with an afternoon of free live music in the Sheaf's downstairs bar with sets from Klub Kak regulars Les Clochards, Beard of Destiny, Twizz Twangle, Purple May, Mark Bosley and Laima Bite.

Phil Freizinger and partner Sue Smith, who play together in The Mighty Redox, founded Klub Kakofanney with lighting man and artist Ainan Addison, and Phil spoke to *Nightshift* about the club's origins, enduring success and some of the highlights over the years.

"If you happen upon a Klub Kakofanney night you instinctively feel something different from a regular gig," he explains, "the bands are not genre specific, there is a warmth and friendliness in the air and the audience and acts are working together to maximise the party feel. The tone is set by the free festival spirit of openness and sharing and love of music. This ethos remains as strong now as at our first gig in 1991. When we started there were few venues that would put on original music; that's why we founded the Klub.

"We're looking forward to the whole anniversary weekend and welcoming regulars like Twizz Twangle, who was there from the beginning, and new acts who've never played Klub Kakofanney before, like the amazing Smiley And The Underclass, and UKID back for their third gig with us. But it's as much about the audience: united in party and music."

Phil feels there have been too many highlights over the past 25 years to single any one out but says, "for party music for me it's got to be Fuzzy Logic, for Sue it's Peerless Pirates; for quirkiness and genius it's Vienna Ditto and Brickwork Lizards, not to forget the brilliant Balloon Ascents, now NeverInd. We all have special love for the erstwhile Tongue & Groove, but there's too many great memories. As we say in The Mighty Redox: 'We Love You All' – every act that's ever played our nights!"

Klub Kakofanney runs on the first Friday of every month at The Wheatsheaf.

The refurbishment will feature new equipment, services and website, with a launch party to be announced. Visit www.soundworks-oxford.co.uk for more details.

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.

THE FUSION PROJECT

will become only the second non-classical group to perform at the historic **Sheldonian Theatre** when they play the Christopher Wren-designed concert hall on **Friday October 21st**.

The Oxford ensemble's fusion of Indian classical music, pop, rock and blues has seen them playing alongside Ustad Rahat Fateh Ali Khan and The Raghu Dixit Project, but the Sheldonian show will be their biggest headline gig to date, organised by Tigmus – the promotions collective featuring Oli Steadman from Stornoway – who became the first non-classical act to play the hall back in 2009

The nine-strong ensemble formed when singer and guitarist Rushil Ranjan met flautist Praveen Prathapan at Oxford University; together they mix original songs with fusion covers of Adele, Ed Sheeran and Eddie Vedder, among others.

Talking to *Nightshift* ahead of the Sheldonian show, Rushil said, "I can't really think of too many other acts doing what we're doing that are in the same place we're in. There are some absolutely mind-blowing fusion artists out there, like the incredible Raghu Dixit Project and Anoushka Shankar; there are also a whole host of artists that use Indian

influences in really interesting and moving ways, but I don't think they're coming at it from the same place we are. We try and expose people to the Indian classical world through the medium of western songwriting and English lyrics. I guess, within the music, the western stuff acts as a point of familiarity that people can hook on to.

"The music community in Oxford has been so important in nurturing us. From the very beginning we've had nothing but support and love from both the University and the town. Yes, there was an Asian community that was always going to be a little more receptive to what we did but what really took us by surprise was how the music seemed to be enjoyed regardless of where people come from and the music they were used to listening to. We've been blessed to have started up in a scene that is so incredibly open minded!"

Explaining the roots of The Fusion Project, Rushil explains, "I grew up in an Indian household and didn't really come into contact with any Indian music. I was vaguely interested in the rhythms and ragas but didn't really get a chance to explore it. That totally changed as soon as I got to Oxford. If you're open to it, there's an amazing scene for people who are into South



Asian music. We all met through the Oxford Indian Classical Arts Society, for example. There are a whole host of different groups and societies that really do invest in South Asian art and culture."

"For newcomers the best way to describe The Fusion Project is as an introduction to the world of Indian and Sufi music through the medium of western songwriting. People will hear tabla drums and Indian classical flute and singing, blended into some of their favourite tracks from artists such as Jimi Hendrix, John Lennon and even some Adele and Ed Sheeran! There'll also be plenty of original materiel being played. We've also got some

beautiful Indian classical dances done to some of the tracks, which is a feature that I'm really excited about.

"Improvisation is pretty central to the Indian Classical tradition and its one of the things that we love doing the most! Yes, there will be a lot that's new but at the same time our aim has always been to keep this music accessible so that people who aren't familiar with it can get into it!"

Tickets for the Sheldonian show are on sale now, priced from £8 to £18 (plus booking fee) from www.eventbrite.co.uk. Find out more about the group on their Facebook page.

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A Quiet Word With

BUG PRENTICE



“I LOVE HARSH, NOISY MUSIC, but I also love beautiful tunes, so... why not both at the same time?”

BUG PRENTICE FRONTMAN

Ally Craig is discussing the conflicting but oddly complementary forces that make up his band’s songs. Songs that can be simultaneously sweet-natured yet serrated; romantic yet abrasive; humorous yet aggressive and awkward. They are songs that, according to *Nightshift*’s review of Bug Prentice’s debut album last year, “like to sneak up on life from the far side.”

THAT REFERENCE TO

whimsical, absurdist cartoonist Gary Larson is wholly appropriate when it comes to Bug Prentice’s music and lyrics, which come filtered through Ally’s constantly open eye and ear for inspiration that stretches way beyond just musical influences into movies (of which he is a self-confessed buff), literature, television and everything beyond (“If it amuses me and there’s not already a song about it, I’ll probably at least try to write one,” he says, “there’s a song on the last album inspired by a famous clip of a drunken Orson Welles trying to make a champagne commercial. `Ahhh, the French...’”).

In particular Ally is a huge fan of cult Scottish poet and humorist Ivor Cutler, and that tangential whimsy runs through much of Ally’s writing, thrown into starker relief by his desire to mix it up with far more angular, abrasive guitar noises, inspired by the likes of Shellac, Thurston Moore and Slint.

“One of the best things music can do is surprise me,” says Ally when *Nightshift* expresses a love for his deliberate culture clash of influences that finds his melancholic and plaintive voice, which recalls both Robert Wyatt and Jeff Buckley, surrounded, skewered and taken for giddy, convoluted rides by wayward hardcore, post-rock or jazz, almost as if the band are deliberately trying to sabotage the songs from within. “I just love it when a song goes somewhere I couldn’t possibly have predicted,” he adds, “whether that’s with sudden stops and starts and unexpected shifts in dynamics, or a surreal turn of phrase. And how could anyone predict an Ivor Cutler song? “I’m also a big fan of They Might Be Giants, who often set quite sad lyrics to bouncy pop tunes. Perhaps merging the sound of Shellac and Shudder To Think with the surreal, wistful sensibility of Ivor Cutler is doing that trick in reverse. Not that

it’s a deliberate trick – the songs just come out that way sometimes.”

WHILE BUG PRENTICE ARE

a trio – singer and guitarist Ally alongside bass player Ruth Goller, and drummer Stephen Gilchrist, both acclaimed and busy musicians with assorted other bands, and based in London – Ally is the band’s central driving force. He started gigging back in 2005 under his own name, including an opening slot at the Oxford Punt in 2006, but quickly became frustrated by playing solo and wrote and performed with long-time friend Rebecca Mosley (of Cogwheel Dogs) before he teamed up with Ruth, who he met when he supported her old band Acoustic Ladyland at The Zodiac, and Stephen, with whom he bonded over a shared love for The Cardiacs. He’s also found time to play alongside jazz pianist Kit Downes and double bassist Ben Bastin, the trio supporting Sarah Gillespie in 2013.

RUTH AND STEPHEN

provided Ally with the added armoury he needed to take his songs where he wanted them – as often as not to places the listener isn’t quite expecting. “I did play with a band during my

school years, so I’ve never been a stranger to collaboration. The band was called Taprobane, but the poster for our first gig billed us as Taliban. We never played further afield than Wantage. My solo sets always went down well, but I never enjoyed it as much as playing with other people, and the songs I was writing towards the end of that period really needed bass and drums to make any sense.

“I met Ruth and Stephen through gigs. I supported Acoustic Ladyland at the Zodiac in 2006, and met Stephen when I saw him play with Stuff & the Fuses, in which he was the eponymous singer-drummer Stuff. They were both lovely, and both really enthusiastic about my songs, so I asked them on a whim to record some demos with me. None of us had ever played together before, and Ruth and Stephen had never even met before our first session, but it all came out sounding even better than I expected. Those first sessions also featured Acoustic Ladyland saxophonist Pete Wareham on one track and were released under my name, but we gave ourselves a proper band name, if you can call Bug Prentice a proper band name, in 2008. “Working with them definitely changed the way I wrote. It’s great

to have creative input from my bandmates, and the possibilities are so much greater with just a couple of extra instruments to work with. It inspires me to be more adventurous as a musician and a songwriter. And it means we can make more horrible noises. Also I don’t have to play guitar constantly during every song, which is great for lazy people like me.”

WHILE BUG PRENTICE HAS

been a going concern since 2008, it was only last year that things really stepped up a gear, first with the release of the single ‘Nicholas Ray’ (named after the film director) early in 2015, and then a full debut album, ‘The Way It Crumbles’, last November.

This month Bug Prentice release a follow-up EP, simply titled ‘EP’, a five-song collection that expands the band’s sometimes sparse sound over a set that ranges from an understated damnation of sexual harassment, ‘Don’t Be That Dude’, with its tipsy jazz timing and dirty, dirgy guitar and bass, through the urgent, hysterical sheet-metal stagger of ‘Couldn’t Tell You’, to the almost Eno-esque instrumental ‘Naamloos’. Connoisseurs of great abstract music might hear the diverse influences of Deerhoof, Captain Beefheart, Devo and The Breeders, as well as all those other acts already mentioned, while lyrically the songs concern surrealist model and artist-turned-war photographer Lee Miller, Polish sci-fi author Stanislaw Lem, and how depression and anxiety can affect creativity – “but in a fun way!” exclaims Ally. It’s a short, sharp and very sweet statement of intent from a band whose watchword, you imagine is ‘restless’.

NIGHTSHIFT IS TALKING

to Ally a few days before ‘EP’ is released on Bandcamp. First off he guides us through his formative music experiences, and the way his influences have changed since he began playing music. “The first album I bought for myself, aged nine, was a cassette of ‘Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band’, so the Beatles were probably my earliest influences as a songwriter. But I’ve loved music for longer than I can remember. My parents say I was singing before I was speaking: my first song was apparently something by Huey Lewis and the News. Later on, I picked up the basics of music theory from my music teacher uncle Stewart, and the basics of guitar from my brother, so they influenced my understanding of how music is actually made.” There seems to be a strong movie influence in your lyrics, going back to the very start of your songwriting;

guitar in my teens by playing songs by the likes of Smashing Pumpkins, Jeff Buckley, Eels, and early Radiohead. Some of that probably still lingers in my musical DNA, but hearing stranger, more dissonant and enigmatic bands like Cardiacs, Shudder To Think, and Shellac really changed my priorities. There are other, less obvious influences too – Debussy, Thelonious Monk, Fred Astaire... I try to keep my ears open.”

BORN WITH MUSCULAR

Dystrophy, Ally developed his own style of guitar playing that suited him as a wheelchair user – more like a lap steel player. It’s a technique he had to teach himself, and in itself has been a major influence on the music he makes. “Sitting in a wheelchair makes it pretty awkward to play guitar in

do you find films as influential as other musicians? “You’re right, there’s definitely a cinematic influence, as well as television and books. I like to pay homage to some of my favourite things, and I happen to be a massive film nerd. My solo sets also include covers of songs from films like *The Muppet Movie*, *Harold & Maude*, *Gilda* and *Cool Hand Luke*, which is a project I’d like to develop further.”

WHILE MOST MUSICIANS

take gigging for granted, the majority of venues, particularly smaller venues where artists cut their teeth and make their names, are inaccessible to musicians and punters with disabilities. We wonder how much Ally feels his own progress has been thwarted. And, given most smaller venues are rooms above or below pubs with little or no budget – or

“It never occurred to me not to play guitar, so I approached it in the way that felt most natural to me. I have to play in keys where open strings sound fitting – or at least the good kind of weird.”

the traditional way. But it never occurred to me not to play guitar, so I approached it in the way that felt most natural to me. Technique-wise I’m completely self-taught, and when I started I hadn’t seen anyone else playing like I do. It influences my music hugely – my playing style has a different set of restrictions and possibilities. For example, I can’t play barre chords at all, so I have to play in keys where open strings sound fitting – or at least the good kind of weird.”

WITH ‘EP’ OUT NOW, HOW

does Ally feel the new songs compare to ‘The Way It Crumbles’? It’s a fuller sound for starters. “‘The Way It Crumbles’ was an attempt to present a fairly spartan live sound. All the instruments were recorded live together in the studio, with as few overdubs and fixes as we could get away with. The only guitar effects I used were a couple of different overdrive pedals, nothing fancy. Basically we were going for a sparse, Steve Albini-esque sound, and with a few exceptions we were quite strict with it. “The new EP used the same starting point of recording live together, but this time I incorporated a wider variety of guitar tones and effects, and added extra tracks for a fuller sound. I even played piano on a few songs, not that you’d notice...” There seems to be a strong movie influence in your lyrics, going back to the very start of your songwriting;

presumptions or outright prejudice about yourself as a musician because you are a wheelchair user? “Things have been better in the past few years, but I remember being patronised quite frequently when I was starting out playing solo. Bar staff and punters would speak to me with newfound respect after actually hearing me play; it was clear that I had defied their expectations by not being crap.”

INCREASINGLY IT IS MAJOR

festivals and the biggest indoor venues that have taken the lead on access for performers and punters alike. Ally has been lucky enough to play both Glastonbury and Liberty Festival, held in the Olympic Park to celebrate the 2012 Paralympics. While he considers both among the highlights of his career so far, Ally has mixed emotions about both, and typically looks back on a more low-key show with the greatest fondness. “It was an honour to be involved in both of those big events. But Glastonbury was huge and daunting and exhausting, and our set at Liberty Festival was preceded by a speech from Boris Johnson, so you can’t have everything! Probably my proudest moment is playing at a fundraising gig for Tim Smith of Cardiacs, and seeing several former Cardiacs members grinning and dancing along to our music.”

WHILE VENUE ACCESSIBILITY

and attitudes have been obstacles to overcome, for the foreseeable future, it is simply a case of getting all three bandmates in the same room at the same time that provides Bug Prentice with their biggest logistical nightmare. “It can be harder to make plans, considering Ruth’s commitments with more bands than I can count, Melt Yourself Down and Let Spin among them, and Stephen’s new solo project, Stephen Evens, as well as his work running Brixton Hill Studios. It’s quite handy to have a bandmate who owns a rehearsal space, though! “I plan to keep working with Rebecca. Unfortunately life keeps getting in the way for both of us, but eventually we’ll manage to put out some music together. The songs she’s been writing lately are some of her best; I can’t wait for more people to hear them. “I don’t consider myself particularly prolific; it’s not like I have five new albums already written. But I have a few exciting new songs waiting to be given the Bug Prentice treatment, so hopefully it won’t take too long for another single or EP.”

‘EP’ is out now at bugprentice.bandcamp.com, as is ‘The Way It Crumbles’.

RELEASED

RICHARD WALTERS

‘A.M.’

(Self released)

It’s some twenty years since *Nightshift* first encountered Richard Walters, then a fifteen-year-old hopeful with a very obvious singing talent.

Two decades, four albums and a whole host of collaborations later, he remains one of the finest vocal talents Oxford has ever produced: a fragile, cracked choirboy falsetto that can carry the entire weight of the world on its slender shoulders. It takes a special kind of voice to get away with opening lines like “I was somewhere lost in London / I was far from you / Thinking about the words we chose to use.” He gets away with it with consummate ease, infusing every word with a sense of desolation and wintry dejection, and when the song – ‘U’ – reaches its end and Richard’s pleading “Come back to me,” it feels like poetry rather than self pity.

The song sets the mood for the rest of ‘A.M.’, Richard’s crowd-funded fourth solo album, one that doesn’t deviate too far from his winning formula of loss and longing, conjuring, at its best, a spectral bleakness that



most lovelorn young singer-songwriters can only dream of; simplicity is key, both in the mostly sparse instrumental arrangements and the key lyrical lines that become mantras – “Where were you?” he repeats during the song of the same name about the sudden death of a friend. Songs like ‘Get Heavy’ and ‘Arches’ typify the atmospheric production (courtesy of Aidan O’Brien, whose name you’ll be hearing a lot more of in years to come) which maintains a frost-bitten grip throughout. In fact ‘Zero Visibility’ runs on a rhythm that sounds

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like an old steam train chugging across icy tundra, while Richard sings about visiting the top of the Empire State Building at night and being unable to see anything through the dark and the clouds.

While the mood can feel unrelentingly downbeat (hey, it’s what he does best; the moment Richard Walters starts singing “I love a party with a happy atmosphere” we’ll begin to worry about his state of mind) there’s actually romance and optimism – most notably in closer ‘New Heart’, a hollowed-out piano ballad that recounts the magic of hearing his firstborn’s heartbeat for the first time.

There is a feeling that ‘A.M.’ doesn’t take Richard’s music to a new level or into any strange new lands, but the counter to that is that he does what he does so well, too much change could only spoil what we’ve got (his over-produced ‘Pacing’ album should serve as a quiet warning). In fact, if we have a complaint, it’s that album highlight, ‘Adeline’, awash with a gorgeous, romantic warmth, is, at just two minutes long, way too short: a criticism you could equally level at ‘New Heart’. Better to be left wanting more, of course. And really, everyone could do with more Richard Walters in their life.

Dale Kattack



THE LONG INSIDERS

‘Bad’

(Self released)

The Long Insiders have got a whole lotta shakin’ going on. Since they lost co-singer Sarah Dodds a couple of years back and Nick Kenny took centre stage, the trio have played true to the roots of classic rockabilly, infecting it with just enough of The Cramps’ sleazy venom to make it’s strut and swagger feel fresh and contemporary.

The track ‘Red Hot’ here is pure Carl Perkins stomp and shake, Dan Goddard’s freight train beat underpinning Kenny’s Gretsch twang and superbly authentic vocals, while the lighter, livelier ‘Twist Of Love’ owes its life to Sun-era Elvis but reminds us a lot of The Stray Cats, the 80s rockabilly revivalist hitmakers who have

only belatedly got the recognition and kudos they deserve.

It’s title track ‘Bad’, though, that leaves the deepest imprint – ghostly spaghetti western harmonica and tremolo-heavy gothabilly creep and crawl that sounds like Jody Reynolds via The Cramps – a song just waiting for a David Lynch reimagining of *Ghost rider* to soundtrack. Top notch revivalism from a band who manage the difficult task of bringing a generations-old sound to life with real conviction.

Dale Kattack

PERCEPTION

‘Collapse’

(Self released)

In the pipeline, or at least being worked on since 2013, Perception’s new EP ‘Collapse’ is a work that has obviously spent some time being assessed and refined. Preceded by the release of the brutal ‘Delusions’ earlier in the year, it’s a dense and riveting EP that, after several listens, clearly doesn’t completely sit with its title. Although relatively commonplace for a band which places itself squarely alongside the likes of Architects and Monuments, as with both those acts the result is rather more invigorating than destructive, a result of the intensity and pace of the performances, and the impressive technicality of the playing on show.

The chief example for this is ‘Castles’, for which the band have just released a new video. A formidable onslaught of instrumentation and singer Ben’s guttural vocals, it’s relentless in its

intricacy, exhibiting all of the facets that make metal, when done well, such a fascinating genre. Similarly successful is the title track, in which Ben calls on his audience to “give up everything for false ideals and misinformation” and to “lie to yourself, as it all collapses”. As already alluded to, what really breathes life into the very fabric of the EP is that the effect is perversely all the more invigorating; although replete with negative, almost nihilistic statements (the equally excellent ‘Heartburn’ opens with the line “What can you know about truth, when all you hear is lies?”), ‘Collapse’ is an impassioned and thrilling exposition it’s hard not to recommend. Interestingly, the EP’s weakest moments are when it relents, such as on the closer ‘Aftermath’, giving credence to the fact that Perception are at their best when at full throttle.

Ben Lynch



BUG PRENTICE

‘EP’

(Self released)

Bug Prentice, a three-piece ‘avant-punk trio’ led by sometime solo singer Ally Craig, pull off a sneaky trick with this new EP. ‘Couldn’t Tell You’ and ‘Lee Miller’ initially place the band on an axis of melodic indie guitar swing, following the lead set by XTC, Dartz!, The Futureheads and Young Knives. It’s all ‘Goo’-ey noise mixed with pop-bothering tunes; arch lyrical twists with vocals like “I couldn’t tell you if I were dead or alive / I couldn’t tell you if I were Derek or Clive”.

So far, so good – in fact, very good – and what these tracks lack in terms of outwards emotional honesty, they more than make up for in pleasing, highly listenable songcraft.

But the trick? Third track ‘Naamloos’, a sub-two-minute, vocal-free exploration of post-rock timbres and minor key meanderings, is followed by ‘Don’t Be That Dude’, which builds on the aforementioned songcraft with some twisty-turny passages, and a sparse, taut arrangement, coming off like a good-time Shellac playing Young Marble Giants covers. ‘Sally Six’ winds things down for the end of the EP, with an insistent bassline leading us through a rich, subtle piece that draws on Slint as much as it does grunge.

Well done, Bug Prentice – with this EP you equally reward the short-attention-span millennial who just wants a couple of cracking guitar pop tunes as you do the more curmudgeonly self-appointed music snob, who wants a bit of depth and a few impressive muso reference points to cling to.

Simon Minter

RAINBOW

RESERVOIR

‘Coco Sleeps Around’

(Oddbox)

Short and and pleasingly sharp, ‘Coco Sleeps Around’ is hard to pigeonhole. Rainbow Reservoir vocalist Angela herself describes their music as “punk and spirit and upbeat”, adding that “it can be romantic, but with a dark side”.

EP opener ‘Kate Moss With A Moustache’ lives up to that description; it’s quirky and upbeat, with snappy lyrics and scuzzy guitars, the kind of angst-ridden song that wouldn’t be out of

place in an American coming of age film. With a catchy melody and simple song structure, it harkens back to the early Noughties, in particular the music of bands like The Moldy Peaches. The rest of the EP follows in a similar vein, with spritely bursts of poppy punk, complete with distorted guitars and half sung, half spoken vocals, delivered in a fantastically feisty manner. ‘Coco Sleeps Around’ is a strong offering from Rainbow Reservoir. Although at time the tracks can seem overly simple, the lyrical offerings and incessantly catching lyrics on tracks like the title track more than make up for the less complex instrumental lines. The EP’s full of the kind of tracks that are meant to be blasted out live in small, sweaty rooms; there’s more than enough here to suggest those venues won’t be so small for much longer.

Hannah Mylrea-Hemmings



G I G G U I D E

SATURDAY 1st
FLIGHTS OF HELIOS + HORNS OF PLENTY: **Salter’s Steamers, River Thames** – Psychedelic, space-rock, electro-grief-core people Flights of Helios set sail on a voyage, not into outer space, but down the Thames, aboard a bloody big boat. The three-hour trip features live sets from them and street jazz ensemble Horns of Plenty, plus indie tunes from Progressively

Saturday 1st
PETER MURPHY:
O2 Academy
The godfather of goth? Arguably. One of the most startling rock and roll performers of the last four decades? Indisputably. As frontman with goth originators Bauhaus Pete (latterly Peter) Murphy had probably the most recognisable cheekbones of the 1980s – best seen in the old Maxwell tape advert – while he and his band crawled out of a subterranean Northampton alcove to wreak stark, artful, poetic, sometimes brutal musical destruction. If ‘Bela Lugosi’s Dead’ is the goth anthem to which all others must bow down, debut album ‘In The Flatfield’ is the genre’s defining masterpiece. Unafraid of accusations of pretentiousness, Bauhaus took the Ziggy Stardust blueprint and painted it black. Post-split (a brief reunion aside) Murphy explored ever artier paths, including the short-lived but superb Dali’s Car with the late Mick Karn, and when he moved to Turkey in the 90s he submerged himself in middle eastern musical traditions (much to the chagrin of diehard goths). In recent years he’s returned to the glam-goth-industrial sound that made his name, working with Nine Inch Nails and Tricky, as well as members of Skinny Puppy and Porno For Pyros, and his last solo album, ‘Lion’, produced by Killing Joke’s Youth, is as dark hearted and intense as you’d hope. Old school fans will get plenty of Bauhaus favourites (if not always the hits), and Murphy certainly hasn’t turned into a shrinking violet onstage. A true showman. One from the dark side.



OCTOBER

Less Elephant DJs. Launch is at 7pm from Folly Bridge; boat arrives in Svalbard sometime around Tuesday.
DONNINGTON COMMUNITY FESTIVAL: **Donnington Community Centre (2-10pm)** – The fifth annual free Donnington community festival features sets from Beard of Destiny; Daisy Delnavaz; The Jesters; Johnny Hinks; Mark Atherton & friends; Matt Sewell; Moon Leopard; Oxford Ukuleles; Phil & Sue; Richard Brotherton; STEM; The String Project and Superloose. Entry is free but food, raffles and merchandise sales will help raise money for Donnington Doorstep and Donnington Youth Group.
BETH ORTON: O2 Academy – The Comedown Queen becomes the Ice Queen on her latest, and best, album – *see main preview*
PETER MURPHY: O2 Academy – The gothic overlord returns to reclaim his realm from the forces of light – *see main preview*
VOODOO VEGAS + PILGRIM + CROSAW: The Cellar – Classic rock, 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 previously supporting Y&T 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 debut album ‘The Rise of Jimmy Silver’. Double dose of south Wales support from heavy rockers Pilgrim and Led Zep and Hendrix-inspired blues riffers Crowsaw.
KANADIA + SLEEPERS’ DOME + SLATE HEARTS + WOLFS: The Wheatsheaf – Part of the nationwide Musicians Against Homelessness series of gigs initiated by Alan McGee. Tonight’s Oxford leg features rising local rockers Kanadia, mixing the expansive, stadium-filling sounds of Radiohead and Muse with delicate, Coldplay-inspired melody. They’re joined by Aureate Act offshoot Sleepers’ Dome; scuzzy grunge crew Slate Hearts and garage pop duo Wolfs.
BOSSAPHONIK with OZI OZAA: The Bullingdon – Dancefloor Latin, Afrobeat, global grooves, Balkan beats and nu-jazz club night, hosted by Dan Ofer, tonight featuring a live set from Ozi Ozaa, playing songs in the heritage of Ghanaian music of the last 50 years, featuring an international cast of musicians drawn from Ghana, Nigeria, Spain, Italy, Israel, France and the UK.
FREERANGE: The Cellar – UK garage, grime and bassline club night, playing the best new underground sounds.
SUNJAY: Tiddy Hall, Ascott-under-Wychwood – Folk and blues at the Wychwood Folk Club tonight from rising young singer and guitarist Sunjay, whose blending of traditional sounds from both camps has drawn praise from the likes of Vin Garbutt and Terry Reid as well as earning him nominations at both the BBC Young Folk Awards and the British Blues Awards.
EYE-CON: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Mod, indie and Britpop covers.

THE PETE FRYER BAND: The Standard, Headington – Rocking blues from the local veteran singer and guitarist and his band, still going strong after celebrating the 50th anniversary of his first gig in the summer.
THE TOM IVEY BAND: The Brewery Tap, Abingdon – Funky blues.

SUNDAY 2nd
ANARCHISTWOOD + UNMAN + OLD ERNIE: The Wheatsheaf – Scuzzy, political/psychedelic punk noise from London’s Anarchistwood, with support from math-drone outfit Unman and atmospheric noise-rock explorer Old Ernie.
PAVES + NEO HOMELESS MAN + RAMONA ROSA: The Bullingdon – Musicians Against Homelessness show, with London’s blues-flavoured roots rockers headlining, and joined by Oxford’s own homeless busking sensation Neo, who’s ‘Homeless Man’ album came out earlier this year.
THE MIGHTY REDOX + PUPPET MECHANIC: The Whitehouse – Blues, funk, ska, psychedelia and more from the local veterans.
WATERFAHL: Brewery Tap, Abingdon (5pm) – Acoustic blues and pop from the local duo.

MONDAY 3rd
RED BUTLER: The Bullingdon – Brighton’s rising young blues-rockers hit town after their showing at this summer’s Wallingford Blues & Beer Festival. The quartet head out on a headline UK tour to promote new album ‘Nothing To Lose’, following supports to Laurence Jones and Billy Walton, and having won this year’s European Blues Challenge in Italy.
PRIDES: The Cellar – Stadium-sized, daytime radio-friendly electro-soul pop from Glasgow’s Prides, back in town after headlining the O2 last year, taking a post-Bastille route to big things via a big sound, all pomp and passion, reminiscent of mid-80s bands like Wet Wet Wet, Tears For Fears and Hue & Cry.
CHRIS WHILE & JULIE MATTHEWS: Nettlebed Folk Club – Powerful harmony singing from the Albion Band and St Agnes Fountain duo and leading ladies of English folk, out on tour to promote their tenth album together, ‘Shoulder To Shoulder’.
OPEN MIC SESSION: The Royal Blenheim – Weekly open mic session.
THE BLUESWAMP BAND + JODY WYATT: The Jericho Tavern – Famous Monday Blues night.

TUESDAY 4th
THE KILLS: O2 Academy – A decade and a half on from their enigmatic conception (mysterious pseudonyms and no interviews given) and The Kills continues to ply a blacker shade of blues on new album ‘Ash & Ice’. If singer Alison Mosshart has found far greater success with The Dead Weather, and guitarist Jamie Hince is better known as (the soon to be ex-) Mr Kate Moss, together their growling, punk-infused

drum machine blues still sounds pretty cool, with echoes of The Velvet Underground, Suicide and Patti Smith. They probably smoke cigarettes in their sleep.
NE OBLIVISCARIS + OCEANS OF SLUMBER: O2 Academy – Now here’s a treat we never expected to hear in Oxford – Melbourne’s New Obliviscaris, the Aussie sextet’s violin-led melding of black metal, prog and symphonic rock laced through with classical, flamenco and folk styles, their extended songs awash with complex technicality and virtuosity and a bloody great slice of bleakness, like a gypsy folk troupe discovering Opeth and Wolves in the Throne Room, getting a bit down about it all and making something magnificent. After supports to Cradle of Filth, Enslaved and Soilwork – and after some prolonged visa issues with their French guitarist, they’re out in the world, touring their ‘Citadel’ album. Music to soundtrack vast mediaeval battles.
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 – Weekly open mic night.
OSPREY & FRIENDS: St Aldates Tavern – Weekly jam session with local blues, rock and funk veteran Osprey and guests.

WEDNESDAY 5th
PANGOLIN + MACACO PROJECT + CONNOR PATTERSON: The Bullingdon – Acoustic Americana and traditional British folk music from Welsh duo Pangolin, with support from Bristol’s jazzy neo-soul and r’n’b septet Macaco Project.

THURSDAY 6th
LUNA + CO-PILGRIM: O2 Academy – Former-Galaxie 500 frontman Dean Wareham’s reformed dream-pop and alt.country band perform their 1995 mini masterpiece ‘Penthouse’ in its entirety – the album declared one of the best albums of the decade by *Rolling Stone*, featuring as it did, Tom Verlaine on guitar and Laeticia Sadier on guest vocals. Considered alt.country support from local faves Co-Pilgrim.
WARD THOMAS: The Bullingdon – Back in town after performances at Cornbury Festival and Halfway To 75 in recent times, Hampshire-born, Nashville-based twin sisters Ward Thomas come to the Bully to promote new album ‘Cartwheels’, the follow-up to their debut, ‘From Where We Stand’, recorded with country music mainstay Vince Gill.
THE MIGHTY REDOX: The Wheatsheaf – Free gig in the Sheaf’s downstairs bar from the veteran local blues, funk, ska, and psychedelic rock faves.
CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre – Oxford’s longest running open club night showcases singers, musicians, poets, storytellers and more every week.
SPARKY’S FLYING CIRCUS: The Half Moon – Weekly open mic club night.
ACOUSTIC THURSDAY: Jude the Obscure – Weekly unplugged open mic night.
BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford – Weekly open blues jam.

FRIDAY 7th
THE ARKYARD SESSION: The Bullingdon – Christian rock package tour with sets from Rivers & Robots, Chariots, Written in Kings and

Cradle of Filth.
NIGEL GARAGE feat. DJ PIED PIPER: The Bullingdon – Garage club night with UK garage veteran Pied Piper, best known for his number 1 hit ‘Do You Really Like It’, having toured extensively with Public Enemy, De le Soul and Buster Rhymes along the way to becoming one of the genre’s most innovative stalwarts.
UK FOO FIGHTERS: O2 Academy – Like Foo Fighters but British.
UB40: O2 Academy – It’s easy to dismiss the raggle-taggle remains of Birmingham’s enduring cod reggae hitmakers as an abomination, but that’s to ignore their genuinely astonishing achievement, being the only band in existence that can actively put *Nightshift* off drinking red wine.
KLUB KAKOFANNEY 25TH ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND: The Wheatsheaf – Kicking off three days of live music partying to celebrate their quarter century of hosting gigs, Klub Kakofanney gather a selection of their favourite acts. Tonight’s show features a return visit to town for Glastonbury’s excellent rap-rave-electro-punk crew UK:ID for their third Klub Kak appearance, the festival regulars reminiscent of early-90s rave crossover acts like Senser and The Shaman. They’re joined by Smiley & the Underclass; the recently-renamed Cherokii and Charms Against the Evil Eye.
SOFAR SOUNDS DOES OXJAM: Venue the – Sofar Sounds host their own Oxjam party, and true to their traditions, it’ll be at a secret venue only announced to ticket holders, two days ahead of the show. Acts to be confirmed too, but knowing SS, it’ll be proper quality.
SOUL SESSIONS: The Cellar – Classic disco, soul and funk from the 60s, 70s and 80s with KD, Cal, Fudd and DJ SDusk.
SPARKY’S SPONTANEOUS SHOWCASE & SPOTLIGHT JAM: James Street Tavern – Sparky’s monthly live bands night and jam session features sets from Martini Russa, Waterfahl and The Talc Daemons.
RONNIE SCOTT’S ALL STARS: The Cornerstone, Didcot – a celebration of the world famous venue with vintage photos and videos alongside performances of jazz greats from The Ronnie Scott’s All Stars Quintet.

SATURDAY 8th
KLUB KAKOFANNEY 25TH ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND: The Wheatsheaf – Part two of the Klub Kak anniversaries celebrations, with rollicking rockabilly grog swillers and seafaring romantics Peerless Pirates, alongside Aylesbury rockers Callow saints; Klub Kak hosts The Mighty Redox; synth-crazed sci-fi rockabilly blues duo Vienna Ditto, and funky bluesman Osprey.
MEILYR JONES: The Bullingdon – Orchestral chamber pop, expansive 90s-style indie glamour and 60s-style psychedelia from former Race Horses frontman Meilyr Jones, whose debut album ‘2013’ comes from a similarly cosmic welsh pop mine as Gruff Rhys and Euros Childs’ solo works.
SIMPLE with NICK HÖPPNER: The Bullingdon – Raw, energetic melodic house and techno from the Berlin-based DJ, producer and remixer at tonight’s Simple, Höppner best known for his residency at Berlin’s Panorama bar as well as his releases for his own Ostgut Tom label.
FROM THE JAM: O2 Academy – Bruce Foxton keeps the old classics alive.
SLAM CARTEL + MOLOTOV SEXBOMB + RAISED BY HYPOCRITES: The Cellar – Growly, blues-tinged hard rocking from London’s Slam Cartel at tonight’s OxRox show, the band



Saturday 1st
BETH ORTON:
O2 Academy
After emerging in the 1990s as the comedown/chillout queen for her mix of subdued electronica and folky confessional pop, Beth Orton became something of a byword for tasteful blandness – something to stick on in the background at dinner parties while discussing Ofsted reports and mortgages, but with new album ‘Kidsticks’, she’s re-emerged as an artist of serious depth and invention. Part of this has come in the wake of becoming a mother, which has brought a new emotional edge to her lyrics, and part from working alongside Fuck Buttons’ Andrew Hung on the new album. Tracks like the spectral ‘Moon’, and ‘1973’, with its sleepy-eyed positivity, are among the best she’s ever made – easily equal to anything off breakthrough album ‘Trailer Park’. While her music remains insular, the cracks in her voice have deepened, everything’s got a bit trippier, even funkier, and rhythmically someone’s definitely been listening to Kraftwerk. It’s no exaggeration to say that Orton has produced one of the finest musical rebirths of any pop act in recent years – a frosty, fiery electro-folk-pop siren who imbue lines like “The phonebook is filling up with dead friends” with an iciness that’s properly haunting.

drawing a line between Guns’n’Roses, Nirvana and Soundgarden on their new album ‘Worldstarlove’.
TURF: The Cellar – House club night with club scene faves Alexander Nut, Josey Rebelle and Dimensions Soundsystem.
WILLIE & THE BANDITS: The Jericho Tavern – Epic, intricate prog-roots rocking and blues from Plymouth’s Willie & The Bandits out on tour, the band having variously been compared to Led Zeppelin, Cream and Santana as they mix up rootsy rocking and blues with electronics and convoluted song structures.

SUNDAY 9th
IDLES + SLATE HEARTS + WARDENS: The Bullingdon – Scuzzy slacker noise-pop and barnstorming garage rock from Bristol’s Idles, out on tour to promote new single ‘Well Done’ – a Huw Stephens record of the week. Great grunge noise support from Slate Hearts, coming on like a scrap between Nirvana and Placebo, and QOTSA-inspired rock beasts Wardens.
KLUB KAKOFANNEY 25TH ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND: The Wheatsheaf (3-7.30pm) – For those still possessed of enough energy to keep the party going for a third day, Klub Kak host a free afternoon session in the Sheaf’s downstairs bar with a host of old friends, including Francophile café folk and lounge pop people Les Clochards; blues duo Beard of Destiny; oddball songsmith



Wednesday 12th

CHRISTY MOORE: The New Theatre

He's battled ill health and addiction and had his songs banned both by radio and the courts, but Christy Moore has never given up; in 2007 he was voted Ireland's greatest living musician and this year he celebrates his fiftieth year in music with a new album, 'Lily'. The album showcases what Moore has always done best: reinterpreting other writers' songs and poems while penning his own material that ranges from angry to thoughtful to comic. 'Lily' finds him taking on a range of Irish writers, including Mick Blake's reflection on the Easter Uprising, 'Oblvious', as well as Peter Gabriel's 1980s lament for political prisoners, 'Wallflowers'. Passion has always been Moore's driving force, both for the traditions of his country's music and for myriad political causes – Irish republicanism; nuclear disarmament; Palestine; El Salvador, and more, his more reflective songs often championing the ordinary man in a brutal world. Through the 70s with Planxty and the 80s with Moving Hearts, and beyond under his own name or in collaboration, he's never, ever got too comfortable, even as national treasure status was conferred on him, and live he's similarly unpredictable, his pick of songs always difficult to second guess, whether Bob Dylan, Ewan MacColl or Natalie Merchant. He is, though, a living legend, of that there's no doubt. Make the most of tonight's chance to join him on whatever road he chooses to take us down.

and KK regular Twizz Twangle; Purple May; Laima Bite and Mark Bosley.

FOLLY & THE HUNTER: The Cellar – Emotive, shimmering indie-folk from Montreal's Folly & the Hunter, over in the UK to promote second album 'Awake', their gently atmospheric sound compared to Broken Social Scene, Bon Iver and Luna at times.

JOE BUCK YOURSELF + TRAUMA UK + BEAVER FUEL: The Wheatsheaf – Sleazy country-rock, bluegrass punk and growling swamp rock from Kentucky singer and guitarist Joe Buck, out on a solo tour 20 years into a career that's seen him play with Hank Williams III and in Th'Legendary Shack Shakers. Local support from heavy rockers Trauma UK and punked-up indie noisemakers Beaver Fuel.

RORY EVANS: The Brewery Tap, Abingdon (5pm) – Acoustic guitar virtuosity.

MONDAY 10th

WE ARE SCIENTISTS: O2 Academy – The irony-heavy Californian indie-punks return to town two years after their last show here,

having previously endured an enforced lay-off due to line-up, label and management issues. Now they're set to release a new album, 'Helter Seltzer', the follow-up to 'TV en Français,' and while their infectious, chorus-heavy fuzz-pop, inspired by everyone from Bowie and Weezer to Hall & Oates, is never less than fun, it's often the witty onstage banter between Keith Murray and Chris Cain that provides the best entertainment. **FAUSTUS: Nettlebed Folk Club** – Folk fun from the award-winning trio featuring Bellowhead's Benji Kirkpatrick and Paul Sartin, alongside Waterson-Carthy collaborator Saul Rose.

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Royal Blenheim

TUESDAY 11th

AURORA: O2 Academy – Ethereal, melodramatic electro-pop from the Norwegian singer best known for her version of Oasis' 'All Around the World on last year's John Lewis Christmas ad, over in the UK to tour her debut album 'All My Demons Greet Me As A Friend'. **THE STUART HENDERSON QUARTET: The Bullingdon** – Free live jazz from trumpeter Stuart Henderson and band. **INTRUSION: The Cellar** – Goth, industrial and ebm club night with residents Doktor Joy and Bookhouse. **SPARK'S SIDE OF THE MOON: The James Street Tavern**

OSPREY & FRIENDS: St Aldates Tavern

WEDNESDAY 12th

CHRISTY MOORE: The New Theatre – The greatest living Irishman celebrates 50 years making music – *see main preview* **LAST GREAT DREAMERS + THE BLACK BULLETS + MOLOTOV SEXBOMB: The Wheatsheaf** – London's sleazy rockers return to OxRock with their take on Hanoi Rocks and Dogs D'Amour's power-pop, following tour supports with Tigertailz and ex-Runaway Cherie Currie. Suitably sleazy support from Basingstoke's tattoo-heavy rock'n'roll, punk and biker rock crew Black Bullets. **MOVE: The Cellar** – Bassline, house and garage club night.

THURSDAY 13th

FEWS: The Bullingdon – Ahead of supporting Pixies on tour, Sweden's psych-pop noisemakers hit town – *see main preview* **BARS & MELODY: O2 Academy** – Fresh from slaying the moshpit at Bloodstock with a two-hour rendition of the title track from their recent 'Humanity Is Cancer' album, Jeremy Bars and Cuthbert Melody celebrate their joint eighth birthday with jolly pop fun, cake, balloons and a pavement drill solo. **DEAD KENNEDYS: O2 Academy** – Dead Kennedys' last visit to town, in 2014, put to rest most of the doubts over whether the band could continue without singer Jello Biafra, latest replacement Ron 'Skip' Greer enough of a soundalike without trying too hard to actually be Biafra, and the band's serrated surf-punk retaining its ability to inspire shock and awe, with 'Chemical Warfare', 'Let's Lynch the Landlord' and in particular 'Holiday In Cambodia' still potent punk rock weapons – ones the band used to great effect as the scourge of the Christian right in the States throughout the 1980s, cutting through the crap with equal parts vitriol and dark, sharp humour. It can be a bit

panto at times, but the band remain – after The Ramones – the best punk band ever to come out of America.

THE ESKIES: The Jericho Tavern – Superb sea-soaked gypsy folk from Dublin's Eskies, the ever-gigging quintet mixing sea shanties, rag time, Italian tarantella, kletzmer, close harmony singing and traditional Irish folk to make a seriously party-hearty brew that makes room for a lively take on Chris Isaak's 'Wicked Game' along the way. Best bring your dancing shoes and drinking suit.

CC SMUGGLERS: Fat Lil's, Witney

– Rough'n'ready roots ramblin' from Bedfordshire's busking ensemble, back in the shire after their showing at the Bullingdon in March, inspired by old-time Texan folk and swing and starting a bluesy bluegrass barn dance wherever they do roam.

CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre

SPARKY'S FLYING CIRCUS: The Half Moon

ACOUSTIC THURSDAY: Jude the Obscure

BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford

PETE FRYER BAND: The Wheatsheaf – Free gig in the downstairs bar from the local blues rock veteran.

FRIDAY 14th

WHAT BECAME OF US FESTIVAL: The Bullingdon – First day of the weekend mini-festival, with sets from Genghar, Hudson Scott and more – *see main preview* **SON OF DAVE: Old Fire Station** – Great, raw, rootsy 50s-style blues, beatboxing, footstomping gospel noise, loop pedal genius, harmonica-blowing, maraca-shaking and manic alcoholic merrymaking from Canadian polyglot Son Of Dave at tonight's Glovebox show, the former-Crash Test Dummies man with close to a thousand gigs under his belt, out on tour to promote his new album 'Explosive Hits', recalling the likes of Little Walter, Jimmy Reed and Muddy Waters with his earthy, timeless sound.

YOU ME AT SIX + VANT: O2 Academy – Long-since sold-out show from Surrey's pop-punk/post-hardcore crew, out on a UK tour ahead of the release of their new album 'Night People' in January – the follow-up to 2014's Number 1 'Cavalier Youth', the band having initially made their name supporting Paramore, 30 Seconds To Mars and Fall Out Boy along the way. Support from London's garage-rockers Vant, in the vein of The Strokes, Pixies and Vines.

LITTLE BROTHER ELI + LUCY LEAVE + WOLFS + MY CROOKED TEETH: O2 Academy – Funked-up blues rocking action from rising local stars and recent *Nightshift* cover band Little Brother Eli, bringing some moonshine-fuelled rock action to the O2, with support from quirky noise rockers Lucy Leave, grungy alt.rock duo Wolfs and emotional acoustic travelogue from My Crooked Teeth. **OXFORD SOUL TRAIN: O2 Academy** – Classic soul, funk, disco and Motown tunes across two rooms at the quarterly extravaganza. **BOSSAPHONIK with THE BAGHDADDIES + FAITH I BRANCO: The Cellar** – A 12th anniversary celebration for Oxford's long-running jazz dance club night, mixing dancefloor Latin, Balkan beats, global grooves, Afrobeat and nu-jazz under the guidance of host Dan Ofer. Tonight's party features a double dose of live

entertainment with Tyneside's Balkan music heroes, themselves out on a 20th anniversary tour, renowned for their exuberant cocktail of Balkan melodies, ska, Latin grooves and brass, all delivered with furious energy and theatrical humour. Support comes from local accordion talent Faith with husband Branko, who is one of the most highly-rated Serbian Roma violinists in Europe. They play in a five-piece band of virtuosic fiery kolos, spirited Gypsy rumbas, swing and jazz improvisation.

FAY HIELD & THE HURRICANE PARTY: Quaker Meeting House, St. Giles – Oxford Contemporary Music host an intimate evening with leading English folk singer, academic and folk song archivist Fay Hield and her Hurricane Party band, which features the cream of the crop of folk musicians, including Sam Sweeney, Andy Cutting, Rob Harbon, and sometimes Martin Simpson and partner Jon Boden, tonight playing songs, ballads and shanties from her latest album, 'Old Adam'.

BANDANTE: The Jericho Tavern – Moody,

Thursday 13th

FEWS: The Bullingdon

Not familiar with Few's? You will be soon. Really, you will be. After a year or so of slowly (but not exactly quietly – of which more later) building a reputation with a slow-drip of new singles, including debut 'Ill' and 'The Zoo', the Swedish-American quartet, based out of Malmo, signed to Play It Again Sam and released their album 'Means' to more than a little acclaim. After supporting Ghostpoet on tour they've spent much of the last few months playing festivals, including End of the Road and Rockaway Beach, but it's the end of this year that will bring them fully into the spotlight as they've been handpicked to support Pixies on their European tour. Before that, though, a short headline tour of the UK, and what better way to acquaint yourself with quite possibly your favourite new band. Like Ghostpoet they carry an air of moodiness about them, but like Pixies they can be abrasive, aggressive and angsty, their songs cresting on linear grooves and mantric repetition, inspired by Krautrock, post-punk, psychedelia and shoegaze, there are elements of Neu!, PiL, My Bloody Valentine and Interpol about them and they're earning a reputation as a seriously incendiary live act, one that shares some DNA with Autobahn and October Drift. So there you go: brilliant and noisy and soon to be considerably more famous than they are now. We're surprised you're not queuing up already.



atmospheric garage rock and blues from Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds guitarist George Vjestica's new band at tonight's Club UFO show. **KUIPER + CRYSTALLITE + STORYTELLER + NEON TEEPEE: The Wheatsheaf** – It's All About the Music local bands showcase. **PARAMORE OR LESS: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Tribute band.

SATURDAY 15th

SOFAR SOUNDS FOR KIDS: The New Theatre (10am-1pm) – As part of The New Theatre's family fun day, local promoters Sofar Sounds will be hosting a live music session for kids. Plus there's a chance to meet Peppa Pig star Mr Potato. Which, frankly, tops anything else in this month's gig guide.

WHAT BECAME OF US FESTIVAL: The Bullingdon – Yuck and Toy are the stars of the second day of the festival – *see main preview* **OXJAM OXFORD TAKEOVER: Various venues** – The annual Oxjam Oxford Takeover celebrates its tenth anniversary with a full day of music across ten venues on and around Cowley Road, with live and DJ sets at East Oxford Community Centre; The Library; James Street Tavern; Fusion Arts; The Star; Joe Perks and more. 50 bands and counting, so a non-stop trail of fun in a great cause – *see main news article* **THE SMYTHS: O2 Academy** – The Smiths tribute celebrate the 30th anniversary of 'The Queen Is Dead'.

SWITCH X FLUID: O2 Academy – Two of Oxford's most established club nights team up for a night of bass, garage, jungle, drum&bass and more with a three-hour B2B set from TQD, Royal-T, DJ Q and Flava D, plus sets from Swindle, Masp and Blair, hosted by MC KIE and Wissla.

FREE RANGE meets DUB POLITICS: The Bullingdon – Dub, roots, dancehall and reggae party vibes. **((RSJ)) + K-LACURA + DOOM CROW + SPREAD THE DISEASE: The Wheatsheaf** – Great, monstrous metalcore from York's bearded noise bruisers at tonight's OxRox show, the band on tour to promote new album 'Giant Glenn', including new single 'Hit The Road Jack', featuring Raging Speedhorn's John Loughlin on guest vocals. They're utterly brutal, but, as the video for their 'Collectively We Are Tall' single showed, also pretty funny. They're joined by Banbury's thrash behemoths K-Lacura, and Swansea's costumed heavy rockers Doomcrow.

TINA MAY & DAVID GORDON: St Giles Church – Jazz At St Giles' autumn season continues with internationally renowned diva Tina May, regarded as one of the UK's most expressive and technically gifted jazz singers, alongside pianist and composer David Gordon. **THE KNIGHTS OF MENTIS + THE LOAFING HEROES: Old Fire Station** – Party-starting bluegrass from the newly-expanded ten-piece band, playing a rare seated show to showcase a set of new songs, with support from Lisbon's folk, poetry, world music and pop ensemble The Loafing Heroes. **THE OXFORD BEATLES: The Cellar** – Does what it says on the tin – Beatles classics done Oxford style.

MOVE: The Cellar

A SPECIAL KIND OF MADNESS: Fat Lil's, Witney – Joint tribute to the Two Tone legends.



Friday 14th / Saturday 15th

WHAT BECAME OF US: The Bullingdon

Future Perfect have been one of the best independent promoters in Oxford over the past year or so, delivering myriad up and coming bands to town, and this weekend serves as a celebration of their success so far with some of those acts returning for a two-day mini-festival, alongside a host of local stars on the rise. Topping Friday's bill are **GENGAHR**, whose psychedelia chime and sun-frazzled pop pitches them between Aerial Pink and Tame Impala. They're joined by former-Youthmovies man **HUDSON SCOTT**; moody Bear on a Bicycle honcho **JORDAN O'SHEA** with his new band **FRIDAY NIGHT FILM CLUB**, and ambient electro/math-rock chap **KID KIN**, plus more to be added. Saturday is a real treat, with shoegazey noise-pop crew **YUCK** kicking it out in the vein of Dinosaur Jr, Ride and more. Potential high point of the event are **TOY (pictured)**, whose motorik psych-pop, inspired by The Velvet Underground, Spacemen 3 and tourmates The Horrors, is intense and thrilling, especially when cranked up full volume. Elsewhere on the day are rock'n'stroll troubadour **WILLIE J HEALEY**; ferocious, dark-hearted post-punkers **OCTOBER DRIFT**; recent Blossoms tour supports **CABBAGE**, and local indie starlets **ORANGE VISION** and **HAZE**, who are this month's *Nightshift* Demo of the Monthers, so go and see why we love them so. With Future Perfect's keen eye for a band on the rise, quality is pretty much assured, and as the days get darker and colder, where better to spend a weekend than immersing yourself in lovely, warming noise.

SUNDAY 16th

ALL TVVINS + 31HOURS: The Bullingdon – Anthemic indie and electro-pop from Dublin duo All Tvvins, out on tour to promote debut album 'IIVV', mixing the bold 80s pop of U2 and INXS with some Foals fidget and a bit of Steve Reich's minimalist insistency. Support from rising local ambient electro-pop crew 31Hours. **LISA HANNIGAN + HEATHER WOODS BRODERICK: O2 Academy** – Alternately serene and haunting minimalist pop from Dublin's Lisa Hannigan, out on tour to promote her latest album 'At Swim', produced by The National's Aaron Dessner, the one-time harmony foil to Damien Rice continuing to explore darkness and death with hushed understatement and crystalline voice. **LEVEL 42: The New Theatre** – Officially the worst band of the 1980s. Shut up, yes they are. **MONKFISH + BEAVERFUEL + PURPLE MAY + JULES PEZO: The Wheatsheaf (3.30-8.30pm)** – Free afternoon of music in the downstairs bar with gothic rockers Monkfish and more.



Wednesday 19th

MICHAEL KIWANUKA: O2 Academy

When Michael Kiwanuka sang “I’m a black man in a white world” on the lead single from his second album ‘Love & Hate’, he was nailing not only his personal situation as an artist (“There’s not many black people at my gigs,” he observed) but the wider socio-political situation where protesters are forced to pronounce that black lives matter. As such the new album is part of a lineage that goes back to Marvin Gaye’s ‘What’s Going On’ and Gil Scott Heron. Just 29, Kiwanuka sounds far older, possessed of a voice to die for, as well as a broad canvas approach to his music and lyrics that owes as much to Dave Gilmour and Leonard Cohen as it does soul greats like Bobby Womack, Bill Withers and Terry Callier. He might be the *Later*... watching crowd’s current soul singer of choice, but he’s a genuinely visionary writer and musician who sounds rootsy and timeless but also stands tall among a morass of post-Drake soul singers. The follow-up to 2012’s debut ‘Home Again’, which helped win him that year’s BBC Sound Of Award (the last time it was won by anyone decent), ‘Love & Hate’ is intimate, introverted, self revealing and awash with doubt. Produced by Dangermouse, Inflo and The Bees’ Paul Butler, it’s almost a shoe-in to win most album of the year awards going, and rightly so. The guy’s a star – even if he’s far too modest and self-doubting to realise it.

MONDAY 17th

HOLLIS BROWN: The Bullingdon – A Welcome return to town for the New York band after their debut here last year, steeped in classic 60s and 70s rock and roll, blues, and traditional American country rock, songwriting partners Mike Montali and Jon Bonilla naming themselves after Bob Dylan’s classic ‘The Ballad of Hollis Brown’. His influence is apparent in their music, alongside Neil Young, Tom Petty, The Band and Credence Clearwater Revival, , while they also knock out a respectable version of The Velvet Underground’s ‘Sweet Jane’.

THE AUSTRALIAN PINK FLOYD SHOW: The New Theatre – Big production Floyd tribute.

KRIS DREVER & IAN CARR: Nettlebed Folk Club – After his superb show at The Old Fire Station earlier this year, Orcadian singer-songwriter, Lau member and young folk gun for hire Drever goes deeper into the Shire for a show at the legendary Nettlebed Folk Club, tonight joined by virtuoso guitarist Ian Carr for a set of

songs from his recent ‘If Wishes Were Horses’ album and more.

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Royal Blenheim

TUESDAY 18th

LONELY THE BRAVE + TALL SHIPS: O2 Academy – Cambridge’s epic, urgent alt.rockers continue their rise and rise, their arena-friendly sound recalling Pearl Jam, Biffy Clyro and Glasvegas at times; after tour supports to Lower Than Atlantis, Marmozets and Deaf Havana they head off on their biggest headline tour to date in support of third album ‘Things Will Matter’.

TEMPLE FUNK COLLECTIVE: The Bullingdon – Horn-led funk at tonight’s Bully jazz club.

SPARK’S SIDE OF THE MOON: The James Street Tavern

OSPREY & FRIENDS: St Aldates Tavern

WEDNESDAY 19th

MICHAEL KIWANUKA: O2 Academy – The London soul star tours his second album, ‘Love & Hate’ – *see main preview*

AMBER ARCADES + ELLA + RAINBOW RESERVOIR: The Cellar – Airy, shimmering indie-electro-pop from Dutch singer and multi-instrumentalist Annelotte de Graaf, a lawyer who’s taken time out from jobs working as an aide to the International War Crimes Commission and working as an assessor for the Dutch refugee council to produce a delicious debut album, ‘Fading Lines’, that swims in similar atmospheric pop waters to Broadcast and Madder Rose at times. Local riot-grrl-inspired pop faves Rainbow Reservoir open the show.

BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE: The Cellar – Alternative 80s, new wave, glam, disco and synth-pop club night.

LET THE LADY SING: The Wheatsheaf – It’s All About the Music’s monthly showcase of female singers, with sets from Cora Pearl, Holly Ford Jones, Waterfahl and Laz Cunliffe.

THURSDAY 20th

PAT McMANUS: The Bullingdon – Metalled-up Celtic folk-flavoured blues rocking from the Irish blues veteran, whose musical history goes back to the 80s with The Mamas Boys, and through the 90s with Celtus, but having fronted his own band for the last 20 years, inspired by Rory Gallagher and Thin Lizzy among others.

JP COOPER: O2 Academy – Intimate soul, gospel and folk from Manchester’s rising star of acoustic-urban, the former gospel chorister beloved of Stormzy and Shaun Mendes.

DEADBEAT APOSTLES + COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN + BEARD OF DESTINY + AUTUMN SAINTS: The Cellar – Bluesy country hoedown crew Deadbeat Apostles at tonight’s It’s All About the Music show. Support from bluesy Americana types Country For Old Men; blues duo Beard of Destiny and country grungers Autumn Saints.

NIKKI LOY: S.A.E, Littlemore – Album launch gig for the local singer-songwriter, releasing her third LP, ‘Pivotal’, and playing the SAE audio college with her full band following a UK tour supporting Westlife’s Shane Filan, mixing up jazzy acoustic pop, power ballads and soulful stompers.

GLUE: The Cellar – Detroit techno, acid house, Italian house and more.

CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre

SPARKY’S FLYING CIRCUS: The Half Moon ACOUSTIC THURSDAY: Jude the Obscure

BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford

THE POWER OF LOVE: The Cornerstone, Didcot – Tribute to Celine Dion. What treats! Such riches!

REBEL STATION + TRAUMA UK: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Punk and rock’n’roll from Oxford-Swindon-Gloucester outfit Rebel Station, plus local metallers Trauma UK.

FRIDAY 21st

GLASS ANIMALS: O2 Academy – Homecoming headline show for Oxford’s latest world-conquering pop heroes, and last month’s *Nightshift* cover stars, celebrating the chart success of second album ‘How To Be A Human Being’. Tonight is their biggest Oxford headline show yet, but they’ve been selling out US shows in far bigger venues for the last couple of years, so come and revel in their psychedelic r’n’b party vibes.

GUNS 2 ROSES: O2 Academy – Oh great, another Guns’n’Roses tribute. Consider us suitably thrilled.

STRAY BIRDS + ROBERT CHANEY: The Bullingdon – Class-A Americana from Pennsylvania’s bluegrass stars Stray Birds – *see*

Friday 21st

STRAY BIRDS / ROBERT CHANEY: The Bullingdon

More class-A Americana courtesy of Empty Room Promotions tonight with an Oxford debut for Pennsylvania’s Stray Birds, the classically-trained acoustic three-piece, led by singer and guitarist Maya de Vitry, having earned a global audience as well as plenty of critical love for their stark, emotive, harmony-laden country-folk, inspired as much by The Beatles and The Band as by The Carter Family and Bill Monroe and his Bluegrass Boys. Having played several hundred gigs across the length and breadth of the US, this rare foray into the Shire comes as they tour Europe in support of ‘Best Medicine’, their second album, released on Yep Roc; with de Vitry having played in various bands with Charlie Muech since their school days, the chemistry within the band is something else. Great support from Florida singer-songwriter Robert Chaney, whose bitter acoustic balladry, inspired by French new wave cinema and southern gothic literature, points a dusty, existential lense at southern American life, harking back to the sounds of classic Bob Dylan and Townes Van Zandt.



main preview

FLIGHT BRIGADE: The Cellar – Return to town for Hampshire’s dark, orchestral folk-rockers, who like to keep it in the family, their parents having met at Glastonbury in the 70s, the band’s haunting, contemplative songs, earning them supports with Turin Brakes and Dry the River as well as slots at Glastonbury, Bestival and The Great Escape while drawing admiring comparisons to early Arcade Fire and The Decemberists.

TERRAFORMS: The Cellar – Drum&bass club night.

USA NAILS + SNOT + GIRL POWER + BASIC DICKS: The Wheatsheaf – Quality noise courtesy of Idiot King tonight with noise-rock supergroup USA Nails – featuring members of Future of the Left; Oceansize, Kong and Silent Front – mixing incendiary walls of abrasive noise with motorik Krautrock and sheer, blinding volume. Get in. Great hardcore punk support from London’s Snot, plus a return to live action with a new drummer for local hardcore and D-beat wreckers of civilisation Girl Power, and vegan-core punk from Basic Dicks.

PETER BRODERICK + BRIGID MAE POWER: St. Barnabas – Elegant pianism and John Cage-inspired experimentalism from the former Efterklang man – *see main preview*

THE FUSION PROJECT + ABI SAMP: The Sheldonian – Local Anglo-Indian ensemble Fusion Project play their biggest show to date, in the Christopher Wren-designed concert hall, mixing classical Indian music with rock and bhangra rhythms – *see main news feature*

XOGARA + OWL LIGHT: Wolvercote Village Hall – Acoustic equinox-themed night with Anglo-Welsh-Galician folk trio Xogara and feral-folksters Owl Light.

WISHBONE ASH: Kidlington FC – The 70s mellow rock giants keep on keeping on, guitarist Andy Powell now the only original member still with the band.

TALC DAEMONS: Jericho Tavern – Album launch gig for the local blues band.

THE BOWIE EXPERIENCE: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Tribute act.

DRIVIN’ SIDEWAYS: The Woodman, North Leigh – Blues rock.

SATURDAY 22nd

THE LONG INSIDERS + THE SHAPES + KUIPER: The Bullingdon – Hot Gretsch rockabilly action from The Long Insiders, with rough’n’ready nods to The Cramps, Jerry Lee Lewis and Little Richard as well as a hefty pelvis bump in the direction of Sun-era Elvis. Great support from The Shapes, with poetic 60s-styled nods to Ray Davies, Van Morrison and The Beautiful South.

THE DOORS ALIVE: O2 Academy – Doors tribute.

BUZZCOCKS: O2 Academy – Peerless proponents of pop-riddled punk since 1976, Buzzcocks have been no strangers to Oxford venues since their reformation in the late-80s, but tonight’s gig is special even by their high standards as they celebrate their 40th anniversary. Following on from the seminal, self-released ‘Spiral Scratch’ EP, the Manchester legends followed it with two timeless punk-pop pieces, ‘Another Music In A Different Kitchen’ and its follow-up, ‘Love Bites’, which featured the band’s signature tune, ‘Ever Fall In Love’, but beyond the albums Buzzcocks are one of the great singles bands of the 70s and 80s, with ‘What Do I Get’,

‘I Don’t Mind’, ‘Love You More’ and ‘Promises’ just a handful of their timeless hits, and with Pete Shelley and Steve Diggle showing no signs of mellowing with age, tonight’s another spectacular step back into history for fans of peerless pop everywhere.

FORT HOPE: The Cellar – Polished rocking from last year’s *Kerrang!* Best British Newcomers winners, fitting neatly into the You Me At Six scheme of stadium-sized riffage things.

PITCH BLACK: The Cellar – The techno club night celebrates its firth birthday with a guest slot from DJ Perc.

PENNY RIMBAUD + EVE LIBERTINE + LOUISE ELLIOT: East Oxford Community Centre – While Buzzcocks kick out the hits and keep the punk nostalgia merry-go-round going up the road tonight, prime movers of punk’s most militant, thoughtful and challenging band, Crass, Penny Rimbaud and Eve Libertine bring their poetry, spoken word, and song performance to east Oxford, the duo teaming up with flautist and saxophonist Louise Elliot to enhance readings that will doubtless challenge everything, their anarchist view of war, peace, love and everything in between unbowed after all these years.

PROMETHEAN REIGN + CONFRONT THE CARNAGE + VIOLENCE IS GOLDEN + MASIRO: The Wheatsheaf – Blackened metal and angular noise tonight with local Behemoth and Fleshgod Apocalypse-inspired heavyweights Promethean Reign alongside grindcore and death metal crew Confront the Carnage, metal and southern rock beasts Violence is Golden, plus visceral math-core from Masiro.

RAWDIO: The Bullingdon – Jungle and drum&bass soundsystem, with guests Bladerunner and Saxxon.

TWISTED STATE OF MIND: The Rock Barn, Witney – The local rockers launch their new EP, mixing up classic 70s rock, thrash and post-hardcore – *see Introducing feature*

THE MIGHTY REDOX: The Black Swan

THE INFLATABLES: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Classic ska tribute.

SUNDAY 23rd

SPRING KING + THE BIG MOON: O2 Academy – Laddish garage rocking in the vein of Palma Violets, Vaccines et al from Manchester’s Spring Kings, back in town on tour to promote new single ‘Detroit’.

ASYLUMS: The Cellar – Anthemic guitar pop from Southend’s Asylums, out on tour to promote debut album ‘Killer Brainwaves’, a livewire collision of Nirvana, Weezer, Ash and Three Colours Red and likely to be heralded as one of the albums of 2016 come the end of year polls.

MONDAY 24th

THE LOVELY EGGS + TENDER PREY + LUCY LEAVE: The Cellar – Idiosyncratic grunge-pop genius from Lancaster’s odd couple – *see main preview*

SUNSET SONS: O2 Academy – The former BBC Sound of 2015 longlisters head out on their biggest headline tour to date as they promote new album ‘Very Rarely Say Die’, the shaggy Anglo-Australian surfer dudes’ slacker grunge coming in somewhere between Kings of Leon, Killers and Doves.

COOPE, BOYES & SIMPSON: Nettlebed Folk Club – A farewell tour for the South Yorkshire/Derbyshire vocal trio, calling it a day with one last album and tour after 23 years on the road



Friday 21st

PETER BRODERICK: St. Barnabas

From his formative years in Oregon, through session work with M Ward and Zoöey Deschanel, onward through his time with Danish etherealists Efterklang an onto a prolific solo and collaborative career, composer Peter Broderick has always celebrated unpredictability in music, and made a virtue out of making himself uncomfortable in what he’s doing. Something he’s taken to the extreme on latest album ‘Partners’, inspired by John Cage’s fascination with chance and landscape in music. Verses of poetry and even the order of musical notes were decided on the roll of dice, including a version of Cage’s own ‘In a Landscape’. All very arty and potentially an absolute shit to listen to, but as ever Broderick creates music that’s fragile and melancholy but capable of drifting into the widest of wide open spaces and retaining a sense of urgency, utilising little more than vocals, loops and piano. Often lumped in with other so-called neo-classical artists (and Erapsed Tapes label mates) like Olafur Arnalds, Nils Frahm and A Winged Victory For the Sullen, Broderick is as at home in club venues as classical concert halls, but tonight’s show, hosted by the irrepressibly inventive Irregular Folks, is in the suitably ornate and grand setting of venue, where he’s joined by Brigid Mae Power, who he covers on ‘Partners’.

together, singing close-harmony songs of social comment and more.

THE BLUESWATER: The Jericho Tavern – Famous Monday Blues night.

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Royal Blenheim

TUESDAY 25th

HAWKLORDS: O2 Academy – Psych/space-rock overload and a visual spectacular from the reconvened Hawklords, helmed now by original member Harvey Bainbridge who formed the band back in the 1970s with the late, great Robert Calvert ad now out on tour to promote new album ‘Fusion’.

HAVE YOU SEEN THE JANE FONDA AEROBICS VHS?: The Cellar – If nothing else, this month’s best band name winner, Finland’s HYSTJFAVHS (don’t make us type it out in full again), come to the UK to tour their new album, mixing 60s girl groups, 80s synth-pop, garage rock and 90s dreampop into a lush, excitable



Monday 24th

THE LOVELY EGGS: The Cellar

Despite describing themselves simply as “a punk rock band from northern England,” it’s fair to say there isn’t another band around anything like The Lovely Eggs. Formed by married couple Holly Ross and David Blackwell, the pair, from Lancaster, plough a singularly idiosyncratic furrow, bashing out gorgeously exuberant indie-thrash gems like ‘Allergies’ and ‘Goofin’ Around (In Lancashire)’ one minute, potty-mouthed grunge rants like ‘Don’t Look At Me (I Don’t Like It)’ and ‘People Are Twats’ the next, everything smothered in a quintessentially northern gravy of daft humour, oddball lyricism and Holly’s unrefined Lancastrian accent. On the one hand they’re so determinedly anti-commercial they released a single called ‘Fuck It’ on a bank holiday Monday so that DJs couldn’t play it and no-one could actually buy it, but on the other, pretty much everything they do comes tinged with pop magic. Last year’s ‘This Is Our Nowhere’, championed as ever by Number 1 fan Marc Riley, cemented their reputation as one of the most under-rated pop gems around, and any band that can rhyme “digital accordion” with “Richard Brautigan”, “Deadly scorpion” and “Beef bourguignon” has got to be genius, right? *Nightshift* sometimes dreams that if we’re really good, when we die we’ll go to Heaven and The Lovely Eggs will be our new mum and dad. The afterlife would never be dull.

whole. Energetic, aerobic dancing is encouraged. Leotards optional.

CATCH FIRE + THESE MINDS + BETTER THAN NEVER + ONE STATE DRIVE: The Wheatsheaf – Pop-punk and post-hardcore mixed bill with a headline set from Nottingham’s Catch Fire.

SPARK’S SIDE OF THE MOON: The James Street Tavern

OSPREY & FRIENDS: St Aldates Tavern

WEDNESDAY 26th

STEVE MASON: O2 Academy – The former-Beta Band man brings his lovelorn psychedelia to town – *see main preview*

RICHARD WALTERS: The Library – Long-time local hero Walters returns to Oxford for an intimate show to promote new Kickstarter-funded album ‘A.M’, his fourth, having recently been working with Newton Faulkner and poet Simon Armitage as well as supporting Stornoway on

tour, still possessed of one of the most intensely emotive voices around.

MOVE: The Cellar

THURSDAY 27th

TELEMAN: O2 Academy – Continuing to stake a claim as one of the best electro-pop bands in the UK with their second album ‘Brilliant Sanity’ – if anything even better than their joyously retro-futurist debut ‘Breakfast’ – Teleman mine the more accessible side of Krautrock and the dancier side of post-punk pop to come out the other side sounding like a heroically chirpy fusion of Neu! Franz Ferdinand, Sparks and The Motors.

RAVENEYE: The Bullingdon – Hard-rocking blues from Raveneye back in town for this Haven Club show after playing here in January. Then they were fresh from supporting Slash on tour around Europe, Canada and the States, as well as dates with Deep Purple and The Darkness. The band are fronted by Norfolk’s young blues starlet Oli Brown, who’s played at the Haven before under his own name, 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.

ROB HERON & THE TEAPAD ORCHESTRA + THE AUGUST LIST: The Cellar – Hot jazz, western swing, hokum blues and country from Newcastle’s Rob Heron and his Teapad Orchestra at tonight’s Tigmus show. Great local support from dustbowl Americana couple The August List.

MAWKIN: The Jericho Tavern – Boisterous trad folk-rock in the vein of Fairport Convention and Bellowhead from the acclaimed quintet, out on tour to promote new album ‘The Ties That Bind’, a return to form for the band, with more songs amid the lively instrumentals, which take inspiration from Scandinavian and Breton folk as well as English traditions. They supported Bellowhead on their farewell tour and are being tipped as the band to fill that particular hole, while their members have worked with Kate Rusby and Eliza Carthy and Norma Waterson, among others.

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 28th

FEROCIOUS DOG: The Bullingdon – Nottingham’s folk-punk road warriors hit town ahead of a tour support to The Levellers later this year. Having become the first unsigned band to sell out their hometown’s 2,000-capacity Rock City venue, they played on the Leftfield stage at Glastonbury in June and are earning a reputation as one of the most hard working and entertaining live bands in the country, drawing on the punk spirit of The Clash and Celtic folk traditions, they’re in the traditions of bands like The Men They Couldn’t Hang, Tansads and Flogging Molly: angry and uplifting in equal measures.

SKYLARKIN SOUND SYSTEM: The Cellar – Count Skylarkin hosts an early Ska-llooween party, with a live set from Chainska Brassika, a horn-heavy horror show of Jamaican brass, as recorded at Harry J’s studio in Kingston and

honed at festivals around the world, from Secret Garden Party to Croatia’s Outlook. Boomtown’s AAA Badboy makes his Cellar debut while the Count plays reggae, ska, soul, dancehall and more.

THE CHRISTIANS: O2 Academy – Soft-centred soul and a capella pop from the enduring 80s and 90s hitmakers, revisiting old favourites like ‘Ideal World’, ‘Harvest For the World’ and ‘Words’ as well as songs from last year’s ‘We’ album.

GENTLEMEN’S DUB CLUB: O2 Academy – Leeds’ livewire nine-strong roots, ska and dub reggae collective bring the party back to the O2 after last year’s show here, the band having spent the summer playing at just about every European festival going, and having previously played alongside Madness, Roots Manuva, The Streets and The Wailers.

STONE BROKEN + TEQUILA MOCKINBYRD + DEAD MAN’S WHISKEY + GUNS OF ANARCHY: The Wheatsheaf – Quadruple bill of heavy rocking courtesy of OxRox, with Walsall’s chunky, melodic hard rockers out on tour, with support from Aussie rockers Tequila Mockingbyrds and more.

THE MIGHTY REDOX: The Mad Hatter

CURE HEADS: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Cure tribute band.

Wednesday 26th

STEVE MASON: O2 Academy

Restless and often pretty bloody angry about stuff (check out ‘Fight Them Back’), Steve Mason has never sounded as at peace as he does on his third solo album, ‘Meet The Humans’, released earlier this year to across-the-board acclaim. The music press loved The Beta Band of course but that never translated into major league record sales, while with King Biscuit Time Mason dipped well below the radar of all but his most devoted fans (and they really are a devoted bunch – not without good reason). ‘Meet The Humans’, produced by Elbow’s Craig Potter, finds him at his commercial peak and might be his best ever album with any of his projects. Warm and hopeful, weightlessly euphoric, joyous and almost anthemic at times, it still carries his trademark genre-blending approach and as usual sounds for the most part like it’s coming at you through a lysergic fog, but is his most stripped-down and straightforward work, one that reveals him as a great singer – gravelly and soothing in equal measures – and a fantastic songwriter. Funny and extremely likeable onstage, Mason’s passed through town a few times on his travels, but there’s no better time to see him live, and tonight will probably find him playing to his biggest Oxford audience so far. Can’t say he doesn’t deserve it.



SATURDAY 29th

THE TRAVELLING BAND: The Bullingdon – Return of Manchester’s rootsy psychedelic folk-pop collective, in the vein of Crosby, Stills & Nash and The Band

AFRO CELT SOUNDSYSTEM: O2 Academy – A bitter split in the ranks last year means we’re not entirely sure which version of Afro Celt Soundsystem this is, but almost certainly the one that just released new album ‘The Source’, taking world fusion from the Scottish Highlands to India via west Africa, the band mixing kora, balafon and Guinean chants with Bhangra dhol rhythms and the pipes, flutes and reels of Gaelic folk tradition. Jazz bagpipes, Gaelic rapping and African choral singing? It’s all here, often within a single song.

GARAGE NATION: O2 Academy – UK garage club night Garage Nation returns to action for a pre-Halloween party.

SYD ARTHUR: The Cellar – Funky psych-tinged folk-pop from Canterbury’s Syd Arthur, out on tour to promote new single ‘Sun Rays’ ahead of their forthcoming fourth album, the band having supported Vampire Weekend on tour as well as playing Lollapalooza, sounding like Maroon 5 if they’d grown up in the company of Canterbury scene greats like Caravan and Gong.

GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES with PETE ROCH + LADY NADE + STOLBY: The Wheatsheaf – GTI continue to mix and match to excellent effect with their monthly live music club, tonight featuring Oxford-London rockers Pete Roch, with a riff-heavy form of psychedelia; support comes from Bristol’s satin-voiced singer Lady Nade, sounding like Nina Simone taking a wander through soulful blues, country, jazz and folk, and airy summer-pop

FUTURE PERFECT PRESENTS

WHAT BECAME OF US

GENGAHR YUCK TOY



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14TH - 15TH OCTOBER

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songstress Stolby, inspired by the likes of Edie Brickell and Juliana Hatfield.

THE DAVID GORDON TRIO: St Giles Church –The Jazz at St Giles season continues with local pianist and composer David Gordon’s trio, mixing melody and improvisation.

OXJAM ABINGDON with KANADIA + COLDREDLIGHT + ALL IS WORTH + SOPHRONIE: The Unicorn Theatre, Abingdon – Expansive stadium pop from Kanadia at the Abingdon leg of Oxjam, plus spooked blues and alt.pop from Coldredlight and more.

PETE FRYER BAND: The Dolphin, Wallingford

BREEZE: Fat Lil’s, Witney

SUNDAY 30th

JAPANESE HOUSE: The Bullingdon – Ambient electro and heavily-treated vocals from Amber Bain’s The Japanese House, back in town after her well-received show here last year, now touring new EP ‘Clean’ and drawing comparisons to The Postal Service and Imogen Heap as well as label mates and occasional collaborators The 1975.

TIBET: The Library – Stomping glam-boogie revivalism from Cardiff’s Tibet, out on a headline tour to promote new single ‘There Is a Place’ on Alcopop! following a summer spent playing Reading and Leeds Festivals, Latitude and Truck, as well as supporting Amazons on tour.

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CLEAN CUT KID: The Jericho Tavern – Languidly funky electro-pop in a Vampire Weekend style from the Liverpooldlian quartet, out on their biggest tour to date to promote new EP ‘We Used To Be In Love’.

MAEVE BAYTON & SHARON NORRIS + THE MONKEYFISTS + THE JESTERS + ASH LEWIS + THE FIREGAZERS: The Wheatsheaf (3.30-7pm) – Klub Kakofanney host an afternoon of free unplugged music in the downstairs bar.

OLD DOG HORNS BIG BAND: Florence Park Community Centre (2-5pm) – The Sunday Sessions hosts a family-friendly afternoon of live music, cake and more, today with twelve-piece swing band Old Dog Horns.

BLUES JAM: Fat Lil’s, Witney (3pm)

MONDAY 31st

JACK GOLDSTEIN + THE POTENTIALS + THE GOLDEN WILDERNESS: The Library – Weird psychedelic spook pop from Fixers man Jack Goldstein at tonight’s Smash Disco Halloween party, plus Buffy the Vampire-themed pop-punk from The Potentials and synth-goth noise from Dublin’s The Golden Wilderness.

HALLOWEEN PARTY: The Cellar

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Royal Blenheim

THE FURROW COLLECTIVE: Nettlebed Folk Club – Traditional folk balladry from a quartet of folk luminaries – Rachel Newton, Lucy Farrell, Emily Portman and Alasdair Roberts.

FUTURE PERFECT

THE MAGIC GANG O2 Academy 2 29.09.16 £8	AMBER ARCADES The Cellar, 19.10.16 £7	MUTUAL BENEFIT The Bullingdon 25.11.16 £10
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ALL TWINS The Bullingdon 16.10.16 £8	FICKLE FRIENDS The Bullingdon 21.11.16 £8	CATE LE BON The Bullingdon 17.12.16 £15

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SLAVES / ESTRONS

The Bullingdon

A Slaves gig for under two quid, in the sort of dark, sweaty venue they were born to but long ago outgrew? Yes, please. The Mercury-nominated duo are embarking on a run of tiny shows, exclusively for fans that have pre-ordered their impending second album, ‘Take Control’, and predictably, tonight’s Bullingdon show, along with the 14 other dates, sold out within two minutes. Tour support comes from Estrons, a female-fronted indie-punk quartet from Cardiff, comparable to Marmozets. They deliver a tight, punky set but fail to connect with their audience until set-closer and clear stand out track ‘Drop’;

tonight’s 14+ show has a noticeably young and sober teenage crowd, who are clearly here for Slaves and Slaves alone. This saps the energy from the room and Estrons’ set suffers as a consequence. They seem like an exciting young band and you hope they’re presented with a more enthusiastic crowd when they return to Oxford. By the time Slaves arrive on stage the venue is packed to the rafters and very, very hot. “Last night we played our hottest show ever and I didn’t think it could be topped – it just has,” declares vocalist and drummer Isaac Holman as he climbs onto the stage, stripping down to a

pair of shorts. The moment the band kick off the previously subdued crowd surges forwards, the mosh pits start and crowd surfers are passed overhead. Tonight’s set is split between fan favourites and songs from ‘Take Control’. Four songs in, we’re treated to mass sing-a-longs of ‘Sockets’ and ‘Cheer Up London’, causing the venue to erupt. “One thing that we’ve never had is a naked crowd surfer. Security – don’t kick them out!” Laurie teases, naturally resulting in chaos. The new songs don’t attempt to deviate too far from the style and formula established on debut album

‘Are You Satisfied’; if anything, they’re slightly heavier but they seem to lose the catchy riffs along the way. Lead single ‘Spit It Out’ sums up the tone of the new songs and cheeky riffs like ‘The Hunter’ seem to be a trait they’ve left behind, but after touring relentlessly for the last few years, Slaves are undoubtedly masters of the stage, combining tight, short punk songs with amusing stage antics to create a rousing live experience. They finish a short but sweet 45-minute set with fans favourite ‘The Hunter’, leaving a roomful of sweaty fans wanting more. With a massive UK tour due in November, more is imminent. **Dan Mordente**

ELVANA

O2 Academy

Right, let’s get one thing straight immediately. Any po-faced pissant carping about the concept behind Elvana – the self-proclaimed (though probably truthfully described) best Elvis-fronted Nirvana tribute act in the world – is conveniently forgetting that Nirvana themselves have essentially endorsed it. Kurt Cobain, having proven in 1994 that he did indeed have a gun, the remaining members chose to play Celebrity Karaoke twenty years later, inviting a quartet of singers to take his place for the live performance that marked the band’s induction into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. If Kim Gordon, St Vincent, Joan Jett and Lorde could all have a crack at the standards, then why can’t the King? Emerging stage right with hamburger in hand as his preppily dressed band kick into ‘Aneurysm’, this Elvis is not the clean-cut sex symbol of the 1950s and 60s, but the bejewelled behemoth of the 70s, dragged straight from the Vegas strip. He’s suffering for his art, clad in a snugly-fitting jumpsuit that results in a sweaty groin and sporting a tan that makes him look like the varnished offspring of David Dickinson and Claudia Winkelman.

Disrespectful to both artists? Not a bit of it. A grunged-up cover of ‘All Shook Up’ (“We like to call it ‘All Fucked Up’”) provokes an animated response, while potent renditions of ‘Lithium’, ‘Heart-Shaped Box’, ‘You Know You’re Right’ and especially ‘All Apologies’ are a timely and surprisingly poignant reminder of Nirvana’s power and Cobain’s considerable songwriting chops in the month that ‘Nevermind’ turns 25. The encore ends with ‘The Man Who Sold The World’, and a Geordie pretending to be Elvis pretending to be Kurt Cobain pretending to be David Bowie. A complete headfuck, in other words – but one they manage to pull off. Elvana may have started out as a joke, but it’s a joke that certainly hasn’t gone too far yet.

Ben Woolhead

THE GARDEN / HAZE

The Bullingdon

Haze are rapidly establishing themselves as one of the most exciting young bands on the Oxford circuit. The four-piece fire through a 30-minute set, inciting a moshpit and whipping the crowd into a frenzy while debuting two songs from their new EP ‘Digital Fulfilment’ along the way. The band’s infectious energy and onstage antics make them ones to watch locally as well as the perfect warm up for The Garden. Consisting of twin Californian brothers Wyatt and Fletcher Shears, and currently on a world tour in support of 2015 album ‘Ha Ha’ The Garden fly onto the stage, covered in face paint and raring to go. Their unusual set-up comprises bass guitar, drums and a heavy dependence on a drum sampler. Highlights of an hour-long set are ‘All Smiles Over Here’, ‘Egg’ and ‘Red, Green,

NEVERLND

The Bullingdon

With half the band heading for university, tonight sees local treasures Neverlnd saying au revoir, and going out with a bang, the band faced with a capacity crowd whose mood feels mildly riotous. The band’s style has mutated a lot over the past year since they changed their name from Balloon Ascents, growing and taking a new shape that affects older songs as well, like ‘Cutout’ that opens the set and radiates contagious energy.

It’s easy to get lost in the atmosphere of the songs, particularly the frenetic ‘Neighbours’, its groovy tune and the warm simplicity of lyrics like “Let’s do something I don’t expect / Or a conversation I don’t wanna forget” make the whole song irresistible. Ditto ‘No’, something of a classic for long-term fans, while they can also slow things down, as on yet-to-be-released ballad ‘Easy’.

Despite the farewell nature of the show there’s also a celebratory feel and an overwhelming sense of inclusiveness, typified by a mass audience singalong of the closing lines of ‘Aberration’: “I wanna see your eyes / I wanna see your eyes / I can run but I cannot hide”. Another gem is the almost annoyingly vibrant and catchy ‘We Don’t Talk Like We Used To’, unadorned lyrics colliding with hypnotic yet playful tunes until the smooth fusion of crunching drums and gentle riffs wraps the song up.

A rare misfire, ‘My Heart Away’ feels as if it’s still in an experimental phase and leaves something to be desired, but there’s enough charisma and charm pouring from the stage for it to matter too much. Neverlnd have never had this problem on that count.

Returning for one last song, ‘Tundra’, frontman Thomas Roberts declares that Neverlnd are not going away forever; in fact they are expected to be back in January. Until then we have a night to remember. The show, from start to finish, from stellar vocals to explosive pop moments, is the perfect amount of intimate.

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MYSTIC INANE / SCRAP BRAIN / JUNKIE BRUSH

The Library

Punk idealism, it’s fair to say, never valued technical virtuosity or production values too highly compared to attitude, but tonight’s gig proves that having one or all of those can make a difference. It’s great to be reminded just how good Junkie Brush are after not having seen them live for a couple of years at least. Standing in for Basic Dicks tonight the band have been around the local scene for well over a decade now and are a taut, well-drilled lesson in how to play hardcore punk. Their superfuzzed mix of 80s DC hardcore, and a bolshy but melodic strain of UK punk (think Minor Threat crossed with The Exploited, or even The Adverts occasionally) keeps it straight and simple while never skimping on the rage and nihilism – a song about a skydiving dwarf who died is followed by a song about Jeremy Beadle being dead, which in turn is followed by a song called ‘Now You’re Fucked’. Still angry. Still bloody great. Scrap Brain – a quartet spread between Oxford, Bath and London – are all

about attitude over technicality.

Their short, musically chaotic set is a rudimentary take on Riot Grrl, in particular Bikini Kill, with a singer possessed of the spirit of a young Kathleen Hannah yelping and hissing her way through serrated chunks of lo-fi noise that make you feel you’re watching a gig inside a collapsing building. If that doesn’t appeal, then Smash Disco’s DIY gig nights probably aren’t for you. A shame that tonight’s headliners, having come all the way from New Orleans, seem to lack either the attitude or musicianship to entertain. As Scrap Brain prove, ramshackle is a good thing if you feel like you’re galloping towards a cliff edge, but Mystic Inane’s pedestrian punk riffage, fronted by a cartoonish Lydon/Biafra hybrid feels more like a tired trudge to the shops, and is ultimately dull and formulaic – not a combination that punk rock should ever aspire to. **Dale Kattack**



MOON HOOCH / MARCO BENEVENTO / TRAINROBBERS

O2 Academy

Trainrobbers are two rappers who join in for the last SYLLABLES! It’s a technique that’s admittedly quaintly OLD-FASHIONED! But which swiftly becomes rather ANNOYING! Their set is low-slung, slapdash AND SLOPPY! In the blunted style of icons from the early to MID-NINETIES! By which we mean both Cypress Hill and Trevor AND SIMON! They’re not really very good, ACTUALLY! When we say, “HALF!”, you say, “ARSED!”

As is so often the case, Marco Benevento doesn’t live up to the promise of his opening number, a juggernaut of delay unit baggy groove and barrelhouse joanna which is like a relentless melding of Flowered Up and Lieutenant Pigeon. Had the trio stretched this track out for 25 minutes, it would have been one of the greatest things we’d seen all year. Still, the rest of the set

is still good, honest fun, if a wee bit desperate to make an impact, from the Screaming Lord Such-And-Such wacky suit and top hat to the simple whoop-along vocals, to the chunky knit reliability of the 70s boogie piano. We can’t call him a genius, but we do find a place in our hearts for this Silly Billy Joel.

As an act that started out busking, Brooklyn’s Moon Hooch likewise never miss an opportunity to please the crowd, and their double sax and drums reproductions of dance music tropes with jazz inflections could easily be designed for clickbait videos or tourist anecdotes (“We saw *best musicians ever* on the subway, must have watched them for 90 seconds; we got this CD that we’ll literally *never play!*”). Except, cynicism aside, they are absolutely astonishing, crafting a single non-stop hour of club music

HELL’S GAZELLES / TWISTED STATE OF MIND

The Bullingdon

Hells Gazelles sport the sort of look that could too easily remind you of *Wayne’s World*, with an 80s kind of swagger from a time when rocks stars really were gods. If I’m worried tonight is going to be some kind of 80s throwback, I’m quickly proved wrong.

Support band Twisted State of Mind are all Incubus style riffs and the frontman has the confidence of a seasoned performer, so when I’m informed that these lads are just 16 years old it’s quite an understatement to say I’m impressed.

Launching their new EP, Hell’s Gazelles have packed out the Bullingdon tonight and the local hype surrounding the band is justified, tight musicianship and a confident delivery fuelling a strong set of songs.

Singer Cole Bryant’s pitch perfect vocals are controlled and fierce. Stand out tracks from the new EP include ‘You Ain’t Nobody’, with an extended outro showing a band who are musically well in sync; ‘Dr Strangechild’, meanwhile, is all early Iron Maiden speed riffs and drums, with the chorus refrain of “Doctor, fix me” in the vein of Judas Priest’s ‘Breaking the Law’.

Despite such 80s-style influences, there’s something modern and punk rock about Hell’s Gazelles, and set highlight, a cover of Billy Idol’s ‘Rebel Yell’, links in with their pop hooks/punk attitude vibe.

A tongue in cheek cover of The Darkness’ ‘I Believe in a Thing Called Love’ showcases yet more vocal acrobatics, while suggesting they’d make a great wedding band.

That’s probably not a future they envisage right now and everything tonight suggests that how they take those older influences and build on them will make them one of Oxford’s most exciting rock bands

Karlyn King

from full-throttle honking and expertly placed breakdowns, with occasional forays into vintage Michael Nyman arpeggiation (which might explain the snarling John Harle tone often employed).

If the quick-switch tempos and the eye-popping circular breathing spotlights have a sideshow feel to them, other sections are incredibly subtle, one track placing an MF Doom style rap over tabla, and another exploring the relationship between an Evan Parker skronk excursion and a euphoric house anthem. There’s a taste for the military-industrial dubstep rhythms of producers like Distance to leaven the bouncy disco-funk, but it’s the long striated drone of the final track that reveals the band’s truly experimental side. Get people onside and dancing, and you can have them cheering hands aloft for the most leftfield noise an hour later; this lesson is perhaps the biggest thing Moon Hooch has taken from great electronica. Although making a sax sound like a 303 is pretty good, too.

David Murphy

TOWERSEY FESTIVAL Thame Showground

A packed line-up across four venues, plus dance and workshops, the 52nd Towersey is probably the biggest ever, yet it still retains its intimate, welcoming vibe.

Saturday’s daytrip starts with a dynamic set from young left-wing songwriter **GRACE PETRIE**, whose passionate singing is matched by her guitar playing. Her ‘Farewell to Welfare’ has become her signature number and gets a roar of appreciation to match any stadium anthem, so it’s a bit unexpected when she comes up with a tender, wry song about a meat eater wanting a relationship with a vegan.

Grace is one of a roster of acoustic acts on today’s bill, among which **STEVE TILSTON**, forty years in the business, stands out. He’s got it all: a consummate songwriter with a wonderfully warm voice and a prodigious touch on the acoustic guitar. He makes it all seem so easy and we happily lose ourselves in his performance. There is more fine acoustic guitar playing from **BEN WALKER**, one half of an award winning folk duo with the Sandy Denny-influenced singer **JOSIENNE CLARKE** who also turns her expressive voice to singing a blues and, more surprisingly, a jazz number.

JEZ LOWE’s earthy style and humour is rooted in his native north east and teaches the crowd Geordie pronunciation when wanting them tossing-a-long. When he sings a sacrilegious verse about baby Jesus there’s an immediate short, sharp downpour on what is an otherwise sunny day. What next, a vengeful bolt of lightning?

Of the other acoustic acts we catch, we like the sublime blend of **WILL FINN** and **ROSIE CALVERT**’s voices and their originality in mixing folk with the sound of the steel pan. The duo of **KRIS DRIVER**

and **IAN CARR** is disappointing, though, especially after Drever’s recent fantastic solo gig in Oxford. Their set is rather flat and only picks up near the end with a sparkling instrumental and Drever’s ‘Poor Man’s Son’.

Late in the afternoon we opt for a change of scene and enjoy hanging out at the festival dance house, which is buzzing with energy and enthusiasm and sets us up nicely for heading back to the main stage and Saturday night’s eclectic line up.

First up are the formally-dressed **UKULELE ORCHESTRA OF GREAT BRITAIN** and while their collective ukulele playing is impressive throughout, we find their highly polished formula of versions of pop hits and rock classics and so-bad-they’re-good jokes wears thin after a while. We are, however, in a minority of one as they get a rapturous reception. They’re followed by **THE WONDER STUFF** who are in the midst of celebrating their 30th anniversary. Splicing more recent reflective material with the spikiness of their back catalogue, they play a tight set, and with charismatic frontman Miles Hunt and the violin playing of Erica Nocklass to the fore there’s plenty to savour, even for a folkier crowd.

Headliners **EDWARD II** started out in the 80s as an instrumental group mixing English Morris tunes with reggae before adding brass and vocals. A much-loved party band, they take Towersey past the midnight hour with a set of old favourites and new material, including broadside ballads from the time of the industrial revolution given the rocksteady/reggae treatment. Though the band doesn’t quite hit the dizzying heights of previous times we’ve seen them, they’re still a totally uplifting finish to our Towersey day.

Colin May

ANARQUIA VERTICAL / ULTRA / DRORE / THE SWELL

The Library

Another great Smash Disco night in the ridiculously intimate surrounding of The Library, which it’s easy to forget was a Sloane Rangers bar in the 80s. The Swell are three parts London, one part Oxford and lay down a very large gauntlet for the rest of the bill. Either seriously under-rehearsed or really not that interested in what their bandmates are playing, they still manage to recapture the excitement of early 80s lo-fi noise bands. The drummer thrashes around her kit like she’s chasing a wasp, the guitar is a wall of angry chords and feedback while the singer stands sideways, delivering rapid-fire lyrics directly at the wall. Possibly the best new band of the year, at least to experience live.

Drore feature members of Undersmile, Crippled Black Phoenix and Girl Power, and are very loud and heavy, with a singer, Taz, whose screams will strike a note with anyone who’s ever been to Didcot. There’s a little relief courtesy of a swap in vocal duties but this is about as uncompromising as rock music gets, of whatever genre. Hard to love; even harder to hate.

Ultra are the first of two bands tonight from sunny Barcelona, not that there’s any languorous beach vibes in evidence. The athletic singer hurls himself around the tiny space while the band are the first of the evening to engage with the concept of songs with discernible tunes, delivered in a breathlessly fast continental punk package. A closer listen reveals significant proficiency and tightness that belies the nihilistic first impressions, and makes you wonder what a good producer could do with them.

Headliners Anarquia Vertical share a drummer with Ultra, and a bassist who’s now switched to guitar. Less melodic, more angry than their compatriots, their singer oddly looks like he’s just stepped out of *The Jersey Boys* or *Grease*. The frequent screeching guitar runs reveal a metal influence along with the punk reference points, and they’re less approachable than Ultra, though of course we’ve no idea what either of them are singing about. Despite the energy there’s sense that they’re not quite sure where it’s all going: a band in need of some focus.

Art Lagun

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PETER BRODERICK
&
BRIGID MAE POWER

Doors: 7.30pm



SLOW DOWN, MOLASSES / FLIGHTS OF HELIOS / THE BECKONING FAIR ONES

The Cellar

Tonight’s show starts with a noisy grunge racket of the best kind. Local newcomers The Beckoning Fair Ones feature former Dallas Don’t lead man Niall, and at first glance you can hear his legacy pretty clearly. However, the further TBFO move into their set a more complex and subtle whole reveals itself. In addition to guitar/bass/vocals, they also include a guy hidden behind a bank of synths and it’s this that adds the depth to their sound. From grunge/shoegaze openings they swiftly add in long, instrumental Krautrock-style wanderings that are layered with some post-rock guitar which is a really compelling concoction.

Flights Of Helios have been around for such a long time I know their songs inside out and am always left smiling when I see them, but their recent line-up changes present me with a

quandary: ignore what I know and review like they’ve touched me for the very first time or compare and contrast?

It’s hard to ignore the past, but the harsher, guitar-driven version of their stalwart track ‘Factory’ wins me over pretty quickly. Tonight they feel more contemplative and closer than ever to the explorations of early Pink Floyd, with a couple of mad tempo changes and blasts of cosmic energy thrown in, just in case you felt too safe. Violin and accordion players join them for the last number, ‘A Sailor’s Life’, a traditional song popular with the 60s folk revivalists, which builds to a beautiful chord-drenched haze and just when you expect the post-rock guitar lead, you get a thumping bass line and even more build, which eventually resolves, unexpectedly, to an almost anti-climactic denouement, which highlights really

THE QUENTINS / BLUSHES / ROSE SEGAL

The Wheatsheaf

It’s good to note the musical genes surfacing in Rose Segal and brother Jack, also here playing double bass, seeing as they are the offspring of the late, great Oxfordshire bluesman Danny Segal from the band Mojo Bones.

Rose tenders a more English drawing room pop with her octave-vaulting trill, reminiscent of an All About Eve ‘Martha’s Habour’ folk-gothic, or Judie Tzuke in a captivating ‘All The Colours’, while the upbeat tropic swing of ‘Torrent or Shower’ is the ear-catching coda to an ever improving set.

Aylesbury’s Blushes might well have stumbled into the lucrative vogue of girl/boy duelling vocals, *a la* funky indie Jackie Abbot / Paul Heaton, but it’s a real joy to see Tiffany Marie Evans blooming from her present backing vocals/keyboardist role to genuine foil to Bradley Ayres’ teenage dilemmas, with their eyes and voices searching for each other in the neat aural dance of songs like ‘Crocodiles’. It’s something they should keep in mind when writing new songs.

The Quentins all look like they are called Quentin, when in fact only drummer Quentin Dercon actually is. He, along with Nick Ormrod, are taking time out from the prog-rock of The Aureate Act to join forces with Harry Wragg and Jonathan Henry to bring a certain bookish gusto to the stage, as if Lloyd Cole was fronting the Arctic Monkeys and ‘Rattlesnakes’ and ‘Mardy Bum’ had morphed into their songs ‘Shit Weather’ and ‘Do Me A Favour’.

It’s the kind of mix and match, dare I say musical genetic modification, that ultimately keeps Oxford stage aprons such a vital, elevating place to be.

Paul Carrera

the bitter-sweet drone-folk mood that still makes FOH special.

Canada’s Slow Down, Molasses have built up a bit of a history with Oxford, which, if nothing else, shows there is still a place out there for tiny promoting companies with enthusiasm for interesting music. The band play a mix of Bunnymen-esque indie and traditional Oxfordshire shoegaze. They take the conventions of shoegaze, polish them to perfection, lose the British misery and add some North American bright-eyed enthusiasm. To cement their shoegaze credentials they end their set with a cracking Galaxie 500 cover and if you missed this visit to the Shire, or the last couple of times, then make damn sure you check them out next time. They will be back and they will be very welcome.

Matthew Chapman Jones

BESNARD LAKES / WEDNESDAY’S WOLVES

O2 Academy

Wednesday’s Wolves’ name is a composite of two of English Football’s most storied clubs, but it’s a breezy, undemanding offering of folk they treat us to. With one of the duo sitting on top of a box and tapping it and the front woman’s guitar displaying a certain quiet lushness, it’s all pleasantly acoustic but offers nothing that Laura Veirs hasn’t brought to the table before.

It’s a sonic experience that doesn’t really prepare the audience for Besnard Lakes. Notorious as studio tinkerers, there is anticipation in a room filled with members of some of Oxford’s best local bands as to how the palate of innovation on display on albums such as ‘Until in Excess, Imperceptible UFO’ and their 2016 offering, ‘A Coliseum Complex Museum’, will be realised in a more spontaneous setting. Siren-like guitars create basilicas of sound, drums are unintimidated by the general *sturm und drang* of the other instruments and the bass pierces and pulsates. Vocals are harmonised in the way Panda Bear reinvented the Beach Boys for an

audience of shoegaze fans, while the touchpoints are numerous: The Earlies, Toy and Wooden Shjips among the likeminded. As if punk never happened, this is a stripped-down prog only minus upturned collars on school jackets and vinyl LPs under arms.

Are the nods to Pink Floyd and the like okay? Kind of. The disappointment comes in the set as an ensemble with tracks bleeding into one another, if not literally, then certainly in mood. Frontman Jace Lasek hides behind a curtain of blonde curls, any interjections are politely Canadian and inaudible and there’s a feeling that the Lakes need to be more arresting and more striking. As the drummer becomes engulfed in more and more dry ice and as the guitars soar and crash, there’s a tendency on the part of audience members to check Facebook on their phones, for, sad to report, the band are just a tiny bit dull: a muso’s treat with precious little chance of winning over any new members.

Rob Langham

[Glovebox]
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Sunday 2nd October

ANARCHIST WOOD UNMAN + OLD ERNIE 7:45pm

Friday 7th October – KLUB KAKOFANNEY

UKID CHEROKII + CHARMS AGAINST THE EVIL EYE 7:45pm

Saturday 8th September – KLUB KAKOFANNEY

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Sunday 9th October – OXROX

JOE BUCK YOURSELF TRAUMA UK + BEAVER FUEL 7:30pm

Wednesday 12th October – OXROX

LAST GREAT DREAMERS BLACK BULLETS 7:45pm

Friday 14th October – IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MUSIC

KUIPER CRYSTALLITE + STORYTELLER + NEON TEEPEE 7:45pm

Saturday 15th October – OXROX

RSJ K-LACURA + DOOMCROW + SPREAD THE DISEASE 7:45pm

Wednesday 19th October – LET THE LADY SING

CORA PEARL HOLLY + WATERFAHL + LAZ CUNLIFFE 7:45pm

Friday 21st October – IDIOT KING

USA NAILS SNOB + GIRL POWER + BASIC DICKS 7:45pm

Saturday 22nd October – TWO FACE PROMOTIONS

PROMETHEAN REIGN CONFRONT THE CARNAGE + MASIRO 7pm

Tuesday 25th October

CATCH FIRE THESE MINDS + ONE STATE DRIVE 7:45pm

Friday 28th October – OXROX

STONE BROKEN TEQUILA MOCKINGBIRD

DEAD MANS WHISKY + GUNS OF ANARCHY 7:45pm

Saturday 29th October – GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES

PETER ROCH LADY NADE + STOLBY 8pm

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

Dr SHOTOVER: Age of Aquariums

Ah, there you are. But where am I??? Follow the sound of my voice (voice, voice) – past the echo chamber and through the clouds of strangely sweet-scented purple smoke. Over here... over here... Ouch! Yes, that's me, you blithering id... I mean, er, MAN. Pull up a bean bag and order us a pot of special mushroom tea, why don't you? Welcome to the East Indies Club Happening and Lightshow. We are, in case you hadn't, erm, *grocked* it yet, celebrating the latest New Psychedelic Revival. Yes, yes, the latest of many. And here's to many more! [*Slurps special mushroom tea while sitars play loudly*]... One caveat: avoid Simpkins and his Tantric body-painting troupe at all costs. They're a Totally Bad Scene. Otherwise, hey, relax your mind, turn off and float downstream, as The Monkees once said. (Before they turned into Supergrass and drove that bed round that beach). (Or was it just a dream?) Talking of Wheatley's finest, all the local acts have obviously had to reinvent themselves, in the dawning of the New Age of Aquarius. So look out for Laughing Gaz Gnomes... Ryde... Swervedryver... The Bakelite Wireless Heads... Glass Onions... Grooveaway (now with extra flutes)... and Glastonbury pyramid-toppers UFOals. And may we really be seeing reunion gigs by such luminaries as Timothy Leary's Lovechild, Biba, and The (Got) Anyskins? I couldn't possibly comment, though the answer is almost certainly 'Forget it'. Actually, with the number of cups of special tea I've had today, it's a miracle that I can remember anything at all. Man. Oh, now I look closer, you're not a man at all, are you? You're a rather, erm, far-out young woman. And when I say 'far-out'... may I call you Alice in Wonderbra? [*Dr S picks up some wind chimes, dons a paisley dressing gown and Afghan slippers, and floats away, tinkling gently*]... Cheers! Down the rabbit hole! **Next month: Being For the Benefit of Mr Shite**



Dr S: 'Why don't you come and see my joss stick collection? Er, man'.

INTRODUCING....

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

Twisted State of Mind

Who are they?

Witney heavy rockers Twisted State of Mind are Ben Comley (*vocals*); Luke Ashby (*guitar and vocals*); Joe Wastie (*bass*) and Damon Marshall (*drums*). Luke and Damon formed the band in 2011 aged just 11, “wanting to explore music further than playing clarinet in a primary school classroom”. They have spent the last five years gigging around the UK as well as three USA east coast tours. Now all aged 16, they are preparing to release dual-EP ‘Set In Stone’ on October 22nd, recorded in the summer of 2015 with Grammy-nominated producer Chris Tsangerides (Thin Lizzy, Judas Priest).

What do they sound like?

Heavyweight alt.rock possessed by the spirit of 80s thrash and classic 70s hard rock, kicked out full throttle with theatrical zeal. Even in their early days the band played with a technicality beyond their years and if their more recent recordings have toned down the speedfreak tendencies, they still come at you with energy to spare. In their own words: “hard-hitting rock fused with raw funk grooves, Latin jazz rhythms and gritty yet melodic vocals.”

What inspires them?

“One thing that sparks our passion for writing music is our unique individual musical inspirations. From the likes of scat jazz to progressive djent, or straight-up rock, we love finding ways to convert information to inspiration and injecting this into our music. Bands that have played a big inspiration in our writing process include, Trivium; Periphery; Slipknot; Stevie Wonder; Alice in Chains; Red Hot Chilli Peppers and Abba.”

Career highlight so far:

“Having our first ever US performance sold out and watched by the drummer of Iron Maiden, Nicko McBrain.”

And the lowlight:

“Getting escorted offstage by the police after throwing a water balloon at a car before a gig at 12 years old.”



Their favourite other Oxfordshire act is:

“Too many names that come to mind; the music scene in Oxford is currently thriving. A recent favourite, though, are Hell's Gazelles, who we were lucky enough to share the stage with.”

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

“We spent half an hour duelling rock paper scissors for this question. In the end it came down to Trivium's ‘In Waves’, as it has played such a massive part in our band's history.”

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

“The Rock Barn, Witney on October 22nd. It's the night we release our two EPs, ‘Set In Stone’ (Red and Blue). It will be sweaty.”

Their favourite and least favourite things about Oxford music are:

“Favourite has to be the mass amount of diversity in genres played amongst Oxford. Least favourite is the under-18 restriction to a lot of great music venues, yet there are so many cool young bands.”

You might love them if you love:

King's X; Judas Priest; Red Hot Chilli Peppers; Bring Me The Horizon; Biffy Clyro.

Hear them here:

www.twistedstateofmind.com

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

20 YEARS AGO

Something of a purple patch for local music of the kind we now take for granted back in October 1996, with twee-core heroes **Heavenly** appearing on **The Chart Show** with their new single ‘Space Manatee’ in the same week that **The Bigger The God** were picked to perform on **Top of the Pops 2** to plug their single ‘Pentonville’. Even local rockers **Swim the Atlantic** were getting some telly action, appearing on morning show **The Time & The Place**. Meanwhile **The Candyskins** slid into the Top 75 with a reissue of ‘Mrs Hoover’, which precipitated a short succession of chart hits.

Heavenly's TV appearance came in the wake of the release of their fourth and final album, ‘Operation Heavenly’, the band disbanding in the wake of drummer **Mathew Fletcher**'s death in June. “The best Heavenly album by far,” ran *Nightshift*'s review, “It's dedicated to the memory of Mathew, and there can be no finer tribute.”

On the local gig front there were visits to town for **Morcheeba**, **The Wedding Present**, **June Tabor**, **Sneaker Pimps** and **Courtney Pine** (all at **The Zodiac**), while spectacle of the month was **Earl Brutus**' astonishing show at **The Point** – the notoriously riotous Liverpool electro-glam-yob-rock crew systematically demolishing their own equipment and the venue's lighting rig during a set that was musically incredible and featured a band member whose entire *raison d'être* was to stand on stage drinking beer, shouting nonsense between songs and eventually wetting himself. A shame that recent visitors to town Coldplay weren't there that night taking note.

10 YEARS AGO

After a major refurbishment **The Exeter Hall** reopened as a live venue in October 2006, with **The Drug Squad** and **The Epstein** playing the opening night. With the future of **The Wheatsheaf** in serious doubt, with the pub up for sale and rumours that it would become a wine bar, **Klub Kakofanney** relocated from there to the Ex. Of course the Ex was sadly soon to be no more – difficulty attracting music fans up to Cowley coupled with financial issues with the PRS would spell the end for the pub, while thankfully the Sheaf survived and remains a cornerstone of the local scene.

In other local music news, techno duo **Lab-4** announced they were to split after 12 years together. Delays over the release of new album ‘None of Us Are Saints’, and the threat of legal action over a cover version were cited among the reasons for the end of the band who remain Oxford's most successful dance export, regularly playing to crowds of 15,000 at major raves and festivals. Another local act splitting this month were punk band **Harlette**, who played the Punt earlier in the year, with members heading off to university. Celebrations of long-term success – or at least endurance – from **Gappy Tooth Industries**, the monthly live music club celebrating its 50th gig in the Zodiac's downstairs bar with sets from rapper **Zuby** as well as **Life With Bears**, **Delta** and **Amberstate**. Good to see GTI still going strong. Local releases this month included **Fell City Girl**'s ‘February Snow’, **Witches**' ‘Taking Myself Home Again’ and **This Town Needs Guns**' ‘Hippy Jam Fest (The Likes of Which Has Never Been Seen

THIS MONTH IN OXFORD MUSIC HISTORY

Before), while **Paramore**, **Cerys Matthews**, **Klaxons** and **Seth Lakeman** (Zodiac); **The Lemonheads**, **Embrace** and **Plan B** (Brookes) and **Kate Rusby** (New Theatre) were among the highlights of the local gig calendar.

5 YEARS AGO

While psych-pop faves **Fixers** were announced as **BBC Oxford Introducing's Band of the Year**; a previous winner of the title, **Ute**, announced they were splitting up, as were another previous *Nightshift* front cover act **Keyboard Choir**, one of whom, Woody, featured in this month's *Nightshift* cover stars, **Borderville**, talking about their new concept album ‘Metamorphosis, based on Kafka's novella. Meanwhile Klub Kakofanney celebrated their 20th anniversary with a weekend of live music at The Wheatsheaf, with sets from **Vicars of Twiddly**, **Fuzzy Logic**, **The Relationships**, **Mary's Garden**, **Space Heroes of the People** and **Twizz Twangle**, among others. A host of local releases included new records from **The Workhouse**, **Laima Bite**, **Trophy Wife**, **Duotone** and **Agness Pike**, while the month's big gig was **Leylines Festival** on the Cowley Road, the one-day, multi-venue boasting a line-up that featured **Jamie Woon**, **Futures**, **The Big Pink**, **Toddla T** and **Little Fish**. **The Horrors**, **Ed Sheeran**, **Enter Shakiri**, **Bombay Bicycle Club** and **Benjamin Francis Leftwich** were among a host of big names playing the **O2 Academy**, all at a price normal people could afford back then. Go and see more gigs, people. You never know which future stadium stars you might catch early on.

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DEMO OF THE MONTH

HAZE

Having been around the local scene rather longer than half the musicians we now review have been alive, we've encountered a good half dozen or so bands called The Haze, or slight variations of (and that's just from the Shire, so extrapolate at your leisure), so these fellas might want to think about changing their name in future. Because they do sound like they might have a very good future on the strength of this debut outing. There's eight songs here but it's rarely a chore as the band alternately scurry and wander through a roughneck post-punk wasteland, a barrow-boy bark and yelp vocalist backed up by music that can be urgent, angular and yobbish (lead track 'Baggy'), or strangely unfocussed (the actually slightly more baggy-ish 'Park'). Seemingly taking Wire's art-punk fire and the original incarnation of Adam & the Ants as their starting point, Haze dig up discarded body parts of Beefheart-inspired bands like Stump and Bogshed and use them to create a sleazy, queasy undercurrent to their songs which seem to have almost self-descriptive titles ('Scratches' is suitably scratchy; 'Bent' sounds like it's been bent slightly out of shape etc). They sound like they're deliberately trying to make everything they do sound unappealing, like someone who's chopped their hair into odd clumps. Even the deliberately daft 'Café', with its opening line steal from Cbeebies' *Big Cook, Little Cook* feels unhinged rather than self-consciously wacky. Terribly dull people with little imagination will say this is all just a tuneless racket made by people who are likely to run off with the next circus in town, but, early days though it is, and though they're not yet fully formed and tend to run out of creative steam towards the end, Haze already sound like they might be the band by which all other bands called Haze must be compared.

WATSON & THE WILDFIRES

Artists who list exciting, eclectic lists of influences that bear little or no relation to the music they make do have a tendency to get on our metaphorical tits, it must be said. It's like a chef presenting you with a worktop of fresh, exciting ingredients – ghost chillies! Fennel seeds! Za'atar! Dwarf aubergines! – before serving up a Tesco value microwaved lasagne. So even when the end musical product isn't anything to get too upset about,

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

you feel let down after getting your taste buds all excited. Singer Ash Watson here boasts Frank Zappa, Jimi Hendrix, Bon Iver, Curtis Mayfield, Public Enemy and Led Zep as chief influences, which is a hell of a melting pot. The finished dish is closer to Jack Savoretti, or maybe one of Van Morrison's lesser recent efforts. It's rootsy and earnest, soulful enough with just a hint of blues about it, but couldn't he at least have sprinkled some chopped coriander on top to make it all a bit fancier? 'Knife of the Long Nights' (see what he did there?) is standard breathless acoustic soul, while 'Just Another B Side', as the title suggests, has an air of second best about. 'Old Gregg' is, apparently, a dark satire on a love song, but we can't help imagine it's about a man who's in love with a sausage roll from Britain's favourite bakery chain, and as the words tumble from Ash's lips in a manner that makes us think he's shivering and damp in a tumbledown shed on a remote Scottish hillside, we can only imagine the comfort and succour that a warm mush of reconstituted meat-style matter in a flaky pastry casing would bring him.

DAZY CROWN

Dazy Crown sound like they could do with a decent meal inside them. They could also do with a better band name. Daisy Crown would be passable for the sort of twee jangly bands who followed in Talulah Gosh's wake but Dazy Crown makes them sound like horrific hippie throwbacks, or the sort of band who tried to cash in on Flowered Up's post-baggy success 20 years ago. But anyway, shit band name aside, this is okay, if a bit of a rubble-strewn puddle of a song, a strung-out indie strum and jangle with hints that something a bit more psychedelic was at least imagined during the writing process. Imagine a socially awkward mix of one of Andy Bell's songs off 'Going Blank Again', something the Weather Prophets thought better of and about half of The Pastels' back catalogue. It's all emotional strife and angsty intensity while simultaneously sounding cataclysmically foppish. It's almost like the entirety of mid-80s indie pop condensed into three minutes. Shame Sarah Records no longer exists; they'd lap it up.

NAUSEA

The tortured young bedroom artist is the demo pages' most frequently recurring cliché, but not all hormonal navel-gazers are hopeless cannon fodder. Henry Plumridge here might have adopted a musical moniker that reflects the feeling we sometimes get when confronted by another angst-ridden sensitive soul, but his first track here, 'Prozac', a meditation on depression, self-harm and, we think, accidental overdose, is both well

executed and succinct. It comes wrapped in a dense blanket of guitar spangle, which gives it an airy sense of grace, and if the lyrics and delivery can tend towards the heavy handed, it's pretty appealing, if hardly fun. A shame that 'Knots', which follows it, is shrill and messy where 'Prozac' was solemn and tidy. The vocals become adenoidal, the attempt at getting funky is entirely unsuccessful and Henry manages to conjure possibly the most horrible guitar sound we've heard in sodding ages, one that stomps garishly all over any subtleties the song might once have possessed. Clumsy understatement over brash bolshiness every time, dearest ones.

IN AIR

Blimey, talking about brash, InAir would no doubt have little truck with the notion of bedroom recordings. In their minds at least they are already topping the bill at every festival next summer (except maybe Supernormal, which is too weird, Cambridge which is too folky, and Bloodstock, which would be too scary and they'd get bottled off as a bunch of pantywaists). But yeah, all them other ones. Everything here is about being bold and brash and big and possibly other words beginning with b. That the band quote Fightstar as their primary influence should guide you towards where this is all coming from and going too: grungy, emo-ish power rock with enough snarly bits in to attract fans of the melodic end of the metalcore spectrum, but anthemic and poppy enough not to alienate grown-ups who need to bring their kids to gigs. They're best when they're trying to be nasty and gruff and turn everything up to 11 as on 'Meant To Be', which at least hints their declared love for Gallows and Skindred isn't just a pose; when they try for acoustic and sensitive, as on a shrill, constricted version of their song 'When I'm Gone' with guest singer Marisa Rodriguez, they sound like failed auditionees for Eurovision, or the worst band at every regional battle of the bands heat ever. Although, saying that, the original rocked-up version isn't much better – all hollow stadium bombast, over-emoting and hair-metal boy band cliché. Union J meets Enter Shikiri. Now there's a Frankenstein's Monster hybrid to avoid contemplating too fully in the dark nights of winter to come.

HUGH EDDY & THE CARNIVAL

Lyric sheets; pretentious videos; lists of influence that bear no relation to the music we're hearing – all things that fuel our ire. But if there's anything guaranteed to raise a chuckle and get us onside here at *Nightshift* Towers, it's a singer who sounds like he's straining really hard to have a poo while he's singing. Comedy gold. So here's Hugh Eddy (who we've already nicknamed Huge Jobby, probably because we're after a job at *Private*

Eye) and his song 'Island of Grey Skies', a jolly skiffle romp that in another world might have found its way onto Peerless Pirates' recent roustabout album. But, oh my days, that voice. First off it could just be someone trying a bit too hard to sound like an old time soul singer (or, rather more worryingly, join the Black and White Minstrel Show) while over-enunciating every word, but as the song picks up a head of steam and things get more intense, we're into full pile-inducing, sphincter strain territory. Probably this month's demo most likely to get Jools Holland excited, but rather than stand here stroking our chins and muttering about authentic rootsiness and stuff, we're going to point and shout stuff like 'Island of Grey Skies'? Toilet of Brown Poos, more like.

THE DEMO DUMPER

WILLY REW

Then again, we could always just point and laugh at anyone called Willy. Because humour should be intellectual like that, particularly in an age where the internet has given everyone the right to be offended and we don't want to let them down. But anyway, Willy here (stop sniggering at the back!) is new in town and while we'd rather make him feel welcome he's a bit of a miserable, mopey old sod from the sound of this demo. It's another of the solemn, sensitive singer-songwriter efforts where some poor hapless, lovelorn young chap bares his soul by way of impersonations of Nick Drake / Elliot Smith / Sam Smith (feel free to choose the one that fits best with your generation). The opening lines are a peach: "Caroline / I'm over here / I stand in no corner / I sit on no chair / I'm standing in front of you / Completely butt naked..." nah, just kidding. "Here today / To show you how I've changed / My crazy, crazy ways." Not sure we can picture Willy being crazy, crazy but we'll take his word for it. Those days are gone now of course and he's sad, possibly remorseful. And sensitive – did we mention this is all very sensitive? Gotta let the ladies know you really are sorry, right? Right! But come on, let's lighten the mood, shall we? Too much melancholy already – let's have some full-on slapstick. And right on cue, we get the line, "Now when I walk / I walk right into a tree". Ooh, that's gotta hurt. Well, yes, obviously he actually said "dream" not "tree" but on first listen we misheard and it gave us a right old belly laugh. Gotta make the ladies laugh, kid, else all that bleeding-heart sensitivity and earnestness will get you nowhere. Ditch the guitar and get yourself a swanee whistle for next time. You'll thanks us for this sage advice in years to come when you're sat round the pool with Nina Conti, laughing like a pair of drains.

Send demos for review to: Nightshift, PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU, or email links to editor@nightshiftmag.co.uk, clearly marked Demos. IMPORTANT: no review without a contact address and phone number. If you can't handle criticism, please don't send us your demo. We make no pretence to being fair, objective or open-minded and reserve the right to use juvenile insults while almost completely ignoring your music should we feel like it. Your Facebook friends are welcome to get all huffy on your behalf, but we'll laugh at them too.

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Tu 22nd Sep • £29.50 adv • 7pm
Gary Numan
+ I Speak Machine

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

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

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

Wed 28th Sep • £5 adv • 9.30pm
Fishy Fingers Brookes Sports Night

Thu 29th Sep • £16 adv • 7pm
Wild Beasts
+ MONEY + Ardyn

Thu 29th Sep • £8 adv • 7pm
The Magic Gang

Fri 30th Sep • £8 adv • 6pm
I Cried Wolf
+ The Colour Line + Severance + Vili & Vile

Fri 30th Aug • £11 adv • 10.30pm
Switch ft. Shy FX
+ Stamina Mc

Fri 30th Aug • £6 adv • 11pm
Vinyl Richie ft. Crazy P

Sat 1st Oct • £18.50 adv • 6.30pm
Beth Orton

Sat 1st Oct • £25 adv • 6.30pm
Peter Murphy

Sat 1st Oct • £5 adv • 11pm
9T's Baby

Tue 4th Oct • £20 adv • 7pm
The Kills

Tue 4th Oct • £10 adv • 7.30pm
Ne Obliviscaris
+ Oceans of Slumber

Wed 5th Oct • £16 adv • 6.30pm
Hypnotic Brass Ensemble
+ Temple Funk Collective

Wed 5th Oct • £5 adv • 9.30pm
Fishy Fingers Brookes Sports Night

Thu 6th Oct • £18 adv • 7pm
LUNA (playing Penthouse in full)
+ Co-Pilgrim

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

Fri 7th Oct • £30 adv • 6.30pm
UB40

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

Sat 8th Oct • £15 adv • 10pm
Cream Classics
+ Seb Fontaine + Tall Paul + K-Klass + Allister Whitehead + Cream residents

Mon 10th Oct • £20 adv • 7pm
We Are Scientists
+ Beverly

Tue 11th Oct • £12 adv • 7pm
AURORA

Wed 12th Sep • £5 adv • 9.30pm
Fishy Fingers Brookes Sports Night

Thu 13th Oct • £20 adv • 7pm
Bars and Melody

Thu 13th Oct • £17.50 adv • 7pm
Dead Kennedys

Thu 13th Oct • **SOLD OUT** • 7pm
You Me At Six

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

Fri 14th Oct • £7 adv • 11pm
The Oxford Soul Train

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

Sat 15th Oct • £12 adv • 10pm
Switch x Fluid ft. TQD - Royal T, DJ Q and Flava D

Sun 16th Oct • £20 adv • 7pm
Lisa Hannigan
+ Heather Woods Broderick

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

Wed 19th Oct • **SOLD OUT** • 6.30pm
Michael Kiwanuka

Thu 20th Oct • £11 adv • 7pm
JP Cooper

Wed 19th Oct • £8 adv • 10pm
Fishy Fingers Brookes Sports Night

Fri 21st Oct • **SOLD OUT** • 6.30pm
Glass Animals

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

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

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

Sat 22nd Oct • £12 adv • 11pm
Switch ft. Sigma and Nadia Rose

Sun 23rd Oct • £10 adv • 7pm
Spring King
+ The Big Moon + Get Inuit

Mon 24th Oct • £13 adv • 7pm
Sunset Sons
+ Jessarae + Airways

Tue 25th Oct • £13.50 adv
Hawklords

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

Wed 26th Oct • £5 adv • 9.30pm
Fishy Fingers Brookes Sports Night

Thu 27th Oct • £13.50 adv • 7pm
Teleman

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

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

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

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

Tue 1st Nov • £14 adv • 7pm
Niccolò Fabi

Tue 1st Nov • £16 adv • 7pm
Local Natives

Wed 2nd Nov • £16 adv • 6.30pm
The Wytches

Wed 2nd Nov • £8 adv • 10pm
Fishy Fingers Brookes Sports Night

Thu 3rd Nov • £12 adv • 7pm
Dance Gavin Dance
+ Good Tiger
+ Jonny Craig
+ Kurt Travis

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

Sat 5th Nov • £8.50 adv • 6pm
Leader - Chasing You Tour
+ Club Drive
+ Additives
+ Delirium

Sat 5th Nov • £13 adv • 11pm
Switch x Caravan Club ft. My Nu Leng & Guests

Sat 5th Nov • £10 adv • 11pm
David Rodigan

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

Tue 8th Nov • £13 adv • 7.30pm
Ren Harvieu & Romeo (The Magic Numbers)

Wed 9th Nov • £11 adv • 6.30pm
Three Trapped Tigers
+ Physics House Band

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

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

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

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