

# NIGHTSHIFT

## Oxford's Music Magazine

**Free every  
month  
Issue 254  
September  
2016**

**"Playing with Paul McCartney was incredible.  
His crew let us have a go on some of his  
instruments. Don't tell him!"**



## CLASS ANIMALS

Oxford's hottest stars on  
partying, global success and  
anonymity - *interview inside.*

*Also in this issue:*

Introducing **LUCY LEAVE**  
**COMON PEOPLE** returns in 2017  
**SUPERNORMAL** reviewed  
*plus*

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# THE BULLINGDON

SEPTEMBER 2016  
GIG & CLUB LISTINGS

COCKTAIL BAR

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

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

Saturday 27th August  
**P.Y.T (Pretty Young Things)**  
**Disco for the Next Generation**  
Doors: 11pm

Wednesday 31st August  
**The Garden**  
**Haze**  
**Captivres**  
Doors: 7.30pm

Friday 2nd September  
**Seratonos**  
**Little Brother Eli**  
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 3rd September  
**NeverInd**  
Doors: 7pm

Sunday 4th September  
**We Are Your Friends #1**  
**Hudson Scott**  
**Oxford Drum Collective**  
**Barryoke**  
**Jack Savidge DJ (Friendly Fires)**  
**Edwin Congreve DJ (Foals)**  
Doors: 7pm

Thursday 8th September  
**Steve Summers Band**  
Doors: 7pm

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

Saturday 10th September  
**Volume DNB**  
**Crissty Criss + MC Carasel**  
Doors: 11pm

Saturday 17th September  
**Vera Grace**  
**Revelation**  
**Chapter and Verse**  
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 17th September  
**Old School Oxford Presents**  
**Slipmatt**  
**Glen Aston**  
**Spaceface**  
Doors: 11pm

Sunday 18th September  
**Khamsina**  
Doors: 7pm

Monday 19th September  
**Giles Robson**  
Doors: 8pm

Thursday 22nd September  
**The Bay Rays**  
Doors: 7pm

Friday 23rd September  
**InHeaven**  
**Pale Waves**  
**Coldredlight**  
Doors: 7pm

Monday 26th September  
**Stevie Nimmo**  
Doors: 8pm

Wednesday 28th September  
**Loyle Carner**  
Doors: 7pm

Monday 2nd October  
**Red Butler**  
Doors: 7pm

Thursday 5th October  
**Ward Thomas**  
Doors: 7pm

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

Saturday 8th October  
**Meilyr Jones**  
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 8th October  
**Simple Presents**  
**Nick Hopner**  
Doors: 11pm

Thursday 12th October  
**Fews**  
Doors: 7pm

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

Sunday 16th October  
**All Tvvnins**  
**31Hours**  
Doors: 7.30pm

Monday 17th October  
**Hollis Brown**  
Doors: 7pm

Thursday 28th October  
**Pat McManus**  
Doors: 10pm

Friday 2nd October  
**The Stray Birds**  
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 22nd October  
**The Long Insiders**  
**The Shapes**  
**Kuiper**  
Doors: 7pm

Friday 28th October  
**Ferocious Dog**  
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 29th October  
**The Travelling Band**  
Doors: 7.30pm

Sunday 30th October  
**The Japanese House**  
Doors: 7pm

Wednesday 2nd November  
**Scout Killers**  
**Blitzkrieg City**  
**Daily Thompson**  
Doors: 7pm

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

Saturday 5th November  
**Simple Presents**  
**Happa & Lone**  
Doors: 11pm

Sunday 6th November  
**Tiger Cub**  
Doors: 7pm

Thursday 10th November  
**The Mentulls**  
Doors: 7pm

Friday 18th November  
**Sara Watkins Trio**  
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 19th November  
**Buried in Smoke All Dayer**  
Doors: 12pm

Sunday 12th November  
**Frank Carter and**  
**The Rattlesnakes**  
Doors: 7pm

Friday 18th November  
**The Neville Staple Band**  
Doors: 7pm

Saturday 19th November  
**The Showhawk Duo**  
Doors: 7pm

Wednesday 23rd November  
**SN Dubstation**  
Doors: 7pm

# NEWS

Nightshift: PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU

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**RICHARD WALTERS** releases his fourth solo album in October. The local singer-songwriter, now based in London, releases 'A.M.' on the 14<sup>th</sup> October. Following a series of dates around the UK supporting Stornoway Richard returns to Oxford for a show at The Library on the 26<sup>th</sup> October. Funded by fans on Kickstarter 'A.M.' features eleven new songs and was recorded in Laugarne in Wales – once home to Dylan Thomas. As well as his own album, Richard has recently been writing and recording with Newton Faulkner and poet Simon Armitage. Find out more at [www.richardwaltersmusic.co.uk](http://www.richardwaltersmusic.co.uk).

**HUDSON SCOTT**, Esther Joy Lane, ODC Drumline and DJ sets from members of Foals and Friendly Fires are all part of the **We Are Your Friends** daytime party at the Bullingdon on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September in memory of Michael Barry. Musician and promoter Michael died in March, aged 35, having made his name in local electro-pop band 100 Bullets Back and as part of the team that ran Abort, Retry, Fail? in the early noughties, putting on some of the first Foals gigs. The party, which runs from 2-7pm, will raise money for the Brain Tumour Charity – Michael Barry Fund.

**THE FIFTH DONNINGTON COMMUNITY MUSIC FESTIVAL** takes place on **Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October** at Donnington Community Centre. The free festival runs from 2pm through til 10 at the venue in Townsend Square, with sets from Beard of Destiny; Daisy Delvanaz; The Jesters; Johnny Hinks; Mark Atherton & Friends; Matt Sewell; Moon Leopard; Oxford Ukuleles; Phil & Sue; Richard Brotherton; Ruby; STEM; The String Project, and Superloose. The event is in aid of Donnington Doorstep and Donnington Youth Group; entry is free but donations are welcome, and there will be food and t-shirts on sale with proceeds going to the community groups.

**THE MUSIC BOX** has reopened in Wallingford, ten years after it closed down. The record store returns to the same site it occupied previously, in the town's market square. After an experimental temporary opening at another site in the town, which is now a bar, owner Richard Strange recognised a renewed demand for vinyl. Go and pay them a visit; support local businesses and meet nice people.

**OXJAM** are still keen to hear from local acts wanting to play their Oxford takeover on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October. The local leg of the annual nationwide network of gigs in aid of Oxfam runs all day at various venues on or near Cowley Road, including East Oxford Community Centre; Fusion Arts; The Library; James Street Tavern and Joe Perks. Last year's event saw sets from The Balkan Wanderers, Death of Hi-Fi, Duotone and Little Brother Eli, among others. Acts interested should email [oxjamoxfordproduction@gmail.com](mailto:oxjamoxfordproduction@gmail.com). As part of the build-up to Oxjam **Daisy Rodgers Music** host their annual **Oxjam In The Round** gig at Worcester College Chapel on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September, featuring sets from The Epstein; Brickwork Lizards and Little Brother Eli. The Oxjam team have also organised a multi-venue local art exhibition across several venues in east Oxford with the Chester Arms; Fusion Arts; The Star; Silvie; Truck Store and Quarter Horse all hosting the exhibition. All the works are from over 20 local artists and will be available to buy during a live auction on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> October at the Chester Arms. All proceeds will go to Oxfam.

**THE PHOENIX PICTUREHOUSE** will screen the **Nick Cave** film *One More Time With Feeling* for one night only on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> September. The film will be shown as part of a nationwide series of screenings the night before the release of Cave's new album 'Skeleton Tree' the following day and will provide the first opportunity to hear the album, written and recorded in the wake of the tragic death of Cave's son last year, following the singer and his band as they write and record the record. *Once More With Feeling* is directed by Andrew



**COMMON PEOPLE** will return to Oxford in 2017. The two-day festival, organised by the team behind Bestival, enjoyed a successful inaugural year in South Park in May, drawing over 15,000 music fans each day to see the likes of Duran Duran (*pictured*), Primal Scream, Craig David and Public Enemy, as well as a host of local bands and DJs. Next year's event will run over the weekend of the **27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> May**, with discount early bird tickets now on sale, priced £22.50 for each day, or £45 for VIP tickets. Talking about this year's event, organiser Rob da Bank said, "Oxford was incredible. The sunshine, the crowd, the stunning city back drop, the music, the food – wow! We have to thank the people of Oxford for making our debut in the city one of the best weekends of the year and we can't wait to be back. "Common People made a huge impact on the local economy, generating an estimated £1 million through our policy of booking local bands and DJs, using local food and drink suppliers, partnering with local businesses and attracting 25% of the audience from outside of Oxford. That's something we are very proud of." Line-up announcements aren't expected until later in the year but follow all the news on the event at [Facebook.com/commonpeopleox](https://www.facebook.com/commonpeopleox), on Twitter (@commonpeopleOX) and Instagram (@commonpeopleOX).

Dominik, who made *Chopper* and *Killing Them Softly*.

**FAMOUS BANANA PICTURES** are looking for local bands to work with on music videos. The independent company, set up by local singer and film maker Laima Bite, have recently worked with Anton Barbeau, Jon Ouin from Stornoway and The Shaker Heights among others. Laima is offering special rates for local acts and promising videos that in her words "offer a visual interpretation of the music, usually abstract and stylised. Using my knowledge of film theory, I will endeavour to create something personal, not just something pretty to look at. I also have a good understanding of how to capture then keep the attention of an audience, which is extremely important when people tend to zone out pretty quickly these days. That's why I tend to go a bit old school. I like to make things odd but stylish." Find out more at [famousbananapictures.com](http://famousbananapictures.com).

**KANADIA** headline the Oxford leg of the **Musicians Against Homelessness** month of gigs on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October at The Wheatshaf. They will be joined by Coldredlight; Slate Hearts, and Sleeper's Dome, formed by members of Aureate Act. The campaign was launched by Alan McGee with the

aim of raising funds and awareness for the homeless charity Crisis. Admission is £6.

**CHEROKEE** have been forced to change their name due to a clash with another act of the same name. The grunge-blues duo are henceforth known as Cherokii. Go and see them – they're bloody great.

**THE ROYAL BLENHEIM** starts a weekly open mic session from this month. The pub, on St Ebbes, hosts its open session every Monday from 8pm. All performers and listeners welcome – just turn up and introduce yourselves to management team Mike and Jane.

**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](http://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](mailto:oxgigbot@datasalon.com) to join.

**JAZZ**  
AT THE BULLINGDON  
FREE EVERY TUESDAY 18.30PM

30th August  
**Alvin Roy's Reeds Unlimited**  
9th September  
**Rod Kelly Quartet**  
13th September  
**Hugh Turner Band**  
20th September  
**Alvin Roy's Reeds Unlimited**

27th September  
**Oxford Brookes Big Band**  
4th October  
**Hugh Turner Band**  
11th October  
**Stuart Henderson Quartet**  
18th October  
**Temple Funk Collective**

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# GLASS ANIMALS



**“I DON’T EVER WANT TO GET recognised! I want to go to Londis in my pants and for no one to give a fuck.”**

**DAVE BAYLEY, OXFORD’S** most unlikely and most unassuming world-famous rock star revels in the anonymity that continues to be a major part of his life in the city he calls home.

**WHEN NIGHTSHIFT LAST** featured Glass Animals on the front cover – back in April 2014 – the owner of a burger bar in Jericho talked in enthusiastically avuncular tones about “his” lad who grew up down the street and was a regular customer. Two hundred million Spotify streams, half a million album sales and several world tours later, chances are if singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Dave visited said burger bar few others would recognise him. And yet, Glass Animals are by some distance the most successful band to come out of Oxford since Foals, with a trajectory that could easily see them overtake their near neighbours.

**IT ALL STARTED OFF** innocuously enough. Back in 2010

the band, without a live gig under their belt, won *Nightshift’s* Demo of the Month (“a welcome breath of fresh air”). Little more was heard of them until a couple of years later they started to become a name to drop on the London music scene, spread by word of mouth when their online music was picked up by significant movers and shakers. One of whom was producer Paul Epworth, whose frighteningly extensive production credits features Adele, Florence and the Machine, CeeLo Green, Bruno Mars and Bloc Party, among a host of other global names. Glass Animals signed to his Wolf Tone label and released debut album ‘ZABA’ in 2014, a hazy, often spectral mix of hip hop, r’n’b, electro-pop and psychedelia. Very quickly things went utterly bonkers for the band and they found themselves jetting between the States and Australia, playing major league festival slots and racking up the online plays and record sales at a dizzying rate.

**DAVE FORMED GLASS** Animals with school friends Drew MacFarlane, Edmund Irwin-Singer and Joe Seaward while the four were back in Oxford during university

holidays. Last time we talked the band had just got back from SXSW in Austin, Texas, playing with Gruff Rhys and Warpaint and had been supporting St Vincent on tour. Things, it’s fair to say, have moved on some since then. “That was a *long* time ago!” says Dave. “Since then we’ve only been doing headlines and festivals. But we get to choose our own supports now which is great, so we get to play with a lot of our favourite new artists, and artists we’ve collaborated with. On festival stages we’ve gotten to play with some of our heroes... Paul McCartney was incredible. His crew were so kind and took us through all of his equipment and let us have a go on some of his instruments. Don’t tell him.”

**BY ANY STANDARDS 200** million Spotify streams is extraordinary. It shows just what a genuinely world-beating concern Glass Animals, who not so long ago were playing gigs at East Oxford Community Centre and The Jericho Tavern, are. Given they can now headline theatres in the States and elsewhere, we wonder where the heartland of their fanbase is.

“I’m not sure where we’re most streamed. Probably Los Angeles or New York or another big American city. Crowds have been very kind everywhere; I couldn’t choose one place that had the best reception, but we had one moment last week in Nebraska where the soundsystem broke down, and the entire crowd of 2,000 people kept singing the entire song word for word for about five minutes. It was incredible. “Kansas City is always very fun though: we seem to always have particularly wild shows there. We ended up crashing someone’s house party and doing a show using the hosts’ guitars and drums and bass, just for fun. That was wicked.” Equally, as so many artists have found out in the modern musical age all those streams don’t add up to a huge amount of money; how difficult is it to make a living as a band at this kind of level, and does Dave think the rise and rise of streaming has slanted everything even further against artists than it was before? “I think streaming is a great solution to what used to be a huge problem. There are issues with it, sure, but those issues will get ironed out over time. When radio first arrived, record

sales dropped even more than they did when pirating was at its peak. People were buying radios and not records, but now artists are paid for radio airplay, as are labels, and radio has been turned into a great way for artists to make money and promote their music. The system balanced out. For the most part. This will happen with streaming, but changes need to be made. Read ‘Dissecting the Digital Dollar’; it’s a paper that outlines what should happen very well.” Then again, you sold half a million copies of ‘ZABA’; can you really start to dream now that with the new album you can make it into the musical A League? “I’m not sure what the musical A-league is, but hopefully we can make more records and keep touring and expanding our live show. We have lots of ideas musically, and artistically and hopefully this album will allow us to realise some of them.

**IF THE A-LIST ISN’T** something on Glass Animals’ minds quite yet, there was a tangible sense of excitement when ‘Life Itself’, the first track to be released from the band’s second album, ‘How To Be A Human Being’, was announced, with an Annie Mac Hottest Record in the World endorsement and plenty of airplay on Radio 1 and 6Music in the UK. Does Dave feel like Glass Animals are a proper known quantity now, and with ‘How To Be A Human Being’ out this month, how excited is he about the release? “Ha! I don’t know if we’re a ‘known’ band now; that’s for other people to decide. But I am very excited for the release, and a bit nervous. We’ve come a long way since album one. There’s some pretty bold stuff on the record, musically and lyrically. There’s a much broader range of sounds, and a much broader range of emotions. A spoken word track, some heavy dancey stuff, some songs that make me tear up. I’m excited to see what people think. What’s your personal favourite track on the new album? “‘Agnes’, the final track.”

**A QUOTE FROM DAVE IN** the press release for ‘Life Itself’ suggested Glass Animals had been having quite a party around the world over the last couple of years (“we’ve been in a different city every night; making friends, hearing crazy stories, getting in crazy trouble”); would that be accurate, and where’s been their personal favourite place to party, meet people and just have fun with the band? “We’ve been *busy!* Some of that involved a bit of a party, yes. The shows often turn into parties too. We started playing bigger, faster versions of the album and reworking it on stage. Favourite places... ah, there

are lots. We’ve been lucky enough to play in almost all of the big American cities, and we always try to explore when we’re there. they’re all very different from each other in amazing ways. Portland, Austin and Kansas City were standouts. LA and New York are growing on me big time. Vilnius, Budapest, and all the Australian cities are pretty freaking great crowds and fun people. And, well, most importantly: Oxford!”

**AH YES, OXFORD. FOR ALL** the global fun and games and success, still the place Glass Animals call home. So much so that back in May when the new record was announced, the band debuted a lot of the new live set with a secret show at the Bullingdon, a road test in front of family, friends and select guests (and a request not to be reviewed as many of the songs were being played live

***“There’s a fair amount of me in ‘Life Itself’. It’s about a slightly odd person who spends a lot of time alone doing weird things, growing older and odder; I feel like that quite often when spending time in the studio. It takes me quite a while to readjust to speaking to other humans again.”***

for the first time). “The Bullingdon was great fun. I love those little shows. It was a chance for us to warm up and test out some new kit amongst friends.” You’ve got a headline show at the O2 in October; other than getting to sleep in your own bed afterwards, what is special about playing Oxford, particularly the size of venue you’ll be playing this time round? “There’s always something very special about playing in Oxford. We grew up here; we discovered music here; we’ve seen all of our favourite bands pass through The Cellar, The Jericho Tavern, The Wheatshaf, The O2, so it’s always wicked to be on those same stages as our heroes.”

**GOING BACK TO THE NEW** album and lead track ‘Life Itself’ looks set to become a genuine anthem for the band – an instantly recognisable radio staple that oozes irresistible funky vibes – vibes that hide a dark lyrical heart, a story “about a guy who was born a bit strange and struggles to become part of society. Because of that he spends more time alone in his own head, getting stranger, and it becomes an awful cycle of doom”. Is there an element of autobiography in the character Dave is singing about? “I’d say there’s a certain amount of autobiography in all of the songs on this record. Each song is meant

to be a different story about a different character; some are 100% autobiographical. I won’t say which as I like the mystery, but yep... there’s a fair amount in ‘Life Itself’. It’s about a slightly odd person who spends a lot of time alone at home doing weird things, becoming less sociable and growing older and odder; I feel like that quite often when spending time in the studio. I start to feel like a bit of a weirdo when I go back out into the world. It takes me quite a while to readjust to speaking to other humans again.” The new album feels funkier, less woozy than the first; what do you think has changed in the songwriting process? How much, if at all, have your influences changed since writing ‘ZABA’? Your hip hop influences seem to have come even more to the fore. “The songwriting process was

going. Last album we tried to play everything perfectly and flawlessly, this time we kept a lot of the flaws in exchange for a bit of rawness and ‘vibe’. Playing live also made us much more comfortable with the idea of making music. ‘ZABA’ was the first album we’d ever recorded; we’ve never been in bands before this one. We found ourselves in the music industry where we knew no one and could hardly play our instruments, and we’d never been on stages before. We were a bit shy making that album... a bit uncertain that what we were doing was right. This time we’d had a bit more experience, and realised it doesn’t matter what other people think; it matters that we feel we’ve made something interesting, cool and new, and that we enjoy doing it. “As for writing on the road: it’s too noisy and busy on the road to get anything substantial done. Sometimes I’ll make beats in the back of the bus when everyone has gone to bed but aside from that there’s too much other stuff going on.” You said before that songs came to you in the moments between sleeping and waking; is that still the case? “It still happens, but I was very lucky this time around and had so many ideas all the time; it was hard to get them down quickly enough. When we came off tour I went straight to a studio on my own and managed to get down all the demos for the record in just under two weeks. I didn’t really get any sleep this time!”

**WITH ‘HOW TO BE A HUMAN** Being’ released this month, and the inevitable round of touring and all the attendant duties that go with it set to kick off again, it could be some time yet before Dave Bayley gets to catch up on sleep. After something of a whirlwind couple of years, the ride – and the party – is only going to get higher, faster, crazier. Glass Animals are a band riding Willy Wonka’s great glass elevator with its gear stuck on ‘Up’. How high it goes now is anyone’s guess, but it isn’t coming back down any time soon. And, having experienced so much since the release of ‘ZABA’, what single piece of advice would Dave give to a new Oxford band starting out and hoping to achieve what he’s done? “Take your time and don’t rush things. If the music is good you’ll get there.” Coming from a man whose music has always done most of the talking for him, it’s sage advice. How to be a human being? Glass Animals are going to have to get used to how to be rock stars – maybe even get mobbed once in a while.

**‘How To Be A Human Being’ is out now on Wolf Tone. The band play the O2 Academy on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October.**



# RELEASED

## GLASS ANIMALS

### ‘How To Be A Human Being’

(Wolf Tone)

Talking to *Nightshift* when their debut album ‘ZABA’ was released in 2014, Glass Animals frontman Dave Bayley claimed that ideas for songs came to him in moments between sleeping and waking, and that seemed highly plausible given the woozy nature of the music, spectral vocals and the strange imagery in his lyrics, with those peanut butter vibes.

With the band’s rapid rise and seemingly non-stop global touring in the interim, coupled with a fair bit of partying along the way, it’s no surprise to hear follow-up album ‘How To Be A Human Being’ sound more like music made in the hours when bed would have been the sensible option but everyone was having too good a time.

Lead track ‘Life Itself’ in particular, which kicks off the album is a big, warm breeze of jammed-out good vibes, west African rhythms and a heftier funk kick conjuring an image of Radiohead and Tame Impala keeping the party going with Mbongwana Star and The Weeknd in someone’s basement when the beer and bongs have been freely passed around.

Even the relatively more laidback ‘Youth’ retains that effervescent fizz about it, Bayley’s love of hip hop ever more to the fore with the loose but precise production and sharp beats stepping out of the haze and fog of ‘ZABA’ while keeping the mood nocturnal. ‘Season 2 Episode 3’ is all wowsy pop and crackle with almost a gospel edge while ‘Pork Soda’ is some way off what you might expect from Glass Animals up to now: solid beats and full-on r’n’b vocals that lyrically sound halfway between Thom Yorke-style



## INDICA BLUES

### ‘Ruins On the Shore’

(Self released)

If Indica Blues were a vehicle, they’d be an oil tanker: slow but unstoppable. If they were a sportsperson they’d be footballer Adebayo Akinfenwa: slow but unstoppable. If they were an

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## DRORE

### ‘Tape One’

(Self released)

Drore’s debut EP starts with the sound of a toilet being flushed. And then flushed again. This is before we get to songs with titles like ‘Skin Job’, ‘Hippy Crack’ and ‘Fukbags’, none of which, it’s fair to say, are going to earn the band a place on next year’s BBC Sound Of shortlist. Drore, you see, are a band fuelled by rage, but seemingly even more so by disgust. It seeps from their every pore in a way we’ve not heard from any local band since the demise of The Cellar Family a few years back.

Drore’s pedigree is impeccable – two parts Undersmile, one part Crippled Black Phoenix and one part Girl Power – and that melting pot is exactly what you hope for from the band. There are strong radioactive traces of Undersmile’s malevolent doom in the deep, dark wells of downtuned noise here, but while Taz Corona-Brown’s voice is recognisable, she regularly dispenses with the haunting, spectral moans and sighs of her other band in favour of a rasping drawl and near-hysterical vocal onslaught that might sometimes recall the terrifying soul-excavating intensity of Babes In Toyland’s Kat Bjelland, but mostly sounds like the demon Abaddon vomiting furballs while simultaneously screaming bloody murder about stepping on a piece of Lego. With four songs each clocking in around the six minute mark, ‘Tape One’ could be an endurance test but, like riding a surfboard across a lava flow, it’s never less than a thrilling trip, culminating in EP highlight ‘Fukbags’, which lurches from hollowed-out gothic lament into a blizzard of shrapnel and hate, concluding with a hiss and whine and sizzle that could be all their amps melting, and a reverbed “Thank you very much”. Yeah, your soul tasted just great.

Drore’s music is dark and dense enough to be virtually impenetrable at times, which merely accentuates the joy you get from cranking the volume ever higher, everything tumbling together as if dragged in by a gravitational force, before being repelled by so many abrasive edges. Our next door neighbours moved out last week, and we wonder if it’s because they knew we were going to be playing this a lot in the near future.

**Sue Foreman**



monochrome feel of the late-70s underground, with their stark, minimalist arrangements and a languid dynamic that borders on outright contempt at times. And they have a simplicity about them like so many of those bands who prized ideas and a sense of adventure above anything resembling virtuosity. So when singer Alice Ream repeats the line “I got drunk, I had a good time” in a girlish, sing-song voice it takes on the guise of a gothic nursery rhyme. This ode of the pleasure of being alone comes infused with the spirit of bands like Young Marble Giants, The Raincoats and The Delta 5 – a golden age of musical liberation for everyone but particularly female musicians.

When Jonny Munday takes over lead vocal duties on ‘Hotel Europa’ things turn just a few shades darker, even as he issues a sombre clarion call for more love in the world faced with our inevitable mortality (“I greet you with a smile, because life is short”), the song’s fidgety spangle reminiscent of so many early-80s 4AD bands, but in particular Modern English.

As their lyrics suggest, Kone are never going to be the life and soul of the party – more like the loner sat at the bottom of the stairs with a bottle in their hand. In their case, though, you’ll ultimately have more fun getting to know them than any of the brasher guests.

**Dale Kattack**



## KONE

### ‘Sketches of Kone’

(Self released)

While the term post-punk has been overused to the point of meaningless by bands who don’t know what they’re talking about, Kone are possibly the one local band who most sound like the music that came out of those incredible years after punk shook up the pop bottle, sprayed it all over the room and snarled “you can do this too.” For starters, Kone reflect the almost

## FOCI’S LEFT

### ‘Something Free’

(Self released)

Lo-fi improvised minimalism can go many ways, but frequently we find it going in the bin, since far too often it seems to be about indulging in the worst kinds of whimsy.

The highly prolific Foci’s Left – the work of electronics/piano dabbler Mick Buckingham whose Bandcamp boasts close to 70 releases and demos – has produced some intriguing moments over the last couple of years, although brevity has never been his strong point, and this latest album, twelve tracks spread across seventy-five minutes, would test the patience of a saint, even if that saint was St Fidget of Moog.

Performed mostly on a Korg Triton, it’s a random scrawl of piano plonking, fractured beats, sub aquatic rave squelch, occasional disembodied vocal samples and the most cursory excursions into drum&bass, jazz and contemporary classical. Occasionally, as on the second, fifteen-minute, track (none of them have titles), things fit together, albeit haphazardly, and he creates an uncomfortable, shifting, stuttering ambience, and when his ideas cohere he can carry you along, but the longer this goes on the more infuriating it all gets, like a kid with no prior engagement with musical instruments let loose in PMT and told to recreate their favourite Stockhausen piece. Doubtless a scholar of International Art English, as identified by Alix Rule and David Levine, could, given enough acid and a big enough thesaurus, describe all this, doubtless using words like liminal, binary and Dadaristical (yeah, that last one isn’t in the thesaurus, we just made it up, so what), but there’s only so much randomness we can take before we’re forced to reach for ‘ABBA Gold’ and remind ourselves that a decent tune is not a crime.

**Dale Kattack**

## TANNERS POOL

### ‘Out of Line’

(Self released)

Reading a recent interview Tanners Pool conducted, they repeatedly describe their music as “punchy”, which is appropriate, since barely two minutes into this debut EP we feel compelled to pummel them to within an inch of their lives for inflicting this grimly efficient, steadfastly soulless dirge on us. Four tracks of limp, lightweight funky rock that seems barely capable of punching its way out of the proverbial wet paper bag, never mind kick-starting a wild rock and roll shindig. Sorry, but this is so bereft of life, energy, attitude... punch, you wonder how the band managed to invigorate themselves enough to record it. If the rumbling soft rock is unremarkable and workaday, singer Matt Ashdale’s strained vocals suggest a casual shrug dying slowly in a darkened corner to universal indifference. In the punchy classic rock stakes, this is to Led Zeppelin what Napoleon Dynamite is to Mohammed Ali.

**Dale Kattack**



## CLUB SODA

### ‘Breathe Relief’

(All Will Be Well)

If they’d chopped six seconds from its length, ‘Breathe Relief’ would be a three-minute pop song, which is something I imagine Club Soda would be happy about. Through a combo of soft pulsing synth lines, slightly (knowingly?) old-school drum machine rhythms, wispy vocals and crisp-as-you-like guitar’n’bass melodic lines, it’s a short and sweet dalliance around 1980s synth-pop and indie-pop. It comes across as accidentally a little dour, which somewhat roughens its edges, but the track is so glossy in production and feel that it’s an overriding compulsion to throw around concepts of ‘summer pop tunes’ and ‘airy festival crowd-pleasers’. Maybe the whole thing is some contrived joke – Club Soda may be four stocky, middle-aged metallers for all I know – but ‘Breathe Relief’ at least *feels* like the work of heartfelt and starry-eyed youngsters. It may not be the ‘perfect pop’ that bands such as theirs dream of, but it’s a pleasing diversion from the daily horror and misery of modern life. Perhaps.

**Simon Minter**



## 31HOURS

### ‘Rockpools’

(Self released)

Having won Demo of the Month back in February, we were a bit taken aback by what a mess 31Hours were live when we went to check them out. Thankfully this debut EP redresses the balance for the most part – a reminder of the hazy, fluid electro-pop and r’n’b fidgeting we’d fallen for on first hearing, rather than the out of tune bloke shouting too loudly over a Foals cast-off that we encountered at The Wheatsheaf.

With their tika-taka beats, starlit keyboards, languid guitar and synth shimmers and lost-in-the-dark vocals, 31Hours risk coming over as something of an Oxford composite –Radiohead, Foals and Glass Animals influences come at you from myriad directions – but that’s to underplay the undeniable charm of ‘Royal Box’ and EP centrepiece ‘Windowsill’, which meanders lazily for almost eight minutes like moonlight reflected on a river at night.

The band still seem unwilling to get a groove on or pick up a bit of pace, but there’s much to be said for slowing down time, staring into space and contemplating the prettiness in small things.

**Sue Foreman**



# G I G G U I D E

**THURSDAY 1<sup>st</sup>**  
**SLOW DOWN MOLASSES + FLIGHTS OF HELIOS + THE BECKONING FAIR ONES:** **The Cellar** – Expansive, almost orchestral folk, alt.country and post-rock dream pop from Canada’s Slow Down, Molasses, at tonight’s Divine Schism show, the collective over in the UK to promote third album ‘100% Sunshine’, tonight warming up for their imminent showing at End of the Road festival. Top drawer local support from ambient electro-prog space explorers Flights of Helios, and fractious noise merchants The Beckoning Fair Ones.  
**GET LIT: The Cellar** – US and UK underground hip hop sounds.

*Friday 2<sup>nd</sup>*  
**SERATONES:**  
**The Bullingdon**  
Just as sometimes we want to slouch on the sofa with a slab of cake and watch Harry Potter films, *Nightshift* sometimes feels the need to forget about musical progress and indulge in some proper old time rock and roll – the dirtier the better. Seratones fulfil that need with raw, greasy riffage to spare. The band, from Shreveport in Louisiana, came together from various bit parts of their local punk scene, and the music they make is a swaggering, soulful mix of garage and southern rock and classic blues, perfect for sweaty, raucous blues bars. But it’s singer AJ Haynes that makes them special; raised in the local Baptist church, singing gospel songs from the age of six, she fair belts out her songs, mixing the grit of Janis Joplin with the gospel of Mavis Staples and the sheer power of Tina Turner. Recorded at Dial Black Sound studios in Mississippi, the quartet’s debut album, ‘Get Gone’, celebrates the joy of old school simplicity and energy, which should appeal to fans of Alabama Shakes, The Bellrays and even Yeah Yeah Yeahs. This will be their first full UK tour, with the likelihood they’ll be far more famous by the time it ends than when they first hit these shores, so get in early. Indulge your ears. And drink more than is good for you. You’ll thank us for this advice in the morning.



## SEPTEMBER

**INDICA BLUES + GRUB + BEAVER FUEL:** **The Wheatsheaf** – Super heavyweight stoner rock from Indica Blues at tonight’s Moshka gig, the band launching their new EP, inspired by Black Sabbath, Kyuss and Electric Wizard. Support from psych-noise people Grub and scuzzy indie-punks Beaver Fuel.  
**TEN STRINGS AND A GOATSKIN:** **St Nicholas Church, Baulking** – Inventive, energetic folk music from Prince Edward Island in Canada from Ten Strings and a Goatskin, the trio drawing on Scottish, French-Canadian, Acadian and Irish traditions on new album ‘Auprès du Poêle’.  
**MICHELE STODART: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – The Magic Numbers singer goes out solo for her second album ‘Pieces’, taking a more solemn, introspective path to her band’s psychedelic pop, her acoustic tales of regret and heartache inspired by Patsy Cline, Joni Mitchell and Tracy Thorn.  
**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre** – Oxford’s longest running open mic night continues to showcase singers, musicians, poets, storytellers, performance artists and more every week.  
**SPARKY’S FLYING CIRCUS: The Half Moon** – Sparky hosts his weekly open mic session at The Half Moon.  
**ACOUSTIC THURSDAY: Jude the Obscure** – Unplugged open mic session.  
**BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford** – Weekly open blues jam.

**FRIDAY 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**SERATONES: The Bullingdon** – Back to the old house in a blues’n’rock style from Louisiana’s finest – *see main preview*  
**ELVANA: O2 Academy** – The world’s premier (for which we guess you can read ‘only’) Elvis impersonator-fronted Nirvana tribute act. Yes, The King goes grunge. And who’s to say he wouldn’t have if he’d gotten the chance?  
**ABSOLVA: The Cellar** – A feast of classic heavy rock and metal courtesy of OxRox tonight with former-Fury UK duo Chris Appleton and Martin McNee bringing their band Absolva to town as part of a UK tour to promote fourth album ‘Harsh Reality’, having previously supported Iced Earth and Michael Schenker as well as forming Blaze Bayley’s touring band.

**KLUB KAKOFANNEY with THE BRICKWORK LIZARDS + FORCE OF MORTALITY + TANNERS POOL:** **The Wheatsheaf** – Klub Kak returns after its summer break, with a fresh mixed bag of music, this month featuring self-styled Turkbilly fusion crew Brickwork Lizards, mixing up Arabic influences with blues, hip

hop and rockabilly to exotic effect. They’re joined by heavy rock, thrash and metalcore newcomers Force of Mortality, and funky pop trio Tanners Pool.  
**SPARKY’S SPONTANEOUS SHOWCASE & SPOTLIGHT JAM: The James Street Tavern** – Sparky’s monthly bands and jam night this month features sets from Richard Brotherton, Beard of Destiny and Porker Band.

**SATURDAY 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
**NEVERLND + GLASS + LUCY LEAVE:** **The Bullingdon** – Eclectic blend of indie, electronica, dub, bluesy rocking and pure pop from the local stars as they play their last gig for a while after a series of monthly releases, university commitments taking the members away from town for the next few months. Quirky noise-pop trio Lucy Leave and London duo Glass support.  
**HOLY MOMENTS + KANCHO! + TANNERS POOL + THE OUTSIDE + LEE RILEY & MACERENA + THE LAND GIRLS: O2 Academy** – It’s All About the Music showcase, with highly promising new punk and post-punk trio Holy Moments, joined by sheet-metal hardcore ragers Kancho!, funk-popsters Tanners Pool, twinkly indie crew The Outside and more.

**FREE RANGE presents WHAT YOU CALL IT, GARAGE?: The Cellar** – UK garage, grime and bassline club night.  
**JOHNNY COPPIN & MIKE SILVER + KIM LOWRINGS & THE GREENWOOD:** **Tiddy Hall, Ascott-under-Wychwood** – Wychwood Folk Club host pianist Johnny Coppin and guitarist Mike Silver, who met in the 70s but only started making music together in 2004, the combination of their vocals making debut album ‘Breaking the Silence’ a firm favourite on the English folk scene. Support from Appalachian mountain dulcimer player, pianist and songwriter Kim Lowrings and her band.  
**THE PINK DIAMOND REVUE + SPINNER FALL + RAVENS: The Wheatsheaf, Banbury** – Reading’s Pink Diamond Revue bring their dark electro-heavy surf-rock to Banbury, with support from local new wave and post-punk chaps Spinner Fall.  
**SHEPHERD’S PIE: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Hard rock and metal covers, from Maiden and Metallica to Thin Lizzy and Black Sabbath.  
**JOHNNY’S SEXUAL KITCHEN: The Brewery Tap, Abingdon** – Classic rock covers.

**SUNDAY 4<sup>th</sup>**  
**WE ARE YOUR FRIENDS: The Bullingdon (2-7pm)** – A special daytime charity gig and party in memory of the late Michael Barry, who passed away earlier this year. In the spirit of the Abort, Retry, Fail? club nights he

helped run, this afternoon features a mix of live music – from former Youthmovies trumpeter-turned-singer Hudson Scott, inspired by Bowie and Arthur Russell, and fellow Youthmovies alumni ODC Drumline – plus DJ sets from Foals – who played some of their first shows at ARF? – and Friendly Fires. All proceeds will go to the Brain Tumour Charity – Michael Barry Fund.  
**BROKEN BRASS ENSEMBLE: O2 Academy** – Fresh from playing Secret Garden Party, the Dutch brass band mix traditional New Orleans brass with hip hop, funk and soul.  
**SEA & AIR + 31HOURS + KHAMSINA: Ark-T, Cowley** – After their star turn at last year’s Oxjam German duo Sea and Air return to town, their highly eclectic mix of startling piano-led torch-pop, crazed jazz-punk, meandering philosophical chatter, subtle humour, sparse Radiohead-like electro-pop and soft-soap harmony pop is a welcome treat. Local support from rising local electro-indie spanglers 31Hours, plugging their new EP, and piano-led power balladeer Khamsina.  
**BEARD OF DESTINY + MOON LEOPARD + MARK BOSLEY & PETE LOCK + SAM POPE: Donnington Community Centre (6pm)** – Free live unplugged music from blues duo Beard of Destiny; psychedelic folksters Moon Leopard and Moiety chaps Bosley and Lock.

**MONDAY 5<sup>th</sup>**  
**THE OUTSIDE TRACK: Nettlebed Folk Club** – Scottish, Irish and Canadian folk-dance from the award-winning outfit.  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Royal Blenheim** – New weekly open mic night at the Blenheim in St Ebbe’s.

**TUESDAY 6<sup>th</sup>**  
**THE ROD KELLY QUARTET: The Bullingdon** – Piano jazz and blues at tonight’s free jazz club.  
**SPARK’S SIDE OF THE MOON: The James Street Tavern** – Weekly open mic session.  
**OSPREY & FRIENDS: St Aldates Tavern** – Weekly jam session with the local bluesman and chums.

**WEDNESDAY 7<sup>th</sup>**  
**WAY UP: The Cellar** – UK garage, UK funky house and summer anthems, with DJ Platinum.

**THURSDAY 8<sup>th</sup>**  
**PETE ROCK & CL SMOOTH: O2 Academy** – The critically-lauded 90s hip hop duo back together for a fresh run through their classic ‘They Reminisce Over You’ and more – *see main preview*  
**THE STEVE SUMMERS BAND: The Bullingdon** – Soulful melodic blues rock from the experienced studio guitarist, out on tour with his own band.  
**ANARGUIA VERTICAL + ULTRA + DRORE + THE SWELL: The Library** – Smash Disco continue to showcase a world of punk and hardcore for zero pounds in the suitably intimate surroundings of the Library. Tonight’s four-band assault features

two bands from Barcelona – slick, super-fast hardcore fighters Anarguia Vertical, whose sub-minute blasts pay due homage to the likes of Wretched, Negative Approach and Teen Idles, while neighbours Ultra similarly hark back to prime early-80s American hardcore. Local sludge/doom/d-beat monsters Drove do a fair approximation of a jet liner full of angst and rage plummeting to earth and exploding in a giant fireball, and they’re joined by new Oxford/London punk/black metal types The Swell.  
**THE MIGHTY REDOX: The Wheatsheaf** – Swamp blues, funk, ska and psychedelia from the ever-gigging local veterans in the Sheaf’s downstairs bar.  
**GET LIT: The Cellar**  
**IT’S ALL ABOUT THE MUSIC SHOWCASE: Jericho Tavern** – New bands showcase.  
**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 9<sup>th</sup>**  
**BOSSAPHONIK with CAMO CLAVE: The Cellar** – Dancefloor Latin, Afrobeat, global grooves, Balkan beats and nu-jazz club night, with a live set from new electro-tropical septet Camo Clave, bringing salsa, rumba, reggae and cumbia rhythms into the realms of electronic dance music via dub.  
**UPRISING with EVAROSE + KONE + WOLFS + KID KIN: O2 Academy** – Alt. rock and post-hardcore pop from Banbury starlets Evarose at tonight’s Academy/BBC Introducing showcase tie-in Uprising. They’re joined by downbeat post-punk spanglers Kone, post-rock soundscapest Kid Kin and more.  
**BLACK SKIES BURN + RSJ + RAISED BY HYPOCRITES: The Wheatsheaf** – Molten grindcore from local stars Black Skies Burn, with support from Witney heavyweights Raised By Hypocrites.  
**THE CORSAIRS + STRIKE ONE + CPR: The Bullingdon** – Rockabilly and psychobilly from Corsairs at tonight’s It’s All About the Music showcase.  
**STORYTELLER + CRYSTALLITE + KUIPER: The Jericho Tavern** – It’s All About the Music showcase night with funk, rock and reggae fusion band Storyteller alongside grungy blues rockers Crystallite and funk-rock crew Kuiper.

**SATURDAY 10<sup>th</sup>**  
**RABBIT HOLE FESTIVAL: Victoria Arms, Marston (12.30pm)** – After last year’s successful inaugural event in Hinksey, Rabbit Hole returns, a full day of live music across two stages in aid of mental health charity Restore and the Helen and Douglas House hospice. Among the highlights are sunshine synth-popsters Alphabet Backwards; authentic country crew The Great Western Tears; dark-edged indie-folksters Little Red; funky reggae outfit Storyteller; jazz-funkers Heavy Dexters,



*Thursday 8<sup>th</sup>*  
**PETE ROCK & CL SMOOTH:**  
**O2 Academy**  
After recent visits to town for a whole slew of golden age hip hop greats – Public Enemy, Jurassic 5, KRS-1 – a chance to catch two of that era’s more unsung heroes in the form of New York’s Pete Rock and CL Smooth, whose tribute to fallen friends ‘They Reminisce Over You (T.R.O.Y.)’ has attained cult classic status over the years, while debut album ‘Mecca & the Soul Brother’ is considered a minor masterpiece of early-90s hip hop. Rock’s love of old jazz and soul samples and jazzy beats played out well against Smooth’s philosophical raps, drawing them close to the style of A Tribe Called Quest and Gang Starr, while they collaborated with Public Enemy and Run DMC along the way. At some point they fell out badly and dissed each other publically while pursuing solo careers, but, in keeping with their intelligent, philosophical approach to music and life, musical and personal differences were eventually forgotten and they’re back together to show a new generation why they were such critically acclaimed, if not commercially successful, hip hop stars. A new album is reportedly ready to go – their first together since 1994’s ‘The Main Ingredient’, but no details or title have yet been revealed.

and emotive songsmith Trevor Williams. Plus sets from Kastaphor; Papa Nui; Haula & Ben Avison; Matt Beasley; Cigani Knees Up; The Aultones, and The Wonder Rabbits.  
**HELL’S GAZELLES + TRAUMA UK: The Bullingdon** – EP launch show from the local rockers, channelling the classic heavyweight sounds of Judas Priest, Led Zep, Van Halen and AC/DC into a melodic but hard rocking riff party.  
**VOLUME DNB with CRISSY CRISS AND MC CARASEL: The Bullingdon** – Drum&bass club night.  
**SILVER RAVENS: The Wheatsheaf** – It’s All About the Music local bands showcase.  
**RAN KAN KAN: The Old Fire Station** – Son Montuno and mambo classics from the local Cuban big band, plus a Cuban salsa dance workshop and tropical tunes from DJ Si.  
**TURF: The Cellar** – House, bass and garage club night.  
**REVENGE OF THE PSYCHOTRONIC MAN + MATHILDA’S SCOUNDRELS + TIM LOUD: The Wheatsheaf, Banbury** – Manchester’s thrash-punk/hardcore beasts come to the Shire.





*Thursday 15<sup>th</sup>*

## MOON HOOCH: O2 Academy

Too much modern jazz is either too polite or too concerned about virtuosity rather than, as was intended back in the mists of time, having a wild time. Moon Hooch might be virtuosos but they're never knowingly polite and wild times are very much the order of the day as their often chaotic, beat-led jazz threatens to enter full-on rave territory at each turn. The trio – drummer James Muschler and saxophonists Mike Wilbur and Wenzel McGowen – met while studying at The New School For Jazz & Contemporary Music in their native New York and began busking on subway platforms, the two sax player's hyperkinetic shadowboxing style creating something almost feral in conjunction with the unrestrained, dance-friendly rhythms, and soon found themselves banned from the underground system for causing too many impromptu parties. Since then they've gone on to record three albums, including their eponymous Billboard Top 10 debut, and new album 'Red Sky', which is getting rave reviews well beyond the jazz press as it weaves aggressive and euphoric sax skronks with hefty doses of funk and more atmospheric passages that suggest some affinity with Radiohead's outer edges. Like the excellent Melt Yourself Down, they're proof that great modern jazz is equal parts adventure and outright fun. So get your dancing shoes on and prepare to get hot and sweaty.

## SUNDAY 11<sup>th</sup>

**DANNY & THE CHAMPIONS OF THE WORLD: The Cornerstone, Didcot** – Big-hearted Americana and 60s country rocking in the vein of The Band, Big Star and Tom Petty from Danny and co.

## MONDAY 12<sup>th</sup>

**LEVERET: Nettlebed Folk Club** – New collaboration from Bellowhead's Sam Sweeney, BBC Folk Award winner Andy Cutting, and The Full English's Rob Harbon.  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Royal Blenheim**

## TUESDAY 13<sup>th</sup>

**THE HUGH TURNER BAND: The Bullingdon** – Funky jazz from Turner and chums at the Bully's free weekly jazz club.  
**MYSTIC INSANE + SCRAP BRAIN + BASIC DICKS: The Library** – Free punk rock

from Smash Disco, with New Orleans' chaotic bad-ass bruisers Mystic Insane, melding Stooges proto-punk with Flipper-like dirges and Necros' hyperactive energy. Suitably virulent support from debased slacker-core crew Scrap Brain and anarcho-punk militants Basic Dicks, featuring ex- and current members of Undersmile, Drove, Too Many Poets and Girl Power.  
**INTRUSION: The Cellar** – Monthly goth, industrial and ebm club night with residents Doktor Joy, Bookhouse and guests.  
**DEAN OWENS: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Celtic Americana from Leith, via Nashville, from Scotland's soulful country troubadour, whose fans include Bob Harris, Irvine Welsh and Russell Brand.  
**SPARK'S SIDE OF THE MOON: The James Street Tavern**

## WEDNESDAY 14<sup>th</sup>

**LOWLY HOUNDS + VAGUEWORLD + SAM EDWARDS: The Wheatsheaf** – London's indie-blues rockers Lowly Hounds headline tonight's It's All About the Music show, inspired by Fleetwood Mac, Alabama Shakes and Catfish & the Bottlemen. Local punk-popsters Vaguelworld make a brief reunion appearance in support.  
**SUMMER SESSIONS: The Cellar** – Bassline, garage, house and drum&bass club night.

## THURSDAY 15<sup>th</sup>

**SAIICHI SUGIYAMA: The Bullingdon** – Classic British blues Japanese style from Tokyo-born guitarist and singer Saiichi Sugiyama, a long-time collaborator with Cream's Pete Brown, and regularly dubbed The Japanese Clapton for his 60s-inspired British blues style. He's drawn admiring comparisons to Peter Green along the way too while over the years he's worked with Zoot Money and members of Bad Company and Hot Chocolate as well as playing guitar in Shana Morrison's band.  
**MOON HOOCH: O2 Academy** – Jazz rave from the New York subway – *see main preview*  
**GET LIT: The Cellar**  
**OXFORD ACOUSTIC CLUB: The Jericho Tavern**  
**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 16<sup>th</sup>

**HOMEPLANETEARTH + ROBERTO Y JUAN + POLAR FRONT: O2 Academy** – EP launch gig for the local electro-indie-folksters, with support from Latin-infused Neverlnd side project Roberto y Juan.  
**ILLEGAL EAGLES: The New Theatre** – Big production tribute to The Eagles.  
**SOUL SESSIONS: The Cellar** – Classic disco, funk and soul club night.  
**COSMOSIS + 1000 CHAINS + EASTER ISLAND STATUES: The Wheatsheaf** – Cosmic folk-rock with a stoner edge from Cosmosis at tonight's It's All About the Music show, plus melodic metallers 1000 Chains.  
**THE AUTUMN SAINTS + FIREGAZERS: The Jericho Tavern** – Country-flavoured grunge

from Autumn Saints.  
**THE MIGHTY REDOX: The Mad Hatters**  
**THE RAJASTHAN HERITAGE BRASS BAND: The Cornerstone, Didcot** – A spectacular and colourful celebration of Rajasthan music and dance from the ten-piece brass band mixing up Rajasthani folk songs, Bollywood hits, spiritual qawwali and Bhangra beats.  
**WHITESNAKE UK: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Tribute to David Coverdale's classic heavy rockers.  
**JACKHAMMER: The Wheatsheaf, Banbury**

## SATURDAY 17<sup>th</sup>

**HUMMINGBIRDS: O2 Academy** – Modern English folk and skiffle from Liverpool's Hummingbirds, out on tour after opening this year's Cornbury Festival.  
**KANADIA + LITTLE BROTHER ELI + VIENNA DITTO: The Cellar** – Stadium-sized pop in the vein of Radiohead, Muse and U2 from fast-rising local stars Kanadia, joined tonight by recent *Nightshift* cover stars Little Brother Eli, bringing the funk and blues party to town via Black Denim, White Stripes and the Chili Peppers, and chaotically brilliant electro-rockabilly and sci-fi blues from arguably the best live band in town, Vienna Ditto.  
**FLUID AUTUMN 2016 LAUNCH PARTY: The Cellar** – Grime, bassline and drum&bass from Masp, Effi, VLVT and Dave Allen at tonight's club night  
**VERA GRACE + REVELATION + CHAPTER & VERSE: The Bullingdon** – Alternately spittle-flecked metalcore rage, and highly textured atmospheric prog from Witney's brilliantly beastly Vera Grace.  
**OLD SCHOOL OXFORD: The Bullingdon**  
**OXFORD BEARD FESTIVAL: The James Street Tavern (12 noon)** – Oxford's annual celebration of facial hair returns, with a full day of live music and beard-related revelry. Making hairy rock noises over the day will be Beard of Destiny (obviously); the newly renamed Cherokees; Texas Ghost Train; STEM; Superloose and Daisy West, while fun activities and competitions include best film or TV character style beard; best historical character beard; most objects held in a beard; straightest and curliest moustaches, a less-mess eating tournament and, for the ladies, a best homemade beard comp. It's beardtastic.  
**ASYLUM SOUNDS: Rock Barn, Witney (1pm)** – An all-day festival in aid of Asylum Welcome. From 1 til 5pm it's a family day with music, poetry, crafts and more; afterwards there's live music from hip hop collective Inner Peace Records; mathfro-pop from Bright Works; Tur kobilly and gypsy hip hop from Brickwork Lizards; traditional Senegalese folk music and stories from Griot Jali Fily Cissokho, and Francophile folk and rock from Les Clochards.  
**MR B THE GENTLEMAN RHYMER: The Wheatsheaf, Banbury** – Straight outta Surrey, bespectacled, besuited and elegantly moustachioed chap-rapper Mr B gives hip hop a run through with the Queen's English, coming in at that point where De la Soul meets Noel Coward and Flanders and Swann. Or maybe NWA if they'd grown up in Hove and been more interested in cricket and fine tea.  
**FUSED: Fat Lil's, Witney** – Indie, rock and grunge covers.

**MARK HARRISON + FARMER JOHN: The Swan Inn, Ascott-under-Wychwood** – Traditional English folk from singer Mark Harrison at tonight's Wychwood Folk Club show, with support from Wurzels associate Farmer John.  
**THE MIGHTY CADILLACS: The Black Swan, Abingdon** – Classic blues and rock'n'roll covers.

## SUNDAY 18<sup>th</sup>

**SUNDARA KARMA: O2 Academy** – Energetic

*Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup>*

## GARY NUMAN / I SPEAK MACHINE: O2 Academy

How many rock stars have risen so high, fallen so low and been so completely reborn as Gary Numan? Back in the late 70s the self-confessed accidental pioneer of synth-pop was just about the biggest star around, but simultaneously reviled by a music press still stuck on post-punk's political posturing. When Numan's musical magic began to fade, he became a laughing stock of unprecedented proportions, artistically and commercially bankrupt, sustained only by the most fanatical fanbase in pop. Fast forward to 2013 and the release of the man's 21<sup>st</sup> studio album, 'Splinter', and he was finally, and rightfully ensconced as national treasure, a universally respected pioneer with few equals. Everyone from Trent Reznor, Beck, Damon Albarn and Lady Gaga to Bowie, Prince, Dr Dre and Afrikaa Bambaataa has clamoured to hail his electronic genius. While the music he's made over the past 20 or so years has been heavier, more industrial, with lyrical musings on religion and mortality, for this new tour he is revisiting the three landmark albums from the start of his career: 'Replicas', 'The Pleasure Principle' and 'Telekon' – the so-called machine music part of his career. So you'll get 'Our 'Friends' Electric?' and 'Cars', but also some of the most important and pioneering electronic music ever made. Onstage he's a strange mix of reticence and unabashed showman; musically he's simply a genius. And yes, *Nightshift* will be down the front, and we will be singing along to every song. As an added bonus tour support comes from I Speak Machine, the work of singer and electronics wiz Tara Busch whose ghostly synth experimentation has made room for inventive covers of John Foxx and Numan himself along the way.



psych-tinged indie rocking from Reading's fast-rising stars, back in town as they tour new single 'Loveblood'.  
**KHAMSINA + ROSE SEGAL + KEVIN PEARCE: The Bullingdon** – Epic big band power ballads and piano-pop belters from local songstress Khamsina at tonight's Tigmus show, plus folk-pop singer Rose Segal.

## MONDAY 19<sup>th</sup>

**GILES ROBSON: The Bullingdon** – Haven Club show for the UK bluesman, discovered playing back-up to Muddy Waters' son Mud Morganfield and rated as the best harmonica player on the European circuit, bringing a soulful blend of blues and r'n'b to town.  
**LYNCHEDED: Nettlebed Folk Club** – Traditional Irish folk from Dublin's Lynched, hailed as the best trad band to come out of Ireland in many years and fresh from playing The Royal Albert Hall.  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Royal Blenheim**  
**TUESDAY 20<sup>th</sup>**  
**ALVIN ROY & REEDS UNLIMITED: The Bullingdon** – Trad jazz, swing and bop from veteran clarinetist Alvin Roy and his reeds band at the Bully's weekly jazz club.  
**SPARK'S SIDE OF THE MOON: The James Street Tavern**  
**OSPREY & FRIENDS: St Aldates Tavern**

## WEDNESDAY 21<sup>st</sup>

**WAY UP: The Cellar**

## THURSDAY 22<sup>nd</sup>

**GARY NUMAN: O2 Academy** – The synth-pop legend returns to town. *Nightshift* gets a bit giddy – *see main preview*  
**THE BAY RAYS: The Bullingdon** – Kent's Bay Rays follow the golden rule of great garage rock – get the song over and done with before people know what hit them. Their spiky, Pixies-style fizz, rockabilly rumble and Sonics-inspired garage noise has seen them supporting neighbours Slaves on tour as well as playing at Glastonbury in June.  
**BETH PRIOR: The Cellar** – Reggae-fuelled gypsy soul and folk from the singer out on tour to promote her debut album, 'Little Acts of Kindness'.  
**DEAR HERO + STOLBY + LAZ CUNLIFFE: The Jericho Tavern** – Drama-laden gothic pop noise in the vein of Editors and The Cure from Dear Hero at tonight's It's All About the Music showcase.  
**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 23<sup>rd</sup>

**INHEAVEN + PALE WAVES + COLDREDLIGHT: The Bullingdon** – Big-hearted fuzzgun pop from the rising London starlets – *see main preview*  
**G2 – DEFINITIVE GENESIS: O2 Academy** – Tribute to 'Seconds Out'-era Genesis.  
**RAT BOY: O2 Academy** – Post-Libertines hip



*Friday 23<sup>rd</sup>*

## INHEAVEN / PALE WAVES / COLDREDLIGHT: The Bullingdon

You'd probably have to go back to Glasvegas' 'Geraldine' to find an indie record that wears its big, bold heart so proudly on its chest as InHeaven's 'Bitter Town' – a song that sounds like The Jesus & Mary Chain deciding that Big Country were pretty damn cool after all and aiming for a similarly heroic sense of epic. And, heck, they're not even Scottish. They're from south London and they're back in town as part of a headline tour after supporting Yak here earlier in May. They've just released a new single, 'All There Is', and that's pretty big hearted too – all frothing, anthemic fuzz and spangle with a hint at REM at their most open hearted. They can do politics too – the anti-American colonialism of 'Baby's Alright'. That's a big anthemic singalong too. These kids can't help themselves. Chances of them being proper bloody huge: pretty decent, we'd say. Continuing the vaguely 80s-styled indie theme are tour support Pale Waves, from Manchester, whose sunkissed guitar spangle recalls The Cure at their poppiest, while local starlets Coldredlight shed a little shadow on proceedings with their lost highway blues, which sounds like Mazzy Star meeting Ry Cooder at the crossroads to sell their soul. Bloody great, in other words.

hop mayhem outta Essex – *see main preview*  
**LUCY LEAVE + SLATE HEARTS + KANCHO!: The Cellar** – Wonderfully off-kilter noise-pop and beyond from this month's Introducing-featured starlets Lucy Leave, with great local support from grunge rockers Slate Hearts and lo-fi noise duo Kancho! – *see Introducing feature*  
**TERRAFORMS: The Cellar** – Drum&bass club night with FD, Greencode and Beatsurfers, plus MCs KB and Sandman.  
**KILLIT + HELL'S GAZELLES + DEAD MAN'S WHISKEY: The Wheatsheaf** – OxRox host London's multi-national hard rockers Killit, whose members are drawn from Argentina, Israel and Hungary and boast CVs that include time in King Lizard and Ace Mafia. They're out on tour to promote debut album 'Shut It Down', channelling the classic melodic rock sound of AC/DC, Guns'n'Roses and Velvet Revolver. Support comes from local old school metallers Hell's Gazelles and London's Black Stone Cherry and G'n'R-influenced heavyweights Dead Man's





Friday 23<sup>rd</sup>

## RAT BOY: O2 Academy

The huge queues outside the merch tent at Truck Festival to get Rat Boy’s autograph – on any scrap of spare paper or item of clothing – was testament to just how far Chelmsford lad Jordan Candy has come since he was sacked from his job at Wetherspoons and turned down by McDonald’s and decided to document teenage Essex life in a post-Libertines hip hop style. Tonight’s leg of his biggest tour to date is in the O2’s downstairs venue and later this month he headlines the Kentish Town Forum. He’s big news. Of course he is – there’s something irresistible about his blokey, bullish, cheeky-scally pop/punk/rap mash-up and say-it-as-you-see-it stories (typical title: ‘Fake ID’) that career off the stage like a playground bundle involving EMF, Arctic Monkeys and The Beastie Boys, but provoked in the first place by Jamie T. From playing at chaotic house parties, Candy found himself on the Sound of 2016 Long List and spent the summer playing Glastonbury, Latitude, Reading and Leeds festivals. And if you find yourself wondering when kids decided Jesus Jones was where it was at, you’ll pretty soon find yourself with an inflatable dinghy on your head, and more than likely bellowing lustily along to every song. Come on, it’s called fun – join in!

Whiskey.  
**AUDACITY: East Oxford Community Centre** – Another trip into the spirit of old school free raves with Audacity AI & the Raving Mad Dancing Dads fusing pub rock covers with hardcore techno for a hi-NRG singalong, while across two rooms there’s old school acid house, techno and underground dance sounds from Remould, Siege Love, Andy Baker and more.  
**MUDSLIDE MORRIS: The James Street Tavern** – Slide and harp blues in the vein of Seasick Steve.  
**ANDY ROBBINS + MICHAEL AXENDERRIE: The Cornerstone, Didcot** – Bluesy acoustic pop in the vein of Van Morrison, Bob Dylan and Eric Clapton from local singer-songwriter Andy Robbins.  
**THE DURAN DURAN EXPERIENCE: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Hankering for the magic of Common People? Relive Duran Duran’s headline set in miniaturised tribute form.

## SATURDAY 24<sup>th</sup>

**GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES** with **DEADBEAT APOSTLES** + **TALL POPPIES** + **CLAIRE LeMASTER: The Wheatsh**

Another mixed bag fundbundle from the monthly GTI night, this time round with local bluesy country hoedown crew Deadbeat Apostles; off-kilter twin-sister-fronted guitar’n’violin-led popstrels Tall Poppies, and acoustic blues-folk from a Reluctant Arrow singer Claire LeMaster, channelling Regina Spektor and Fiona Apple.  
**PSYCHEDELIC CIRCUS: The Cellar (3pm – 3am)** – Twelve-hour psychedelic ‘happening’ with psych-rock, psy-trance and improv from Lucid DJs, plus Firehealer, Delnavaz and more, plus 60s films and projections, lightshows, interactive installations, walkabout performers, cabaret acts and mind-expanding talks.  
**THE LEISURE SOCIETY (ACOUSTIC): Old Fire Station** – Gorgeously sombre folk-pop from Leisure Society, the band centred around singer Nick Hemming, once a member of psychedelic noise rockers The Telescopes and a former bandmate of Shane Meadows and Paddy Considine (he wrote soundtrack music for *A Room For Romeo Brass* and *Dead Man’s Shoes*). Compared to Grizzly Bear and Fleet Foxes, Leisure Society are a peculiarly English take on Americana, wistful regret and an air of menace hanging around their dreamily bucolic songs.  
**KAREN STREET & STREETWORKS: St Giles Church** – Kicking off the fourth season of Jazz at St Giles, with arranger and accordionist Karen Street & Streetworks drawing influences from folk music, tango and central European traditions.  
**HOME SERVICE: The Cornerstone, Didcot** – The near-legendary folk-rock ensemble head out on tour, having replaced John Tams with John Kirkpatrick up front.  
**THE MIGHTY REDOX: The Black Swan**  
**JOHNNY’S SEXUAL KITCHEN: The Black Swan, Abingdon**

## SUNDAY 25<sup>th</sup>

**ULRIKA SPACEK: The Cellar** – Psych-pop grooving to take you through a wormhole, or possibly down the rabbit hole. And into space, man – *see main preview*  
**SCOTT GORDON BAND + LEIGH VER FUEL + RICHARD BROTHERTON + PURPLE MAY + FREDDY LE CRAGG: The Wheatsh** (3.30-8.30pm) – Free afternoon of live music in the Sheaf’s downstairs bar, hosted by Giddyup Music.  
**KRYSTHLA + THE EVER LIVING KILL FOR COMPANY: The Wheatsh** – Savagery and brutality in abundance as Wellingborough’s death metallers Krysthla come to town to promote their acclaimed debut album ‘A War of Souls & Desires’.  
**JASON CARTER + JALI FILY CISSOKHO: Florence Park Community Centre (2-5pm)** – The Sunday Sessions return, bringing some family-friendly live music action to east Oxford. Twelve-string guitar/harp virtuoso Jason Carter brings songs from his travels around the globe, while locally based kora player Jali Fily Cissokho teams up with Natureboy’s Dave Noble for some griot/pop crossover fun.  
**BLUES JAM: Fat Lil’s, Witney (3pm)** – Open blues jam.

## MONDAY 26<sup>th</sup>

**STEVIE NIMMO: The Bullingdon** – Rock, blues, Americana and gospel from Glaswegian

singer-songwriter Stevie Nimmo, once joint frontman of The Nimmo Brothers but now out on his own, touring his solo album ‘The Wynds of Life’, following treatment for cancer.  
**JOHNNY COPPIN & PHIL BEER: Nettlebed Folk Club** – Show of Hands’ Phil Beer is joined by Gloucester singer-songwriter Johnny Coppin, renewing their old partnership last seen here in 2013.  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Royal Blenheim**

## TUESDAY 27<sup>th</sup>

**KAREN MATHESON: The North Wall** – sublime Gaelic folk music from Capercaillie founder and singer Karen Matheson whose alternately ethereal and earthy voice has made her a leading light of the Scottish folk revival since

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup>

## ULRIKA SPACEK: The Cellar

Ulrika Spacek, apparently, collect old televisions with the hope, or aim, of them becoming wormholes to another dimension. Quite possibly they’d smoked their breakfast a bit too quickly before that interview but then again theirs is music seemingly set of taking the listener into the clouds and onward into space. Formed in Berlin by Rhys Edwards and Rhys Williams, the band, now five strong, relocated to London and recorded their debut album ‘The Album Paranoia’ in the kitchen of their shared house, Joe Meek style. The result is a melting pot of classic indie, alt.rock and psychedelic influences that ranges from My Bloody Valentine fuzz and spangle and Spacemen 3-like drone/dirge, to Sonic Youth’s discordant, abrasive noise, through Krautrock motoring and onward to Deerhunter’s solemn spangle. Rather than being stuck in some kind of indie trainspotter ghetto though, Ulrika Spacek throw in some pretty vocal harmonies, starlit guitar twinkling and sweet melodies which keep things varied even as they’re ploughing a deep, dark psych-rock furrow. As they head off on a headline tour of the UK they’re still unknown but with *The Quietus* already declaring ‘The Album Paranoia’ one of the best releases of the year, things should be headed a bit more skywards for them.



the 1980s. Tonight’s show features songs from her most recent solo album, ‘Urram’, as well, no doubt as takes on Capercaillie songs.  
**SPARK’S SIDE OF THE MOON: The James Street Tavern**

## WEDNESDAY 28<sup>th</sup> THE WARLOCKS: O2 Academy

– Taking Spacemen 3’s maxim “Taking drugs to make music to take drugs to” to its logical conclusion, Bobby Heckster’s LA psych/drone rockers somehow have made it this far (their last gig at this venue in its Zodiac incarnation in 2003 saw the band fighting with each other before the gig and their manager hiding the rider) and, having got through some 22 members, with Heckster the only constant, are out on tour to promote new album ‘Songs From the Pale Eclipse’, staying true to their chosen course of narcotic groove rock inspired by The Velvet Underground, early Stones, Ride and The Jesus & Mary Chain.  
**LOYLE CARNER: The Bullingdon** – Oxford debut for the rising south London MC, whose sensitive, eloquent confessional hip hop, more old school than grime, has seen him working with Kate tempest and Maverick Sabre, as well as supporting MF Doom and Joey Badass.  
**RAS BROTHER JOHN + SELF HELP + BOFUS: The Wheatsh**  
**MOVE: The Cellar** – UK bass club night.

## THURSDAY 29<sup>th</sup> WILD BEASTS: O2 Academy

– Back in town for the first time in an age to promote fifth album, the John Congleton-produced ‘Boy King’, and Cumbria’s finest are getting funkier, the erudite humour and ethereal pop of debut ‘Limbo, Panto’ increasingly dominated by widescreen rock and heavier grooves that recall Tackhead and Arctic Monkeys as much as the gender-teasing likes of Bowie and The Associates. That old grandeur remains though, and if it doesn’t hit the highs of ‘Two Dancers’, ‘Boy King’ still has plenty of class. Impossible not to really given Hayden Thorpe’s operatic falsetto leading the line.  
**MAGIC GANG: O2 Academy** – Psych-tinged grunge-pop from Brighton’s indie hopefuls, back in town after their triumphant showing at Truck Festival in July.  
**THE EPSTEIN + BRICKWORK**

**LIZARDS + LITTLE BROTHER ELI: Worcester College Chapel** – Building up to the main Oxjam Oxford takeover in October, Daisy Rodgers Music present Oxjam in the Round in the ornate setting of Worcester College Chapel, with local folk-rock heroes The Epstein; Turkobilly fusion crew Brickwork Lizards, and funky electric blues-funk faves Little Brother Eli.  
**HOLY MOMENTS: The Jericho Tavern**  
**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 30<sup>th</sup>

**I CRIED WOLF + THE COLOUR LINE: O2 Academy** – Skeletor presents another quality night of metal and hardcore, with Banbury’s virulent metalcore crew I Cried Wolf alongside Hull’s tech and math-core merchants The Colour Line.  
**THE AUREATE ACT + CALLOW SAINTS: The Bullingdon** – The local electro-prog faves return to live action after a break since their Punt show in May, mixing King Crimson’s guitar adventuring with an atmospheric electronic sound that takes inspiration from Talk Talk and East India Youth.  
**SKYLARKIN SOUND SYSTEM: The Cellar** – Monthly ska, reggae, dancehall and soul session with Count Skylarkin’ and guests.  
**RITUAL IN TRANSFIGURED TIME: OVADA** – Oxford Contemporary Music host a sound and visuals concert that features Varese’s 1958 masterpiece of early electronic music, ‘Poème Électronique’, as well as new compositions from Arlene Sierra and Kathy Hinde, exploring technology, obsolete and future, and the expanding universe.  
**THE GUNS’N’ROSES EXPERIENCE: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – The Guns’n’Roses experience round our way being to stick knitting needles in your ears so you can’t hear them ever again.  
**HEADINGTON HILLBILLIES: James Street Tavern** – Bluegrass and Americana from the local regulars.



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## SUPERNORMAL Braziers Park

It all starts out normally enough – for five minutes at least. The weekend’s opening act, **WATER**, seems to be one woman in a gold mask playing some pleasantly ambient electronica, allowing us to break gently into three days of the strange and unexpected. But no sooner have we sunk into a reverie than there’s a parade of what look like bizarre alien nuns showering everyone with gold glitter and the music takes a turn for the satanic, sounding fantastically like Gong being devoured by Nurse With Wound. “We’re from Tunbridge Wells,” announces a demon voice. Welcome to Supernormal.

Now in its sixth year, Supernormal is small (capacity just 1,500) and perfectly imperfect. Normal festival rules rarely apply; before the weekend is out one *Nightshift* scribe has found themselves dressed as a bat in the middle of the woods playing samples of bat noises alongside a group of other bemused bat people, while even the less appealing performances tend to be entertainingly terrible rather than just dull. Like **ANGELA RAWLING**’s “echology” on the barn stage, which involves a lot of

whooping and wailing and Tarot card reading which is made all the more hilarious by just how seriously everyone is taking it. The festival is mildly scandalised when a talking bird puppet hidden in a tiny shed goes missing, while half the *Nightshift* gang is almost never seen again when, late Saturday night, a bearded troubadour entices us down an overgrown path into the darkened woods to regale us with songs about demons and murder.

Given the programme seems to have been written by an art degree undergraduate who’s necked a fistful of magic mushrooms and a thesaurus and thus offers little useful guide to what anyone sounds like, we do what we enjoy most at festivals: follow our ears and the vagaries of fate and hope for the best. At Supernormal, the best is rarely more than a short walk away. Take **HOUSEWIVES**, whose programme notes promise “a monochrome liminal zone where nihilistic No-Wave geometry locks horns with kinetic rhythmic drive,” but sound like a belligerent gothic noise clash between early Foals, Cindytalk and Can. They’re funky, hysterical, discordant and

hypnotic, and, obviously, brilliant. Or **KNIFEWORLD**, whose propulsive, psychedelic jazz-rock is as absorbing as you’d expect from a band led by a man who’s served time with The Cardiacs, Gong and Chrome Hoof. Or maybe **CAVALIER SONG**, which appears to be a rather decent Mark E Smith impersonator reciting Rabbin Burns poetry over a math-rock soundtrack. All of this before Friday afternoon is over.

If **MDC** are Friday’s bill toppers, with a variously furious and tongue-in-cheek agit-punk that rolls back the years to the band’s 80s heyday on the US hardcore underground scene (best song: ‘John Wayne Was A Nazi’), the twin high points of the day are a debut UK show from American singer **IAN WILLIAM CRAIG**, whose crackly, ethereal electro-pop sounds like it’s being beamed down from space via short wave radio, and the confusingly named **PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS** (seven pigs, okay?), whose brilliant stoner-psych-grunge provokes a good-natured stage invasion – no mean feat on a stage barely big enough for a three-man band in the first place.

There’s no easing into Saturday either, with a black metal aerobics workout to shake off any hangovers before **GUTTERSNIPE** provide one of the weekend’s most startling sets: a fantastically hellish boy/girl cacophony involving more screaming, clanging and overdriven guitar noise than is decent at just gone midday but sounds like a sublime riot grrl take on SPK’s industrial noise swarm. What we’d give to see them playing at next year’s Cornbury Festival. Or even Truck. And as the sun reaches its oppressive early afternoon peak, **CASUAL NUN**’s doom-encrusted psych-noise is appropriately molten, the singer’s strange incantations reminding us of Taman Shud at times. You wonder how the day is going to get any better.

Faced with **TUT VU VU** it doesn’t: queasy, random, wobbly electronica over jazz drumming that might be some acid flashback kids TV theme tune but noodles far too far off course to really work. **TASOS STAMOU**’s extended microtonal improv piece in the shelter of the barn, replete with zithers and homemade electronic clutter, at

least provides soothing respite from the sun and noise, but the next real highlight is a reformed **EARLY YEARS**, whose dark, fuzzy hypno-pop initially stops off at Joy Division and Yo La Tengo before going properly stratospheric with ‘All Ones And Zeros’ and heading off down the autobahn with Neu! at the wheel.

With psychedelia and improvisation two of Supernormal’s musical cornerstones it’s no surprise to encounter a few bands who’d struggle to deny they’ve been listening to Hawkwind, but we’ll never argue with that kid of thing and **FLOWERS MUST DIE**’s space ritual rumble shows a genuine affection for their chief inspiration. Inspirational being something former-This Heat drummer **CHARLES HAYWARD** has been for 40 years now on the musical fringes. Today isn’t his day though as various technical issues reduce him to tetchy shouting before he hurls himself into a set of funk and drum&bass rhythm pieces. Then again, given the programme notes say his set “uses technology to open uncertainty in songs that surf his muse’s trademark psychedelic continuum and the startling other”, perhaps it was all meant to go wrong. Considerably better vibes over in the bar where a Bowie and Prince karaoke session, hosted by two fabulously camp lookalikes, is an absolute riot – the raucous mass singalongs audible across the entire festival site. Even amid a weekend of crazy, arty musical adventure you just can’t beat a classic tune.

Back into the world of the exotic with Georgian-Turkish saz player **ASIQ NARGILE**, whose virtuoso explorations make her sound like a middle eastern Nought, and some more Hawkwind-inspired sonic space travel from **GUM TAKES TOOTH**, whose nasty overdriven synth-core and crazed prog-rock incantations take everything to a higher level and when a giant framed 3-D picture of a cat is held aloft in the delirious moshpit, it feels entirely appropriate. That’s just a warm-up for what is a contender for set of the weekend from **GIANT SWAN**, two skinny long-haired metal kids armed with a table of FX pedals and a fuck-off big drum machine. Cue bedlam as the pair launch into a rave made in hell, monstrously abrasive techno building to euphoric rave peaks as two women wander through the crowd wearing hats that are exact replicas of the Overlook Hotel from *The Shining*.

Having spent most of the weekend so far near the three main music stages, we opt to explore some of Supernormal’s artier offerings on Sunday, with mixed results. **GOODIEPAL & PALS**’s rambling, random chat’n’squawk experimentation is initially head-scratchingly silly but soon becomes tedious as it fails to progress, while in the Vortex (imagine an Amish barn built by an acid-crazed lunatic in a hurry) **MEDEA** is intended to be a Greek tragedy rendered as a soap opera involving

renowned harpist Serafina Steer, but what little we can see and hear in the packed room is so witchy we wonder if it’s actually Serafina Pekkala in there.

Back in the open air **THE CUSH**, from Texas, feel incongruously normal in all this company, but their easy country rock jam soon takes shape, edging into beguiling ethereal shoegaze pop and eventually into what could be a good-natured soundclash between Neil Young and Sonic Youth. But before we get too comfortable the world of the strange imposes itself again as a parade of people dressed in giant cardboard soundheads shaped as nightmarish animals appears to take over the nearby bandstand. It makes no sense and probably exists solely to screw up anyone foolish enough to be tripping. Suitably inspired/disturbed, we wander over to Braziers Park’s old manor house where there’s a chance to join an impromptu jug band. By the time we arrive it’s already over-subscribed and there are crowds five deep at the windows trying to catch a glimpse of those lucky enough to be sat inside blowing into giant jugs. Still, at least we’d already had the chance to see one of the *Nightshift* gang play at being a bat. No one can ever take that from us.

**MUMS**’ brutalised Led Zep riffs and sludgy Melvins noise manages to beat what remains of Sunday’s mellow vibes into submission with seriously heavyweight class before a rare moment of clarity in the programme informs us that Wire guitarist Matt Sims and Electralane singer Verity Susman are involved in improv jazz trio **CUP**, and if the resultant journey is a world away from what we’ve known the pair for previously, the cascading Can-like drumming, psychedelic sax skronks and electronic washes create a warm, hazy motorik ambience that’s all too easy to lose yourself in.

Rather than going gently into that dark night, Supernormal bows out thunderously with two of the best moments of the weekend: **TOMAGA**’s slow-build industrial soundscaping that recalls early Cluster and is just fantastic, and **JK FLESH**, the latest incarnation of Justin Broadrick. Given Broadrick holds pretty much A-list celeb status with the sort of people who frequent Supernormal for his work as Godflesh and Jesu, he unsurprisingly pulls the biggest crowd of the weekend and as his dirty, dirgy digital demolition derby picks up the pace, the throng down the front goes bonkers, distorted electronic beats and nightmare sci-fi synth sirens taking four-to-the-the-floor techno, strip-mining any feelgood vibes and replacing them with malign intent. It’s brutal and it’s brilliant and it’s a fitting climax to an event that’s taken its stand against an overly-commercial, corporatized and overpriced festival scene and come up a winner. So next year when the festival line-ups are announced, do yourself a favour and take the alternative route – the one into the deep, dark woods. You’d be bats not to.

*Dale Kattack*

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Braterton, Ruby, Steel, the String Project, Surreal Se,

Food (4 to 7PM) from Donnington Bar & Step





DELTA SLEEP / BEARDED YOUTH QUEST / ORCHARDS

Modern Art Oxford

If math pop wasn’t already a thing (and it almost certainly is) then Orchards would be its epitome. The Brighton four-piece who open tonight’s Idiot King show are absolutely delightful; they perfectly blend Lucy Evers’ charming vocals, with staccato pitch-shifted guitar and a solid rhythm section that results in easily-danceable pop with all the trappings of less accessible math

bands. They are perhaps a beautiful, glittery gateway drug; now you’re dancing to catchy tunes like ‘Peggy’ and soon you’ll be sneering anything in a time signature as mainstream as 11:8. Bearded Youth Quest also bring something to tonight’s very mathy line-up that you don’t often get in this kind of band: joy. They grin ear-to-ear as they perform rhythmic

acrobatics between the three-guitar, head-banging riffs. There are numerous virtuosic sweeping lead parts, and jolting stop-starts but none of it seems forced; instead it feels like the organic result of these five guys having a laugh. If you need another reason to check them out, one of their songs is called ‘Banana Flip-Flop’ which they all bellow in unison to start it off.

MARTHA  
East Oxford Community Centre

I’ve been a fan of Fortuna Pop bands for a while now, so it’s exciting to see one of their latest signings, Martha, a hotly-tipped anarcho-pop-punk four-piece hailing from sunny Durham, in town. Having lived in Glasgow for most of my life, sweaty DIY shows are my bread and butter and I’d yet to witness anything with this vibe in the five months that I’ve been an Oxfordian. Tonight I finally witness such a packed show, organised by the Smash Disco collective, complete with DIY sound system, DIY bar, and, vitally, a DIY ethic. Oxford finally feels like home. The first thing to love about Martha is the uncompromising volume they play at: no messing around with levels here. The second thing is the songs: indie pop dreams in the vein of labelmates Pains of Being Pure at Heart, all hooky vocals and having a bloody great time. Highlights include ‘Ice Cream and Sunscreen’, with the band describing themselves



Photo IW PHOTOGRAPHIC

As headliners Delta Sleep’s set starts I’m knocked back by the force and complexity of their rhythms and dynamics changes. I find it hard to latch onto what they’re really going for at first, but as they move through their post-hardcore-tinged set I begin to see the nuance, like a sonic magic eye painting. I’m not put off by the initial intensity so much as it’s so overwhelming I don’t feel part of it. However, once the shock wears away and I find my way through the chaos I see it’s all intricately put together; not chaotic at all: that is just an illusion generated by every instrument playing opposing rhythms and numerous unexpected shifts. Delta Sleep switch between heavy riffs and jazzy clean guitar sections in the blink of an eye; sometimes they let Devin Yuceil’s vocals come to the forefront and they too cover a wide range, from soft and melancholic through to pure guttural energy. It’s genuinely hard to convey the Delta Sleep experience with mere words. They defy easy comparisons or simple superlatives. They definitely fit in the Big Scary Monsters emo/math/punk/post-whatever sound, but past that you’re just going to have to listen to them for yourself. It might take a few listens before it all clicks, but when it does you’ll be thrilled you did. **Matt Chapman-Jones**

as “the dampest box of matches you could ever hope to find”. ‘Chekhov’s Hangnail’ reminds me of Ash, circa-’1977’, and I have “It might seem that we lost the battle” going round in my head all night. The four separate vocals are all so different but sound just as powerful as the likes of Alkaline Trio, and just as memorable. ‘Goldman’s Detective Agency’ reminds me of tour buddies the Spook School, with classic pop hookage and backing vocals getting most of the crowd actually dancing. They finish with ‘I Miss You, I’m Lonely’, leaving me with ringing ears and ‘Distance Stretches On And On’ as my new earworm. Tonight reminds me of why I started going to gigs: to see bands and local scenes doing it themselves and supporting creative endeavour. Smash Disco gets it bang on tonight. **Karlyn King**



HAZE / DYKE TV / SLATE HEARTS  
The Bullingdon

Fresh from a feisty Truck Fest performance and having recently released a new EP confirming their status as the best local alternative to Parquet Courts, Haze are certainly riding a high at the moment. Their excellent ‘Complacent Inebriation’ EP furthers their craft of intelligent, tightly-woven garage/indie tunes, though it’s their engrossing and boisterous live show which has drawn the growing crowds. Having been invited by The Bullingdon to play at this year’s Truck Fest, Haze’s stated intention behind this evening’s gig is “for those of you that couldn’t make Truck”. It transpires to go far beyond merely a post-festival catch-up, however, ensured by the talent on show. Slate Hearts, who have similarly recently released an EP, ‘Blood Fluff’, deliver a set which marries seduction and intrigue to their more typical grunge approach. Vocalist/bassist Ellis Currell is already a defined frontman, his pitched vocals the perfect accompaniment to the band’s chugging riffs. Such sludgy introspection is quickly averted by Dyke TV however. Having only been formed for this show and without even a Facebook page (their only presence online is vocalist/guitarist Lewis Twines’ Soundcloud uploads under ‘hapax legomenon’), the three-piece flower their spacey psych with legitimately expressive solos and Lewis’ **Ben Lynch**

controlled, Hers-esque vocals. An undoubted and unexpected highlight is a collaboration with rapper Zim Trippy; intense and more focussed, it’s an impressive closer from an exciting local prospect. Exciting prospect is similarly how Haze should also be described, though increasingly they are proving themselves capable of moving beyond and fulfilling mere potential. Layering their performance with a genuine and infectious sense of humour (aided no end by bassist Ollie Ratcliffe’s hilarious antics), Haze are as exciting as they are compact. An inspired cover of Dizzee Rascal’s ‘Dance Wiv Me’ is a live favourite, though even having seen it performed several times prior, it loses none of its wild appeal. Tracks such as EP title song ‘Complacent Inebriation’ and ‘Park’ typify their ear for a hook, the former a masterful expression of sleaze and intrigue and a highlight of the evening. They even treat us to an impressive punk showing, moving drummer Daniel Hearn to vocal duties to play ‘Café’, paying homage more to the likes of Frank Carter than Courts’ front man Andrew Savage. As with everything this evening, it’s relentless, it’s thrilling and it’s perfectly orchestrated, typifying all that makes Haze such a promising young act, and one that just seem to keep getting better and better. **Ben Lynch**

VIOLENT CHIMES / CARPOOL CONVERSATION  
/ CHARLIE LEAVY

The Wheatsheaf

Despite the emotional resonance of her acoustic sets, with their Tracey Chapman and Sundays frameworks I can’t help thinking Charlie Leavy needs a band behind her. I’m still carrying around in my head her corking Soundcloud track ‘The Way Life Is’, with its light, groovy accompaniments, which I start to hanker for as this strummed set reels out. The north Oxfordshire teenager’s quality and huge talent shines bright from under her new Bieberish haircut, while the quirkiness of her bi-lingual ‘Korean Song’ breaks up the over wordiness of the solo set, but when her present constricting college days are over The Charlie Leavy Band is something I’m expecting to see heading many a poster. It’s top marks to promoters Gappy Tooth Industries tonight for crawling out from under the rubble of not one, but two band cancellations, and coming up with superior replacements. Carpool Conversation, collectively wise-cracking out of Cork, Poland and “exotic Kent”, are astonishingly good musicians. As music in general increasingly becomes fragmented, genres within genres fractally form, and in the

cracks between the already crazy paved slabs of Talking Heads, Blancmange and Space, Carpool Conversation tool out their melodic, free-forming psych-groove. Drummer Christos has limbs that operate on four different time signatures, each of which break sporadically to the surface, so, like chasing a butterfly with a camera, the songs are up and flying away again before they’ve settled. It’s upbeat and jiving, and in the case of the shredded Santana of ‘African Queen in a Brazilian Dream’ an utter joy from start to finish. Violent Chimes, OX4’s overwrought extension of The Misfits’ power-punk, now turned post-everything band, suffer a little tunelessly from the loss last year of Charlie Bass on vocals, with guitarist Joal Adkin manfully taking over the mic at the same time, he’s hoofing a full range of pedals in search of the lost shoegaze whiteout chord. Simon Tarassenko sparkles on the other side of the stage with his virtuoso prog guitar, and in the way that when you hum you

RAGING SPEEDHORN / BY ANY  
MEANS / BLACK SKIES BURN

The Wheatsheaf

Celebrating day release from the fetid dungeon that *Nightshift* likes to imagine they call home, Black Skies Burn – Oxfordshire’s four horsemen of the apocalypse – are here to ride roughshod over our ears with their unforgiving brand of thrash. It says something when the Extreme Noise Terror cover that closes the set feels a little like respite. “Come the fuck forward, I want you to fucking intimidate me”, says the guitarist of hardcore crew By Any Means, a man with a Sick Of It All wifebeater and the physique of a 1970s wrestler. Not likely to happen anywhere, let alone in Oxford. Nevertheless, one of *Nightshift*’s unwritten rules of life is not to antagonise or disagree with someone whose neck is wider than his head, and so we’re coaxed forwards reluctantly with the promise of a Motörhead cover, like a puppy wandering blindly into the blades of a combine harvester. The Troubles may be over, but Belfast is surely only peaceful when this mob are away on tour. For a while, around the turn of the millennium, Raging Speedhorn often seemed like the sole credible standard-bearers for British metal, the only hope for salvation in the face of the US post-nu-metal invasion. Sadly, the pressure proved too much and they buckled, disbanding in 2008. But absence

makes the heart grow fonder, and their reputation and legend continued to grow. It’s now two years since the Corby bruisers reformed – initially for only a handful of shows, just to see how it felt. It felt good. So good, in fact, that they recorded a split single with Monster Magnet, ‘Halfway To Hell’, and now have a new album out, ‘Lost Ritual’, on which the super-slo-mo heaviness of ‘Ten Of Swords’ – the sound of a woolly mammoth attempting to drag its hefty frame through a swimming pool full of gradually setting concrete – is a particular delight. Suffice to say they probably didn’t spend their retirement making jam and tending to the garden. As might be anticipated of a band who sound like a Nigel Tufnell side project and who have a song “about a midget we met in Manchester once”, Raging Speedhorn are acutely aware of the innate ridiculousness of rock and refuse to take themselves too seriously, playing snippets of other songs and taking turns to have solos during the encore. What’s more, they’re able to roll with the punches – faulty lead, faulty mic, lead guitarist being wrestled off stage by an overenthusiastic fan – and come out smiling. It’s not just earplug manufacturers who are pleased to have them back. **Ben Woolhead**





**HONKY / DESERT STORM / MY DIABLO**

**The Bullingdon**

My Diablo are making a quite beautiful full metal racket: controlled and perfectly paced, the tempo rising and falling like a tiger on the prowl. The Didcot duo, formed from the ashes of local metal titans Mother Corona, use guitar and drums with such thoughtfulness and dexterity that it's hard to see how anything extra could improve their sound. Drummer Dave-O picks out beats with a craftsman's touch, while Lee Cressey tries to squeeze every sound possible from his guitar. This is metal at its best, and we can hope that the band's old following are taking note.

Desert Storm have been kicking out the jams since the last decade, going on to earn a reputation well beyond the ring road that has made them Oxford's most successful heavyweight export. Tonight they come across like a band you might catch at a Newquay beach festival: heavy and riff-laden but ultimately sounding and looking a bit too clean and ordered. Matt Ryan's growling vocal style sounds neither as low or menacing as many of his compatriots, though the acoustic track 'Home' from their

'Omniscient' album shows he's capable of much more given the chance. Many here were drawn to tonight's headliners by association. Honky, from Austin, Texas, feature Jeff Pinkus who played bass in legendary US punk band The Butthole Surfers and, later, The Melvins. The latter's gig at The Zodiac in 2006 drew a crowd that included Julian Cope in full military regalia, and was talked of in hushed tones for weeks afterwards. Both bands used humour and surrealism to challenge musical norms and create worlds of their own, but sadly nothing could be further from what we witness here. Honky are a lumpen, stodgy blues-rock band that almost seem to rejoice in having no redeeming features apart from Pinkus's nimble bass playing. Ramshackle drumming, lazy song structures and guitar solos, and half-hearted singing make for a truly depressing experience, topped off by between-song 'jokes' about going hunting for pussy. For the first time in twenty years I walk out of a gig I've come to review. Let's hope it never happens again.

*Art Lagun*

**KAGOULE**  
**Modern Art Oxford**

Paul Hobson, director of Modern Art Oxford, is explaining in a pre-gig talk how pieces in the gallery's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations are occasionally moved to create new contexts. Fresh dialogues can indeed be created between artworks through adjacency, but sometimes transplanting a whole art form from one milieu to another can reduce it to the status of curio. It takes a while to get over the impression that Kagoule, a young Nottingham grunge-inflected trio airlifted from a sticky-floored gig dungeon to the austere MAO basement space, are specimens to be studied, sprawling on a pin, especially immediately after a short yam-hacking performance piece by artist Nacheal Catnott warning of the dangers of cultural appropriation. Then again, as a pop band on the grindcore channel roster that is Earache Records, perhaps the band is used to looking out of kilter. Perhaps it's this cultural displacement, but the first couple of numbers pass us by, seeming to deflate Mudhoney's dumb scuzzy zeppelins of marsh gas to create the sort of light, harmless balloons bounced around by Superchunk. All very pleasant, but hardly masterpieces to be recalled at the

gallery's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. Then, the paranoid eddy of a Sebadoh-style repeated phrase catches our ear, the anti-mantra honing our attention on a band with a surprisingly subtle melodic sense. The songs may sound simple, but Cai Burns' guitar is fascinatingly fluid, seemingly always in transition, eliding notes and greasily sliding between chords – plus, he makes good use of that deserted warehouse chorus sound found in the space between new wave and goth. His vocals also repay attention, at first sounding like a half-arsed sneer, but eventually revealing a delicate reedy tunefulness that we're surprised to find recalls Par Wiksten from The Wannadies. What truly lifts the band, though, are Lucy Hatter's basslines, which capture a little of The Pixies' dark enormity and a lot of Jah Wobble's mecha-dub relentlessness. Kagoule have their faults: they seem uncomfortable ending songs, and there's an occasionally sticky lack of rhythmic fluency between passages, but there are lots of ideas and idiosyncratic pleasures to reward anyone prepared to give their grubby pop a close listen. Looks like Paul Hobson had the right idea all along.

*David Murphy*

**KANADIA / COLDREDLIGHT**  
**The Jericho Tavern**

"Theresa May is the antichrist," sings Coldredlight's Gaby-Elise Monaghan with more than a hint of bitterness partway through her song 'Babylon'. It's an unexpected moment of politically-motivated bile from a singer whose intense blues-infused music tends to come from a far more personal place. But then Gaby is an artist who does contrasts particularly well: set opener 'Night' is dark and harrowing but equally spacious, able to soar when it needs to. Vocally she does sleepy-eyed and sultry but also piercing and strident. Emotionally there's tenderness, even an apologetic tone, but she'll turn on a sixpence and bare her lyrical teeth, full of spite and revenge fantasies. Rarely, though, is she anything less than bewitching, particularly on 'Little Scorpion', her signature tune that's fast becoming one of *Nightshift*'s favourite songs of the year. A couple of new songs feel a bit like works in progress, but the young classics student whose name was unknown locally before May, is shaping up to be a real star of the scene. Kanadia too are a name more and more people are quick to drop when thoughts of future fame come up. If Coldredlight are darkness at the edge of town pensiveness, Kanadia

are bright lights, centre stage and big sound. Their opening number kicks in with a similar sense of stadium-slaying bombast as Simple Minds' 'Waterfront'. Frontman James Bettis is a scrunched-up bundle of intensity: Michael Hutchence without the flouncing overconfidence, just a surety that he's born to the stage. Maybe he could do to let his hair down at times, while the rest of the band could do to at least look like they're enjoying themselves, but they maintain a keen grasp of tension even as they're billowing into the ether, capable of taking Muse-like anthemic rock down into dirty, dirgy krautrock grooves. 'Into the Flames', the highlight of their recent debut EP, shows them at their best: able to stretch their music, rein in the stadium pomp and conjure something genuinely special. If they do occasionally tip across the line into mid-80s excess, they're quick to take a step back, tonight's finale mixing Purescence's bright, pretty pop colours with Radiohead's nervy tension. Importantly, their big, bold shapes carry huge mass appeal potential, and you know they can only benefit from playing ever bigger stages.

*Dale Kuttack*

**DEAR HERO / 31 HOURS / YEAR**  
**OF THE KITE**

**The Library**

As a six piece, with clarinet, violin and keyboards in the mix, Year of the Kite promise much and they open up with an atmospheric set of which the electronics are the most pleasing element. Indeed, we are tantalisingly treated to a glimpse of something even more interesting when the lead singer takes a short break to tune his guitar – a spin-off act rejoicing in the Covered Market-inspired moniker of Biscuits for Cheese coming across all BBC Radiophonic Orchestra – which can only be a good thing. Not that the rest of the main band's set is substandard – the sombre 'The Beauty Gone' and haunting 'Something after Sunday' progressing at a stately pace, shimmering as the instruments interact. 31 Hours bounce on stage, their floppy fringes and their music reminding us of the Charlatans, although the Afropop guitar squeaks, clattering drums and general all-round springiness, coupled with the five piece's obvious youth leads to comparisons with Vampire Weekend and two set of local heroes, Foals and Neverlnd. That they often surpass the former in the complete lack of any stadium posturing and the latter in

their ear for a good tune is a striking takeaway from the evening, although adopting arena moves in a venue where cat swinging is ill-advised might prove to be impossible. 'Under the Influence' is a slower number they admit to not having provided with much of an airing but the slow build and strategically placed flautist lend it a real influence. That high point of the set is perhaps only bettered by the indie disco of 'Trees', the family variety of which might number Dutch Uncles and Battles. Overall, it's a striking performance that should see the band secure a headline slot soon. Dear Hero have an element of Hard-Fi about them in their boysy determination to have a good time. Where they differ from some bands is in their bellowing vocalist, determined to be on personal terms with the microphone and unencumbered by any necessity to play a guitar. The tunes are strong with the keyboard riffs especially prominent and while there are obvious comparisons with now defunct local act Too Many Poets, comparisons with The Jam and Editors means that this is a less theatrical take on the goth pop template.

*Rob Langham*



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## THE WHEATSHEAF

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**INDICA BLUES** GRUB + BEAVER FUEL 7:45pm

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> September – KLUB KAKOFANIEY

## BRICKWORK LIZARDS

**FORCE OF MORTALITY + TANNERS POOL** 7:45pm

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> September – OXROX

**BLACK SKIES BURN** RSJ + RAISED BY HYPOCRITES 7:45pm

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September – IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MUSIC

## SILVER RAVENS

7:45pm

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> September – IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MUSIC

## LOWLY HOUNDS

**VAGUEWORLD + SAM EDWARDS** 7:45pm

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> September – IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MUSIC

**COSMOSIS** 1000 CHAINS + EASTER ISLAND STATUES 7:45pm

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September – OXROX

**KILLIT** HELL'S GAZELLS + DEAD MAN'S WHISKEY 7:45pm

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September – GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES

## THE DEADBEAT APOSTLES

**TALL POPPIES + CLAIRE LEMASTER** 8:15pm

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> September – TWO FACE PROMOTIONS

**KRYSTHLA** THE EVER LIVING + KILL FOR COMPANY 7:45pm

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September – IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MUSIC

**RAS BROTHER JOHN** SELF HELP + BOFUS 7:45pm

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## Dr SHOTOVER: Pennines From Heaven

Ah, there you are. Pull up a pew, Pickering, and buy us all a drink. Mine's a pint of Anti-Tank Missile... now, don't sit between me and the Gents, there's a good chap. I may need to move rather swiftly. What were we discussing? Why, one of my favourite topics (after my own wartime record) – the Tribute Band. A wonderful phenomenon, as I'm sure you'll agree. Basically, the more Beatles tribute acts there are, the fewer bookings are available to groups of whingeing Young People playing their dreary originals. But it's not just about outfits called things like Pre-Fab Four, Beat The Meatles or The Mope-Tops. There is quite a YES tribute band phenomenon going on too, I gather. OUI (France), SI (Italy) and DA (Russia) are all making, ahem, very positive contributions to the sub-genre. Not to mention Yorkshire's finest, OH AYE. Their outstanding achievement last year was to stage (Eeeh, Tha's Too Bloody) Close to t' 'Edge, performed in its entirety amidst the lush topiary of Castle Howard gardens. Unfortunately keyboard player Rick Wakefield didn't heed his own advice and slipped into some spiky shrubbery while performing a three-hour Moog solo (or 'ser-ler', as drummer Bill Bradford called it). Result? 'Wazzock tore cape and put bloody back out'. According to guitarist Steve 'Ow-Do, Mr Wakefield is over the worst, but still feeling a little, uh, fragile. So fellow Yorkie and Prog enthusiast Keighley Emerson is stepping up from the ranks of ELP tribute stalwarts BRAIN SHEFFIELD SURGERY to help out with this year's project: a full-length multi-media performance of Tales From T'Opographic Oceans on Ilkley Moor (baht 'at). (Ticket-holders are reminded that any mardy kids wearing anything resembling 'at will be forcibly ejected from the Moor). Causing music fans and Yorkshire folk everywhere to ask the question: 'Can tha stop t' Prog?' The answer is of course... erm... 'NAY, lad'.  
**Next month: A 'reet gradely word' with Lancs Pink Floyd tribute ATOM HEART MITHER**



Members of OH AYE (l-r Bill Bradford, Steve 'Ow-Do, Jon 'Alifax and Rick Wakefield) start alfresco rehearsals for CLOSE TO T' 'EDGE

## INTRODUCING....

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

## LUCY LEAVE

### Who are they?

Oxford wonky psychedelic noise-pop trio Lucy Leave are Jenny Oliver (bass/vocals); Mike Smith (guitar/vocals) and Pete Smith (drums/vocals). The two Smiths are brothers and Mike met Jenny playing in a big band. They "got the itch to start playing together again after watching NVRLND (née Balloon Ascents) play at The Cellar and discovering an Oxford scene that was pretty exciting." They started rehearsing and writing in September 2014, and played their first gig in April 2015. They recorded a demo 'Jesus Walks Funny' in January and launched their first EP-proper, 'Fighter Pilot', in June. As well as being played on BBC Oxford Introducing, they played the Punt in May and Truck Festival in July this year.

### What do they sound like?

Loud, quiet, volatile, repetitive and agricultural in varying measures, often at the same time. They're a band hard to pin down, balancing oddly tender melodies with all-out sonic warfare, coupled with the feeling that everything's going to fall apart any second. Regular set highlight '40 Years' is a glorious Bo Diddley-inspired rifforama that stretches to the horizon while elsewhere abstract jazz-rock clashes sideways on with Pixies-ish noise-pop.

### What inspires them?

"Other bands; death; 'art'; LPs; FX pedals; bassy sounds; painfully screechy trebly sounds; Grimes; the prospect of environmental destruction; self-indulgence; people grinning at us; The Natural World; noise; Minutemen; people singing along to our songs."

### Career highlight so far:

"It has to be Truck Festival so far..."

### And the lowlight:

"Many moons ago – with a different band – we emptied a pub in Kettering."

### Their favourite other Oxfordshire act is:

"There are many, and *Nightshift* readers know a lot of them already, so we'll



say Holy Moments. They're so exciting to watch live, and are up there with a fistful of really great heavy pop bands around at the moment."

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

"We'll never be able to agree on this really, but one group we do all agree on is Deerhoof, so we'll say their 'Offend Maggie': intense, intricate, bonkers, human. 'My Purple Past' is the song that we're always trying to write.

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

"The Cellar on September 23<sup>rd</sup> as the culmination of our little tour we're doing that week with the mighty Slate Hearts. Newcomers will hear some songs about politics, disability, and death. And it will be fun."

### Their favourite and least favourite things about Oxford music are:

"Favourite is all the ace bands we get to play with. And of course our superfans. Least favourite is... we won't be able to play the Punt again, unless we change our name. Also, Mike wishes Elton John would play at the Kassam again."

### You might love them if you love:

Sebadoh; Robert Wyatt/Soft Machine; The Wedding Present; Pixies; (Syd's) Pink Floyd; Deerhoof.

### Hear them here:

[lucyleave.bandcamp.com](http://lucyleave.bandcamp.com)

## ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

### 20 YEARS AGO

Exciting times in September 1996, firstly with the news that Oxford had been confirmed as the venue for **Radio 1 Sound City** the following year. The decision to host their annual showcase of new music in Oxford, following in the footsteps of Bristol and Leeds, showed just how far the local scene's reputation had grown in the wake of **Ride**, **Radiohead** and **Supergrass**'s success, with **Brookes'** new union venue and **The Zodiac** picked as the main broadcast venues for the week.

More imminently, this month saw **Big Love** come to Oxfordshire, the dance festival taking place at **Otmoor Park** with sets from **Underworld**, **Paul Oakenfold**, **Jeff Mills**, **L TJ Bukem**, and a first ever DJ set from **Robert Miles** among the highlights of the 20,000-capacity event.

Also coming to Oxford this month was a new music store on the Cowley Road – **PMT** opened its doors for the first time 20 years ago, only days after **ABC Music** on St Clement's went into liquidation. It remains a flagship local music store to this day.

Rather less pleasing was the news that the Firkin brewery was to close **The Brewhouse** on Gloucester Green, the home of the **Famous Monday Blues** club, run by landlord **Jonathan Lee**. Promises were made that the music night was safe, but it was soon to find a new home at **Jongleurs** on Hythe Bridge Street.

On the release front, **The Candyskins**' classic 'Mrs Hoover' single was re-released this month in 96 by Ultimate Records, although *Nightshift*'s review declared the b-sides – covers of X-Ray Spex's 'The Day the World Turned Day-Glo' and The Bee Gees' 'Got To Get a Message to You' – as "abominations".

Two gigs this month that have lasted long in the memory: **Ultrasound** made their Oxford debut at **The Point** with Paul Carrera declaring of the band who were to become honorary Oxfordians "A great joy of reviewing is being faced by four unknowns and watching the grumpy cynicism in your head have its arse kicked all the way into the street as you exclaim, 'bloody hell, that was brilliant'." Meanwhile polarising opinions to the point of actual fisticuffs at The Zodiac were **Tiger**, a band still beloved by indie geeks of a certain vintage long after they disappeared without trace. "Tiger are the kids that Jarvis surely write 'Misshapes' for" ran our review.

### 10 YEARS AGO

Less positive news in September 2006 with the closure of **The Pit** in Witney – the venue that was a hub for the blossoming local scene that spawned **The Rock of Travolta** among others – and the announcement that wayward local metal/jazz/art-rock heroes **A Suitable Case for Treatment** were splitting up – just weeks after they hit national headlines for their 'Cow' single, featuring newsreader **Jon Snow** on vocals.

The music continued though, and this month saw the release of **Jonquil**'s 'Sunny Casinos' debut album ("a melting pot of full of richness and imagination – something to lose yourself in," according to *Nightshift*'s review), as well as a debut release for local rapper **Zuby**, whose 'Commercial Underground' followed on from a *Nightshift* Demo of the month and a place on this year's Punt. Back in the modern world, Zuby has just released his seventh album – inventively titled 'VII'. On the local gig side of things, **Sparklehorse**;

## THIS MONTH IN OXFORD MUSIC HISTORY

**Nick Oliveri's Mondo Generator**; **British Sea Power**; **Thea Gilmore** and the month's cover stars **Xmas Lights** were all playing at The Zodiac, the latter supported by **Foals**.

### 5 YEARS AGO

In the wake of **Truck Festival** going into liquidation, more bad news followed in September with the death of **Alan Cook**, from cancer at the age of 62. The founder of the Popular Music course at Cherwell Valley College was remembered fondly by, among others, **Dive Dive**'s **Nigel Powell**, who spoke of Alan's 'childlike enthusiasm for music,' and **Fixers**' **Jack Goldstein**, who credited the lecturer as a pivotal figure in his music career.

More positively, local reggae veterans **Dubwiser** released their debut album, 'A Crack In Paradise', this month – a mere 20 years after they first started out. The band featured on the cover of *Nightshift* and talked about trying to escape the creative cul de sac that reggae had headed down over the years as well as music as a way of bringing people together and countering racism.

While the likes of **Ghostpoet**; **Richmond Fontaine** and **Toots & the Maytals** provided star quality on the month's gig line-up, and **Stornoway** played a sold-out show in aid of The Sumatran Orangutan Trust at **The Regal**, it was the last-minute cancellation of **Summer Fayre Festival** in South Park that made the headlines. Organisers blamed a bad weather forecast for the cancellation but in reality a weak line-up, and many acts cancelling over payment uncertainty, were the real reasons. The chief lesson being: don't let incompetent fucknuts organise major music events.



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# DEMOS

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## DEMO OF THE MONTH

### THE BECKONING FAIR ONES

A few days before we sat down to review this month's batch of demos *Nightshift* had spent the weekend at Supernormal Festival – three solid days of music from the outer reaches, places where everything seemed made with a courageous lack of concern for commerciality or mass appeal. Some of it was pretentious arty bollocks of the highest order, but even that was usually fun, and mostly what we heard was mad, crazy, non-conformist brilliance. Which means this month's batch of demos is going to have to work very hard to avoid being fed to a troupe of garishly made-up demon nuns armed with buckets of gold glitter and a Satanic line in psychedelic electro-craziness (that'd be Supernormal opening act Water, in case you were wondering). Predictably we were to be left disappointed as most of the pile turns out to be less appealing than a night spent sleeping on a compostable hay bale toilet, but at least The Beckoning Fair Ones come at music from an oblique angle, the recent Punt stars even managing to conjure a song about meeting a former Inverness Caledonian Thistle striker on a train and setting it to an obstinate, shrapnel-sharp post-hardcore soundtrack that's part Fugazi, part Arab Strap (and not just for singer Niall's rich Scottish accent). There's more Scottish references on 'Elgin', a more sturdy, sullen noise-pop rumble that's all pensive denied gratification, while the shorter, shaper '(Ex) Machine' almost spirals into some kind of 'Zen Arcade' psych-core before dissipating into the ether. There's something slightly unfocussed about the band across these three tracks but equally a sharpness and raw energy that wipes the floor with everything else we're presented with this month. And live, you're well advised to stand well clear lest you get your senses badly singed.

### 20 TEETH IN A NEAT ROW

What's this? A Cassels side project already? Don't those boys expend enough energy for five bands already as it is? Seems that it's drummer Loz Beck involved in this, though he goes under the

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

name Larry Beck for this band, whose line-up also features members of Who's Alice. They're a ramshackle bunch but there's at least a naivety and giddy enthusiasm about them that so many of the other acts in this month's pile would do well to take note of, singer Evie Norman barely in tune at times as she emotes in alternately strident and adenoidal tones alongside fellow vocalist Adam Baker, who brings a more shouty edge to songs like 'Monkey In a Cage'. Musically they're not quite the punk band they half describe themselves as, closer at times to a gawky, awkward kid sister version of Youthmovies' emo-ish math-pop, or, dare we say it, a sweet and scrappy take on Cassels' spindly post-hardcore. 'Death of Twenty Teeth' pretty much stumbles into being, not quite fully formed and eager to latch onto the first lo-fi indie band it can catch sight of and hardwire itself to, but what kind of a bastard doesn't love a newborn creature making its first tentative steps in the world? Clumsy for sure, but also rather pretty in its noisy, squawky way.

### ZANDER SHARP

In a month when too many demos tread a fine line between offal and excrement, we're rather more predisposed towards Zander Sharp than we might otherwise be. He's a singer-songwriter of a gentle, soulful strumming variety, but he's possessed of a soft, sleepy-eyed voice that means poking him with needles and profanities would be tantamount to throwing stones at baby penguins, and 'Asleep' wafts harmlessly along, lost in its own sweet reverie. 'The Other Day', meanwhile, bears out Zander's claim to be influenced by Nina Simone – a jazzy acoustic soul swoon that might blow away in a stiff breeze, but would easily pass muster in some early hours lounge bar where lost souls stare silently and maybe tearily into half empty glasses, soft-centred sax carrying the tune through the night air. By slight contrast 'City Blues' picks up the pace and a bit of swing, all shuffling snare beat and harmonised "Whoos" that might take everything a little too close to Jamie Cullum, but do at least suggest some genuine soul at the heart of it all. This month's demo act most likely to earn a place on *Later... With Jools Holland*. And we mean that as a compliment.

### PICTURE PALACE

Picture Palace's one-song demo here, 'Night Trains', is appropriately titled since it sounds like they recorded the vocals before the singer had actually woken

up, resulting in a sort of yelped mumble and tumble of vowels from which only a smattering of consonants can be made out. Musically too the twinkly, trebly indie funk resembles the soft rumble and huff of a midnight train as heard across a distance of a couple of miles. Unsurprisingly Foals seems to be the chief reference point but it's all a bit too unfocussed and inconsequential to stand real comparison to that band. Less Trans-Europe Express, more the 23.15 service to Charlbury.

### CHARIOTS

Chariots is the musical moniker of a chap called Tom Read. Tom proudly compares his own music to Jack Garratt. Just going to leave that with you for a moment in case you thought you'd misread it and thought he'd said something less embarrassing like "I have several sexually transmitted diseases, all of which I caught from livestock, and I regularly poo in my bed." But no, he just said his music sounds like Jack Garratt, who all sane music lovers believed was some kind of prototype psychological experiment devised by Theresa May when she was Home Secretary to subdue rioting mobs by reducing them to sobbing, catatonic husks devoid of hope or purpose. Anyway, back to Chariots. Just the one song here, called 'Dreaming As We Go', a blandly euphoric slice of boy band "indie" that mostly sounds like Union J trying to be M83. It's big and wooshy and well produced and expansive in its own way and... and... no, sorry, Jack Garratt... (*Nightshift* collapses into a sobbing, catatonic husk devoid of hope or purpose).

### TOM IVEY BAND

"We play funky blues grooves," says the introduction to The Tom Ivey Band's Facebook. Fuck. Ing. Hell. After 25 years of demo demolitions, has no-one spotted our less than hidden contempt for funky blues? Bigotry and bias? In all probability, but so what, *Nightshift* isn't a council-funded inclusivity brochure; it's a monstrously prejudiced bile machine whose sole purpose is to persuade more people to love vicious industrial hardcore and synth pop. And kittens. And okay, we do have some serious love for Little Brother Eli, who are, to all intents and purposes, a funky blues band – but Little Brother Eli make us feel like we've necked a gallon of moonshine in some Mississippi blues shack and sworn brotherly allegiance to Black Denim at a secret party hosted by Jack White. They don't make us feel like we're trapped in the back bar of some benighted market town boozer on a desolate Sunday lunchtime with only Fosters on tap. The band self describe themselves as "Jimi Hendrix meeting Grant

Green to go watch Parliament play Little Feat covers," which roughly translates as "widdly piddly woddly wank." Or, if we're being kind, a bit like Jack Savoretti if he was in a particularly good mood and probably a bit tipsy. One of which states *Nightshift* has only rarely experienced.

### FLASHFIRES

It gets better – Flashfires have also got the funk, but they use theirs to try and sidle up to Catfish & the Bottlemen's vapid indie rock, so there isn't even an element of bluesy earthiness about them, just a miasma of vaguely uplifting landfill indie and maybe a nod or two U2's epic guitar intentions. It's at times like this we throw our hands in the air and let out a sort of "pfft" noise, because we're simply bereft of anything to say about music that just sort of exists but possesses no actual substance or character. This lot could be playing the middle of the afternoon at a major festival but equally at some small town battle of the bands competition. It's just there. It will always be there. Eat your noodles and drink your plastic pint cup of Tuborg and soak it up. Two days on from our weekend at Supernormal we still cherish memories of Justin Broadrick, in his JK Flesh guise, cranking out a thrilling, nightmarish approximation of a rave in Hades. Flashfires aren't super, just normal.

## THE DEMO DUMPER

### MATTHEW S

A video! Yay! A shit video! Double Yay! Videos are better than lyric sheets for getting to the very heart and soul of the delusional auteur or artisan. What have we got? It all looks a bit arty. A bit lysergic. Woozy footage of palm trees viewed through the sunroof of a moving car. And here's a slow-motion skateboarder jumping off a metal beam. And now a rollerskating man in a suit carrying a briefcase. How about some kaleidoscope shapes and colours? What can it all mean? It means Matthew here is off his fucking nut on skunk and hasn't realised his montage of deep and meaningful images is a crock of hippie shit and the tripped-out sub-Banco de Gaia ambient house soundtrack isn't a party-starting rave banger, but one step removed from an ad jingle for herbal detox bio yoghurt or something similarly dreary. Get back to your juggling balls you hopeless crusty bore. In fact, try using unpinned hand grenades this time – the resulting eruption of limbs and innards will surely be more fun than videos of fucking palm trees.

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

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