



# NIGHTSHIFT

## Oxford's Music Magazine

**Free every  
month  
Issue 263  
June  
2017**

**Our music is like an audio  
Rorschach inkblot test."**

# Local Leave

**Welcome to the Oxford pop  
weirdoes' Beautiful World**

*Also in this issue:*

**Introducing HAZE  
RIDE and Willie J HEALEY  
reviewed**

*plus*

**All your local music news, reviews and six  
pages of local gigs for June**

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# THE BULLINGDON

## JUNE 2017 GIG & CLUB LISTINGS

Friday 2nd June

**The Pretty Things**

Doors: 7pm

Friday 2nd June

**Glue feat. Dr. Rubinstein**

Doors: 11pm

Sunday 4th June

**Bloodstock:**

**Metal to the Masses**

Doors: 7pm

Tuesday 6th June

**The Strypes**

Doors: 7pm

Wednesday 7th June

**Rhys Lewis**

Doors: 7pm

Friday 9th June

**Minus the Bear**

**Joan of Arc**

Doors: 7pm

Friday 9th June

**Organised Fun:**

**Pender Street Steppers**

Doors: 11pm

Saturday 10th June

**Bump**

**Cyantific**

**Pola & Bryson**

Doors: 11pm

Monday 12th June

**The Rainbreakers**

Doors: 7pm

Wednesday 14th June

**Never Found**

**City of Ashes**

**Defences**

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 15th June

**Disco Ma Non Troppo**

Doors: 11pm

Friday 16th June

**The Hummingbirds**

Doors: 7pm

Friday 16th June

**SE10**

Doors: 11pm

Saturday 17th June

**Simple**

**Helena Hauff**

Doors: 11pm

Wednesday 21st June

**Oxfordshire Science Festival**

Doors: 7pm

Friday 23rd June

**Oxphwoard**

**Alter Egos**

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 24th June

**Volume #4**

**Ed Solo**

**Grimeminister**

**Didz and M Blaze**

**Uzi and Serkus**

**Snowy**

Doors: 11pm

Sunday 25th June

**Bloodstock:**

**Metal to the Masses**

Doors: 7pm

Wednesday 28th June

**Hitman Blues Band**

Doors: 7pm

Friday 30th June

**Fracture**

**Semi Urban Fox**

**Fuji**

Doors: 7pm

Friday 30th June

**Throwing Shapes #002**

Doors: 11pm

Wednesday 5th July

**Joyce Manor**

**Martha**

**Fancy Dress Party**

**Drama Kids**

Doors: 7pm

Friday 7th July

**Bloodstock:**

**Metal to the Masses**

Doors: 7pm

Friday 7th July

**Metal to the Masses**

**After Party**

Doors: 11pm

Wednesday 12th July

**Billy Walton Band**

Doors: 7pm

Friday 14th July

**Nathassia**

**SAALLondon**

**Original Primate**

Doors: 7pm

Wednesday 19th July

**Deap Vally**

Doors: 7pm

Friday 21st July

**Bossaphonik**

**Lakuta**

Doors: 11pm

Tuesday 25th July

**Sam Outlaw Band**

Doors: 7pm

Wednesday 26th July

**Hamilton Loomis**

Doors: 7pm

Wednesday 16th August

**Billy Branch**

**With Giles Robson Band**

Doors: 7pm

Friday 25th August

**P.Y.T**

Doors: 11pm

Wednesday 30th August

**Neil Hilborn live Poetry**

Doors: 7pm

Tuesday 5th September

**Rob Tognoni**

**Hell's Gazelles**

Doors: 7pm

Friday 8th September

**Poizon**

**Singer of Tigertailz - Rob Wyrle**

Doors: 9pm

Monday 18th September

**Blues Caravan**

Doors: 7pm

Friday 15th September

**Bossaphonik**

**The Destroyers**

Doors: 11pm

Friday 22nd September

**Danny & The Champions**

**of the World**

Doors: 7pm

Friday 6th October

**Police Dog Hogan**

Doors: 7pm

Monday 9th October

**Yak**

Doors: 7pm

Tuesday 24th October

**Skinny Molly**

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 26th October

**Miles Hunt & Erica Nockalls**

**(The Wonder Stuff)**

Doors: 7pm

Friday 27th October

**Gentlemen's Dub Club**

Doors: 9pm

Sunday 29th October

**Jane Weaver**

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 16th November

**The Stray Birds**

Doors: 7pm

Wednesday 29th November

**Tom Russell**

Doors: 7pm

# NEWS

Nightshift: PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU

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**SUPERNORMAL** have announced the first wave of acts set to play this year's festival. Now in its eighth year, Supernormal has earned a reputation as the most eclectic, esoteric and adventurous festival in Oxfordshire, earning national awards for its challenging artist-curated line-ups and diversion from traditional festival tropes.

Supernormal runs over the weekend of the **4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> August** at **Braziers Park**, near Ipsden. Acts announced so far include: John Bence; Steve Beresford; Bruxa Maria; Eric Chenaux; Chop Chop; Coum Flakes; Dead Rat Orchestra & James Holcombe; Kelly Jayne Jones; C Joynes;

King Ayisoba; Sharron Krauss (*pictured*); Left Hand Cuts Off The Right; Lone Taxidermist; Paper Dollhouse; Pikacyu\*Makoto; Rapid Tan; Joanne Robertson; Silver Waves; The Stallion; Tiritilakops; Ukaea; Colin Webster & Andrew Cheetham; Yeah You; Zaimph, and Zoviet\*France.

Tickets, priced £85, including camping, are on sale now at [www.supernormalfestival.co.uk](http://www.supernormalfestival.co.uk).

**IF NOT NOW, WHEN?** Is a new festival for east Oxford, organised jointly by Divine Schism and Idiot King. The one-day event takes place on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> September at East Oxford Community Centre and Fusion Arts. 30 acts will play across three rooms, from 2pm through to 3am, with acts confirmed including: Tigercats; Johanna Glaza; Fever Dream; Garden Centre; Flemmings; Slate Hearts; Kid Kin; Green Hands; Kone; WOLFS; Porridge Radio; Repo Man; Alpha Male Tea Party; Tellison (solo); Birds of Hell; Rough Music; Be Good; Flights of Helios, and Small Hours. A limited amount of early bird tickets, priced £15, are available until the end of May and thereafter £17.50, all from [Wegottickets.com](http://Wegottickets.com). More info on the If Not Now, When? Facebook page.



**JOSEFIN OHRN + THE LIBERATION, TRAMMS AND PINKSHINYULTRABLAST** are among a host of names announced for **Ritual Union** festival this year.

The one-day festival, organised by Future Perfect, takes place on **Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> October** across a host of venues along Cowley Road, including the **O2 Academy**, **The Bullingdon**, **Truck Store** and **The Library**.

With the main headline acts yet to be confirmed, other acts announced so far include Flamingods; Dead Pretties; Her's; Trudy & the Romance; The Lizards; Van Zellar Magique and local faves Low Island, Candy Says and The August List.

Tickets, priced £25, go on sale from the 26<sup>th</sup> May at Truck Store on Cowley Road or via See Tickets.

**FRONT ROW FESTIVAL** takes place on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> July at Fritwell Playing Fields. The one-day festival in the north Oxfordshire village features sets from The Mantelles; Barstow Bats; The Lilyhammers; Harry Pane; The Homing; Beth

Thornton; Colonel Pearl; Rosie Samaras and Floodhounds, and runs from 11am through to 11.30pm. Tickets, £15 for an adult day ticket, with discounts for under-18s and kids under 10 going free, are on sale at [www.frontrowfest.co.uk](http://www.frontrowfest.co.uk).

**YORKSTON, THORNE & KHAN** will kick off this year's **Irregular Folk Summer Session**. The award-winning trio, made up of Scottish folk scene mainstay James Yorkston, Indian sarangi player Suhail Yusuf Khan, and double bassist Jon Thorne, from the band Lamb, will open proceedings at the annual celebration of new sounds inspired by folk music and beyond, which this year takes place in a Bedouin tent in the garden of **The Victoria Arms** in Old Marston, on **Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> July**. Like last year's sold-out event, this year's Irregular Folks, is sponsored by The Arts Council and will be hosted by surrealist comedian **Paul Foot**. Other acts confirmed include: **Go Dark**; **Rozi Plain**; **Laura J Martin**; **Oly Raffe**; **Dead Rat Orchestra**; **Jack Cheshire** and **Hannah Bruce**.

In addition to the music on the main stage there will be **The Odditorium**, hosted by David Bramwell, the man behind Sing-along-a-Wicker-Man, and featuring unusual talks, presentations, stories and more, as well as a short-film cinema tent and Drunken Drawing.

The day runs from midday through to 11.30pm. Tickets, priced £15 in advance, are on sale from [Wegottickets.com](http://Wegottickets.com) and Truck Store on Cowley Road. The event is 16+ (though babies are welcome). More info at [www.irregularfolk.co.uk](http://www.irregularfolk.co.uk).



## THE BEST IN LIVE STAND-UP COMEDY

Saturday 2nd June - 7pm  
**Sol Berstein, Luke Toulson, Mark Olver**

Saturday 10th June - 7pm  
**Paul Myrehaug, George Zach, Matt Price, Damian Clark**

Saturday 17th June - 7pm  
**Ian Cognito, Zoe Lyons, Dave Twentyman, Phil Ellis**

Saturday 24th June - 7pm  
**Trevor Crook, Robin Morgan, Paul McCaffrey, David Hadingham**

The Bullingdon  
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# NEWS



**MOOGIEMAN & THE MASOCHISTS** release their new album this month. The band launch 'Girls & Film' with a headline show at The Cellar on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June, with support from Crandle and All Is Worth. 'Girls & Film' is a concept album about the history of analogue photography. Tickets, priced £6, or £12 with a copy of the album, are on sale at [moogieman.bandcamp.com](http://moogieman.bandcamp.com)

**TURAN AUDIO** have been certified as 'Mastered for iTunes' mastering engineers. Mastered for iTunes (MFiT) is a high quality 24bit AAC (Advanced Audio Codec) audio file available from iTunes, that sounds far superior to regular MP3 files. This format is now widely used by major labels and artists who want their releases on iTunes to sound significantly better than they previously did. Only approved mastering houses, on Apple's MFiT providers list, can submit MFiT audio files for iTunes. Tim Turan at Turan Audio LTD, who has mastered some of the biggest names in music, as well as scores of local acts, is now certified by Apple as an approved MFiT mastering engineer. Visit [turanaudio.co.uk](http://turanaudio.co.uk) for more details and rates.



**TAMDEN FESTIVAL** returns this month with three days of world music, art, talks, workshops, cinema and food. The eco-friendly festival runs over the weekend of the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> June at Lower Farm in Ramsden. Among a host of acts from around the world are Moulettes; Zlabye; Akervinda; Firefly Burning; Solana; Rachael Dadd; Funkhaus; Brass Funkkeys; Iyatra Quartet; Ethno England; Catgod; Bethany Weimers and Sinfonia Gaia. Tickets and more info at [facebook.com/tandemfestival](http://facebook.com/tandemfestival).

**CHASING DAYLIGHT** launch their new single and their own range of beer this month. The local r'n'b outfit release 'Live at the O2' on CD and 7" vinyl along with their own Bad Chimp ale, brewed by the Tap Social brewery, with a gig at Masterrhythm Studios in Templars Square in Cowley on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June. Kick off at 7pm with free bottles of the beer on offer.

**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.



**YOUNG KNIVES** host Barbaric Experiments at Modern Art Oxford this month in preparation for the release of their new album early next year. Barbaric Experiments is a residency, running from Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup>-Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> June at the gallery on Pembroke Street, with the aim of developing ideas for a new stage show, bringing together songs from their forthcoming album, imagery, soundtracks and sonic sculpture, which will allow visitors to watch and be involved in the process. A new stage installation will be unveiled, while other installations include "a polling booth with a difference," to coincide with election week. Currently finishing recordings for the new album, Young Knives singer Henry Dartnall says: "Modern Art Oxford approached us about working together and it was a perfect match with the ideas we already had about a video/sculptural live show. We will be experimenting with film and sound to make something as wild and exciting as possible. It will be the first time the new tunes have been played in public so it will be interesting to see how it all works live, but we are also going to just play around with sounds and film to make a show that incorporates the songs and makes a whole experience." Henry also explained the themes that emerged during the recording of the album: "However technologically and scientifically advanced we become, we don't seem to be any less cruel to each other; we do not become better people. This is a running question through the album: if we are somehow naturally barbaric, how do we come to terms with this? The residency is an exciting and nerve-racking proposition for us. An idea of playing within a prison of images and lights has been with us for a while, but the technicalities of it were a bit daunting, so having the opportunity to try it out first is really appealing. We are just going to see what works and what doesn't work, and get the vibe of an audience in an environment where people understand that it's an experiment, not a finished thing. That's really exciting for us because it means things will happen that we weren't expecting. I'm hoping that people will give us ideas and inform what we are doing. I reckon it will just expand what we think we can do." The new album, Young Knives' fifth, will be their first for five years, following 2013's 'Sick Octave', which spawned that year's *Nightshift* Number 1, 'Maureen'. *More updates at [facebook.com/youngknives](http://facebook.com/youngknives)*

**BANANARAMA, MARC ALMOND AND THE PRETENDERS** are among the star names coming to **The New Theatre** later this year. The recently reunited original line-up of 80s girl group Bananarama come to the New Theatre on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December as part of a sell-out UK tour, the first ever by the original trio of Siobhan, Keren and Sarah. Marc Almond, meanwhile, performs with a full orchestra on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> October, revisiting songs from across his extensive career, including Soft Cell. The Pretenders follow up their headline set at the final Cornbury Festival with a show on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October. Other highlights for the rest of 2017 include **Kraftwerk** (Tues 6<sup>th</sup> June – already sold out); **Ride** (Mon 10<sup>th</sup> July); **Texas** (Wed 13<sup>th</sup> September); **Suzanne Vega** (Mon 2<sup>nd</sup> October); **Midge Ure, The Christians** and **Altered Images** (Tue 17<sup>th</sup> October); **Jools Holland's Rhythm & Blues Orchestra** (Sun 5<sup>th</sup> November), and **John Mayall** (Wed 8<sup>th</sup> November). Full listings and tickets at [atgtickets.com/oxford](http://atgtickets.com/oxford) or 0844 8713020.

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## JUNE

MOTOWN'S GREATEST HITS: HOW SWEET IT IS	FRI 2
MADELEINE PEYROUX	SAT 3
KRAFTWERK - SOLD OUT	TUE 6
THE ELO EXPERIENCE	FRI 9
ISLANDS IN THE STREAM	THU 22

## JULY

THE CARPENTERS STORY	SAT 8
RIDE	MON 10
THE ILLEGAL EAGLES	FRI 21

## AUGUST

JOE MCELDERRY	SAT 5
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## SEPTEMBER

PEACE TRAIN: THE CAT STEVENS STORY	TUE 12
TEXAS	WED 13
THE MAGIC OF MOTOWN	FRI 15
NIGHTS ON BROADWAY - THE BEE GEES STORY	SAT 16
ONE NIGHT OF ELVIS: LEE 'MEMPHIS' KING	FRI 29
ONE NIGHT OF QUEEN	SAT 30

## OCTOBER

SUZANNE VEGA	MON 2
TOTALLY TINA	SAT 7
MARC ALMOND	SUN 15
MIDGE URE, THE CHRISTIANS, ALTERED IMAGES	TUE 17
THE PRETENDERS	WED 18
THE AUSTRALIAN PINK FLOYD SHOW	THU 19


## NOVEMBER

JOOLS HOLLAND AND HIS RHYTHM & BLUES ORCHESTRA	SUN 5
COLLABRO	MON 6
ALISON MOYET	TUE 7
JOHN MAYALL IN CONCERT	WED 8
WHITNEY - QUEEN OF THE NIGHT	THU 9
DR HOOK FEATURING DENNIS LOCORRIERE	FRI 10

## DECEMBER

BANANARAMA	MON 4
THE SENSATIONAL 60'S EXPERIENCE	FRI 8
CHRIS REA	SAT 9



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A Quiet Word With

# Lucy Leave

photo: Helen Messenger



“WE’RE QUITE PERVERSE really,” says Lucy Leave singer and bassist Jenny Oliver; “sometimes if a particular song gets picked out and slated, we go, right, let’s play that one more! And sometimes something just doesn’t quite work on the night, and you’ve got no idea why, but you know it’s a good idea and worth pursuing.”

LUCY LEAVE ARE ONE OF *Nightshift*’s favourite local bands, but it wasn’t always so. Our first couple of encounters with the band provoked more head scratching than fist pumping. Their first demo was described as “an endearing mess”, while an early gig found us pointing and laughing at their lyrics (“I like the friends / That I have in my life / Thank you, my friends / Thank you, my friends / La la la la la la la.” they sang, with an almost heroic lack of poetry). Although by the end of their set they’d started to win us over. “We’re glad we stuck around, let’s hope they do too,” we concluded, and we’ve never looked back.

“I think it took us a while to know what we were about; we still don’t really and that’s part of what keeps us interesting.” continues singer/ guitarist Mike Smith, who, along with his brother, drummer and singer Pete, completes the band with Jenny. “Those early reviews were meant in

the spirit of curiosity I think, which is definitely what we’re about.”

AT THE END OF MAY LUCY Leave perform on the main stage at Common People, recommended by *Nightshift* and picked up on by the festival organisers as a band starting to make some serious waves. And here they are now, on the front cover. You could say we’ve been won over. But those early impressions can still be disorientating for newcomers to the band. Lucy Leave are not a straightforward rock band. They hardly look like a rock band for starters, and their songs might go from a to b, but often via c and maybe even d if they’re feeling particularly adventurous. It’s rare for any song in their set to sound much like the previous one, or the next. And yet, they are very much loved on the local scene, particularly by fellow musicians, who increasingly quote the trio among their favourite Oxford acts.

FOLLOWING THAT INITIAL demo – entitled ‘Jesus Walks Funny’ – and last year’s ‘Fighter Pilot’, which featured their epic, hypnotic Bo Diddley-flavoured magnum opus ‘Forty Years’, Lucy Leave release their new EP, ‘Beauty of the World’ this month. The new EP features six more songs with a particularly strange charm: awkward, tangled,

obstinate and absolutely bloody wonderful, drawing together the myriad threads of their sound that make them such an unusual and irresistible band: grunge and the most *outré* end of post-punk, mixing them with jazz (particularly the inventive jazz-rock of the 60s Canterbury scene) and pop.

WHILE INCREASINGLY established as leading lights of the current wave of Oxford bands, Lucy Leave’s roots lie in Warwickshire, where the brothers grew up together and where Mike met Jenny when they played in a jazz big band together.

Jenny: “Pretty much the first conversation we ever had was about Nina Simone. That, and classical piano music. So I think we’ve always had an understanding that nothing’s off the table, influence-wise. If it’s good, we’ll listen to it and try and steal the best bits.

Mike: “It was the first time I came into contact with any kind of jazz standards, and from that I went on to listen to Miles Davis – his late 60s and 70s stuff, like ‘In A Silent Way’, ‘Bitches Brew’, that kind of thing. But the big band also played some awful cheesy funk, which meant that we were very cautious of playing anything even a bit funky until recently.”

Seven years ago, though, the trio

moved to Oxford, drawn by the compact but vibrant music scene.

Mike: “Pete and I grew up in Rugby, which had a bit of a scene left over from the old Spacemen 3 days, and that’s where we started playing in a band together. But the venues have all closed now. I was in Manchester for a while, playing in an indie band, but there are so many bands, and the sheer weight of musical history there – part of the reason I went – can be pretty intimidating. Jenny and I moved to Oxford seven years ago but we only discovered the scene by accident; since Jenny is a gown person and students don’t go to a lot of gigs, it was kind of hidden from us for a long time. A friend had seen Count Drachma by chance at a local pub and encouraged us to come to their next show, which happened to be the first Tigmus gig, at The Cellar. Oli Steadman, who is now a great friend and supporter of the band, was of course wonderful, and then headlining the evening were Balloon Ascents, who just blew us away with their weird pop *nous*. So I called Pete straight away...

“The scene here has been wonderful to us. We started playing Osprey’s It’s All About the Music shows, as so many do, and met several brilliant bands through playing shows for him and then we played for Smash Disco, Idiot King, Divine Schism, and Tigmus, who are all wonderful and different in important ways, and we’ve learnt so much from them.”

Jenny: “Going on tour with Slate Hearts back in September was really special but the great thing about the scene is that at any time you feel like you’re going to run into good friends whatever gig you go to, and people surprise you all the time by turning up to stuff out of the blue, just to show support and keep an eye on what you’re up to. It’s nice to feel, when you debut a new song, say, that one or two people in the audience will be genuinely excited about that and will want to talk to you about it afterwards. That’s how I feel like we keep moving forward too, by watching these other people expressing themselves in their own ways.”

Pete: “I have a strong like for the small town thing in Oxford: like Rugby, you can build a new family here, people that care for you and support you.”

ONE OF THE MOST STRIKING things about Lucy Leave when you

first see them live, is the democratic set-up of the band: there’s no set front person. Each of them takes turns singing, while even between-song chat is divided up on a seemingly random basis.

Pete: “Yeah, the idea of not having a frontman is a deliberate choice: not having a leader. It’s a socialist idea maybe, that we work better if we collaborate equally. Sometimes it can be annoying though, maybe if we are forced to decide a setlist by sharing the singing equally, for example. Recently I’ve decided we sound better when we’re singing together or not singing at all: perhaps a greater socialist message, singing together in unity.”

Mike: “I think it’s one of the few things we do that is a conscious attempt to be different. Then again it comes from necessity: we would never be able to agree who was the front person, and without the three of us all contributing words and ideas we might never have enough material.”

Jenny: “We’re all kind of wonky in our own different ways, but fit together to make something really weird and great.”

Weird without a doubt, but great indeed. And one of the great things about Lucy Leave’s sound is they sometimes sound like a band pulling in different directions at the same time; is that an accurate reflection of how they work?

Mike: “Yes!”

Jenny: “No, definitely not.”

Pete: “Sometimes I play devil’s advocate, I’ll admit, although not because I want to pull in a different direction. When I feel that the music is okay, I wanna do something different, so maybe when we’re playing a long instrumental section, we can flip it into a verse/chorus thing, and maybe it will be more fun that way. I like to think that our music is full of ideas, music doesn’t require direction, It can just exist as this big mass of things.”

Mike: “Dave Gilyeat once said to us that watching one of our shows was like watching a rehearsal, which I took as a compliment... hopefully we’re giving the impression that anything can happen.”

A MASS OF THINGS, OR A mess of things; both might be fair descriptions of Lucy Leave’s sound, which tends to draw all manner of comparisons from reviewers and gig goers alike. Amid the genuinely eclectic array of influences on ‘Beauty of the World’, you might detect elements of Sonic Youth; Robert Wyatt; The Cardiacs; Miles Davis; PiL; Pentangle; Fugazi; Deerhoof, and Sebadoh. Diverse to say the least, and all acts renowned for a sense if unpredictability.

Jenny: “Someone said at one of our

early gigs that we were a bit like The xx, which I was kind of baffled by; one of Elevant shouted out “Deerhoof!” during our set when we played with them, and I don’t think it really gets better than that, does it? *Nightshift* wrote that the bass in the demo of ‘Friends’ sounded a bit like Hawkwind, which I can’t say was a major influence, but it was interesting to think about how that might have filtered through in some of the stuff I was listening to. Maybe our weird music is kind of like an audio Rorschach inkblot test.”

Mike: “Getting compared to Neu! was extraordinary. My favourite is when we get compared to an act we’ve never heard of, Sebadoh being a great example. We listened, and of course found that they were brilliant.”

There’s a line in Lucy Leave’s brief biography they emailed over ahead of our chat where they describe themselves as “an argument between Pete’s outward-looking hopefulness and Mike’s downward-looking love of his brightly coloured new trainers” Is that the Lucy Leave dynamic summed up?

Mike: “Well, the argument bit is right, but it’s definitely a three-way argument...”

Jenny: “Warpaint once described themselves as a band of four dictators, and I think there’s an element of that in our dynamic at times. But the dictators have some really great arguments! And we *nearly* always come up with creative solutions that keep us all happy.”

You’ve also described yourselves as “jazz-grunge”. Is that something the world has been missing to date?

Mike: “I hope so. I think its mixture of meaninglessness and seriousness sums us up well.

Jenny: “It actually makes a lot of sense, just not the kind of sense you might want it to.”

AMONG THE CLATTER AND clutter of musical oddity and brilliance that makes up the new EP, chief highlights are the wired, angular ‘Chant//Fresh Crepes’, and the jittery, spiderish post-hardcore/ jazz-rock ‘Talk Danish to Me’, which Lucy Leave say is particularly difficult to sing, but typifies their commitment to pushing themselves at every turn.

Mike: “Maybe we push ourselves to do things differently; the melody for that song was a combination of a fragment of a classical guitar piece by Frederic Mompou – he’s Spanish,

and I wanted a bit of Europeaness in there directly – and just playing the whole-tone scale on a piano, which is dead easy to play, but a bit tricky to sing, only because it’s not your usual pop sound.”

Jenny: “I’m always kicking myself that I seem to write vocal parts that sit in a really awkward part of my vocal range. I don’t think I’ve ever sung ‘Carry’ completely in tune, but then it wouldn’t be very Lucy Leave if I did.”

‘Talk Danish to Me’ is Lucy Leave’s deliberately oblique take on Brexit. Amid the band’s challenging approach to music, a strong political edge in their lyrics is something that sometimes gets overlooked.

Mike: “I think we’re all interested in politics to different degrees. ‘Jesus Walks Funny’ was a pretty bald political statement in some ways, and just a silly song in others. Tone is sometimes a problem; near

*“It took us a while to know what we were about; we still don’t really and that’s part of what keeps us interesting.”*

the beginning, around the time of the last election, we had this song called ‘Five More Years’ and it had this long, doomy intro and some swearing, and then this krautrock-y outro that was meant to sound like we were spiralling into the abyss... but some people thought that we were celebrating Five More Years... so that one got dropped. People seem to get on board with ‘Danish’ though, so maybe there’s something in this protest song stuff. Does the tongue-in-cheek thing undermine the message? It could do...”

Jenny: “I think we like to play about with our political seriousness, I mean everything in life’s political, and life is also completely ridiculous, so you have to find a way to square those things somehow. On ‘Forty Years’ on the last EP we did that by mashing together so many different political and ecological anxieties it all came out as a big righteous rambling mess, but also something you can headbang along to for several minutes.”

Pete: “I like the sounds of words and phrases more than meaning really, you can make songs your own more that way, and it’s easier and more accessible. Meaning from nonsense is really fun too. I also like the idea of singing in different languages; recently I learned a bit of Italian and I’d like to make that into a song so that I can thank my housemate’s mum properly, ‘cause she taught me how to cook gnocchi.”

STICKING WITH POLITICS, there’s going to be a general

election in a few weeks; what are Lucy Leave’s realistic hopes for its outcome?

Mike: “Caroline Lucas and Jonathan Bartley to share the top job heading up a progressive coalition. Corbyn can be minister of defence; I would love for the minister of defence to be a pacifist, I really would. Then that bloke Farron can be Brexit minister, get us back in and take all the flak. I’d like to get rid of the fuckwittery that is First Past The Post and have Proportional Representation like any actual democracy. Sorry, did you say realistic?”

J: “Since the EU referendum, I think I’m taking a year off from concrete party political hopes, for the sake of my mental health, and trying to focus on the small things we can all do in our lives to build solidarity, to get ready to confront what’s coming in the next few years.”

Pete: “I want to make sure that I vote for certain; I was on holiday last time, and that I speak to more people about my political views. I hope for a socialist world and so the next general election in other countries, for example in Uganda, where bananas are sweet and small, is just as important as our own contest.”

BEFORE THAT NATION-changing day though, Lucy Leave have another momentous occasion to look forward – one that will have passed by the time many people read this interview – playing on the main stage at Common People in South Park at the end of May; how will this strange, brilliant, oddly-shaped musical force, accustomed to playing dark, sweaty club and pub venues, face up to such a big festival crowd, there for a bit of a dance along to Sean Paul and Groove Armada, who mostly know nothing about them and maybe aren’t going to be naturally predisposed to their style of music?

Jenny: “Like with our favourite 60s pop and soul, where the heartbreaking words are set to really danceable music, I think we tend to mix some of our abstruse political musings with nice grungy licks that you don’t need long to get the hang of... Some of our biggest fans are young kids, who seem to tune into our mentality quite well, so we could be a surprise family favourite with the under-10s, you never know.”

Mike: “I don’t think our music is particularly difficult or anything, we’re just a pop band really.”

Any surprises in store?

Jenny: “I might wear something other than my dungarees. There’ll be letters...”

Hear Lucy Leave at [lucyleave.bandcamp.com](#)



# RELEASED

## RIDE

### ‘Weather Diaries’

(Wichita)

“How do you pick up the threads of an old life... there is no going back.” So considers Frodo Baggins at the end of *Lord of the Rings*, but it’s something that must go through the mind of every band that reforms. If a week is a long time in politics, 20 years is an aeon in music and for Ride, just how and where they restart their dormant career isn’t going to be easy. A band who once were the brightest, sharpest young noise on the scene are now elder statesmen, whose influence over the past two decades has grown rather than diminished, have to prove all over again they’re the act by which others must be judged.

‘Weather Diaries’, the quartet’s first album since the frankly appalling ‘Tarantula’ in 1996, goes some distance towards that goal. Here Ride almost make out like it never happened, returning instead to ‘Going Blank Again’ for inspiration. ‘Lannoy Point’ reopens the book with an almost *kosmiche* sense of drifting, guitars spangling over a spaced-out melody. The prominent use of electronics continues through the album, notably the lush, synthy ‘All I Want’, which sounds like a sci-fi Byrds, and the robotic ‘Rocket Silver Symphony’. It’s on tracks like this that Ride show they’re often best when they detour furthest from their old sound; similarly the short, sharp attack of ‘Lateral Alice’. There’s plenty that’s familiar, though: recent single ‘Charm Assault’ punches with a similar force to ‘Black Nite Crash’ – ‘Tarantula’’s sole redeeming track – while ‘All I Want’ carries more than faint echoes of ‘Taste’ and ‘Home is



## KANADIA

### ‘Ocean Blue’

(Self released)

When Kanadia first appeared in Oxford it seemed as if they’d arrived almost fully formed with hardly any imperfections at all. Even in the smallest venues the band had the capacity to sound absolutely monolithic and stadium sized. Ordinarily, it’s fair to say we like our rock tunes



a Feeling’ brings the classic shoegaze sound up to date in a stately drift of heavily-treated guitars that brings them as close as they’ve ever been to former tourmates Slowdive.

Lyrics were never Ride’s forte and they’re still best when kept simple and barely decipherable, else we get gems like “We’ll be wiser when we fall / Like the dinosaurs before,” which isn’t poetry in anyone’s book. There are times too when you feel the band are pulling in different directions: the album’s ponderous title track sounds like it doesn’t know whether to drown in early-80s 4AD atmospherics or fly off with Lynyrd Skynyrd.

For the most part, though, ‘Weather Diaries’ does what old school Ride fans would want it to do, and the questing ‘Impermanence’, with its heroic guitar swell at the death is pure, prime Ride. They’re different now of course, but in so many ways still the same. Who would want it any other way.

**Dale Kattack**

with jagged edges and imperfections but there’s something about Kanadia’s polished and epic sound that is undeniably impressive. ‘Ocean Blue’ finds the band sounding even more assured than ever. The power of the classic quiet-loud-quiet dynamic might have been lost a little over the years, but in the right hands it can still pack a punch. A reverb-drenched introduction and a relatively delicate vocal croon from James Bettis sees him at a point where he’s evaluating his life and seeking new beginnings. “Nothing lasts forever / I need a new direction” is not perhaps the most groundbreaking lyric you’ll ever hear but the songwriting that carries Bettis from a position of uncertainty to bellowing “I’m alive, I’m alive” is perfection. The cascading wave of guitar noise that begins to build after that mellow introduction could crush a vocalist with a less conviction, but far from being swamped by the crescendo Bettis rides it out, battling passionately with the rising chaos surrounding him. Admittedly, it’s a fairly well controlled chaos and one that’s produced to create maximum impact, but Kanadia’s power doesn’t really come from grit or raw aggression but from their truly oceanic sound.

**Sam Shepherd**

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## FALSE FRIENDS

### ‘False Friends’

(Self released)

“False friends” is a linguistic term referring to two words in two different languages that look similar but whose meaning is different – but it’s equally apt as a description of the songs on this album, which are so varied as to be barely even on nodding terms with one another.

Opening track ‘Prologue’ – which finds performance artist/actress Stavroula Kounadea delivering a bleak monologue over soundscapist Lee Riley’s sinister drones, culminating in the repetition of the word “nothing” – feels like horror film scene-setting. The fact that it’s immediately followed by ‘Bluebird’ – swooning lounge-pop (albeit with unsettling lyrical references to “this fucked-up little world”) that features vocals contributed by Rainbow Reservoir’s Angela Space – exemplifies the determinedly contrary ethos that seems to stand behind the record as a whole.

Hence the presence of a children’s choir in the midst of the gothy, gloomy synth-rock of ‘The Darkest Days Of Night’. Hence the way that ‘Black Book’ refuses point-blank to conform to the expectations set up by the Jesus & Mary Chain stylings of the opening lines, instead developing into a gently twinkling reverie. Hence the inclusion of both the spiky electro-punk of ‘Attack’ and the sweet and disarmingly conventional orchestral pop of ‘Change’.

Most remarkable is lengthy final track ‘Keith & Michael’, which starts unremarkably enough before being suddenly gatecrashed by a dirty garage rock riff, gradually descending into a humming, seething mess of guitars, chucking in a baffling robotic funk coda and tailing off in a fog of echoing laughter. Make sense of that if you can.

More readily comprehensible is ‘Beautiful Dream’, a suitably spacey, otherworldly song on which Claire LeMaster’s vocals cut cleanly through the haze before doomy piano chords introduce a note of ominous tension. It’s the high point of what is an undeniably ambitious bedroom project brought to life in the studio with the help of friends – and with qualified success.

**Ben Woolhead**



## ZAIA

### ‘Butterflies’

(Self released)

ZAIA’s ‘Challenge 145’ established the band as an Oxford staple, and since then they’ve made waves in the UK reggae scene, with a distinguished list of supporters, including the legendary David Rodigan MBE. Two years later, the dub reggae nine-piece are back with ‘Butterflies’, their first full length album, which continues in the vein of soulful, melodic reggae that has made them their name.

‘Butterflies’ is indisputably a summer album, despite the assertions of soulful, dubbed out roller ‘Reggae in Autumn’, and it is surely no coincidence that ZAIA have timed the album’s release with the start of the English festival season. In true reggae style, the whole of the album is underpinned by James Bolton’s slick drum work, which interlocks tightly with David Tomlinson’s rumbling basslines. Meanwhile, tracks like ‘Fire in my Heart’ balance danceable brass melodies with tasteful, melodic lead



guitar work and a subtle use of FX which errs just on the right side of cheesy.

However, perhaps the most distinctive aspect of ZAIA’s sound is Amy MacKown’s lead vocal, with poppy, soulful melodies that demonstrate a diverse range of influences, extending far beyond reggae. Admittedly, this vocal experimentation doesn’t always hit home, and opening track

## NATUREBOY

### ‘Setting of the Sun’

(Natureboy)

A mere eight years since his last album – ‘Under Your Window’ – Dave Noble – aka Natureboy – returns with another extensive journey into well-orchestrated jazz-inflected pop that, as has become a trademark, features a cast of guest turns by the likes of Megan Henwood and Barney Morse-Brown.

If you had to sum ‘Setting of the Sun’ up in a single word it’d be languorous, the entire album stretching itself out across almost seventy minutes without ever breaking into anything more energetic than an easy canter, but mostly preferring to stroll or wander through its 13 tracks.

No bad thing on its best moments, like the opening ‘Stands All Alone’, a slice of pop whimsy speckled with synth squiggles that could be a 1980s Paul McCartney number, or the catchy, piano-led ‘Swings & Roundabouts’, with its Randy Newman-style summertime vibe and a melody you feel you half remember from somewhere else. The Beatles influence is rarely too far from the surface; the album’s title track carries a Sgt Pepper feel about and there’s an easy, almost psychedelic fluff about many of the tunes. Elsewhere Noble touches base with Steely Dan – the drifting ‘Feeling Alright’ in particular – Donovan, latter-day Pink Floyd (especially on the sprawling, drifting ‘Realise’) and even Jamie Cullum. Even when he picks up the pace and gets his bounce on, as on ‘Realise’ he does so in laidback fashion. All of which makes ‘Setting of the Sun’ an easy, likeable listen, but does mean after over an hour of easy vibes you crave something a little spikier.

That’s never going to be his shtick though; doubtless Dave’s easy-going personality is something that draws so many fellow musicians to contribute and it rubs off on his music. An eight year gap between albums suggests a sense of urgency isn’t something he’s too concerned with.

**Dale Kattack**

## KT REEDER

### ‘Utopian Dream’

(Kalpamantra)

Kris Reeder is a trombone player and sound artist from north Oxfordshire. Not the sort of introduction we get everyday here at *Nightshift*, and this album by Reeder isn’t your typical local band release, as it opens with what might be the sound of a trombone dying a painful, wheezy death in the wake of a battle with, I dunno, a gang of tubas, who’ve flattened one of its pipes. Just as you think the poor wee brassonaut has popped its clogs it revives slightly amid a sea of hiss and crackle and what might be the sound of a Triffid approaching, before everything collapses into random atonality.

That at least sets the scene for the rest of the album, which mixes abstract electronics and disjointed rhythms with lashings of trombone to create an atmosphere that can occasionally be both nightmarish and comical. ‘Labexperiment 1’ in particular sounds like a thunderstorm on some hellish alien world with some added jaunty trombone parps, like an episode of *The Flumps* set on LV-426.

At his best, as on the extended ‘Surface Instincts’, Reeder finds something approaching a groove, here via layered, heavily-treated chants and electronic rhythms, before wrecking it all with the trombone lurching into the room like a drunken, flatulent baby elephant, while ‘Simple Love’ captures an eerie malfunctioning cyborg atmosphere (with added trombones). The promisingly-titled ‘All Out Nuclear War’ is a dense wash of white noise and dissonance that recalls Sonic Boom’s more outré journeys, but with added trombone, and ‘Solo Journey’ is nothing more than a tuneless, directionless ramble into trombone onanism.

For the most part ‘Utopian Dream’ fulfils the part of experimental music’s remit to be challenging, but sadly it’s rarely enjoyable, and we’re not sure if the laughs to be had are entirely intentional.

**Dale Kattack**

‘Under the Tree’ feels a little shaky at points. However, many of the real standout moments of ‘Butterflies’ are those in which ZAIA adeptly incorporate elements from other genres. The delicate, celtic harmonies of ‘My House Grows in the Sun’ and ‘Simple Tune’ are key examples. Moreover, Amy demonstrates she can still throw down in classic reggae style with the sweet, warm, lush vocal performance of ‘Music Profound’. It’s not only Amy’s vocals that stray a little out of the all-too-rigid confines of reggae, with ‘Dark Days’ featuring searing lead guitar work that evokes the great Carlos Santana.

‘Butterflies’ is a consistently soulful, groovy debut that will certainly further establish ZAIA’s distinctive sound both locally and further afield.

There’s something about the album which feels perhaps a little too restrained at times, and it’d be great to see the band cutting loose a little more on future releases. Nevertheless, it’s packed full of danceable tunes, and it’s an album that will ensure that ZAIA are a hit at festivals across the UK this summer.

**Tal Fineman**

## LUCY LEAVE

### ‘The Beauty Of The World’

(Self released)

A new six-tracker EP from Oxford’s Lucy Leave, a buncha weirdos doing twisty and unexpected things with standard rock band instrumentation. Like a slightly less comedic-sounding Cardiacs, or a slightly more straight-sounding King Crimson, they pull together strongly melodic lines from a big mess of frantic guitar, nutty vocals and at times impossibly complex compositions.

All good, then – especially in a musical climate that often seems to retreat from anything outside a safety ball of easily-shareable content. Young Knives have in the past pulled out similar kinds of perversion of popular music, and in more recent times Nairobi have taken cutesy tunes and mixed in varying colours of darkness and unnerving strangeness. It takes either an extraordinary amount of luck, or no small measure of musicianship and focus, to do what’s apparent in this EP – the ability to construct songs that sound as if they’re about to fall apart, while at the same time working successfully to a strongly listenable and surprisingly understandable set of overlaid rhythms and melodies.

On one level, this music makes no sense – it makes you work for it, with a mashup of funk, jazz, skronky guitar noise and outsider grunge. But in a world where bands like Soft Machine, Slits, Van der Graaf Generator, Melvins and Amon Düül II have existed, Lucy Leave make a lot of sense.

**Simon Minter**





# RELEASED



## TREV WILLIAMS

### ‘The Start Line’

(Self released)  
Trev Williams has been a quiet but persistent presence on the local scene for a decade or so now, twice a Demo of the Month winner, and a regular face on the live circuit – albeit mostly at open mic sessions in recent times as his day job as a guitar tutor took over. It comes as a surprise then that ‘The Start Line’ is only his second album in that time. He’s always displayed a way with a tune, even if his nervous stage presence has made gigs a sometimes uncomfortable experience, but with this record he reveals himself to be a genuinely under-appreciated talent, aided and abetted by an extensive cast of fellow local musicians who expand on his raw ideas to make for a surprisingly fulsome album. In particular the likes of Hannah Rhodes and the excellent Bethany Weimers add their voices

## THE SHAKER HEIGHTS

### ‘Out of the Blue’

(Skag Harry)  
Weird to think that The Shaker Heights formed back in 2003 but even among local gig regulars are better known for a persistent piece of graffiti in the Wheatshaf toilets than their music. For the significant majority of that history the band were a decent if forgettable country-tinged rock band, but having experienced some kind of epiphany, starting with their 2015 single ‘Body’, they’ve headed down an electro-pop road, retaining the slightly epic, questing vocals of yore, while linking them to clattering electronic rhythms and bubbling synth. ‘Out of the Blue’ is all lush synth washes and has a similarly detached stance to Pet Shop Boys, although if you told us it was a lost electro-pop record from around 1983 we wouldn’t question you too hard. It comes ahead of a long-overdue new album, ‘Collapses’ and suggests The Shaker Heights might be set to fill the resident unabashed 80s retro band vacancy that’s been unoccupied for as long as anyone can remember.

Sue Foreman

to Trev’s sometimes slightly rasping vocal performance to soften, warm and expand tracks like ‘Along the Way’ and album highlight ‘The Only One’, lending them added depth and soul, while strings and brass bolster the skeletons of songs. Gabrielle Lambrick’s viola and inventive backing vocals on ‘We Will Wake’ are a prime example of how Trev’s songs can blossom on record where they might sound slender when he plays them solo onstage. Trev’s always been a man to wear his emotions on his lyrical sleeve, and here he deals with personal issues, including mental health, as well as a love of running, but the title track shows this doesn’t have to mean the album’s a melancholy journey, bringing an upbeat vibe to bear and perhaps use running as a metaphor for escape, while ‘Cockroach’ proves Trev can rock out when the mood take him. That said, ‘You Cut, We Bleed’ is a sharp dagger to the heart of government cuts to public services and the effect they have, particularly when it comes to health. Here Trev stretches his voice the furthest and provides one his best performances to date. A reminder of just how long it’s been since Trev released his last album comes with the inclusion here of ‘Keep Singing’, which has cropped up on various demos over the years and continues to haunt us with its mixed metaphors (“Blackbird singing in the dark / Falling like a star / But singing like a lark / Beating like a drum”) and we’ll go to our grave happy if we never have to hear it again, but that aberration aside, this is a fine, sometimes excellent, varied album from a singer and songwriter whose honesty might lead to the odd clumsy moment but one who more than so many deserves to be heard.

Dale Kattack

## SLATE HEARTS

### ‘Disease’

(Self released)  
If we start from the premise that nothing in rock music will ever be truly new again and the best we can hope is for new bands to do old stuff well, then Slate Hearts at least are fulfilling that side of the bargain. If they’ve previously displayed a healthy (or otherwise, depending on your point of view) love for dungarees and early Nirvana, they’re not simply sat in their dubious denim wear waiting for the Sub Pop revival to swing round again on one of its fashion cycles, instead getting stuck into something a little more wayward on this new single, slinking in on some almost Suede-like sneer-pop before waiting a minute to stamp on the pedal board and bring the monster riff, a slab of dirt-covered Sabbath guitar with an almost Marc Bolan-esque vocal slither on top. The whole thing feels positively greasy, like it’s been lying underneath a leaking car engine overnight and has emerged oily and dishevelled. Remembering that it was its mates who dumped it there the night before is the point where all hell breaks loose and its rage is something to behold.

Ian Chesterton

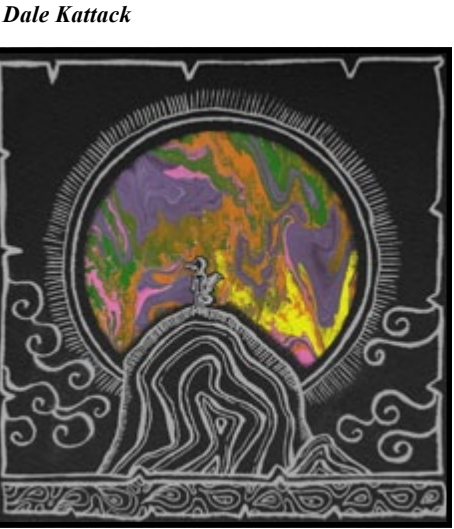
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## JERAMESA

### ‘The Myriad’

(Self released)  
After a decent demo review a couple of months back, Jeramesa – the solo project of singer and multi-instrumentalist Jack Hally – returns with a full album of eastern-flavoured psych/drone noise, track titles like ‘Our Cosmic Doom’ and ‘Sunward’ promising us a proper cosmic trip. The album’s introduction is nicked from *The Clangers*, which only ups expectations and as soon as the opening pagan folk mantra-cum-Indian temple raga kicks in we’re engulfed in a heady bong smoke ambience, controls set to the heart of the sun as the spirit of early Pink Floyd and George Harrison’s excursions to jam with Ravi Shankar are evoked. From that spaceward opening ‘Utopian Meadow’ (as opposed to Grantchester Meadows, presumably) takes us into almost Tuvan throat singing territory, while attempting to keep the stoner haze going. With each track merged into the next it’s not always easy to tell which one is which but we guess that’s not the point – track titles don’t matter when you’re smoking caterpillar, right? At its best, there’s a hypnotic simplicity – like the acoustic thrum of ‘Submarine’ with its wraith-like female backing vocals – but it’s a hard task keeping the vibe going for an hour and the likes of ‘Ripcord’ are perhaps too insular – to the point of mournful – to be anything than a downer on the promised trip and it’s as much about inner space as outer. That said, if you’re prepared to enter the darkness for a while ‘Satan’s Spire’ is an eleven-minute excursion into almost Swans-like doom, at least up to the point it fires up and heads off briefly to play with Loop; there’s a pleasing sparseness about ‘Plateau’, while the portentous ‘Sivilazide’ most effectively brings that dark trippiness into focus. There are some clumsy moments along the way, and it can’t sustain its atmosphere for the duration, but at its best this is an intriguing curiosity of the sort you can imagine Stuart Maconie raving about on his Freakzone show.



Dale Kattack

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# G I G G U I D E

*Thursday 1<sup>st</sup>*

## SAM LEE & FRIENDS / DUOTONE:

### The Sheldonian

As well as a musician, promoter, academic and broadcaster, Sam Lee is a song collector, in particular of lost or forgotten folk songs. His 2012 Mercury-nominated album ‘Ground Of Its Own’ found him breathing new life into gypsy and traveller folk songs, which he discovered hands-on by living and working with the communities where the songs, or memories of them, still thrive. The album revealed Lee to be a singer with a distinctive, unforced baritone, almost a croon, while he eschewed guitars in favour of jews harp and shruti box to further enhance the austere, ghostly atmosphere of the songs. His project, ‘Forever England’, in conjunction with the Imperial War Museum Centenary Partnership, found him collecting and reviving folk songs from the First World War period, travelling to rural communities in southern England – including Witney – to trawl archives and personal artefacts and bring together the songs of the period, while a couple of months ago he was in town as part of Broadside ballads, bringing lost songs back to life alongside Lisa Knapp and Dead Rat Orchestra’s Nathaniel Mann at The Holywell Music Room. Tonight’s show, hosted by Tigmus, finds the travelling troubadour and archivist playing in the grand surroundings of The Sheldonian, a venue that itself is steeped in history, alongside a cast of collaborators and guests for what will without doubt be another fascinating journey back through musical time. Perfect support in the form of Duotone, whose elegant, emotive mix of balladry and loops and cello invention make him one of Oxford’s most unusual stars.



# JUNE

## THURSDAY 1<sup>st</sup>

**SAM LEE & FRIENDS: The Sheldonian** – Songfinder General Lee returns to town – *see main preview*  
**NEGATIV + THE SWELL + BASIC DICKS + LEE RILEY: The Library** – Free punk, hardcore and lo-fi noise courtesy of the mighty Smash Disco again tonight, with Oslo’s velocity hardcore crew Negativ dishing out short, sharp shocks from their recent ‘Automatic Thoughts’ EP, with support from raw London punkers The Swell; vegancore rabble rousers Basic Dicks, and guitar noise and drones from Lee Riley.  
**COVER ME: The Jericho Tavern** – It’s All About the Music hosts a night of cover versions, with Reg Berry & the Cherries, T Remy and bluesman Andy Robbins.  
**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre** – Oxford’s longest running open club night continues to showcase singers, musicians, poets, storytellers and performance artists every Thursday.  
**THE MIGHTY REDOX: The Wheatsheaf** – Free show in the downstairs bar from the veteran local psych-funk-blues-ska-pop crew.  
**FOOTNOTE: The Cellar** – House, techno, dubstep and jungle club night with resident DJs.  
**SPARKY’S FLYING CIRCUS: The Half Moon** – Weekly open mic session.  
**ACOUSTIC THURSDAY: Jude the Obscure** – Weekly unplugged open night.  
**BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford** – Open blues jam.

## FRIDAY 2<sup>nd</sup>

**SLOWDIVE + ULRIKA SPACEK: O2 Academy** – Gaze upon our shoes, ye mighty, and despair! – *see main preview*  
**THE DEMOISELLES + TARPIT + MOMENTO + FREEMANTLE + JERAMESA: O2 Academy** – It’s All About the Music local bands showcase.  
**THE PRETTY THINGS: The Bullingdon** – A return to town for the near-legendary Pretty Things, oft quoted as one of rock music’s unluckiest bands, with a litany of near-misses under their belt through the 1960s, with founding guitarist Dick Taylor quitting his job as original bassist with The Rolling Stones, then his band’s before-its-time psychedelia and concept album acid rock being derided at the time, while inspiring The Who, Led Zeppelin et al. Harder and heavier than the Stones in their heyday, the rock’n’roll lifestyle took its toll on various members but Taylor and vocalist Phil May are back together and reliving the glory years while picking up various legacy awards along the way.

**GLUE featuring Dr RUBENSTEIN: The Bullingdon** – House and techno club night.  
**BOSSAPHONIK with ANTHONY JOSEPH: The Cellar** – Dancefloor Latin, Afrobeat, global grooves, Balkan beats and nu-jazz at the monthly celebration of world jazz dance, tonight with a live set from poet, novelist, lecturer and musician Anthony Joseph, widely regarded as a leader of the UK’s black music avant garde, playing a charged, hypnotic mash-up of Caribbean polyrhythms, martial funk and militant Afrobeat, his band featuring members of The Comet is Coming, Sons of Kemet and Salif Keita’s band, fronted by his spoken word performance. Bossaphonik host Dan Ofer mans the decks.  
**KLUB KAKOFANNEY with MAD LARRY + DEATH OF THE MAIDEN + ROSE SEGAL + MAIRA & ROBERTO: The Wheatsheaf** – Classic 60s r’n’b from Mad Larry at tonight’s Klub Kak, alongside emotionally taught baroque pop from Death of the Maiden in support.  
**KORN AGAIN: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Europe’s premier Korn tribute act, apparently. There’s still an audience for that kind of thing, apparently.

## SATURDAY 3<sup>rd</sup>

**SARAH CRACKNELL: Truck Store** – Solo set from the St Etienne singer, playing songs from her new solo album ‘Home Counties’.  
**DONNINGTON DOORSTEP FUNDRAISER: Donnington Community Centre (2-10pm)** – Fundraising gig in aid of the Donnington Doorstep family centre, whose funding is under threat. Live sets from Papa Nui; Audacity Live; The String Project; Beard Of Destiny; Ben Mowat and Paul Humphries; Mark Atherton & Friends; Mizike; Johnny Hinkes; Glendale Train; Richard Brotherton and Franklin’s Tower. Entry is free with donations welcome.  
**THE PAINS OF BEING PURE AT HEART: The Cellar** – The New York branch of the C86 fanclub returns to his own personal Mecca – *see main preview*  
**FREERANGE: The Cellar** – UK garage, grime and bassline club night.  
**MADELEINE PEYROUX: The New Theatre** – Sensuous, playful jazz and blues from the Franco-American singer, in the mould of Nora Jones, touring her latest album, ‘Secular Hymns’ – recorded in an Oxfordshire church, in which she interprets songs by Tom Waits, Patti Smith, Sister Rosetta Tharpe, Allen Toussaint and more in her inimitably smoky style.  
**CONTEK + KILL FOR COMPANY + PERCEPTION + ROY: The Wheatsheaf** – Heavyweight triple bill with ambient post-hardcore crew Contek alongside London thrash/prog/techno-metallers Kill For Company, and Oxford/Southampton metalcore people Perception.

**KATHRYN ROBERTS & SEAN LAKEMAN: Tiddy Hall, Ascott-under-Wychwood** – Husband and wife duo Kathryn and Sean return to the Shire, fresh from winning Best Duo at the BBC Folk Awards off the back of the acclaim accorded their ‘Hidden People’ album, mixing tender folk ballads with stomping acoustic rock, the couple having previously formed Equation with Kate Rusby and Sean’s brother Seth.  
**DIRTY EARTH BAND: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Rock covers.

## SUNDAY 4<sup>th</sup>

**MONKEYFISTS + MANAGH + JORDAN ENGLAND + SONG & SUPPER ROOMS + ASTEROX: The Wheatsheaf (3.30-7pm)** – Free live music in the downstairs bar from Klub Kakofanney.  
**BLOODSTOCK – METAL 2 THE MASSES: The Bullingdon** – First semi-final of the battle of the bands competition to win a place at this summer’s Bloodstock.  
**PRETTY HURTS + NEGATIVE SPACE + GRUB: The Library** – More righteous noise from Smash Disco, tonight with dark, militant industrial hardcore and post-punk from Berlin’s Pretty Hurts, alongside Kent’s twisted punk rockers Negative, and scuzzy garage-grunge beastlets Grub.  
**GRUB + WORRY: The Wheatsheaf** – Moshka local bands night with scuzzy psych rock/garage/grunge crew Grub.  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: Harcourt Arms** – Weekly open mic night.  
**OSPREY & FRIENDS: The Big Lunch, Bicester (1pm)**

## MONDAY 5<sup>th</sup>

**SOFAR SOUNDS: Venue TBC** – The Oxford arm of the global pop-up gig movement host this month’s show in a venue to be disclosed to ticketholders a couple of days beforehand, with acts similarly kept secret til the last minute. Quality music and exotic setting guaranteed – check out their website to find out what’s happening.  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Royal Blenheim** – Weekly open session.  
**CARAVAN: The Cellar** – 80s and 90s dance, Afrobeat and reggae club night with Amber Dal and Daniel Keane

## TUESDAY 6<sup>th</sup>

**KRAFTWERK: The New Theatre** – The synth-pop godheads return to town for the first time since 1981 – *see main preview*  
**THE STRYPES: The Bullingdon** – Raw, retro rocking from the Irish starlets – *see main preview*  
**TWO DOORS DOWN: The Cellar** – Indie disco.  
**SPARK’S SIDE OF THE MOON: James Street Tavern** – Weekly open mic night.

## WEDNESDAY 7<sup>th</sup>

**STARSAILER: O2 Academy** – What, again? Can’t we use Brexit to install some border gates on local venues.  
**RHYS LEWIS: The Bullingdon** – After selling out The Cellar in February, local

bluesman Rhys Lewis follows up with tonight’s show at The Bully, playing recent single ‘Waking Up Without You’, as well as tracks from his forthcoming debut album for Decca, due later this year, with a soulful take on electric blues.  
**TRISH EPHINSTONE QUINTET feat. ALVIN ROY AND MIKE WILLS: The White Hart, Wolvercote** – Monthly residency from eclectic jazz saxophonist Trish Elphinstone and guests, the alto and soprano sax player’s much-travelled career bringing elements of pop, blues, hip hop and more to her music. Joining her tonight is renowned local trad-jazz clarinetist Alvin Roy.

## THURSDAY 8<sup>th</sup>

**LTNT + GELATO + ROBOTS WITH SOUL: The Cellar** – Melodic grunge-inspired rocking in a Buffy Clyro / QOTSA vein from London’s LTNT, alongside fellow London grungers Gelato and local electro-indie popstrels Robots With Souls.  
**TRIPWIRE: The Cellar** – Acid house, new beat and electro club night with ph2.  
**ENNOR: 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 9<sup>th</sup>

**THE SKIDS: O2 Academy** – 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary show from the Scottish punk heroes – *see main preview*  
**KING PRAWN + BLACK CANDY + KAPELLE: O2 Academy** – The 90s ska-punk firebrands reignite the fire – *see main preview*  
**MINUS THE BEAR + JOAN OF ARC: The Bullingdon** – Genre-hopping post-hardcore, math-rock, electro-pop, prog and hip hop from Seattle’s veteran rockers Minus the Bear, back in town for the first time in a decade and out on a European tour to promote ‘Voids’, their first album in five years, their increasingly less abstract, more melodic take on post-punk and hardcore having made them big favourites of Dave Grohl among others.  
**ORGANISED FUN with PENDER STREET STEPPERS: The Bullingdon** – The tenth and final all-night dance party from Organised Fun, tonight with an Oxford debut from Canadian rare soul and disco selectors Pender Street Steppers.

**THE ELO EXPERIENCE: The New Theatre** – Big stage ELO tribute.  
**IT’S ALL ABOUT THE MUSIC SHOWCASE: The Cellar** – New bands showcase.  
**THE HISTORY OF JUNGLE: The Cellar** – A celebration of jungle with Merman, Sound Affect, Didz, D-Ranged, Blair Grylls and MC D Raw.  
**MUSED: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Muse tribute.  
**THE PETE FRYER BAND: The Wine Vaults, Banbury**

## SATURDAY 10<sup>th</sup>

**THE TRAVIS WALTONS + DAISY +**



*Friday 2<sup>nd</sup>*

## SLOWDIVE / ULRIKA SPACEK: O2 Academy

Quite a summer for shoegaze nostalgia in Oxford with Ride’s New Theatre homecoming to come and tonight’s already sold-out show from Ride’s former tour supports. Both bands have new albums out, each separated from its predecessor by over 20 years, but both have benefitted hugely from their extended time away, with several generations of bands inspired by their sound – notably Deerhunter, Beach House, Lana del Ray and even Grimes. Slowdive’s new album is, with characteristic disregard for grand statements, titled ‘Slowdive’ and recaptures both the washes of swirling, slow-motion pop-noise of their early records and the spectral electronic minimalism of their ‘farewell’ album, ‘Pygmalion’. Like Ride, the various members of Slowdive have gone off and done other things musically since they split, Rachel Goswell and Neil Halstead forming the more country-influenced Mojave 3, while Goswell was in town recently with indie supergroup Minor Victories and Halstead has enjoyed a decent acoustic solo career, but they’ve recommenced pretty much where they left off, and that’s a very fine thing indeed. The band once described by The Manic Street Preachers as “worse than Hitler” are, thankfully, rather more fondly remembered. Good to have them back, and great to see Ulrika Spacek opening for them, the Berlin-formed, London-based band 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.

**CHARMPIT: The Cellar** – Folky indie-grunge from Bristol’s Travis Waltons, whose new album ‘Separation Season’ features contributions from Busted’s Charlie Simpson, Reuben’s Jamie Lenman and members of The Get Up Kids. Dark, twisted emo from Daisy, plus lo-fi pop-punk from Champit.  
**P30 MEMORIAL MASH-UP Pt.2: O2 Academy** – Jungle and drum&bass club night in memory of Paddy Juste, with all proceeds going to his children’s trust fund. Sets from DJ Guv, Logan D, TNA, Ray Keith, DJ SS, Eksman, Ragga Twins  
**BUMP with CYANTIFIC + POLA &**





*Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup>*

## THE PAINS OF BEING PURE AT HEART: The Cellar

While the UK’s mainstream music press revelled in deriding much of the home-grown indie of the 1980s for being fey and foppish, kids Stateside were happily lapping it up and adding their own twist on C86 and shoegaze. None more so than New Yorker Kip Berman, who founded The Pains of Being Pure At Heart in 2007, part of a wave of American bands that included The Drums, Vivian Girls and Crystal Stilts who were inspired by British guitar pop, worshipping at the altars of Sarah Records; 53<sup>rd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>, The Pastels; My Bloody Valentine and Ride. They were as twee as a basket of kittens, but there was noise aplenty too, their cutesy jangle interrupted by fuzztone and feedback. The lispy, wan vocals of Berman were pure Stephen Pastel or Stuart Murdoch, but the band were closer in sound and spirit to the My Bloody Valentine of ‘Strawberry Wine’ – before they reinvented music with ‘Isn’t Anything’. They supported The Wedding Present on tour in the UK, while a succession of none-more-indie singles and EPs kept a particular musical flame alive. Since that initially burst the band have been less than prolific, just three albums in ten years and Pains really just a vehicle for Berman as far as writing and recording goes. He’s promising new songs on this UK tour so maybe there’s a fourth album in the pipeline. In the meantime, hairclips in, stripy t-shirts on, have your pocket money ready for the fanzine sellers outside and take a trip into indie pop that remains pure at heart.

**BRYSON: The Bullingdon**

**THE OXFORD BEATLES: Harcourt Arms** – Local Beatles tribute.

**THE EAST POINTERS & JOE TURNER: Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall, Uffington** – Goodtime Canadian roots music from Prince Edward Island’s fiddle, banjo and stomptbox trio The East Pointers, whose last album, ‘Secret Victory’, earned them a Juno award back home. They played last year’s WOMAD and are regulars on Cerys Matthews’ 6Music show and World on 3.

**JO HARMAN: The Cornerstone, Didcot** – Gospel, blues and soul from the singer, touring her new album ‘People We Become’, recorded in Nashville.

**MUDSLIDE MORRIS & THE REVELATORS: The White House** – Blues and cigar box guitar boogie in the vein of Seasick Steve and Rory Gallagher from the local regulars.

**THE VINCENT WHITE BAND:**

**Wallingford Blues and Beer Festival (4pm)**

**FUSED: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Rock covers, from Kings of Leon and Killers to Foo Fighters and Kasabian.

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

**OPEN MIC SESSION: Harcourt Arms**

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

**THE RAINBREAKERS: The Bullingdon** – Soulful, funk-tinged rocking blues from Shrewsbury’s Rainbreakers at tonight’s Haven Club show, the band, nominated for the Emerging Talent Award at last year’s British Blues Awards, channelling Humble Pie, Free and Black Keys in their lean, rootsy sound.

**AMOR FATI: The Cellar** – Ambient, dub, techno, industrial, electro and house night.

**OXFORD CLASSIC JAZZ: Harcourt Arms** – Live jazz.

**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Royal Blenheim**

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

**OXFORD UNDERGROUND: O2 Academy** – First of two nights of new bands showcases, tonight with heavy rock and metal from Oceans of Apathy; 12Gauge; Autumns Fall; Nightlife and Monkey Radio.

**INTRUSION: The Cellar** – Monthly goth, industrial, ebm and darkwave club night with residents Doktor Joy and Bookhouse.

**OSPREY & FRIENDS: St Aldates Tavern** – Blues and more from local veteran singer and guitarist Osprey and chums.

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

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

**NEVER FOUND + CITY OF ASHES + DEFENCES: The Bullingdon** – Punk-metal inspired by Aiden, Bullet For My Valentine et al from Oxford/Bridgend quartet Never Found, promoting their EP ‘Sorrow & Cyanide’ after supporting Fearless Vampire Killers.

**TOO TANGLED + TIGER MENDOZA: The Jericho Tavern** – Dark, brooding electro-indie from Belgian boy/girl duo Too Tangled at tonight’s Tigmus show, the pair’s mix of smoky garage-pop and shimmering synth-pop taking in influences from Yeah Yeah Yeahs and Black Rebel Motorcycle Club to The KVB and Mazzy Star.

**OXFORD UNDERGROUND: O2 Academy** – New bands showcase with Lads on Tour; Cosmic Shower; In Between Reality; Vertigo Below and Solfunk.

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

**IT’S ALL ABOUT THE MUSIC SHOWCASE: The Wheatsheaf**

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

**HALF DECENT + STEVEO NUISSIER + SAMUEL ELECTRONICA EDWARDS:**

**The Jericho Tavern** – Rapper and producer Half Decent returns for a hometown show after moving to London.

**SUPERMARKET: The Cellar**

**DISCO MA NON TROPPO: The Bullingdon** – House, disco, dub, afrobeat and cosmic weirdness.

**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre**

**SPARKY’S FLYING CIRCUS: The Half Moon**

**ACOUSTIC THURSDAY: Jude the Obscure**

**BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford**

**THE PETE FRYER BAND: The Wheatsheaf**

*Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup>*

## KRAFTWERK:

### The New Theatre

The last time Kraftwerk played in Oxford was July 1981 as part of a tour to promote ‘Computer World’, but before they enjoyed their sole Number 1 hit with ‘The Model’.

At the time they were a cult concern, recognised as an influence on the prevailing electro-pop success, beloved of Bowie,

Blondie, Numan and OMD, but best known to the wider UK public as those strange German blokes who’d been on *Tomorrow’s World* saying guitars were heading the way

of dinosaurs. Fast forward 36 years and tickets for tonight’s show were snapped up in minutes, such was the clamour to see a

band now considered alongside The Beatles and Velvet Underground as one of the most influential of all time. Not difficult to see

why: from synth-pop to techno and house, through hip hop to contemporary classical and all manner of experimental electronic

music, Kraftwerk’s pioneering sounds and rhythms cast a vast shadow. The influence of albums like ‘Autobahn’, ‘Trans-Europe

Express’ and ‘The Man-Machine’ is impossible to overstate: those clinical rhythms, sleek, silicon synth lines and

clipped, robotic vocals still sound like some far off future even now. Only Ralf Hütter

remains from the band’s classic line-up that created so many masterpieces through the

1970s and 80s, but like the greatest cyborg, new parts are slotted in easily to keep the

machine running. Tonight’s show is advertised as a 3-D extravaganza and recent

live outings have been a visual as well as audio extravaganza, but really, Kraftwerk’s

music needs nothing beyond your rapt attention; this is music that genuinely

changed the world as we know it.



– Free show in the downstairs bar for the veteran local blues rock man.

### FRIDAY 16<sup>th</sup>

**TAMDEN FESTIVAL: Lower Farm, Ramsden** – After a year off, the cycle-powered, volunteer-run, completely

vegetarian festival returns, with a music bill spanning the globe. Among acts

playing over the weekend are Moulettes; Zlabye; Akervinda; Firefly Burning;

Solana; Rachael Dadd; Funkhaus; Brass Funkeys; Iyatra Quartet; Ethno England;

Catgod; Bethany Weimers; Scarlett in the Wilderness and Sinfonia Gaia. As well

as live music there is art, cinema, talks, workshops and food. Lots and lots of lovely

veggie food. None for you, all for us. **HUNTER & THE BEAR + MODEL**

**AEROPLANES: O2 Academy** – Sweet, rustic folk-rock and Americana from the

London-based Cornbury Festival regulars, touring the UK to promote debut

album ‘Paper Heart’ after supporting Eric Clapton, inspired by Lynyrd Skynyrd,

The Band and, in particular, Bruce Springsteen.

**THE HUMMINGBIRDS: Truck Store** – Acoustic set from the Liverpool folk-rockers ahead of their show at The Bully

this evening. **THE HUMMINGBIRDS: The Bullingdon** – Modern English folk and

skiffle from Liverpool’s Hummingbirds, out on tour to promote new album

‘Pieces of You’, after opening last year’s Cornbury Festival.

**SE10: The Bullingdon** – Garage, grime and jungle club night.

**MOOGIEMAN & THE MASOCHISTS + CRANDLE + ALL IS WORTH: The Cellar** – Oddball, intellectual alt.pop from

Moogiemán, tonight launching their new album ‘Girls And Film’, a collection of

songs about analogue photography. Great kitsch Casio goth-pop from Cradle, and

singer Nathan Allsworth. **INNER PEACE RECORDS + MORALS OVER MONEY + FASHIONPROOF: The Wheatsheaf** –

Conscious hip hop from the Inner Peace Records collective.

**SOUL SESSIONS: The Cellar** – Classic funk, soul and disco with Mind Body

Solution. **VIDEOVADA: Ovada** – Help improvise the soundtrack to a silent film as part

of the Videovada Festival – bring an instrument of your choice – tubas, bagpipes and kettle drums particularly

**WOODSTOCK ACOUSTIC CLUB:**

**Woodstock Social Club** – Sets from

Great Western Tears, Mandy Woods and Windsong Revisited at the monthly

acoustic club. **EMERGENCY BANTER: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Rock covers.

**NIGHTWRECKERS: Red Hot Blues Club, Didcot**

**THE PETE FRYER BAND: The Baytree, Grove**

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

**TAMDEN FESTIVAL: Lower Farm, Ramsden**

**THE LONG INSIDERS + DEADBEAT**

**APOSTLES: The Cellar** – Classic rockabilly, rock’n’roll and surf from The

Long Insiders, keeping the spirits of Jerry Lee Lewis, Sun-era Elvis, The Cramps

and Jody Reynolds fresh and lively. Great support from Americana-flavoured soul

and r’n’b ensemble Deadbeat Apostles. **FLUID: The Cellar** – Bassline, drum&bass and

grime club night celebrating its seventh birthday tonight with underground tunes from

Hamdi, Slim, Paddy Collett, Masp and Wissla.

**NICK MULVEY: O2 Academy** – The former-Portico Quartet chap returns to

town as part of a short series of low-key dates to coincide with new track

‘Unconditional’, his first new music since 2014’s Mercury-nominated solo debut

‘First Mind’, his intimate brand of folk-pop having previously seen him out on

tour with Laura Marling. **STRIKE ONE + ASH LEWIS + SCREAMING CULTURE: The**

**Wheatsheaf** – Punk from Didcot’s Strike One at tonight’s It’s All About the Music

show. **SIMPLE with HELENA HAUFF: The Bullingdon** – Intense acid house, Detroit

house and electro from Berlin’s Helena Hauff at tonight’s Simple, the DJ running

club nights Birds and Other Instruments in her home town.

**THE RETURN OF THE WINCHESTER CLUB: St Aldates Tavern** – It’s All About the Music

presents a night of local bands, including sets from Self Help, Earinade, Beard of

Destiny, Mojo Daemon and Mark Cope. **MAGIC OF THE BEATLES: The Cornerstone, Didcot** –

Career-spanning Beatles tribute. **W.A.M: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Ska-punk classics.

**THE PETE FRYER BAND: The Dolphin, Wallingford**

**HEADINGTON HILLBILLIES: The Ferryman, Bablock Hythe** – Charity barn

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Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup>

## THE STRYPES: The Bullingdon

The Strypes’ last visit to Oxford was back in 2013 when they headlined the Academy, so the fact they’re playing the Bully tonight suggests the inevitable rise that was predicted for the band back then hasn’t quite gone to plan. How the Irish outfit respond to what might be a temporary blip will determine their future as they prepare to release their third album, ‘Spitting Image’, later this month. Whichever way it goes it won’t be down to a lack of trying, as the band’s live performances are full of the swagger and raw energy we expect from the best rock bands, guitarist Josh McClorey in particular an energetic mix of grit and virtuosity, a natural heir to Wilko Johnson as his band pursue Dr Feelgood’s punked-up rhythm’n’blues. As far back as when they were just hitting their teens the Cavan quartet released an EP of blues covers, led by a take on Bo Diddley’s ‘You Can’t Judge A Book By Its Cover’, just for fun but quickly found it becoming a radio hit in their home country. Cue a record company bidding war, including Elton John’s Rocket label, John declaring the young whippersnappers knew more about the blues than he did. Dave Grohl, Noel Gallagher and Jeff Beck similarly fell for their charms and rave reviews and sold-out shows followed. Hearing young hands recalling The Beatles and The Stones is never going to go out of fashion with rock traditionalists, and if The Strypes can bounce back, perhaps they won’t simply become yesterday’s thrill.

Rounding off Ovada’s Videovada Festival with sci-fi voodoo blues duo Vienna Ditto beaming in lounge jazz joy from the 25<sup>th</sup> Century.  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: Harcourt Arms**

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**MONDAY 19<sup>th</sup>**  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Royal Blenheim**

**TUESDAY 20<sup>th</sup>**  
**SPARK’S SIDE OF THE MOON: James Street Tavern**

**WEDNESDAY 21<sup>st</sup>**

**THURSDAY 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
**PATCHWORK: The Cellar** – House and techno club night with Lena Willikens, Orpheu the Wizard and Anu.  
**DXISGEORGE: The Jericho Tavern** – No, us neither.  
**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>**  
**GHOST OF THE AVALANCHE + SELF HELP + RATS EAT RATS: The Cellar** – Frenetic, stripped-down punk in the vein of DFA1979, Misfits and The Bronx from Bath’s Ghost of the Avalanche, out on tour, with local support from steamroller garage-pop and punk crew Self Help, and melodic grunge crew Rats Eat Rats.  
**THE AUTUMN SAINTS + PAPA NUI + NEON TEEPEE + REAL KOOL KILLERS: The Wheatsheaf** – Atmospheric Americana from Autumn Saints, plus pop-funk from Papa Nui and more at tonight’s It’s All About the Music local bands showcase.  
**MAMZER + CRIMSON TUSK + KING BOLETE: O2 Academy** – Noisy bastard rock from newcomers Mamzer, fronted by American singer Christina Kowalchuk, at tonight’s Church of the Heavy showcase. Riffmongous stoner-blues from Crimson Tusk in support.

**JONNY PAYNE & THE THUNDER: Modern Art Oxford** – Free show from Witney’s bluesy Americana songsmith Jonny Payne and band.  
**WITTFEST: The Plough, Long Wittenham** – Live music from The Vincent White Band, Nightwreckers, Octane Spring and more at the annual festival.  
**RICHARD DURRANT: St. Nicholas Church, Baulking** – An exploration of eleven centuries of British music from the acoustic guitarist, touring his new album ‘StringHenge’, mixing classical, baroque and folk traditions.

**OXPHWOARD: The Bullingdon** – Burlesque and drag night.  
**BREEZE: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Rock’n’roll party hits.

**SATURDAY 24<sup>th</sup>**  
**FLOFEST: Florence Park (11am-5pm)** – The annual celebration of music and more returns to Florence Park, today’s free family day featuring three stages. On the music stage there’s old school acid house

fun from Audacity Live, plus New Orleans-style street jazz from Horns of Plenty; funky blues from Osprey; funk-pop from Papa Nui; samba from Larkrise Samba Band; acoustic tales from Neo, and folk-rock from Band of Hope. Elsewhere there’s cabaret, slam poetry and wit from Steve Larkin and readings from children’s author Theresa Heapy, and Virginia Moffatt.  
**THE INFLATABLES + RODDY RADIATION + THE SKABILLY REBELS + KING HAMMOND & THE RUDE BOY MAFIA + MADAN SCORCHER: O2 Academy** – Ska extravaganza from veteran local skamongers The Inflatables who have been flying the flag for classic Jamaican skank and Two Tone for over 25 years now. They’re joined by Specials guitarist Roddy Radiation and his Skabilly Rebels band, plus traditional Jamaican ska revivalists King Hammond & the Rude Boy Mafia.

**GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES with EASTER ISLAND STATUES + THE OTHER ONES + BREEZEWAX: The Wheatsheaf** – Folk-inflected indie pop from Easter Island Statues from Easter Island Statues at this month’s GTI, with support from London’s harmony-heavy fuzz-popsters The Other Ones, the band mixing up influences from The Manics to Teenage Fanclub. Chilled, beat-driven hip hop and trip pop from Breezewax to open the show.  
**PITCH BLACK: The Cellar** – Midsummer techno party with Fossil Archives boss Roberto, fresh from playing Fabric and Berlin’s Tresor and Berghain, as well as remixing Jamie Anderson, Roberto Clementi, Myk Derill and Space DJs.  
**THE MIGHTY REDOX: Cowley Road Social**  
**FREEFAL: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Rock covers.

**SUNDAY 25<sup>th</sup>**  
**BLOODSTOCK – METAL TO THE MASSES: The Bullingdon** – Second semi-final of the battle of the bands competition to win a place at this summer’s Bloodstock.  
**TOM HINGLEY + FREDDY LE CRAGG + PURPLE MAY + SCOTT GORDON + LEWIS NEWCOMBE-JONES: The Wheatsheaf (3.30-8.30pm)** – Free afternoon of unplugged music from Giddyup Music, including a solo set from Inspirial Carpets frontman Tom Hingley.  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: Harcourt Arms**  
**BLUES JAM: Fat Lil’s, Witney (3pm)**

**MONDAY 26<sup>th</sup>**  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Royal Blenheim**

**TUESDAY 27<sup>th</sup>**  
**TOM CLARKE: O2 Academy** – The Enemy frontman plays the band’s ‘We’ll Live & Die In These Towns’ solo to celebrate its tenth anniversary.  
**SPARK’S SIDE OF THE MOON: James Street Tavern**  
**OSPREY & FRIENDS: St Aldates Tavern**

**WEDNESDAY 28<sup>th</sup>**  
**HITMAN BLUES BAND: The Bullingdon**

– Hard hitting Chicago-style electric blues and r’n’b from veteran NYC guitarist Hitman, whose resume includes working with Smokey Robinson, Diana Ross, The Ink Spots and Johnny Copeland over the years, back in Oxford tonight as a guest of The Haven Club.  
**IT’S ALL ABOUT THE MUSIC SHOWCASE: The Wheatsheaf**  
**CHRIS HOLMES’ MEAN MAN + ALEXA DE STRANGE + HELL’S ADDICTION + DISCIPLES OF SIN: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Bona fide heavy rock royalty courtesy of OxRox tonight with former-W.A.S.P. guitarist Chris Holmes coming to Fat Lil’s with his

## Friday 9<sup>th</sup> KING PRAWN / BLACK CANDY: O2 Academy

Some serious 90s nostalgia tonight with a first return to town for King Prawn for over 15 years, the London ska-punk-dub-metal warriors regular visitors to Oxford during the 90s, including a headline set at Truck Festival in 1999. Back then they were an incendiary live band, helmed by livewire singer Al Rumjen and bassist Babar Luck, a demented dervish of a performer who brought an element of comic performance to the band’s furious agit-punk, with firebrand anthems like ‘Racist Copper’ and ‘Not Your Punk’ finding a meeting point between Black Flag, The Specials, Steel Pulse and System of a Down. Alongside Asian Dub Foundation King Prawn brought a much needed Anglo-Asian viewpoint to 90s punk and it was no surprise that when the band split in 2002 Rumjen joined ADF as vocalist. They reformed in 2012, though sadly without Luck, but still with a fire in their souls and a skank in their step, and tonight’s return to town is a one-off club show ahead of a summer of festivals. Listening back to those early albums, in particular 2001’s live album ‘Fried In London’, King Prawn had both a wit and bite about them that was a class above American bands like Rancid and Reel Big Fish trying to make a similar fusion sound, and at a point in history when things are going down the pan at an alarming rate, their angry voice is needed as much now as it ever was. And what better local support than reformed 90s funk-core heroes Black Candy, whose RATM-inspired metal made them champions of the local scene back in the early-noughties and hasn’t mellowed with age.



new band. Having spent two extended periods with singer Blackie Lawless during W.A.S.P.’s prime, he’s possibly as well known for his legendary interview, pissed, floating in a swimming pool while necking vodka, as part of the seminal *Decline of Western Civilisation Pt.II: The Metal Years*. Among tonight’s supporting cast are Leicester’s melodic heavy rockers Hell’s Addiction, mixing up Skid Row, Guns’n’Roses and AC/Dc into a hoary, hairy brew.  
**OFF KEY: The Cellar** – Hip hop, garage, bassline, grime and drum&bass club night, with SIDE, Burt Cope, Silas, Nikstar and Gilly Gill.

**THURSDAY 29<sup>th</sup>**  
**JESSE MALIN: O2 Academy** – Grimy, downbeat tales from New York from Jesse Malin, former glam-punk with the recently reformed D Generation, Ryan Adams collaborator, and mate of Bruce Springsteen, currently out on tour with his new album ‘Outsider’.  
**THE DEMOISELLES: The Jericho Tavern**  
**SALLY BARKER & BROOKS WILLIAMS: The Cornerstone, Didcot** – Traditional English folk music meets traditional American blues and country at The Cornerstone as Poozies mainstay Barker teams up with Georgia guitarist Williams, the pair having met when Sally sang on Brooks’ recent ‘My Turn Now’ album.  
**THE LORDS OF DISCO WONDER: The Cellar** – Rock, disco and 80s sounds from King Terrible  
**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>**  
**PINKGRIP + DISJOY + BASIC DICKS: The Library** – High quality lo-fidelity punk noise courtesy of Smash Disco, tonight with super-malevolent distorto-punk demons Pinkgrip, alongside Disjoy’s gothic punk and Basic Dicks’ anarcho-punk noise.  
**FRACTURE + SEMI URBAN FOX + FUJI: The Bullingdon** – Local bands showcase.  
**THROWING SHAPES: The Bullingdon** – House and disco club night.  
**RIDDIM KITCHEN: The Cellar** – Bazza Ranks, Jago, Deemas J and Count Skylarkin keep the reggae party going.  
**STORYTELLER + INVISIBLE VEGAS: The Wheatsheaf** – Funk, reggae and pop fusion from Storyteller, plus bluesy roadhouse



Friday 9<sup>th</sup>

## THE SKIDS: O2 Academy

The enduring market for punk nostalgia isn’t drying up any time soon and if King Prawn’s show upstairs at the O2 tonight is a glimpse back to 90s politico-punk, downstairs it’s a trip further back in time with a 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary tour for Scotland’s Skids, the band founded in Fife in 1977 by guitarist Stuart Adamson, singer Richard Jobson and bassist William Simpson. Their heroically melodic, anthemic style brought them hits in the form of ‘The Saints Are Coming’, ‘Masquerade’, ‘Working For the Yankee Dollar’, and enduring Top 10 classic ‘Into the Valley’, as well as Top 10 album ‘The Absolute Game’ before they split in 1982, with Adamson going off to find even greater success with Big Country. And here’s the caveat: the guitarist, the band’s chief writer and creative force died in 2001, which kind of makes this latest reunion a bit incomplete to say the least. This was a man once described by John Peel as “the new Jimi Hendrix”. Fellow Big Country guitarist Bruce Watson has subsequently stepped into Adamson’s boots, which at least lends some continuity, but it’s a big hole at the heart of the band. That aside, The Skids’ back catalogue is well worth revisiting, especially live, and Jobson is a huge character, spending much of his post-Skids career as a poet and TV presenter, where his effusive wit was well suited. So hopefully a nostalgia trip worth taking.

Americana from Invisible Vegas  
**THE EXPERIENCE MAKERS + DRIVIN’ SIDEWAYS: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – After a 20-year break, local blues-rockers Richie Rich & the Rich Boys return to action in their new guise as The Experience Makers, still kicking out a Hendrix-inspired rock noise.  
**FINSTOCK MUSIC FESTIVAL: Finstock Playing Field** – Quatermelon and Highway 61 play the first night of the village music fest, which continues Saturday.  
**STRIKE ONE + VINCENT WHITE BAND: Tap Social Movement, Botley**

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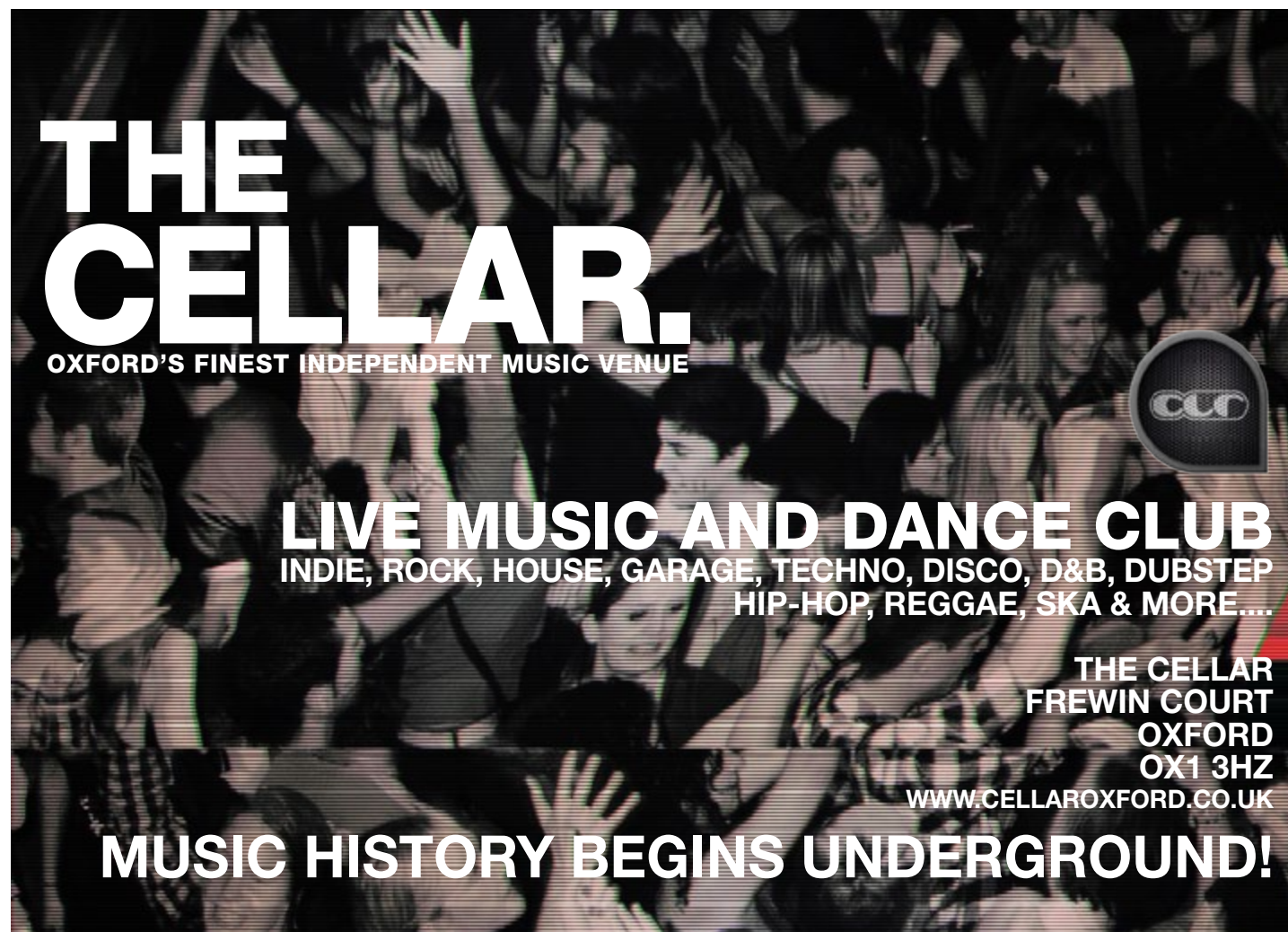
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## WILLIE J HEALEY Modern Art Oxford

Oxford doesn’t really do rock star egos; local heroes tend towards the thoughtful and unpresumptuous. But even by such standards, Willie J

Healey is a quiet, retiring character, if not exactly taciturn, then certainly reserved, always seeming a little taken aback by the attention

increasingly being focussed on him. Tonight he’s faced with a packed house, the crowd full of fellow local musicians, dedicated fans mingling

with those wanting to see what the fuss is about. With a lack of stage in Modern Art and a packed throng obscuring most of the view for anyone under six foot, tonight it’s all about the music doing the talking – something you feel Willie is more than keen to happen.

With his untidy heap of hair and puppy-ish demeanour, Willie’s carefully cultivated a good-natured slacker image and the songs back that up: new single ‘Lazy Shade of Pink’ sounds like it’d be happy to spend all day in bed, which might not be a bad thing given it starts with the narrator cutting himself shaving and then proceeding through a dizzy stoner haze that’s reminiscent of Aerial Pink’s sunshiny psychedelia before it wanders good-naturedly into an approximation of what early T-Rex might have sounded like if they’d grown up in 90s Seattle. ‘Greys’ takes things further down the grunge path, a bullish, Weezer-ish chug that still finds time to stop and smell the flowers.

Backed by a muscular but dextrous band – including in Mike Monaghan, one of Oxford’s most underrated drummers – Healey fizzes and flurries his way through a lively set, much of which already seems to be crowd favourites, and he’s clearly enjoying what’s currently very much an upward trip. ‘Would You Be’ is just one of a sackful of breezily serrated anthems that are crying out for a festival crowd to be singing along with them.

An unlikely star he might be but Willie J Healey is well on the way to being that star; tonight’s gig feels like an event – a show that in a couple of years time people will be able to say “I was there” – and the reception he gets from a partisan hometown crowd should be all the confirmation he needs that his time has come.

*Sally Maynard*

## THE MISSION / SKELETAL FAMILY

### O2 Academy

Being creatures of the night, goths can never actually die, even if, on tonight’s evidence, they can age badly (note: retaining a mane of long, dyed black hair into your 50s only works if the front hasn’t receded halfway up your skull).

The passing of the years, though, can’t change some things and having last seen The Mission live some 30 years ago, it’s comforting that many of the rituals have stayed steadfastly the same – from the *Dambusters* march, to the elaborate hand dancing of the women up on their partners’ shoulders, and the mass eruption of ticker tape during ‘Wastelands’. Hell, there’s even a couple of chants of “Eskimos!”

One person determined to defy the aging process is Skeletal Family singer Anne-Marie Hurst, once every goth boy’s pin-up and still a picture with her scarlet hair and green dress, looking like Santa’s most exotic elf. Never among 80s goth’s A-list, they did pen one of the scene’s finest songs in ‘She Cries Alone’, a high point of tonight’s short set, along with a brace of

Ghost Dance numbers that roll back the years.

Wayne Hussey, now elegantly grey, sporting his trademark shades and wielding a guitar, looks a lot like Peter Capaldi’s current rock’n’roll Dr Who, and if his voice regularly shows signs of cracking under the weight of decades of rock star behaviour, it’s worth remembering he was never the greatest singer, The Mission basing their appeal on a dedication to pomp and excess, typified by the anthemic ‘Tower of Strength’, touchingly dedicated to Chris Cornell, who tragically died today and who supported the Mish back in the early 90s.

If we’re worried too much of tonight’s show will be taken up by the patchy new album, ‘Another Fall From Grace’, we’re in for a treat as the band continue to celebrate their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a set packed with vintage numbers, including a rare outing for debut single ‘Serpent’s Kiss’, and even a trip back to Sisters of Mercy days with a dirgy take on ‘Marian’. Parts of the set do drag; a couple of new tracks are turgid in the extreme, but when The Mission pump it up, aim for ‘Kashmir’-levels of portent on ‘Butterfly on a Wheel’, they still shine, and an almost celebratory ‘Evangeline’ crowns a set that is a triumph of hope over expectation. As long as rock music loves its dark side, there will always be goth.

*Ian Chesterton*

## THE COATHANGERS / SPRINGBREAK / SELF HELP

### The Bullingdon

If this review were broadcast by BBC News this paragraph would be accompanied by an unnecessarily flashy infographic illustrating how new wave is an attempt to resolve the opposing forces of *melody*, *energy* and *sloppiness*. Self Help may have a little developing to do, but at their best they stumble across this sonic tightrope impeccably. ‘Won’t You’ has the insane catchiness of Os Mutantes’ ‘Bat Macumba’, the cheery steamroller bludgeon of your favourite Buzzcocks classic and the droopy-eyed delivery of a band who just woke up from a week-long kip. ‘Gooley’ is a lost Wannadies hit delivered with the lackadaisical cool of The Strokes, albeit once the New York glamour’s been scrubbed off with lager-anointed chip paper. There are superfluous moments – the odd guitar solo, and a tendency to decelerate every song to a teetering stop – but if Self Help can hone down to the glowing pop core of their music, they’ll be a glorious band.

Bristol’s Springbreak also pull in different directions simultaneously, but although they are the more intriguing band, the success rate is slightly lower. Most of the set consists of sweet, perky indie pop lost behind an ambient peasouper of malleted cymbals and Cocteau Twins guitar shimmer, sounding like The Sundays would if you left them in your hip pocket and put them through the wash. Although coming across as about the nicest and most ethical band

you could hope to swap coloured vinyl with, there are times when the music feels frustratingly mismatched, but feminist rant closer ‘I’m Walking Here’ pulls them over the victory line, the shoegaze fug acting as shimmering backdrop to the song’s euphoric anger, rather than obscuring veil. Cue swingometer swoop.

You’d think that Atlanta punk trio The Coathangers would have no room for variation in their scrappy brattish bashing, but, in contradiction to every punk show played in history this set actually becomes more interesting as it goes along. Sure, the first half is good, Ramones directness and Stooges scuzz played with the tinny-fuelled bonhomie of the post-record industry house show generation, but the second half is superb. Somewhere around the time of the most economic diss of Oxford on record (stare down the crowd; intone “Harry Potter” in a quavery voice; giggle), the band starts swapping instruments, loosening up, wobbling into a pseudo-rap territory and generally becoming more childishly joyous than is decent. By the time of the last number, essentially a dumbass solo for squeaky dog toy, we’re reminded of ultra-early Beastie Boys, albeit with a more enlightened agenda. We did have an animation to illustrate the journey this gig took, but someone’s sprayed a big pair of boobies on the monitor. Landslide victory for the iron(y) ladies.

*David Murphy*

## THE JAPANESE HOUSE

### O2 Academy

Alan Turing, godfather of theoretical computer science, created a set of questions which would test a machine’s ability to exhibit intelligent and rational behaviour. If the Turing test had musical capabilities and The Japanese House’s robotic, multi-layered production were to come under the scrutiny of such an examination, you feel the likelihood would be that Amber Bain’s work to date was in fact that of JapHaus 2000, a soulless tin toaster spewing out metallic music for disillusioned droids. However, a reprieve will surely be in order if her live sound has a more humanoid resonance and can strip away the layers of corrugated iron to reveal an industrious brain and pounding heart.

For the most part of The Japanese House’s foray into alt indie rock there is indeed an ambitious and dexterous pulse, Bain using every pedal, drum loop and harmonising technology at her disposal, so much so that her Flatley-esque footwork is as much to be admired as her stirring songwriting and expansive live sound. The latter is particularly impressive and often throughout the show you find yourself wondering which musician on stage is responsible for this hum, that sound or that other noise, with a definitive answer hard to come by.

The reliance on technology somewhat limits the emotive qualities of the music as everything is stringently tied down to an authoritarian clicktrack which refuses to allow the respiratory system to ebb and flow. After a little while there’s an unwarranted claustrophobic sensation, a palpable feeling that the sumptuous nature of Bain’s music is caged by the totality of the metronome. If the music didn’t rely so heavily on triggers, loops and an abundance of electro-guff, the songs themselves are easily well nourished and educated enough to stand on their own two feet without the need of their postmodern pushchair.

As much as The Japanese House create brave and audacious music, it feels like Bain is rushing past the simplicity of her music to create a fragmented and uber-contemporary conclusion. With her obvious key influence being Bon Iver, she could remember that Vernon’s work, although now terribly convoluted, began life as stripped back and acoustic, which has developed new prestidigitation throughout its long career. By jumping straight into complex drum loops and over production, Bain does her well written and genuinely emotive music a disservice.

*Richard Brabin*

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## CHASING DAYLIGHT / EARINADE

### O2 Academy

“This one’s called ‘Her Majesty’s Displeasure’; it’s about the Queen wanking,” announces Earinade singer Mac, a man long known for his caustic irreverence and a songwriter who shows no sign of mellowing as he heads towards his fourth decade playing in local bands. With his latest musical incarnation

he’s joined by a cast of musicians that includes former members of The Candyskins, The Daisies and The Anyways, a pedigree that would explain their almost nonchalant style, even as they mix cynicism and celebration on the dense, dirgy set highlight ‘How Evil is Evil Knievel!’, cranking out a quirky,

sporadically menacing, occasionally euphoric form of garage rock that somehow finds a meeting point between Crazy Horse, The Skids and 90s pop weirdoes Tiger. A steely stubbornness becomes hypnotic and while Mac’s always quotable lyrical turn of phrase remains in place, with Earinade, it’s the music that takes

centre stage, and it’d take some serious muscle to shift it.

Chasing Daylight frontman Julian Sharples is another seasoned veteran of the local scene but a very different personality to Mac. Looking not unlike Wilko Johnson, he takes to the stage in a kilt and plays up to a slightly clownish character throughout the band’s set, with songs like ‘What About Me?’ and ‘Ouch’ mining a very English brand of rock and roll idiosyncrasy that runs from The Small Faces through to The Blockheads, a funky kind of r’n’b that’s not afraid to drop the odd blokey “Oi, oi” into songs, sing “I want to be your Chihuahua” or turn a guitar effect into a Dalek voice commanding “Obey!” into the final number. The problem is when such silliness is overdone; the band can be self-consciously wacky so much it loses its quirky appeal and becomes a chore. The punk-attitude rock cabaret that makes the first part of the set fun veers towards grating zaniness, like John Otway with the so-bad-it’s-brilliant edge of lunacy replaced with something that’s just bad. More Daleks and less daftness please. Then again, any band that launches their own brand of marmalade is probably never going to go big on understatement, and on a scene renowned for its intellects maybe the occasional clown is a welcome diversion.

**Dale Kattack**

## THE TUTS

### The Cellar

Seeing The Tuts live is everything you’d expect: matching outfits (tonight, it’s white, knee-high socks and yellow Girl Power t-shirts); moments of Tory-shaming (“When I say Tory, you say scum!”), and a dozen righteous bangers from their debut album, ‘Update Your Brain’. But because it’s so easy to be their fan, you almost forget how strange that recipe looks on paper. We have here a band that covers The Spice Girls right after The Clash; that writes the sweetest pop songs while also being one of the most punk bands out there; that orchestrates a Wall of Death (more about that later) while wearing knee-high socks. You’d be excused for thinking they were taking the piss, either out of cutesy girl groups or of masculine punk tropes, or both. Maybe they’re doing neither, because The Tuts are dead serious. They’re showing that you can do both: be cool and cute. It’s a unique extension of the DIY toolkit but if you think about it, there’s nothing more do-it-yourself than matching your outfits every night. And remember it was Kurt Cobain who called The Vaselines “very punk rock”.

It’s with sadness, then, that The Tuts announce that this might very well be their last DIY tour. The trio’s at that stage where they’ve become so popular that they can’t spend all their time doing band admin, but not (yet) popular enough that they don’t need a day job. From their show, it’s pretty clear they’re ready for something bigger. Not only are their tunes the best – we knew that already – but they’ve also got perfect control of the crowd. Whether it’s shouting down hecklers (“What’s that, old white man at the back?”) or orchestrating anti-Tory chants, there’s no way the audience can refuse their demands. At one point, they ask us to form two lines down the middle of The Cellar – no one has a clue what’s going on – and when that’s done they announce: “now this is what they call a Wall of Death. You gotta run at each other at the count of 3. 1, 2...”

At the end of their main set, Nadia manages to cheekily announce “You gotta make some noise if you want more,” before running off the stage. We want more, so much more. More songs, and more gigs, and finally, The Tuts, world domination!  
**Caspar Jacobs**

## GURR / YONAKA

### The Cellar

One might expect a few eyebrows arched in readiness as Brighton band Yonaka take the stage at the Cellar.

Brighton could be considered Oxford’s biggest rival when it comes to small cities with reputations as cultural hotbeds, but just as a few craft beer emporia and a wealth of hipster drip coffee do not an artistic scene make, feisty punk bands don’t constitute a reinventing of the ark. It’s a rough-edged but occasionally swampy set where the songs tend to blend into one, saved only by a highly energetic performance from frontwoman Theresa Jarvis, originally from Folkestone. ‘Gods and Lovers’ and ‘Pride’ are bawled out at a rate that leaves us gasping for breath, Jarvis plunging into the crowd at various intervals to declaim into punters’ faces.

Yonaka’s tendency to get excited is scarcely less evident as co-headliners Gurr take the stage; Jarvis and her cohorts dominating the moshpit with abandon, indulging in a spot of crowd surfing and being invited on stage for a Beastie Boys-style shoutathon in

company with all the audience’s female members.

No wonder too, for Gurr are explosive in a way that makes up for the “seen and heard it all before” nature of the music, the Berlin four-piece diving into the spirit of things with all the abandon of a raver at Berghain or Tresor. ‘Moby Dick’ is a highlight as much for its involvement of just two of the band members as opposed to the usual quartet, chiming, scratchy guitars lending a welcome change of pace to proceedings amid all the cartoon punkiness, while ‘Walnuss’ ups the melody quotient to reveal a killer tune in the manner of Belly or Juliana Hatfield.

The band engagingly tell of efforts to corral audience members on a daytime tour of Cowley Road only to be met by a degree of standoffishness. That’ll teach them to go canvassing in Honest Stationery and Kebab Kid – although it’s the patrons of those establishments who are missing out as the evening proves to be another shrewd choice from promoters Future Perfect.

**Rob Langham**

# Irregular Folks



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# LIVE

## OXFORD FOLK WEEKEND

### Various Venues

The Folk Weekend could have been riding for a fall by emblazing the front of their programme with “... one of the county’s best weekends of music,” even if the assertion is not their own but culled from *The Oxford Times*. But the weekend not only lives up to this claim but is so successful on all fronts that arguably they would not have been over-reaching themselves should they have happened to delete “one of” from the strap line.

There is a strong communal atmosphere between performers and punters, something we have experienced before at Folk Festivals (and at the WOOD Festival too). Much of this is down to many punters being there not only as listeners but as participants. And in participating they perhaps make a claim that the festival, the music, the dancing is theirs, getting sweaty at ceilidhs or clashing sticks in one of the myriad Morris sides bringing delight to Oxford’s streets, or trying something new

in a workshop (we have great fun attempting to learn to play spoons), or, in the tradition of folk clubs, raising their voices in chorus singing or in singing a solo from the floor.

This year though the organisers must have got hold of a rare magic ingredient as the communal experience is especially strong. Also hats off to them for the ‘Inclusive Folk’ strand to support children with special needs and their families.

Friday headliner **JIM MORAY** is known for a soulful and yearning voice that fits so well with many traditional songs of longing, but it’s his guitar playing that’s revelatory in its range and apparent effortlessness. Touchingly he sings a song associated with Dick Gaughan, who is unwell, having ignited the festival with his first number, an angry defence of human values, ‘It Couldn’t Happen Here’ that he explains he needs to get off his chest, and which wins our prize for the weekend’s best original song.

Saturday’s headliners **NANCY KERR & JAMES FAGAN** provide not so much a revelatory moment as revelatory set. Despite their award winning track record we have never ‘got’ them until now. With vocals

sounding fuller and richer, appealing harmonies, instrumentals that seem subtler, an easy-going charm that seemed missing before, plus sympathy for the underdog, tonight they are class. They get the prize for best setting of a traditional tune for their version of ‘Dance For Your Daddy’.

Prize for best performance, and also ironically for best newcomer, and for best in-joke, goes to Oxford Folk Weekend patron and melodeon player **JOHN SPIERS**. But he’s no newcomer. Okay, in a way he is, starting a solo career only when his long standing duo with John Boden and then the massively popular Bellowhead disbanded. While his melodeon playing is brilliant as ever, the first solo performances we witnessed were tentative. This one, though, is confident, and engagingly witty.

Prize for sheer charm goes to **SONG DE RAIZ** (Song of Roots), a song exchange project between Oxford primary schools and projects in Brazil and Oxford.

On Sunday night survivors are presented with a difficult choice between quality acts: see possibly the hottest folk act of the moment, **LEVERET**, queues down the street to get in, or head to the wonderful setting of the Quaker Meeting House’s Garden Room

for the **DIPPER/MALKIN** duo and the **EMILY ASKEW BAND** re-imagining medieval and Renaissance tunes along with an occasional contemporary one. Great to have such a dilemma and something that would not have arisen at the Folk Weekend even a couple of years back.

*Colin May*

## TINARIWEN/ART THEEFE

### O2 Academy

It’s good to see a sizeable crowd already in for Art Theefe which is nothing less than leader Matt Sage deserves for his many years nurturing local talent through his Catweazle Club nights. For those who know Matt only in solo singer-songwriter mode it may be news that Art Theefe rock rather splendidly, are impressively tight and offer pleasing variety.

‘Golden Switch’ has a neat minor-key twist; there’s an instrumental that starts with a loping guitar riff (an unintended homage, perhaps, to Tinariwen) before spiralling of into soft jazz rock territory, its inspiration signposted by its title, ‘Steely Jam’. ‘Cold Dark Night’ is suitably dark, while elsewhere

there are touches of Kurt Weill and The Doors. Though set closer ‘Don’t Let The World Pass You By’ is a rather saccharine anthem, this set is likely to have won Art Theefe new followers.

Grammy winning Tuareg guitar collective Tinariwen are back in town two years on from their memorable gig at the Town Hall. Their global success contrasts with the turmoil in their northern Mali homeland of Azawad, including a former friend becoming a leader of the hard line Islamist group Anser Dine, and one of their collective being kidnapped (and released) by that group.

Appropriate for their nomadic roots the band are perpetually touring and arrive at the O2 towards the end of a 49-gig blitz which started in early March and this time round they have guitarist Ibrahim Ag Alhabib with them, the man who made his first guitar from a tin can, a stick and bicycle brake wire. Unexpectedly while he does share main vocal duties, he and his electric guitar are not a pre-eminent presence and he seems

to spend as much time off stage as on. If there is a main man then it is Abdallah Ag Alhousseyni, probably the collective’s main guardian of Tuareg poetry, with his acoustic guitar, and his solo that opens the encore is simply stunning. Hassane is the other member communicating with the packed venue, but does so as always through dancing. In ‘Amassakoul’ (“The traveller in the desert”) from Tinariwen’s now extensive back catalogue, his body seems to express every undulation of the song’s journey.

While they play a couple of climatic psych-rock inflected numbers (re-enter Ibrahim) about halfway through, tonight it’s Tinariwen’s slow burners and weighty trance that hypnotise the crowd. Gig 42 of the 49 and Tinariwen are at the top of their game, albeit a different one from last time in Oxford, but one they play just as impressively. Their success on the road seems unstoppable right now, but we can only hope that calm returns to their ‘tenere’ (desert) soon.

*Colin May*

## SHAME / SORRY / HAZE

### The Cellar

Looking at tonight’s gig poster we wonder if the band name shop had simply run out of not shit ones. Thankfully, for the most part, the quality of the music is inversely proportional to those chosen names.

After a six month break Haze return better than ever, the more untidy corners of their sound not so much smoothed out as sharpened up, while still retaining the awkwardness that gives them their character. They’re a sullen, scowling, wayward post-punk bag of odds, ends and angles, all battered together to make a gnarly whole that is merely a couple of killer tunes off being something special. Easily one of the most interesting, difficult to second guess young bands in town right now, you can picture them heading off on tour with Parquet Courts or Idles as they ladle bits of The Fall, Wire and, in their most upbeat moments, The Wonderstuff, onto their off-kilter noise. In fact the only real fault we can pick is their between-song chat lacks the attitude and confidence of their music.

Sorry by name and sorry by nature, the London quartet are a passable support band but seem to lack anything by way of their own character, a mix and match of decent 90s influences that sounds

like Sleeper’s Louise Wener fronting a belligerent Breeders. “I like you better when you’re not around,” snarls Shame singer Charlie Steen on tonight’s opener ‘Tasteless’ in a line that sums up the band’s misanthropic bulldozer punk. Moments later he’s narrating a grimy tale of a man addicted to visiting a gynaecologist on Shame’s sleazy, gutter-level single ‘The Lick’. It’s the closest they get to sounding like obvious antecedents Fat White Family; by the end they’re hammering out a tribal industrial finale in ‘Set Me Up’, that sounds like Killing Joke’s kid brother forcefully fighting for a piece of the action. In between we get rabble-rousing agit-punk and even some unexpected shoegazy spangle on ‘One Rizla’, Sheen stripping off his shirt as the band’s intensity and the onstage temperature rise, the line between band and moshpit blurring and the singer lofted above the crowd to crawl along the ceiling like a human spider. It’s a fittingly chaotic and celebratory climax to an exuberantly aggressive set that suggests not all young bands are going to lie down and dream of being Ed Sheeran. Shame are kicking against the pricks.

*Dale Kattack*

# THE CELLAR

## WHAT’S ON IN JUNE

Thurs 1st  
**FOOTNOTE RESIDENTS**  
*House / Techno / Dubstep / Jungle*  
11pm – 3am • £5

Fri 2nd  
BOSSAPHONIK  
**ANTHONY JOSEPH (LIVE!) + DJ DAN OFFER**  
10pm – 3am  
£7 adv • £9 otd

Sat 3rd  
FUTURE PERFECT  
**THE PAINS OF BEING PURE AT HEART**  
7.30pm – 10pm  
£13 adv • 16+

Sat 3rd  
**FREERANGE**  
11pm – 3am  
£5 all night

Mon 5th  
CARAVAN  
**AMBER BAL + DANIEL KEANE**  
*80’s & 90’s Dancehall / Afrobeats/ Reggae*  
11pm – 3am • £3 adv  
• £4 B4 12 • £5 after

Tues 6th  
**TWO DOORS DOWN**  
*Indie / Disco*  
10pm – 3.00am £5 otd

Wed 7th  
**CUNTRY LIVING**

Thur 8th  
POSH BIZKIT  
PROMOTIONS  
**LTNT + GELATO + ROBOTS WITH SOULS**  
7.30pm – 10.30pm • £5

Thurs 8th  
TRIPWIRE  
**PH2**  
11pm – 3am • £5

Fri 9th

**THE HISTORY OF JUNGLE MUSIC**  
**MERMAN + SOUND AFFECT + DIDZ + D-RANGED + BLAIR GRYLLES + MC’S: D RAW**  
11pm – 3am  
£6 all night

Sat 10th  
DIN TWINS PRESENT  
**THE TRAVIS WALTONS + DAISY + CHARMPIT**  
7.30pm– 10pm • £7

Sat 10th  
**OXFORD HOUSE PARTY**  
*House / Hip Hop / Garage / Bass*  
**CHRIS BARRANCE + KATISHUA + HEADCHEF**  
11pm – 3am • £5 otd  
£4 EDMS

Mon 12th  
**AMOR FATI**  
*Ambient / Dub / Techno / Industrial / Electro*  
9pm – 3am • £4

Tues 13th  
INTRUSION  
**RESIDENT DJS DOKTOR JOY + BOOKHOUSE + GUESTS**  
8.30pm – 2am • £4 otd  
Dress Code: Goth • Cyber • Dark Alternative

Wed 14th  
**BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE**  
11pm – 3am • £5

Thurs 15th  
**SUPERMARKET**  
11pm – 3am • £5 otd

Friday 16th June  
MOOGIEMAN  
ALBUM LAUNCH  
**MOOGIEMAN AND THE MASOCHISTS + CRANDLE + ALL IS WORTH**  
7.30pm  
£6 adv • £7 otd

Fri 16th  
SOUL SESSIONS W/ MIND BODY SOLUTION  
**SPECIAL GUEST DJS FROM MBS + ABRAHAM DELACEY**  
*Italo / Cosmic / Disco*  
11pm – 3am • £5 otd  
£4 EDMS

Sat 17th  
IAATM  
**THE LONG INSIDERS + THE DEADBEAT APOSTLES + AGS CONNOLLY**  
7pm – 10pm • £7 adv

Sat 17th  
FLUID’S 6TH BIRTHDAY  
**HAMDI + SLIM + PADDY COLLETT + MASP & WISSLA**  
11pm – 3am • £6 otd

Thurs 22nd  
PATCHWORK  
**LENA WILLIKENS + ORPHEU THE WIZARD + ANU**  
10.30pm – 3am • £10

Fri 23rd  
PALADIN PROMOTIONS  
**GHOST OF THE AVALANCHE + SELF HELP + RATS EAT RATS**  
7pm • £7 otd

Sat 24th  
OXFORD COMEDY PRESENT  
**RICHARD HERRING EDINBURGH PREVIEW + SUPPORT**  
£14 (£11 NUS)  
Doors 6.30pm  
Show 7.30pm

Sat 24th  
PITCH BLACK  
**ROBERTO (FOSSIL ARCHIVE)**  
11pm – 3am  
£5 – £6 adv • £7 otd

Mon 26th  
CINEMA UNDER THE STAIRS  
**BLUES BROTHERS**  
7.30pm for 8.30pm start • £4

Wed 28th  
OFF-KEY  
**SIDE + BURT COPE + SILAS + NIKZTAR + GILLY GILL**  
10pm – 3am • £6 otd

Thurs 29th  
KING TERRIBLE PRESENTS....  
**THE LORDS OF DISCO WONDER**  
11pm • Free Entry

Fri 30th  
RIDDIM KITCHEN  
**DJ BAZZA RANKS + JAGO + DEEMAS J + COUNT SKYLARKIN**  
10pm – 3am • £5 adv  
• £6otd



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MORGAN HERITAGE / ETANA

O2 Academy

Morgan Heritage are probably the most well known reggae family after the Marley Sons (Rohan, Stephen, Ziggy and Damian), hence the O2 Academy is packed and expectations are high for tonight’s show.

Before the Heritage touch down, we are treated to the sparkling wonder that is Etana. Born in Jamaica, now living in the US, she has just the right balance of sassy soul styling and conscious lyrics to demand attention and her short set has a big

impact.

Then we get the third generation of Morgans: Jemere, son of Gramps ‘Rockaz’ Morgan, keyboard and vocalist extraordinaire. Jemere brings a sweetly voiced r’n’b slant to things; there is perhaps a little

too much emphasis on what’s “for the ladies,” but the apple clearly hasn’t fallen far from the musical tree here.

Finally, Morgan Heritage emerge, joyful and triumphant. Theirs is a very smooth, professional sound, perfected over two decades of making music together and a genetic predisposition to reggae’s technical structuring from their father, original foundation artist Denroy Wilson, who has raised five accomplished singers and musicians. They manage the enviable balance of being both extremely radio friendly and ideologically uncompromising, carrying a clear message extolling the benefits of a Rastafarian lifestyle. Dubbed “urban roots rockaz”, basically reggae but with a contemporary hip-hop/soul feel, theirs is a tight, punchy, clean and pristine sound. Rolling out brand new tracks from their forthcoming LP ‘Avarakadabra’, as well as the 2016 Grammy award-winning ‘Strictly Roots’, they also ransack their earlier discography for their more militant offerings ‘Protect Me Jah’ and ‘One Calling’ and a very moving ‘Down By the River’ (though, sadly, no ‘Don’t Haffi Dread (to be Rasta)’ ).

Clearly aware of their position in the musical pantheon, they deliver a sonically illustrated lecture on the difference between reggae and dancehall, and engage in some call and response: something Oxford audiences are not always known for. Their onstage dynamic is fostered both with the interplay between the sincere and kindly Peetah, the mischievous Gramps, and Mr Mojo (whose onstage knees-up antics almost threaten to destabilise the keyboards), as well as the tangible warmth between the band and their fans, who they meet afterwards. Then they trot on to their ginormous tour bus and on to the next leg of their world tour. Nice and easy, inna Heritage stylee.

Leo Bowder

SPOOK SCHOOL / BAD MOVES

The Library

A hot, sweaty Library plays host to a double dose of DIY darlings tonight. Bad Moves, from Washington DC, play the kind of infectious pop that would get even the most reluctant dancer up for a boogie. Like the Breeders meets Lush, the four-way vocals give us earworms for days, particularly on stand out track ‘Shitty Tomorrow’, an ode to living near the new Trump residence in an uncertain time. ‘Get Slow’ is reminiscent of a rawer Third Eye Blind, increasing the sweat levels significantly, although outright favourite is definitely ‘The Verge’, coming on like early Weezer fronted by Sleater Kinney.

The Spook School have come a long way since playing Glasgow Popfest in 2012, while retaining the same DIY aesthetic. Opener ‘Burn Masculinity’ has never been more relevant, with lines like “there’s nothing / It gives / To us,” delivered bang on point. The punk energy and vulnerability ensure that their gigs sell out well in advance, with

a cult following that is growing everywhere they go. In particular the LGBT community feel like such gigs are a safe space, where Nye Todd sings about his own journey with gender and identity. ‘Speak When You’re Spoken To’ is like the Buzzcocks circa 1978, with hooks aplenty and anxious lines about not being noticed. New song ‘Still Alive’ is introduced as the result of an abusive relationship and dedicated to survivors in every community, with the most empowering chorus I’ve heard in a long time.

Such epic chorus-ness is also delivered in ‘Binary’ with chants of “I’m bigger than a hexadecimal” by the entire crowd. The Spook School are not only great songwriters, but give people the chance to feel represented, which is what real punk was supposed to do, right? Vital, accessible and honest, there’s a lot more to come from the Spooks.

Karlyn King

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The Bullingdon  
21.10.17 | £5

THE PAINS OF BEING PURE AT HEART

The Cellar  
03.06.17 | £13

DEAP VALLY

The Bullingdon  
19.07.17 | £10

FRANCOBOLLO

The Cellar  
22.10.17 | £7

THE STRYPES

The Bullingdon  
06.06.17 | £12.50

NADIA REID

The Cellar  
02.09.17 | £9

HOWIE PAYNE

The Bullingdon  
23.10.17 | £10

RHYS LEWIS

The Bullingdon  
07.06.17 | £8

MICAH P HINSON &THE HOLY STRANGERS

The Bullingdon  
28.09.17 | £15

MILES HUNT & ERICA NOCKALLS

The Bulingdon  
26.10.17 | £15

MINUS THE BEAR

The Bullingdon  
09.06.17 | £15

VAN ZELLER

The Cellar  
28.09.17 | SOLD OUT

SLØTFACE

The Cellar  
26.10.17 | £7

JONNY PAYNE &THE THUNDER

Modern Art  
23.06.17 | FREE ENTRY

WE ARE NOT DEVO ATRIBUTE TO DEVO

The Cellar  
30.09.17 | £8

GHOSTPOET

O2 Academy  
03.11.17 | £15

AIRWAYS

The Cellar  
04.07.17 | £7

THE SKINTS

The Bullingdon  
04.10.17 | £16

GOAT GIRL

Modern Art  
10.11.17 | SOLD OUT

STEVIE PARKER

Modern Art  
14.07.17 | FREE ENTRY

YAK

The Bullingdon  
09.10.17 | £10

DREADZONE

O2 Academy  
22.12.17 | £17.50





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MAD LARRY DEATH OF A MAIDEN + ROSE SEGAL

Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June  
CONTEK KILL FOR COMPANY + PERCEPTION + ROY

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> June  
CORRIE DICK

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> June  
GRUB WORRY

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June  
CHRISTIAN BREWER

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June  
INNER PEACE MORALS OVER MONEY + FASHIONPROOF

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June  
STRIKE ONE RAD ROACH + ASH LEWIS + SCREAMING CULTURE

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> June  
JOHN ETHERIDGE

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June  
PAPA NUI NEON TEEPEE

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> June  
EASTER ISLAND STATUES

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ART THEMEN & ROD HEART

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The Width and Wisdom of DR SHOTOVER

F\*\*\* me, what an absolute f\*\*\*ing TRAVESTY! So I said to him, ‘Ok, Mr Clever-Clogs, let’s hear how YOU’d cook a corned-beef-and-pickle passanda!’ And you know what HE said? *[Discreet cough behind Dr S at the East Indies Club bar]*... What’s that? Ah, there you are. Pull up a pew and get a round in, why don’t you... I’ll just finish my story about the worst celebrity chef I ever met. Figgy Sturgess’s older brother - ‘Gamey’ Oliver, we used to call him, aka The Tikka Man. (Yes, yes, Spode, he was always currying favour). Anyway, he eventually incinerated himself in a huge pagan wooden structure while the squire invoked the harvest goddess and the villagers chanted and gyrated in beast masks and antlers. Just another Sunday afternoon barbecue in Kirtlington... What’s that? What do I require to drink? Let’s have something from every optic for a start, shall we? And a pint of tapioca to wash it down. Mm-HM, that’ll get the engine working. Yes SIR! Now, you will find this hard to credit, but my personal trainer, Spanish Tony Sanchez, has suggested that I might be a little overweight. I know, ridiculous, isn’t it? So anyway, it may be time to get the novelty nicotine-coloured onesie out of mothballs and start a rigorous exercise schedule. Eventual goal – putting the F.U. back in F.U.N. R.U.N. (Yes, Spode, I know – we’ve used that one before, but at least we didn’t re-hash the ‘Now you’re cooking with Gaz Coombes’ one again, did we? Oh... hang on...)

Next month: *Don’t. Vote. Tory.*



‘Dr Shotover, Celebrity Chef? Dear Christ, where’s Delia Smith when you need her?’

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

HAZE

Who are they?

Oxford indie/post-punk band Haze are Ollie Ratcliffe (*bass*); Will Harrison (*vocals / guitar*); Conor Kearney (*guitar*) and Dan Hearn (*drums*). The four were close school friends from a young age and have been a band together for five years now, though the past 18 months has seen an increase in giging and interest in the band. In 2016 they released their debut EP ‘Digital Fulfillment’, a *Nightshift* Demo of the Month, and played Truck Festival. They have also supported The Garden; Ratboy; Shame; Cabbage, and Palm Honey, as well as Antarctic Monkeys. They head off on tour in August, including a headline show at the O2 Academy on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup>.

What do they sound like?

An occasionally messy, always thrilling mix and match of great influences that stretches from Captain Beefheart and The Velvet Underground, through punk, post punk, the more obstinate end of C86 and onto the noisiest of the current sprawl of indie bands, Haze have, according to their most recent live review “got a directness and urgency about them that carefully avoids sliding down the punk-pop path most travelled, coupled with an often abstract approach to melody that makes them far harder to second guess than you might imagine.” In their own words they are “messy and energetic with lots of personality and some humour.”

What inspires them?

“Our main musical inspiration is Parquet Courts. We’re influenced by a lot of jazz and rap, not that you’d hear it; those influences creep in subconsciously.

Career highlight so far:

“Truck 2016 was amazing. Not just our set but the whole experience.”

And the lowlight:

“Every band has probably played a show to one drunk man in an empty pub shouting “play Wonderwall”; we certainly have.”

Their favourite other Oxfordshire act is:

A lot of the bands we like to play alongside are from Aylesbury; there’s a

great band called Father Demo. We would plug them but they don’t have social media so you’ll just have to come and check them out when they support us at the O2 Academy in August.

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

“‘Light Up Gold’ by Parquet Courts. It’s just the perfect album; the riffs are good enough to chant when you’re pissed at a house party; the lyrics are poetic; it was recorded live in two days; it’s just raw talent.”

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

“We’re headlining the O2 Academy on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> August, our biggest show to date, and we have some great young bands lined up to join us as well as a few surprises. It will be very sweaty and energetic... very interactive.”

Their favourite and least favourite things about Oxford music are:

“Favourite thing has got to be the venues; we’ve had so many good nights building our following at the O2 Academy and The Bullingdon. Not a fan of the club scene here; that’d have to be the least favourite.”

You might love them if you love:

The Fall; Fat White Family; Parquet Courts; The Replacements; Wire; Bogshed.

Hear them here:

[soundcloud.com/hazeband97](https://soundcloud.com/hazeband97). Also Spotify and iTunes.

## ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

### 20 YEARS AGO

“Radiohead’s world is a bleak, lonely and very fucked up place. That they can soundtrack it so magnificently makes our world so much better,” concluded *Nightshift*’s review of ‘**OK Computer**’, released in June 1997, and an album that served as a paradigm shift in rock music as well as cementing the Oxford stars as one of the biggest and certainly the most influential band on the planet. “OK Computer sees Radiohead being awkward, truculent, oblique and generally going off on one. It’s never self-indulgent but it can be weird as hell; it rarely sounds like anything you’ve heard before,” mused the full-page review. 20 years on it’s still an album that rewards repeated listens and serves as a benchmark for pretty much every other band. Its release eclipsed those of Supergrass’s ‘Sun Hits the Sky’, Hurricane #1’s ‘Just Another Illusion’ and Mark Gardener’s solo debut ‘Magdalen Sky this month, the latter on Shifty Disco. Away from such high profile local releases, Supergrass and Primal Scream both played festival warm-up shows at **The Zodiac** this month, both shows selling out, while **The Bigger The God** played their biggest hometown headline show to date, their “Royal Variety Performance” at **The Oxford Playhouse**, featuring support sets from comedians and circus performers, still regarded one of the greatest shows by an Oxford band in *Nightshift*’s lifetime. **Napalm Death**, **Ash**, **Kenickie** and **Corduroy** at The Zodiac, and **The Supernaturals**, **Magoo**, **Nought** and **Northern Uproar** at **The Point** were among other gig highlights of the month.

### 10 YEARS AGO

As the dust settled – literally – on **The Zodiac**, which closed its doors for the last time in May 2007, June found us bidding another fond farewell, this time to **Fell City Girl**, who announced their split, with frontman **Phil McMinn** explaining, “we were facing a huge amount of difficulty in the industry, which as anyone who has experienced working with labels and agents knows, is pretty common. We wanted to go out on a high and stop while we still had the choice.” The band are still the only act to top *Nightshift*’s end of year Top 25 two years running. Phil and other members of the band would later re-emerge as **The Winchell Riots**. Also going was **The Market Tavern** – now a Wagamama – whose upstairs room hosted the now legendary Punt set by pre-Foals band **Elizabeth**, as well early shows for rapper **ShaoDow**. In happier news former-Unbelievable Truth singer **Andy Yorke** prepared for his debut solo album with a show at **The Jericho Tavern**, while **This Town Needs Guns** released their new single ‘And I’ll Tell You For Why’ on **Big Scary Monsters**, the local math-rockers currently battling with visa issues in Hong Kong jail as we type this. Acts coming to town this month included **OMD**, **Damien Rice** and **Rufus Wainwright** at **The New Theatre**; **Biffy Clyro** (with support from **Frank Turner** and **YourcodenameisMilo**) at **Brookes Union**; **Maximo Park** at **The Oxford Union** of all places, and **Scouting For Girls** at **The Jericho Tavern**, while future local legends **Stornoway** were topping the bill at **The X** down in Cowley on their way to headlining The New Theatre.

### THIS MONTH IN OXFORD MUSIC HISTORY

### 5 YEARS AGO

Tragedy struck **Radiohead** in June 2012 when the roof of the stage for their show in Toronto collapsed during soundcheck, killing the band’s drum technician **Scott Johnson** and injuring three other crew members, including long-serving guitar tech Duncan Swift. Only the fact the soundcheck was running late and the band themselves were not on the stage prevented even greater loss of life. Back home, rising local stars **Spring Offensive** played their biggest Oxford show to date with a gig at **St Barnabas Church** in Jericho, supported by Stornoway offshoot **Count Drachma**, while visitors to town included **Django Django**, **Black the Ripper** and **Kate Nash (O2 Academy)**; **Stealing Sheep (The Cellar)** and titan of the Telecaster, **Bill Kirchen (The Bullingdon)**. An earlier than usual **Cornbury Festival** featured headline sets from **James Morrison**, **Elvis Costello** and **Jools Holland & His Rhythm & Blues Orchestra**, featuring **Marc Almond** and **Ruby Turner**, joined over the weekend by **The Waterboys**; **Seasick Steve**; **Pixie Lott**; **Newton Faulkner** and show stealers **Katzenjammer**. Among a slew of local releases, the stand-out was ‘Narwhal’ by **Undersmile** – “the most uncompromising record to come out of Oxford since the touchstone of doom that was **Seventhchurch**’s ‘Bleak Insight’; quite an achievement,” read Sam Shepherd’s review. **Bethany Weimers**; **Jess Goyder**; **Kill Murray**; **The Old Gridning Young** and **Lewis Watson** also had new records out.



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# DEMOS

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## DEMO OF THE MONTH

### STOLBY

In case you've been asleep in a cave in a remote part of the Shetlands (and frankly you'd do well to stay there) there's an election looming, a final battle between the forces of good and evil or something that will define all our futures, so we're immersing ourselves in a pile of local demos in the hope the misanthropic feelings they tend to provoke in us will allow us to at least start to understand the Conservatives' manifesto; well, it's that or sit staring out of the window like a zombie, playing with a fidget spinner, while drooling slightly. One band here who might well enjoy living in the splendid isolation of the Scottish Highlands and Islands are Stolby, an acoustic folk-pop quartet led by a singer with the wonderful name Xenia Kotyusheva and featuring former Daisies and Medal guitarist Jonno Willis. And they're all rather lovely, with pretty spangled melodies, Xenia's bird-like voice reminding us variously of Laura Marling, Harriet Wheeler and Tanya Donnelly. '40 Below' is gently uplifting, and if 'You Don't Need James Blunt To Sing...' is a bit drippy in its sentiment ("You're beautiful, beautiful, beautiful"), it beats listening to a weird android crone croaking on about privatising old people or making coats out of wildlife. 'Sing Fly Love' wafts more into Shania Twain territory but frankly, given the vast black void looming before us, we'll happily take this soothing musical balm. Though we do worry Stolby are way too sweet natured to last long in Theresa May's brave new world.

### SUGAR DARLING

Sitting in front of the news wondering what in God's name is going on isn't a world away from listening to Sugar Darling. For starters, somehow their email managed to freeze *Nightshift's* computer every time we clicked on it, then we realise one of their WAV links is 60meg and we're buggered if we're downloading that, particularly since our security software says it can't guarantee its safety – much like your local A&E department in the next couple of years. For some strange reason they've managed to actually attach one song and made another one just about downloadable (after a fair bit of freezing and swearing), and it's not worth the hassle. 'Happy Snare' might be a Zappa-esque piece of rock and roll parody. Alternatively it might be a straight homage

*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)*

to the worst bits of Motley Crue. Like modern day politics, it's now impossible to tell satire from reality.

### K-LACURA

Ah, that's more like it. Sorry – AAAAAAGGGGHHHH!!!! THAT'S MORE LIKE IT. K-Lacura have been a force for malevolent good on the scene for a while now and promise a long-overdue full album before the year is up. In the meantime here's a track called 'Who Controls the Switch?', the political connotations of which you don't need us to spell out. As we've come to expect from the band it's a shock and awe storm of metalcore riffage, blast beats and rage. Yes, there's a breakdown in the middle when they inject some clean vocals and melodic accessibility to proceedings, but we just sit there feeling a bit twitchy until the nasty stuff comes back in again. They don't play it completely straight though, preferring to skew things slightly, bring a bit of awkward At the Drive-In angularity to play on their Killswitch/Pantera attack. Right, that's us sorted; we're voting K-Lacura.

### COWLEY CHAINSAWS

No, scrap that, vote Cowley Chainsaws! The Cowley Chainsaw sounds like a great nickname for a firebrand politician, to rank alongside The Beast of Bolsover. Are they angry? They are angry! How angry? Very, very angry. This is flight of stairs collapsing down a flight of stairs kind of bastard noisy, the sort of hellish thrash-punk racket that should be blasted from the speakers of political party battle buses across the nation, or at ferocious volume to terrified Old Etonian would-be rulers until they collapse in a tangled heap, much like each of these short, unsweet songs do. There's no finely-honed artillery fire here, more the sound of an amphetamine-crazed, disenfranchised street brawler stripped to the waist and lashing out at anyone within punching distance. They make Conflict sound like Fugazi. They sound like broken things. Their last song is called 'It Gets Worse'. It probably will. Best, maybe, to neck a litre bottle of Smirnoff and listen to this on repeat until The League of Strong and Stable Citizens come and cart us off to the gulag for breach of noise regulations.

### JONNY RACE

"Don't sweat the big stuff yet," swoons Jonny Race during this one-song video demo, called 'Sleep', perhaps as some kind of reassurance ahead of the UK's

impending meltdown. It's a pretty effective musical sedative, Jonny's fragile voice leading this piano and acoustic guitar-led daydreamy lullaby, singing with his eyes shut as lyrics, pictures and at one point a pharaoh's headgear is drawn on and around him. There's a bit of Thom Yorke in the airy, yet sombre mood, although The Sad Song Co.'s most recent album would be a more accurate touchstone. Either way it's all rather lovely, especially when Jonny sings "Animals are waiting to be named," (as opposed to maimed, if the Maydroid gets her way) moments before sketches of a bear, a chameleon, an otter and a giraffe are adorned with the names Benjamin, Camile, Oscar and Gemma. Then right at the end Jonny finally opens his eyes and smiles. Poor sod doesn't realise the mess we're in. Back to sleep, fella – Oscar the otter needs a cuddle and the waking world is no place for a tender soul like you.

### FORCE OF MORTALITY

Heavy metal only needs to be hard and tight to work – fast, slow or anything in between is fine. It should, though, sound at least more convincing than a Tory election promise to protect the NHS. Force of Mortality get it right on the tight, just about earn a pass mark on hard, but struggle to convince. Though they do make us actually laugh out loud at once point when the singer bawls "Out on the road, I go where I please / In my own time, I do it with ease," on the excellently titled 'Black Clad Devil', and follows those lines with "The next bar is up, though they know not / The hell that awaits, the fire I got," like a furious child readying itself to unleash a torrent of demonic forces on an unjust world. Sad to say it's the singer who most lets the side down in the convincing stakes, sounding awkward, like he's just not cut out for this thrash metal lark and would be more at home with some old blues rock and a tankard of foaming real ale. It's like they read a manual on how to be a metal band written sometime around 1983 with a couple of minor edits to recognise Metallica's emergence, and have falteringly tried to follow it to the letter. They didn't read the bit about Spinal Tap being a spoof, mind, else they'd never have given us 'The Darkest Shade of Black', and maybe they should re-read the chapter about writing songs that go on for about two weeks – that's for doom bands, okay. Not bad but must try harder. And faster. And louder.

### STEEVO NUISSIER

That said, Force of Mortality's songs are Napalm Death-like blasts of shock and awe compared to Steevo's here, which are more drawn out than detailed

Brexit negotiations. A Frenchman living in Oxford, we warm to Steevo from the off as he quotes The Cure, Joy Division and Depeche Mode among a list of decent influences, and at his best, as on the pulsing, squiggling synth-pop mantra 'Filter', which uses its awkwardness and repetition to squirm its way into your head, he lives up to the promise. 'Blue Design', though, outlives its welcome some time before its eight minutes are up, despite its almost rustic New Order-meets-Penguin Café Orchestra vibe. The acoustic cover of Massive Attack's 'Teardrop', meanwhile, is up there with promises to bring back fox hunting in the Really Bad Idea stakes. 'Emergency', with its darker, post-punk vibe sounds like it's escaped from an early-80s minimal wave compilation, which is promising, but maybe Steevo would do well to recognise less can mean more in every department.

## THE DEMO DUMPER

### JAY EBBY EAST

Comforting to know, in these turbulent times, that we can rely on some things to stay the same. Specifically sometime around the late 1990s when Noel Gallagher and Richard Ashcroft bestrode the world of rock and roll like the most boring twin colossi in history. Jay Ebbly East here quotes the pair as chief inspiration – inspiration being a word we're loathe to ever associate with either of them – and thus damns himself before we even click on his lovingly crafted crock of dadrock crap. Said crock is called 'On The Other Side', and if we're thinking of this in vaguely political terms, the other side might feature a rainbow coalition of shiny happy people, the Pirate party, funtime pop and basically anyone whose idea of good times isn't a sub-High Flyin' Birds dirge that could reduce a room full of toddlers on a sugar high to a comatose heap of lethargy before it even gets to its sorry excuse for a chorus. If this song was a politician it'd be *Spitting Image's* grey caricature of John Major, devoid of anything resembling a personality; it's the soundtrack to a minimum wage, zero hours contract job in a call centre on some benighted industrial estate near Swindon and as sexy as Boris Johnson in a thong and nipple tassels. But, cry worthies and musos and the sort of people who actually get excited whenever *MOJO* runs yet another 16-page Pink Floyd retrospective, you can keep your unpredictable sonic adventuring and glittery party dresses, this sort of music is strong and stable. Strong and stable, dear reader, strong and stable. Keep saying it. Strong and stable. God help us all.

*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 phone number. If you can't handle criticism, please don't send us your demo. We make no pretence to being fair, objective or open-minded and reserve the right to use juvenile insults while almost completely ignoring your music should we feel like it. Your Facebook friends are welcome to get all huffy on your behalf, but we'll laugh at them too.*

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