

# NIGHTSHIFT

## Oxford's Music Magazine

Free every  
month  
Issue 270  
January  
2018

# BRICKWORK

# LIZARDS

*"There's definitely an appetite in Oxford for bands that are outside the norm"*

photo: Geoff Russell Hayward MBE at RHimageart

Oxford's exotic musical travellers talk longing, hangings and Sultans' wedding parties.

Also in this issue:

Introducing **MOTHER**

plus

All your Oxford music news, previews, reviews and gigs for the month ahead

### OXFORD DUPLICATION CENTRE

CD DUPLICATION SPECIALISTS

CONTACT US

01865 457000

CD DVD Duplication  
Card Wallets & Digipacks  
Digital Printing  
Large Packaging Options  
Graphic Design  
Fulfillment Services

all@oxfordduplicationcentre.com  
29 Banbury Road Kidlington OX5 1AQ

Short order specialists 25+ to 1000's

SUPPORTERS OF THE LOCAL MUSIC SCENE WITH DISCOUNTED SERVICES

Highly recommended by Turan Audio, Evolution Studios, Nightshift Magazine, TAD Studios, Blue Moon, ZURICH, Nick Cope, Tony O'Malley, Lucy Leave, Great Western Tears, The Shapes, The Deadbeat Apostles, Laureltide, Invisible Vegas, Bo Walton, DEO, Peepworld, and many many others.

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



# THE BULLINGDON

## JANUARY 2018 GIG & CLUB LISTINGS

<p>Sunday 31st December <b>Cowley Road's NYE Festival</b> Dutty Moonshine Big Band Skylarkin &amp; Friends ZAIA Soundsystem Simple Old Skool Oxford Doors: 8pm</p> <p>Friday 5th January <b>Brickwork Lizards Album Launch</b> Flights of Helios Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Friday 5th January <b>Rascal Presents:</b> Dense and Pika Hechef Doors: 8pm</p> <p>Saturday 6th January <b>The Centrifuge Collective</b> Doors: 8pm</p> <p>Friday 12th January <b>Groove</b> Doors: 8pm</p> <p>Saturday 13th January <b>Doctor Feelgood</b> Doors: 8pm</p> <p>Saturday 20th January <b>Musical Medicine</b> Magnier Doors: 11pm</p> <p>Thursday 25th January <b>The Night Cafe</b> Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Friday 26th January <b>Mr Scruff</b> Doors: 8pm</p> <p>Monday 29th January <b>Pete Fij &amp; Terry Bickers</b> Doors: 7pm</p>	<p>Tuesday 30th January <b>The Americans</b> Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Wednesday 31st January <b>Mandolin Orange</b> Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Thursday 1st February <b>The Brew</b> Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Friday 2nd February <b>London Calling</b> Play The Clash Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Saturday 3rd February <b>Simple</b> DJ Stingway Doors: 8pm</p> <p>Sunday 4th February <b>Jesca Hoop</b> Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Friday 9th February <b>Mr B The Gentleman Rhymers</b> Grace Savage Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Saturday 10th February <b>John Robins:</b> The Darkness of Robins Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Friday 16th February <b>Fern Brady 'Suffer Fools'</b> Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Saturday 17th February <b>Silent Disco by Silent Social</b> Doors: 8pm</p> <p>Tuesday 20th February <b>Pete Boss &amp; The Bluehearts</b> Doors: 7pm</p>	<p>Friday 23rd February <b>Daliso:</b> 'What the African Said...' Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Thursday 1st March <b>Matt Edwards Band</b> Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Friday 2nd March <b>Patrick Monahan:</b> Rewind Selector 90s Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Saturday 3rd March <b>Simple Objekt</b> Doors: 8pm</p> <p>Thursday 8th March <b>Youthmovies</b> Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Friday 9th March <b>Youthmovies</b> Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Friday 9th March <b>Off-Key</b> Doors: 8pm</p> <p>Saturday 10th March <b>Sub Tropic</b> Dub Boy B2B ATK12 feat. MC Jonzey Count Skylarkin Doors: 8pm</p> <p>Sunday 11th March <b>Simon Evans</b> Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Wednesday 14th March <b>Milk Teeth</b> Doors: 7pm</p>	<p>Thursday 15th March <b>Will Wilde Band</b> Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Friday 16th March <b>Rob Auton:</b> The Hair Show Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Saturday 17th March <b>Musical Medicine</b> Bradley Zero Doors: 8pm</p> <p>Friday 23rd March <b>Gwenno</b> Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Wednesday 28th March <b>Geoff Achison</b> &amp; The Souldiggers Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Thursday 29th March <b>Noasis</b> Doors: 7pm</p> <p>Friday 30th March <b>Prism / Spectrum</b> Kieran Alexis Tim Aldiss Marty P Ben Mac Doors: 8pm</p> <p>Saturday 3rd March <b>Rawdlo: Metalheadz</b> Dillinja DLR Dubz Blunt Samas Doors: 8pm</p> <p>Sunday 1st April <b>Sabrina Benaïm</b> Doors: 7pm</p>
---	---	---	--



### THE BEST IN LIVE STAND-UP COMEDY

Saturday 6th January - 7pm  
**Mickey Sharma, Dave Fulton, Jimmy McGhie, Abigoliah**

Saturday 13th January - 7pm  
**Marlon Davis, Jen Brister, Andy Robinson, Nigel Ng**

Saturday 20th January - 7pm  
**Lloyd Langford, Mandy Knight, Fin Taylor, Steve Gribbin**

Sunday 27th January - 7pm  
**Sean Percival, Glenn Wool, Allyson Smith, Tom Lucy**

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

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

# NEWS

Nightshift: PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU

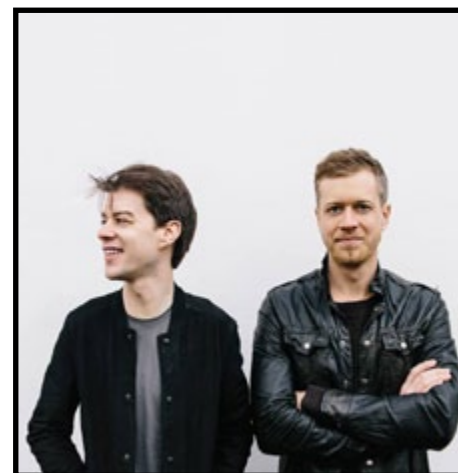
Phone: 01865 372255

email: editor@nightshiftmag.co.uk

Online: nightshiftmag.co.uk



**YOUNG WOMEN'S MUSIC PROJECT** geared up for the campaign to keep the project alive in 2018 by filming a video for a new song at the start of December. The long-running project, led by musician Zahra Tehrani, is under threat as its current home, Fusion Arts, behind East Oxford Community Centre, is due to be demolished as part of redevelopment of the area. YWMP works with over 60 young women and girls as well as partnering various organisations and charities helping empower young women through music. A series of fundraising campaigns are planned. In the meantime you can get yourself a 2018 YWMP calendar, on sale from The Old Fire Station or at [www.ywmp.org.uk](http://www.ywmp.org.uk).



**A SILENT FILM** have announced they have split. The band featured on the cover of *Nightshift* three times from their formation in 2005 from the ashes of punk band Shouting Myke. Originally a four-piece, in recent times they operated as a duo of singer and keyboard player Robert Stevenson and drummer Spencer Walker. They released three albums, including 2008 debut 'The City That Sleeps', and 2015's eponymous finale, enjoying considerable success in the States, where they toured regularly and where Rob has lived in recent years. In a statement on their website in early December they told fans that following the birth of Spencer's first child, "We realised we were enjoying our new life experiences and weren't ready to come back to the band. We know this will be a great disappointment to many of you but we want you to know that this is coming from a natural, positive place for both of us."

Robert will be undertaking a final solo acoustic tour of the States in February and March, playing A Silent Film songs.

To read the full message, visit [www.asilentfilm.com](http://www.asilentfilm.com)

**SLATE HEARTS** have also decided to call it a day. The grunge trio announced their split in the wake of recent EP 'Honey Roasted Henry', simply stating on their Facebook page that their show on the 28th December would be their last, but telling *Nightshift*, "We've just run out of steam to be honest. We gave this band all we had and we don't want to carry it on half arsed and have it end up feeling like a chore."

'I'm Not There' from the recent EP was number 10 in *Nightshift's* end of year Top 25 for 2017, while the band's incendiary set at Common People in May last year, on *Nightshift's* Uncommon Stage, was a lesson in rock and roll ferocity. Damn shame – they'll be missed.

**THE PROCLAIMERS, RICHARD THOMPSON AND THE SHARON SHANNON BAND** are the first headline acts to be announced for next year's **Towersey Festival**. The annual

folk weekend – the longest running festival in Oxfordshire – takes place from the 24<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> **August 2018** at Thame Showground. Other acts confirmed so far include Martin Joseph; Peter Knight & John Spiers; Martin Simpson; Wildwood Kin, and Faustus. Tickets are on sale now at [www.towerseyfestival.com](http://www.towerseyfestival.com).

**IF NOT NOW, WHEN?** Returns in 2018. The one-day festival of new indie and DIY music takes place at East Oxford Community Centre and Fusion Arts on **Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> September**. Tickets, priced £15 until the 31<sup>st</sup> January and £20 thereafter, are on sale now from [Wegotickets.com](http://Wegotickets.com). This year's inaugural event featured over 30 acts across three rooms, including a headline set from Gallops.

**THE SAD SONG CO.** release their fourth album next month. 'Worth' is released on the 9<sup>th</sup> February, the follow-up to 2016's acclaimed 'In Amber'. The Sad Song Co. is the solo project of Oxford multi-instrumentalist Nigel Powell, previously of Unbelievable Truth and Dive Dive and currently drummer in Frank Turner's Sleeping Souls band. He will undertake a solo UK tour to accompany the release, including a hometown show at **Modern Art Oxford** on **Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> February**.

Talking about the new record Nigel said, "The album strips things down and gets to the heart of the songs. The new songs especially have many layers and it's educational to peel them back and find what's driving it all underneath. It's also terrifying! I play hundreds of gigs every year as a drummer – confident in my abilities – but put me up front and it's far more nerve-racking."

Fans can pre-order the album at [www.thesadsongco.com](http://www.thesadsongco.com) and get a download of new single 'What You Make Of It'.

**AS EVER**, don't forget to tune into **BBC Oxford Introducing** every Saturday night between 8-9pm on 95.2fm. The dedicated local music show plays the best Oxford releases and demos as well as featuring interviews and sessions with local acts. The show is available to stream or download as a podcast at [bbc.co.uk/oxford](http://bbc.co.uk/oxford).

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

**SMART GUITARS** ... RESTRING ... REVALUE ... REPAIR ...

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

CONTACT DAVE SMART  
[smartguitars@ntlworld.com](mailto:smartguitars@ntlworld.com) • 07710 216368

**HUNT SABOTEURS ASSOCIATION**  
The only organisation that stops the killing in the fields

**Still saving lives!**

Despite the Hunting Act 2004, organised hunts around the country are still chasing and killing wild animals such as foxes and hares.

The police have said that it's not a priority to enforce the law and have left the hunts to continue their blood sport with little fear of prosecution. When hunts are caught red-handed, they claim it was an "accident" that an animal was chased and torn apart by their hounds.

The Hunting Act needs to be strengthened and enforced. However it is now under threat from the hunting fraternity who want to revoke it. Knowing that they don't have the support of parliament, they are seeking to weaken it by creating even more loopholes. Hunts must be held accountable for their cruel and reckless actions.

Until the law is tightened and properly enforced, hunt saboteurs are needed out in the fields to directly intervene to protect hunted animals.

Hunt saboteurs, saving lives through direct action.

[www.huntsab.org.uk](http://www.huntsab.org.uk) [www.facebook.com/HuntSaboteursAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/HuntSaboteursAssociation) @HuntSab



# BRICKWORK LIZARDS



Geoff Russell Hayward MBE at RHimageart

## “IT WASN’T US!” PROTESTS

*Brickwork Lizards bass player Malachy O’Neill when Nightshift asks which member of the band first coined the term ‘Turkabilly’, which has long been used to describe their exotic fusion sound. “At least there’s no one in the band who’ll admit to it,” he continues, “it was a journalist a few years ago who came up with Turkabilly but we all blush slightly when we hear it. I guess it feels a bit like false advertising. It’s true that Ottoman and country music are a couple of the strands that feed into what we do, but Turkabilly doesn’t say much about the other influences that make up the Lizards sound. The other stuff is just as much a part of it: the rap, swing jazz, other Middle Eastern traditions, vaudeville, psych-rock, and so on... so it might sound snappy, but it doesn’t really fit the bill.”*

## REDUCTIVE THE TERM

might be, but Turkabilly has become a convenient tag to attach to a band whose sweep of influences is so wide, you’d struggle to sum them up without recourse to a short essay. It’s probably fair to say that Brickwork Lizards exist in a genre of one, so whatever anyone chooses to describe them as, that’s their sound. Possibly. Theirs really is a world of music: a globe-spanning hotchpotch of traditions and fusions from various points in time that, over the thirteen year lifetime of the band have

resolved to make the band the entity we know now. The band that this month release their second full album, ‘Haneen’, a collection of modernized traditional songs alongside their own material and an album that can transport you out of chilly January Oxford into the far warmer bars and palaces of North Africa.

## A STAPLE ON THE LOCAL GIG

and festival scene over the years, renowned for their exotic, energetic shows, The Brickwork Lizards are currently an eight-piece band but their history is worth retelling to get you up to speed. There have been fourteen Lizards over the years; the only three remaining from the original line-up are singer and oud player Tarik Beshir; rapper Tom O’Hawk and cellist Louisa Lyne. On top of this, and to cut a long story short, they’ve had three guitarists; three bassists; three violinists; three percussionists, and one keyboardist/trumpeter. The current (and “hopefully final,” according to Louisa) line up is: Tarik, Tom and Louisa plus Malachy; Spencer Williams (guitar); Steve Preston (keyboard and trumpet); Andrew Mack (drums); Jules Smith (violin/viola), and Sophie Frankford (violin/viola). Brickwork Lizards started in mid-2005 with Tarik, Tom (previously rapper with local hip hop collective Big Speakers) and guitarist Garry Curran. A couple of months on, in time for the band’s first gig, they

were joined by Louisa, as well as Dan Glazebrook on percussion. Bruce Douglass joined on bass guitar and percussion a year or so later. There was a brief spell in 2008 where the band also included guest appearances from the ‘Lizettes’ as backing singers, namely Susanna Starling from Inflatable Buddha and The Goggenheim’s Grace Exley. 2008 also saw Dan moving away and Andrew Mack joining on drums. Garry left the band - eventually being temporarily replaced by Johnny Hinks on guitar before he in turn was usurped by Spencer. Up until this time, Steve Preston had made the odd guest appearance on trumpet, but eventually gave in to the pressure and joined the band for good, playing both trumpet and keyboard. As Bruce moved onto percussion to support Andrew’s drums, Ian Wilde joined as bass guitarist and occasional rhythm guitar. And when Ian left in 2014, Malachy O’Neill arrived with his double bass. Since they now had the beginning of a string section with the cello and double bass, introducing violin was an obvious next step, so in 2015 Sophie Frankford came on board. Then this year, as Sophie spends a year in Cairo, Jules Smith has joined and will stay once Sophie comes back on viola. It’s also worth mentioning Giles Lewin (violin) and Charlie Fothergill (clarinet), who have made guest

appearances with Brickwork Lizards over that time, and continue to do so. *Phew.* So now you’re up to date and ready to meet the band...

## BRICKWORK LIZARDS

came into being when Tarik moved from Egypt to Oxford in 2004. “I moved here when I secured a job as a structural engineer. A chance meeting with Tom a few months later led to me playing at his open mic night at the Turf Tavern; we got talking and had one of those bromantic moments when we realised we were both huge fans of The Ink Spots, so much so that we decided to start meeting up regularly and listen to and learn to play Ink Spots songs. “They have such great lyrics, great music performed exquisitely, and don’t even get me started on lead singer Bill Kenny: possibly the most underrated r’n’b vocalist in 20<sup>th</sup> Century American music. Such calm, well crafted music by a bunch of guys who knew exactly what they were doing and played always to their strengths. I think music today lost some of the strong melody lines and string arrangements that reinforced the choruses and propped the hooks.”

**TARIK’S OUD IS A BIG PART** of Brickwork Lizards’ sound, but not an instrument commonly seen in the UK. Tarik: “I started playing at 14. The

oud historically is the predecessor of the Renaissance lute. It is a fretless six double string acoustic instrument. In its fretlessness and short neck lies its versatility. If you are technically competent you can probably play so many different types of music on it, from oriental, Middle Eastern, East African to Flamenco, rock and blues.”

Having set out on their unusual journey together, The Brickwork Lizards quickly found Oxford’s music scene open and welcoming. Tarik: “The sheer diversity in the music scene here certainly helps and drives any band aspiring to stand out to try something different.”

Louisa: “There’s also a huge appetite and support for local artists to thrive, especially if they’re pushing musical boundaries and offering something a bit different.”

Spencer: “Oxford bands have been pushing musical boundaries since the early 90s and some of them helped to put Oxford on the musical map of the world. I remember when Oxford was Radio 1 Sound City in 1997 and there was an amazing buzz around the town. It was a milestone year for some of the better known Oxford bands who were going stratospheric at that time. To a certain extent, that buzz has remained to this day and there’s definitely an appetite here for bands that are outside the norm.”

at Towersey one year and that was fairly riotous; drunkards always make the funniest hecklers! I can’t think of a show where people haven’t got us eventually, but it’s nice watching facial expressions change from puzzled to ecstatic.”

**THE NEW ALBUM’S TITLE** ‘Haneen’ translates as a feeling of nostalgic yearning; are The Brickwork Lizards nostalgic people? Tarik: “It essentially means ‘longing’. I guess the underlying theme in the album – between original material we’d written, and re-arranged and re-imagined covers – is paying homage to great traditions, some completely disappeared, like the Ottoman Zeybek and Mandira, and some that hardly get written these days, the slow ballad like album closer ‘Old Fashioned Song’.”

If you could bring anything back to life what would it be? Tarik: “78rpm Shellac records. There is a music dynamic in those

Original Rabbit Foot Spasm Band in the way they bringing a modern interpretation to traditional music from beyond British folk sounds. Tom: “Unfortunately I’ve not seen The Balkan Wanderers so I need put them on the 2018 must-see list, but I have performed with the Rabbits a few times and the Lizards have shared the stage with them as well and we all feel an affinity with them; it’s the type of music we all enjoy.”

Malachy: “ They’re two of the city’s best bands, who both know how to give a crowd a great time, so we’re in good company. There’s a lot of fun and inspiration to be had out of trad music, especially when the songs and traditions aren’t well known. Audiences love hearing something they haven’t heard before. When the Lizards rehearse and arrange music, it’s all very open, and the ideas just keep coming. So often what starts as something a bit unusual, like deciding to try our hand at a Renaissance gallows dirge or a Peruvian protest song, quickly

nightmare organising shows or are you flexible on how many of you you need at any given time? Tom: “We always try to make sure we can all make the gigs; that usually involves booking them pretty far in advance. Inevitably there is the occasional gig where we maybe a person down.”

How do you adjust the band’s sound and dynamics from festival shows to intimate club shows? Tarik: “Choosing the right blend of songs first as a platform and then looking at modifying something here or there to suit, in the arrangements or the dynamic.”

Spencer: “We’re lucky in that our songs lend themselves well to stripped down, unplugged and/or full electric band arrangements, and all points in-between, so we can either play up or down to suit the venue and audience. With eight of us in the band, we fill any stage, large or small!”

**LIKE THE ORIGINAL** Rabbit Foot Spasm Band and The Balkan Wanderers, The Brickwork Lizards are adept at getting a crowd moving but also like those other bands they tell stories in their songs and make pertinent points about the world around them. Is it more important to make people think or make them dance, and how hard is it to make them do both at once? Tarik: “It’s definitely a delicate balance, but we always write and perform songs with the aim being both, not one or the other.”

Steve: “For me it’s all about getting people dancing; when have you ever not had a good time dancing? Watching people dance while we play gives me energy and makes me smile; it makes me feel we are getting it right. If our music makes people think then that’s great but for me it’s all about the dancing.”

Dancing or not, both the band’s albums have had songs about hanging on them; is that something that plays on their thoughts a lot? Tom: “Ha ha ha, that’s a coincidence but you’re not the first to notice that grim connection.”

**THE BRICKWORK LIZARDS** launch ‘Haneen’ with a show on the 5<sup>th</sup> January at the Bullingdon. The show will be a celebration of everything the collective have achieved so far in their thirteen years and will hopefully be the perfect introduction to them for any newcomers (“expect the unexpected,” says Tom). They’re a band with some serious history under their belt and steeped in even greater musical history, but also one with an exciting future ahead of them. Another great square peg in a round hole type of band that Oxford does so well.

***“The Sultan’s sons and daughters were all married on the same night and Egypt was in festive mode for four weeks before and four weeks after. The biggest stars were all vying to outdo each other in an eight week music extravaganza.”***

things, especially when played on a gramophone, that simply doesn’t exist in remastered and digitised versions. You just have to listen to Ella Fitzgerald’s voice on a 78rpm and you’ll immediately understand why.”

You’re given a time machine and the chance to go back to one gig – who would it be and where and when? Tarik: “1878, Cairo. The wedding of the Sultan’s sons and daughters: they were all married on the same night and so Egypt was in festive mode for four weeks before and four weeks after. The biggest stars of Egyptian and Ottoman court music were present and vying to outdo each other in an eight week daily music extravaganza.”

Spencer: “I’ve been lucky enough to be at some amazing gigs over the years but for me it would be when Jimi Hendrix burst onto the scene at The Bag O’Nails club in London in 1966 and all of the greats of the time like Clapton, Townshend, Page, Beck etc. were blown away.”

**THE MIX OF ARABIC AND** Middle Eastern music with swing and elements of hip hop – particularly with Tom’s vocals – has earned Brickwork Lizards a unique place in Oxford’s music scene, although they share certain ideas with local acts like The Balkan Wanderers and The

mutates into something unexpected and occasionally a bit special.”

**HAVING BEEN TOGETHER** for thirteen years, and undergoing a constant evolution in terms of personnel, we wonder how much The Brickwork Lizards’ sound has changed in that time and how close is it to Tarik and Tom’s original vision for the band. Tom: “Our original vision has changed in that it’s even more genre expansive and the arrangements are much more intricate and complex, thanks to our gifted band members; the Middle Eastern elements, the rap and the love of pre-war jazz still shines through.”

Have you taken on ideas or influences you never envisaged previously, or ever tried anything that didn’t work out? Tarik: “Yes, certainly. Like when we started doing somewhat complex instrumentals on odd beats – perhaps a few years ago that might have not been something we would look at. As for experiments that didn’t work, we are our own harshest critics and so we can have something like three or four song ideas in a month, but only one would make it through.”

With eight of you in the band, and a fair few of you in other bands at the same time, is it a logistical



# RELEASED

## BRICKWORK LIZARDS

### ‘Haneen’

(Lazima Records)

For thirteen years The Brickwork Lizards have been combining 1930s swing and Middle Eastern music with forays into rap and beyond. Their music has a built-in charm, but also a tension arising from the sharp contrast between oud player and vocalist Tariq Bashir’s flowing baritone and rapper Tom O’Hawk’s deep voice and staccato delivery.

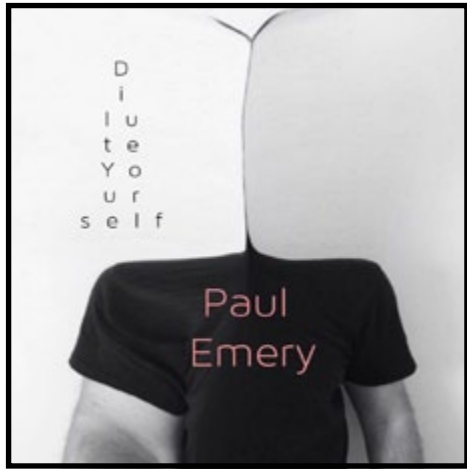
All these features are present on this their second album which comes six years after their debut, ‘Zaman’. Having now expanded their line-up, on some numbers they sound more like a little big band than a group, as on the impressively arranged, lively instrumental ‘Hijaz Mandira’, when super tight brass kicks in over a superb rhythm section.

The artwork on the CD itself shows a well dressed lizard playing an oud and some of the bold musical choices and the juxtapositions of musical styles have a whiff of the surreal about them. ‘Toro Mata’ combines a Tom O’Hawk rap, and a choral version of a famous Afro-Peruvian song about a deadly bull sung over a catchy Middle Eastern-cum-Latin riff. ‘The Hanging Song’, a lover’s lament from the 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> Century, the tune of which was used for Broad­sides sold at public executions, is beautifully minimalist and hypnotic with



an unexpected musical twist at the end. It is followed by an Algerian song about exile. There are several engaging 30s-influenced songs of love unrequited, love lost and deep regret. The final track, ‘Old Fashioned Song’, delightfully re-creates the world of listening to a crooner and a band (The Brickwork Lizards themselves, of course) on late night FM radio. While ‘Haneen’ means a feeling of nostalgic yearning, this is a musically uplifting album in which the band creates not one but several worlds. The playing and arranging is high quality and there are new musical discoveries to be made with every repeat listen. Most of all it confirms that Brickwork Lizards are right up there with the most creative bands the local scene has produced.

**Colin May**



## PAUL EMERY

### ‘Dilute Yourself’

(Self released)

“Behold the fatted calf / Stripped down for spare parts” intones Paul Emery ominously at the start of ‘Dilute Yourself’'s opening title track over a bed of doomladen industrial electronic rumbles, grinds and clunks, setting a scene that doesn’t quite unfold as we hoped. Following on from his last release under the name Metal Horses, Emery’s touchstone

remains late-80s Depeche Mode and his solemn vocal delivery regularly captures some of Dave Gahan’s sullen portent. At his best he digs deep into the early industrial sounds that bled into synth-pop and goth, particularly on album highlight ‘Motherland’ whose title alone betrays its ‘Floodland’-era Sisters of Mercy influence, while hints of Suicide, DAF and even Fad Gadget cast their shadow over tracks like ‘In Godless Places’.

It might be personal taste but I keep hoping Emery will go deeper and darker with each track but he punctuates the album with lighter pieces like ‘Love Is A Lesson’, where he almost turns to lightweight pop crooning in the style of Neil Hannon, and the disappointing album closer ‘White Doors’, which is ponderous to the point of being inconsequential. Then again, ‘This Is My Space’, a simple, almost plaintive piano-led ballad, is elegant and one of the album’s best moments.

Fair play to him for trying to inject some humanity into machine-led music which can lapse into stentorian sterility in the wrong hands, and overall ‘Dilute Yourself’ finds an enjoyable middle ground between industrial/ebm steeliness and contemplative synth-pop, but deeper, darker and doomier is always a good place to go in these circumstances.

**Ian Chesterton**

Sponsored by



## HUNNY JINKS

### ‘Farewell Zombie

### Emperor’

(Self released)

A regular busking figure on Cornmarket with 40 years playing experience under his belt, Johnny Hinkes might be nearing retirement age but here’s his debut studio album, a dozen of his own compositions contrasting with the covers he’s better known for.

Given Hinkes is also a veteran guitar tutor it’s unsurprising that his instrumentation is technically spot-on, meticulous, but technique only gets you so far as a writer and too often ‘Farewell Zombie Emperor’ simply lapses into age-old clichés or sinks into lethargy.

Nominally rooted in the 60s blues-rock revival, Hinkes at least tries to keep things fresh with stop offs at country rock, funk and even Parisian swing, with varying degrees of success. He’s at his best when playing it heavier as on the Cream-influenced ‘Whiskey Preacher Man’, but he seems content to let his guitar go a-wandering, as on the languid instrumental ‘The Babes in the Fountain’ and the album’s closing title track. Any enjoyment of these probably depends on whether you like your rock music with a bit of fire in its belly.

Hinkes’ attempts at levity also tend to fall flat, like the cloying ode to beating addiction, ‘Clean’ (“I’m as clean as a washing machine / But I still miss the smelly green”). Worst of all are the slightly cringy attempts at something approaching funk and reggae (it’s hard to tell if they’re intentional to be honest) on ‘Premonition of Love’.

‘Lovers in Paris’ is a nice diversion from the endless Clapton-esque guitar noodling elsewhere, with its accordion lead but even this moment of Gallic-flavoured romance sounds like a Peter Sarstedt pastiche. Elsewhere we get some jaunty, good-time rhythm’n’blues and even some lightweight prog, but rarely if ever do we hear anything that emotionally resonates. It’s comfortable and technically proficient but without that vital fire in its soul.

**Dale Kattack**



## NATHAN ALLSWORTH

### ‘All Is Worth’

(Self released)

All Is Worth is the musical project of Abingdonian Nathan Allsworth, ex of the much lamented Grudle Bay and Club Soda amongst others, but surfacing again in 2016 with ‘NYC’, a very competent, atmospheric track on the All Will Be Well Records compilation ‘Vol 2’.

Here on his first solo ten track collection there

## TIECE

### ‘WMN’

(Inner Peace)

The hiss and crackle that pervades Tiece’s new solo EP is appropriate, sounding like an old vinyl rarity dug from a crate having remained unlistened to since the 1960s. Appropriate since Tiece – perhaps better known round these parts as part of Rhymeskeemz’s P45 band – has the cracked, smoky soul voice of Etta James or Irma Thomas: a voice that sounds like it’s been lived in, betrayed and abandoned more than once. ‘2 Sugars’ is a stoned wander through tripped-out minimalist electronica that lingers in the background allowing Tiece’s voice all the room it needs.

If a couple of the songs here sound unfinished, it’s that voice that stands out each and every time, a tumbledown cousin to Martina Topley Bird’s subterranean jazz diva: a voice that sounds like it could carry all the hurt of the world on its shoulders while maintaining perfect deportment.

**Dale Kattack**

## BEWARETHISBOY

### ‘Be Here Next Year’

(Self released)

A festive-sounding single from local politico-folkies Bewarethisboy, the song dancing through the tinsel with an air of regret hanging around it as the band contemplate friends present and absent (“Allow yourself a wistful smile, for those you know you won’t see for a while / Raise a glass and make a cheer for those of us who will be here next year”) with the sort of bitter-tinged jollity that made ‘Fairytale of New York’ such a relatable anthem.

are plenty of moments of quality but all of them unresolved and seemingly masked in an emotionless psychedelia as he works beneath the surface to understand how to best use his undoubted talents.

It starts out promisingly with the all too short ‘Lesser Light’, a shimmering, ascending instrumental, manifest to opening curtains onto a winter wonderland or equally a hot, glittering seascape. It’s this powerful but simple airiness you spend the rest of the album searching for among his heavily immersed vocals, typically on ‘The Weight of Summer’ and ‘Optimistic Kids’, which makes me feel I’m listening to a slowed down ‘End Times’ by Eels with my head under water in the bath.

‘We’ll Go Down’ adds a fragrance of Japanese rhythms to the mix without extending this good idea, just as the fresh oxygen of Abi Williams’ vocals on ‘Right On’ ends as merely an invitation card for a DJ or producer to sample it into a banging dancefloor filler.

There are elements of synthesized majesty in ‘Sun Spots’ but overall this is like being in a hypnagogic reverie: interesting, confusing, momentarily exciting, but like all ephemera, however beautiful, when it’s over you’re not at all sure what actually just happened.

**Paul Carrera**

Bewarethisboy do solemn storytelling and contemplation well (as on previous single ‘Tommy & Jack’, about the boys who fought and died in the world wars), and b-side ‘The Burden’ here brings that out best, a near-desolate tale of a life pressed down and broken by longing for a lost love, Sue Mallett’s plangent fiddle hanging over the song like a wraith waiting to take the subject of the song to her final destination – one she finally reaches at the literal and metaphorical death.

Great stuff – Happy New Year, everyone. We’ll all die in the end.

**Dale Kattack**

## GRUB

### ‘Grub One Out’

(Self released)

Grub are a three-piece Oxford band that take their lead from the AmRep/Sub Pop end of American indie rock; from rock’n’roll-ish punk in the vein of The Stooges and Hellacopters, and from the earnest, slobby emotions of grunge pioneers Mudhoney. In their blurb, they position themselves as “a reaction against the swathes of current bands who take themselves way too seriously”, that raises bristling fears of ‘comedy music’. Those fears aren’t realised, as in fact ‘Grub One Out’ is for the most part a satisfyingly down-the-line set of slacker punk songs; melodic guitar tunes played through a lazy filter, decent riffs and solid wah-wah wail action hiding behind a sheen of blank generation nihilistic ennui. It’s a reliable, solid slice of simple pleasure, that could perhaps benefit from some added depth and grunt in terms of its recording, but that also sounds like a band simply having a bit of a lark, paying sluggish respect to the music they love.

**Simon Minter**

## BEIßPONY

### ‘Beasts & Loners’

(Self released)

Beißpony’s initial contact with *Nightshift* queries whether we ever review experimental music, which suggests they’ve never picked up a copy of the mag before, but it also opens up a debate as to what constitutes “experimental” music.

Beißpony ae Oxford based multi-instrumentalist Laura Theiss, who also plays in local indie/electro band Robot Swans, and Berlin based Stephanie Müller. ‘Beasts & Loners’ is their second album together and while it certainly tends to drift, wander or simply lurch into some strange old musical corners, at its heart it’s a pretty sweet, almost cutesy, pop record.

Take opener ‘Lord of the Wings’ for example which is twee, lo-fi jangle pop of the kind The Marine Girls, Talulah Gosh et al pioneered, albeit with more emphasis on getting laid and mention of “Mr Winkie”. Willies and all things toilet become a recurring theme throughout the 14 tracks here, including the album’s best line, “Sometimes they dream of the sea while they’re flushing the toilet.” Or how about “I like farting / You like smart things / Like reading and stuff” on the excellently titled ‘Never Seen a Movie That Doesn’t Star Bruce Willis’.

Such silliness adds to a sense of playfulness that keeps everything buoyant throughout the album, and if the pair slip into self-conscious quirkiness occasionally, as on ‘Rumble’, or ‘More Excuse Than Escape’, which sounds like Moldy Peaches decided to record a new album using empty wine bottles while stood on the deck of an old clipper ship, there’s something pleasingly oddball about ‘Throw a Dog a Bone’ (“You are a cat person / And I’ve always been your dog / I just want to follow you home”), while ‘My Abstraction Capability Equals Zero’ could almost be Billie Holiday displaced into a stark post-punk band inspired by Chopin and Satie who eventually decide to be Le Tigre.

Everything is restless and keen to go wherever it currently isn’t – be it abstract jazz or atonal industrial noise – but simultaneously content to cosy up to sweet old-fashioned ideas of indie pop. It’s less experimental music, more pop music that sounds like it’s been experimented on, possibly by mischievous, tipsy elves. The result can be messy at times but it’s more often than not entertaining and you can’t help but admire their stitching.

**Victoria Waterfield**





# G I G G U I D E

## MONDAY 1<sup>st</sup>

New year, same shit.

## TUESDAY 2<sup>nd</sup>

## WEDNESDAY 3<sup>rd</sup>

## THURSDAY 4<sup>th</sup>

**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre** – Oxford’s longest running open club night keeps on going into another new year, showcasing local singers, musicians, poets, storytellers and more every Thursday.  
**ACOUSTIC THURSDAY: Jude the Obscure** – Weekly open mic night.  
**BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford** – Open blues jam.

## FRIDAY 5<sup>th</sup>

**BRICKWORK LIZARDS + FLIGHTS OF**

## Monday 15<sup>th</sup>

## THE CRIBS: O2 Academy

Once dubbed “the biggest cult band in the world” The Crib’s story is one of survival but also one of maintaining a reputation over a length of time that few acts ever last. Formed in Wakefield by twins Gary and Ryan Jarvis and their brother Ross, The Crib’s must have been nominated for Best Live Act more times than almost any band over the past decade and a half, a reflection of their dedication to energetic performance and the spirit of rock and roll. Along the way they’ve also won the *Q* magazine Spirit of Independence Award and *NME*’s Outstanding Contribution Award. From their early days supporting Bobby Conn on tour and working with Edwyn Collins and Bernard Butler in the studio, they’ve stayed true to their brash, garage-rock roots – taking inspiration from Buzzcocks and The Replacements along the way – and maintained an enviable run of Top 10 albums, including 2017’s Steve Albini-produced ‘24-7 Rock Star Shit’. Johnny Marr came and went but the core trio has stuck together, which reflects the loyalty of their fanbase. Tonight’s gig is their first visit to Oxford since headlining Truck Festival in 2014 and is Oxford’s first big name show of 2018. When Neil Young sang “Hey hey, my my, rock and roll will never die,” he probably wasn’t thinking of The Crib’s, but it’s a line that sums them up well enough.



# JANUARY

**HELIOS: The Bullingdon** – Album launch show from this month’s *Nightshift* cover stars – *see main interview feature*  
**RASCAL presents DENSE & PIKA: The Bullingdon** – Laser-lit underground techno and melodic house from the duo beloved of Scuba, Sven Vath and Blawan.  
**BOSSAPHONIK: The Cellar** – Dancefloor Latin, Afrobeat, global grooves, Balkan beats and nu-jazz club night, hosted by Dan Ofer, joined for tonight’s celebration of world jazz-dance by DJ Badger.  
**KLUB KAKOFANNEY with STORYTELLER + THE SHAPES + FRANKLIN’S TOWER + HIRAETH: The Wheatshaf** – A new year but Klub Kakofanney remains a comforting constant in our gigging lives, heading into their 27<sup>th</sup> year with a characteristically eclectic mix of sounds, including funk, reggae and pop fusion outfit Storyteller; effervescently melancholy r’n’b stars The Shapes and Grateful Dead tribute Franklin’s Tower.

## SATURDAY 6<sup>th</sup>

**BLOODSTOCK – METAL TO THE MASSES: The Wheatshaf** – First of this year’s local heats to win a slot at this summer’s Bloodstock Festival. Sets tonight from Rats Eat Rats, Fall of a Tyrant and Bring the Onslaught.  
**CENTRIFUGE COLLECTIVE: The Bullingdon** – Drum&bass club night.  
**DEEP COVER: The Cellar** – Bass and grime club night with Bristol’s Sir Hiss and Lucy alongside Oxford residents Jawside and Shryke.

## SUNDAY 7<sup>th</sup>

**FRANKLIN’S TOWER + MARK ATHERTON & FRIENDS + BEARD OF DESTINY + TONY AND SAL: Donnington Community Centre (6pm)** – Free evening of unplugged live music, including Grateful Dead tribute Franklin’s Tower and Delta blues crew Beard of Destiny.  
**OPEN MIC NIGHT: Harcourt Arms** – Weekly open mic session.  
**THE PETE FRYER BAND: The Tree, Iffley (4-6.30pm)** – First of doubtless many gigs this year from the veteran local blues rocker and band with over 50 years gigging experience under his belt.

## MONDAY 8<sup>th</sup>

**TIN MEN & THE TELEPHONE: Brookes University (5pm)** – Kicking off a four-day residency in conjunction with Oxford Contemporary Music, Amsterdam-based pianist Tony Roe and his band present an interactive, multi-media show that takes in jazz, hip hop, modern classical, improv, tape loops and more for a concert that’s part gig, part game show, part gadgetry-based mischief.  
**OPEN MIC NIGHT: The Royal Blenheim**

## TUESDAY 9<sup>th</sup>

**TIN MEN & THE TELEPHONE: Brookes University (5pm)**  
**INTRUSION: The Cellar** – Monthly goth, industrial, ebm and darkwave club night.

**SPARK’S SIDE OF THE MOON: The James Street Tavern** – Weekly open mic session.

## WEDNESDAY 10<sup>th</sup>

**TIN MEN & THE TELEPHONE: Brookes University (5pm)**  
**SHOTGUN SIX: The Jericho Tavern** – Dark psychedelic garage rock and blues in the vein of The Doors, The Sonics and Hendrix from the local rockers.

## THURSDAY 11<sup>th</sup>

**TIN MEN & THE TELEPHONE: Brookes University (8pm)**  
**ECHO4FOUR + ROCK SOLID + SWORDS OF THOUGHT: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Black Sabbath-influenced groove metal from Echo4Four at tonight’s OxRox show, with support from Witney teen rockers Rock Solid, and Woking’s grunge and punk crew Swords of Thought.  
**CATWEAZLE: East Oxford Community Centre**  
**ACOUSTIC THURSDAY: Jude the Obscure**  
**BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford**  
**SOCIAL JAM BAND: Tap Social, Botley** – Fortnightly jam session.

## FRIDAY 12<sup>th</sup>

**RESTRUCTURE + DJs FRED UGLY, HARRY OLIVER + MAX O’NEILL: The Wheatshaf** – Free show from the local yob-hop, electro-punk duo, jointly celebrating their birthday and the release of their new single ‘Antisocial Media’, coming in partway between The Streets and Sleaford Mods.  
**GROOVE: The Bullingdon**  
**DEFTONES UK + K-LACURA: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Tribute to the Californian metal titans, with support from local thrashcore heavyweights K-Lacura.

## SATURDAY 13<sup>th</sup>

**THE SURFING MAGAZINES: The Jericho Tavern** – Garage rock and surf-pop from the sort-of supergroup, made up of one half of Slow Club and two thirds of The Wave Pictures, taking inspiration from The Velvet Underground, Bob Dylan and 60s surf-rock bands.  
**MACCA: The New Theatre** – A cast of West End stars led by Emanuele Angeletti celebrate the songs of Paul McCartney and The Beatles.  
**DR FEELGOOD: The Bullingdon** – Disco, afrobeat and house club night.  
**U2 BABY: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – It’s Baby Bono!

## SUNDAY 14<sup>th</sup>

**KLUB KAKOFANNEY: The Wheatshaf (3.30-7pm)** – Free Sunday afternoon session hosted by Klub Kak, today with sets from Puppet Mechanic, Mark Atherton & Friends, Asterox, Jesters and Glenda Huish.  
**OPEN MIC NIGHT: Harcourt Arms**

## MONDAY 15<sup>th</sup>

**THE CRIBS: O2 Academy** – Raucous fight pop from the enduring indie heroes – *see main preview*  
**OXFORD CLASSIC JAZZ: The Harcourt Arms** – Classic jazz and ragtime from the local ensemble,

taking on Jelly Roll Morton, Louis Armstrong, Fats Waller et al.

**OPEN MIC NIGHT: The Royal Blenheim**

## TUESDAY 16<sup>th</sup>

**OUTTA PEAK + ONE STATE DRIVE + TORRE VALLEY: The Wheatshaf** – Metalcore and pop-punk from Sheffield’s Outta Peak out on tour, with support from local pop-punkers One State Drive and Torquay’s emo crew Torre Valley.  
**4x4: The Cellar** – Tech-house, bassline and jump up club night.  
**CZEZLAW: The Jericho Tavern** – Traditional Polish folk, waltzes and stories.  
**SPARK’S SIDE OF THE MOON: The James Street Tavern**

## WEDNESDAY 17<sup>th</sup>

**BLOODSTOCK – METAL TO THE MASSES: The Wheatshaf** – Second local heat to win a slot at this summer’s Bloodstock Festival. MSRY, The Motive and King Bolster go head to head.  
**NEW WAVE: The Cellar** – Hip hop club night playing underground tunes from the US and UK.

## THURSDAY 18<sup>th</sup>

**GO WEST + NIK KERSHAW + CUTTING CREW: The New Theatre** – The latest 80s revival

## Saturday 27<sup>th</sup>

## AK/DK: The Jericho Tavern

If the key to getting your audience into your music is to look like you’re enjoying playing it, then AK/DK are onto a winner. Few acts look like they’re having as much fun as the Brighton-based duo. Ed and Gee have a habit of filling each and every stage with a whole clutter of technology, both ancient and modern, then going at it hammer and tongs on twin drum kits, smiling like loons all the while. Which is why they’re fast earning a reputation as one of the best live bands on the UK underground scene. Their debut album ‘Synths + Drums + Noise + Space’ – a pretty accurate description of what they’re about – was a frenetic DIY journey into Suicide-inspired electro-pop, lo-fi and extremely visceral. Its follow-up, ‘Patterns/Harmonics’, ups the ante with the introduction of vocals, but that raw, sometimes brutal edge remains, the band’s songs mostly a clamour of digital and analogue synth lines and propulsive beats. At times it’s reminiscent of Maryland’s Trans Am, who they’ve supported, while at others it sounds like a moshpit punch-up between Holy Fuck and Battles, while their gnarly electro primitivism occasionally recalls long-lost Californian synthesists Sewer Zombies. It’s a patched-up mash-up of first wave electronica and Krautrock and it’s just bloody fantastic. Just look at AK/DK onstage and you know they know this. Soon everyone will know.



package brings three minor titans of the middle period of that decade to town together. Enduring soul-pop duo Go West enjoyed their commercial peak with singles like ‘We Close Our Eyes’, ‘Call Me’ and ‘The King of Wishful Thinking’ over 30 years ago, but have never split up. Nik Kershaw was the most successful of the three, going multiple platinum with albums like ‘The Riddle’ and hits singles ‘I Won’t Let The Sun Go Down On Me’, ‘Wouldn’t It Be Good’ and ‘Don Quixote’, but while his star status fell post-Live Aid, he continued to find musical success as a songwriter, including Chesney Hawkes’ ‘The One & Only’ and collaborations with Elton John and Gary Barlow. Cutting Crew are probably best known for their hit ‘I Just Died in Your Arms’, but since it went to Number 1 around the world, it’s served them well. It’s a like a little bit of Rewind Festival just landed in the centre of Oxford.  
**SPHINX: The Cellar** – Ruskin College art degree fundraiser with Sphinx alongside DJs from Disco Ma Non Troppo and more, playing techno and disco.  
**TWISTED STATE OF MIND + URSUS + WORRY + DREAMEATER: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – OxRox rock and metal night with exuberant heavyweight TSOM and more.

**CATWEAZLE: East Oxford Community Centre**  
**ACOUSTIC THURSDAY: Jude the Obscure**  
**BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford**

## FRIDAY 19<sup>th</sup>

**PROMETHEAN REIGN + NOMOS + REPERCUSSIONS OF YESTERDAY: The Wheatshaf** – Blackened death metal from local stars Promethean Reign, keeping it dark, brutal and occasionally theatrical in the vein of Emperor et al.  
**SOUL SESSIONS: The Cellar** – Disco, funk and soul classics.  
**LAST CALL: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Rock, metal, punk and indie covers.

## SATURDAY 20<sup>th</sup>

**ELYSIAN DIVIDE! + THE FINAL CLAUSE OF TACTICUS + CRIMSON TUSK: The Wheatshaf** – Metal and stoner rock at tonight’s Abolition 2018 fundraising show.  
**RICHARD WALTERS + RALEGH LONG + ROSIE CALDECOTT: Fusion Arts** – Angel-voiced troubadour Richard Walters returns to Oxford for a rare hometown show, hosted by Divine Schism, the singer currently recording his new album.  
**MUSICAL MEDICINE featuring MAGNIE: The Bullingdon** – Funk, soul, disco and house club.  
**THE PETE FRYER BAND: The Britannia, Headington**

## SUNDAY 21<sup>st</sup>

**STEAMROLLER & FRIENDS: The Cellar** – Fundraising show for children’s charity ROSY, re-arranged from December, with local r’n’b veterans Steamroller and a cast of chums, including bluesman Krissy Matthews, and Sunfly.  
**OPEN MIC NIGHT: Harcourt Arms**  
**THE MIGHTY REDOX: The Tree, Iffley (4-6.30pm)** – Swamp blues, funk, ska, pop and psychedelia from the veteran local party starters.

## MONDAY 22<sup>nd</sup>

**BULLY WEE BAND: Nettlebed Folk Club** – Traditional acoustic folk from the reformed folk veterans.  
**OPEN MIC NIGHT: The Royal Blenheim**

## TUESDAY 23<sup>rd</sup>

**BLUE ROSE CODE: The Cellar** – Rich, soulful roots music from Edinburgh-via-London songsmith Ross Wilson, out on tour to promote his fourth



## Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>

## THIS IS THE KIT: O2 Academy

Centred on Bristol-born and bred, Paris-resident singer and multi-instrumentalist Kate Stables, This Is The Kit are one of those acts beloved of critics and tastemakers but stubbornly beloved of a cult cognoscenti rather than enjoying huge commercial success. More fool the masses, as Stables and chums (and what chums: John Parish and The National’s Aaron Desson have played with and produced the band, while Francois & the Atlas Mountains and Rozi Plain have also joined Stables’ ranks on a regular basis) continue to release charmingly inventive albums that mix up ramshackle rootsiness with vivid imagery, a feeling of otherness and an often gothic soulfulness. 2012’s ‘Wiggles & Restless’ should have at least been shortlisted for the Mercury Prize, and if 2017’s ‘Moonshine Freeze’, released on Rough Trade, quietly becoming a natural home for indie folksters, gets overlooked, voices should be raised and sternly worded letters penned. Rioting might be taking it a bit far for a band as gently warm and airy as This Is The Kit, although Sables delves into the darker corners of human nature on her new album. If TITK regularly get lumped in as a folk band, and Kate regularly leads the line on banjo, they’re much, much more, tiptoeing from breezy psychedelia into the sort of oddball songs Robert Wyatt conjures. What they indisputably should be is much, much more famous.

album, ‘The Water of Leith’ – featuring contributions from Karine Polwart and Julie Fowlis among others – his eclectic range weaving in strands of jazz, blues and downbeat pop and drawing comparisons with Van Morrison.  
**SPARK’S SIDE OF THE MOON: The James Street Tavern**

## WEDNESDAY 24<sup>th</sup>

**BLOODSTOCK – METAL TO THE MASSES: The Wheatshaf** – Third of this month’s local heats to win a slot at this summer’s Bloodstock Festival. Cranking it out in a music war are Resolve, Force of Mortality and Orpheus Oblivion.  
**BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE: The Cellar** – 80s hits, new wave, disco, glam and synth-pop club.

## THURSDAY 25<sup>th</sup>

**THE NIGHT CAFE: The Bullingdon** – Exuberantly funky indie jangle from Liverpool’s fast-rising youngsters, back in town after recent supports to The Wombats and Blaenavon.  
**GOODNESS: The Cellar** – House and techno club night.





Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup>

## THE AMERICANS: The Bullingdon

The first of two consecutive nights of prime quality Americana to kickstart the year courtesy of Empty Room Promotions tonight, with an Oxford debut from The Americans. The Los Angeles trio – Patrick Ferris, Jake Faulkner and Zac Sokolow – have been making quite the name for themselves in recent times, particularly for their recurring part in *American Epic*, the documentary series produced by Jack White, T-Bone Burnett and Robert Redford, exploring the roots and resurgence of American music traditions from the 1920s and 30s. They’ve also played on *The Late Show* with Letterman, toured with Grammy and Oscar winner Ryan Bingham, played with Nick Cave and Lucinda Williams and even found themselves playing the first dance at Reese Witherspoon’s wedding. Like JD McPherson, American Aquarium and Richmond Fontaine, The Americans take the earthy folk traditions of the rural West and mix them with blue collar rock’n’roll passion and swagger; it’s unreconstructed stuff but full of soul and great songwriting – new album ‘I’ll Be Yours’ featured in Truck Store’s end of year Americana Top 10, and they know their stuff on that count. Time to leave the post-Christmas blues behind and hit the road with a better kind of blues.

**CATWEAZLE CLUB:** East Oxford Community Centre

**ACOUSTIC THURSDAY:** Jude the Obscure

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

**SOCIAL JAM BAND:** Tap Social, Botley

## FRIDAY 26<sup>th</sup>

**SKYLARKIN SOUNDSYSTEM with**

**HEMPOLICS:** *The Cellar* – A first glimpse of summer on the horizon with the first Skylarkin’ party of 2018. Tonight’s guests are smoky reggae/soul/hip hop stars on the rise Hempolics, touring their debut album, ‘Kiss Cuddle & Torture Volume 1’, featuring vocal contributions from Maxi Jazz and Paulo Nutini, as well as lead performances from singers Nubiya and Dan Collier. Count Skylarkin is selector-in-chief on the decks alongside Emma Jardine.

**MR SCRUFF:** *The Bullingdon* – A typically marathon set from Manchester’s tea-drinking master of eclecticism and quirky mixology Andy Carthy; his last studio album, ‘Friendly Bacteria’, was a bass-heavy blend of deep house, electro-funk, afrobeat, soul, hip hop and dubstep, though he’s happy to delve into whatever else takes his fancy, while retaining a sense of fun about his sets.

**VOODOO VEGAS + FLOWERPOT + SILVERVOID:** *The Wheatsheaf* – Heavy rocking in the vein of Guns’n’Roses, Alter Bridge and Bon Jovi from Voodoo Vegas at tonight’s OxRox show.

**F.U.D:** *Prince of Wales, Shippon* – Rock covers.

## SATURDAY 27<sup>th</sup>

**TWO ICONS DUB:** *O2 Academy* – A cast of acts pays dub tribute to reggae icons Bob Marley and Dennis Brown, with sets from Ras Keith; Zaia; TOKA; Jamatone; Garvin Dan; Dan-I; Tony Dread, and Jack Paul.

**LOW ISLAND:** *The Cellar* – Homecoming show from last month’s *Nightshift* cover stars, the fast-rising electro-pop quartet, with over two million Spotify streams under their belt in under a year, beefing up their woozy synth-psych sound live, with harder beats and gnarlier synths, for a ravey atmosphere. Catch them before they go stratospheric.

**GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES with FREEMANTLE + RAT THE MAGNIFICENT + EARINADE:** *The Wheatsheaf* – The first Gappy Tooth Industries of 2018 continues the theme of providing an eclectic line-up, tonight’s show featuring local psychedelic shoegaze and dreampop outfit Freemantle alongside London’s alt.rock and post-hardcore outfit Rat the Magnificent, inspired by The Jesus Lizard and Slint. Post-punk, power-pop, electro-rock and caustic whimsy from EarinaDE to open the show.

**AK/DK:** *The Jericho Tavern* – Synthesizers! And drums! And more Synthesizers! And more drums! – *see main preview*

**SASASAS:** *O2 Academy* – Underground drum&bass club night with DJ Phantasy, Macky Gee, Stormin MC, Harry Shotta, Shabba D & MC Skibadee, back in town after their set at Truck Festival in July.

**CANUTE’S PLASTIC ARMY + RACHEL RUSCOMBE-KING + BECKI REED:** *The Harcourt Arms* – Quirky folk and pop from acoustic duo Canute’s Plastic Army, led by the soaring vocals of former Teddy White Band member Anish Noble-Harrison.

**DAY OF THE DEADBEATS 5:** *Isis Farmhouse* – Country-soul/r’n’b crew The Deadbeat Apostles host their monthly free party, tonight joined by Ragged Charms and more.

**MUSED:** *Fat Lil’s, Witney* – Tribute to the renowned Radiohead tribute band.

**DAMN GOOD REASON:** *The Brewery Tap, Abingdon* – Classic rock covers.

## SUNDAY 28<sup>th</sup>

**THIS IS THE KIT:** *O2 Academy* – Banjos and blood in Kate Stables’ sweetly strange folk-pop world – *see main preview*

**LACH:** *The Cellar* – New York singer-songwriter Lach brings his Dylan-esque antifolk and beat poetry to town, having previously supported Neil Halstead on tour.

**OPEN MIC NIGHT:** *Harcourt Arms*

**BLUES JAM:** *Fat Lil’s, Witney (3pm)* – Monthly open blues jam.

## MONDAY 29<sup>th</sup>

**PETE FIJ & TERRY BICKERS:** *The Bullingdon* – Late-night reflection, alt.country and minor key acoustic introspection from former Creation Records labelmates Fij and Bickers, leaving behind the indie sounds of their previous bands (Adorable, Polak, The House of Love and Levitation) to take elegant inspiration from the likes of Richard Hawley, Johnny Cash, Scott Walker and Lou Reed.

**SWARB:** *Nettlebed Folk Club* – Tribute tour to the late folk fiddle legend, who died in 2016. Martin Carthy, Canada’s Jason Wilson Band and John Kirkpatrick and Simon Swarbrick play the former-Fairport man’s songs from across his extensive career, with a few guests along the way.

**OPEN MIC NIGHT:** *The Royal Blenheim*

## TUESDAY 30<sup>th</sup>

**THE AMERICANS:** *The Bullingdon* – Rootsy Americana and blue collar rock and soul from the LA stars on tour – *see main preview*

**LEECHES + SAN.MARIO + LYRA + SAD LOVE:** *The Cellar* – We Broke Free tour, bringing a selection of Bournemouth’s new talents out on tour.

**BE GOOD + HUX:** *The Jericho Tavern* – Featherlight funky electro-indie and r’n’b from Be Good.

## WEDNESDAY 31<sup>st</sup>

**FLAMINGODS + MELT DUNES:** *The Cellar* – The world in song from the Bahrain-Brit band – *see main preview*

**MANDOLIN ORANGE:** *The Bullingdon* – A return to Oxfordshire for North Carolina duo Mandolin Orange, following their gig in Witney in 2015, Emily Frantz and Andrew Marlin’s blend of rootsy Americana, bluegrass and gospel inspired by Gram Parsons, Neil Young and Townes Van Zandt. They’re over in the UK to tour fifth album ‘Blindfaller with tonight’s show hosted by Empty Room Promotions’.

## Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup>

## FLAMINGODS / MELT DUNES:

### The Cellar

Easy to get a bit carried away when you start writing about Flamingods. Partly because they sound like they got a bit carried away when they made their music. Their music being a mix of the ancient and modern and a whole world of sounds: a musical journey from Turkey to Thailand via Tasmania. Formed as a bedroom project in Bahrain by Kamal Rasool, he recruited a bunch of fellow musical travellers, but they rarely existed in the same space at the same time. When he relocated to London (and was later deported), Flamingods recorded their albums via soundfiles and Skype. They draw on influences from Middle and Far Eastern traditions, North African rhythms, Western pop and all manner of folk, jazz, dance and psychedelic sources, their extended songs a mix of mosaics, drones, samples, melody and atonality. They’ve been called tribal folkadelica and Aboriginal prog at various times and variously compared to Goat, Avalanches and Ash Ra Tempel. They’re certainly different – esoteric, otherworldly and brilliantly international in their flavours as well, with their strange dress, a treat as much for the eyes as the ears. They’re back in Oxford after their showing at Ritual Union in October and before that as support to Comet Is Coming, and are joined by south coast psych-rockers Melt Dunes for what will indisputably be the most exotic gig of the month.



## THE CRIBS

O2 Academy

15.01.18 | £20

## MOTHER

The Cellar

01.02.18 | £6

## THE BLINDERS

The Cellar

17.02.18 | £7

## FICKLE FRIENDS

O2 Academy 2

12.03.18 | £12.50

## BLUE ROSE CODE

The Cellar

23.01.18 | £12

## JESCA HOOP

The Bullingdon

04.02.18 | £15

## DEAD!

The Cellar

19.02.18 | £8

## GWENNO

The Bullingdon

23.03.18 | £10

## THE NIGHT CAFE

The Bullingdon

25.01.18 | £8

## REDFACES

The Cellar

08.02.18 | £6

## CATHOLIC ACTION

The Cellar

21.02.18 | £7

## SUPER HANS

O2 Academy Oxford

30.03.18 | £15

## MR SCRUFF

The Bullingdon

26.01.18 | £15

## WE ARE NOT DEVO

The Cellar

09.02.18 | £8

## DESERT MOUNTAIN

TRIBE

The Cellar

24.02.18 | £8

## STEVE DAVIS &

KAVUS TORABI

The Cellar

31.03.18 | £6

## LOW ISLAND

## & FRIENDS

The Cellar

27.01.18 | £6

## DREAM STATE

The Cellar

10.02.18 | £6

## PALE WAVES

The Cellar

26.02.18 | SOLD OUT

## LITTLE COMETS

O2 Academy

16.04.18 | £15

## THIS IS THE KIT

O2 Academy

28.01.18 | £16

## THE LOVELY EGGS

The Cellar

15.02.18 | £9

## SAINT AGNES

The Cellar

05.03.18 | £6.50

## SHAME

The Bullingdon

19.04.18 | £8.50

## PETE FIJ &

## TERRY BICKERS

The Bullingdon

29.01.18 | £8

## ITCH (THE KING BLUES)

The Cellar

16.02.18 | £10

## PAUL DRAPER

O2 Academy 2

07.03.18 | £17.50

## THE ACADEMIC

The Cellar

21.04.18 | £9

# FUTURE PERFECT



@FUTUREPERFECTT  
@FUTUREPERFECTT  
FUTUREPERFECTLIVE  
THEFUTUREISPERFECT.CO.UK  
INFO@THEFUTUREISPERFECT.CO.UK  
TICKETS FROM SEETICKETS.COM





LIVE

## LUCY LEAVE / SELF HELP / MANU LOUIS / BEARD OF DESTINY

### The Wheatsheaf

Blues rock duo Beard of Destiny are at half strength for tonight’s Gappy Tooth Industries show, so it’s just Graham Barlow playing acoustic – a one-man blues machine as he puts himself in song. Despite this he’s far more fun than 90% of solo acoustic performers we’ve seen lately, mixing up growly Mississippi blues with daft humour, playing ‘Ace of Spades’ Robert Johnson style one minute, singing about cats eating budgies the next and culminating in a clap-along number titled ‘The Ghost of Larry Grayson Perry’.

Berlin’s Manu Louis is alone onstage too, dressed like an extra from *Miami Vice* and accompanied by an array of electronic gadgetry from which he conjures a slightly manic set of highly kitsch electro-pop that variously sounds like a *Generation Game* take on DAF; a Latino cruise ship crooner with an abstract industrial electronica

fetish; a *Mighty Boosh* skit on ebm; a failed disco star having a breakdown and accidentally making the best music of his career, and a holiday camp kids entertainer who’s thought “fuck it, these brats need some Krautrock in their lives.” Sometimes it’s silly, often it’s camp, but mostly it’s inspired and highly entertaining.

Self Help are also a (wo)man down tonight, which steals some of the detail from their barrelling pop-punk that’s ferocious yet merry, the songs bold and fresh and executed with a rough-edged naivety. They’re being tipped as one of the new local bands most-likely-to, and while we don’t want to burden them with the weight of expectation, they have the raucous vibe of early Supergrass about them and, crucially, the tunes to back it up. Welcome to your new favourite band.

“That was *Nightshift*’s fourteenth favourite song

of this year,” announces Lucy Leave’s Mike Smith after playing of ‘Chant/Fresh Crepes’; “before that was *Nightshift*’s ninth favourite song of last year, so you can see the trajectory we’re on,” he deadpans. Truth is Lucy Leave are very much on an upward trajectory. And a downward one. And a leftward one. They’re a band who probably struggle to second guess themselves, their set coming on like a minibusload of tunes taken for a trip to a hall of magic mirrors and returned home in their distorted state. ‘40 Years’ is as close as they get to a straight musical line – a pummelling Bo Diddley/Modern Lovers jam-out, but the likes of ‘Beauty of the World’ and ‘Speak Danish to Me’ are as fractured, cracked, bent out of shape and inventive as you’d hope from a band who tend to sound like Deerhoof, Soft Machine, The Cardiacs, The Slits and David Bowie all at the same time. A band perfectly suited to Gappy Tooth Industries’ square pegs, round holes and what the hell ethos. They’re a band on their very own trajectory; the rest of us can simply try and keep track.

**Dale Kattack**

## GAELYNN LEA / WAITRESS FOR THE BEES

### St Barnabas

On a bitterly cold night at the start of December, it already feels a lot like Christmas: inside one of Oxford’s most ornate churches the aroma of mulled wine and homemade mince pies permeates the air; the stage is decked with fairy lights and tonight’s gig hosts Irregular Folks and OCM are wandering around the room handing out free sherry.

Not just a gig, tonight is an event – one involving two of the most inventive string players around. Minnesota’s Gaelynn Lea plays her violin like a cello, the result of Osteogenesis Imperfecta. Her technique means she’s hitting the low notes first, bringing out her instrument’s sombre side and exacerbating the intensity of songs like ‘Some Day We’ll Linger in the Sun’ and set highlight ‘The First Three Feet’, delicately elaborate, deeply soulful music that mixes bluegrass with classical music, guitarist Dave Mehling adding a grunge edge to the sound. It’s Gaelynn’s voice that’s the star of the show though: limpid and pure, almost operatic but full of passion and quirks, like a mix of Eartha Kitt and Joanna Newsom at times. She breaks the spell on the distracting dirge ‘Breathe! You Are Alive!’, which sounds like a dippy mindfulness speech, at least until it resolves into a droning duel between violin and guitar. And this being Christmas she closes with ‘In The Bleak Midwinter’, perfect for the weather outside and a perfect vehicle for her singular talent.

Better still though is Canadian singer and viola player Emma Hooper, who goes under the name Waitress For the Bees and whose songs about insects and dinosaurs are full of scientific fact, childlike glee and deep, dark pathos. Songs are introduced by short, sweet lessons in natural history before the bugs are infused with human spirit and existentialism and tragedy unfold. Stick insects lose their identity among their clone sisters; ants are brainwashed then killed by mushroom spores and fruit flies are born, breed and die within three days. Hooper loops her viola and various vocal ticks, singing the songs in a high-pitched, playful voice, culminating in a euphoric hymn to cicadas, rising into summer skies after years spent living underground. She has an almost magical gift for turning what are essentially grim horror stories into something genuinely fun – and funny, while taking her music into equally unpredictable places. Her entire set – including an obscure Huron Christmas carol – is mesmerising and educational and we come away knowing a little more about the natural world and feeling a whole lot warmer inside.

**Dale Kattack**

## HALFWAY TO SEVENTY FIVE CHRISTMAS JAMBOREE

### The Isis Farmhouse

Fancy some “rockin’ blues from the USA”? How about a bit of “foot stompin’ roots”? Okay, we’ll throw in a smidgeon of “swinging Christmas jazz” for good measure – and a hog roast.

Halfway to Seventy Five’s good ol’ Americana charm might not seem like the most seasonal of vibes, but there’s a strange charm in the combination of mulled wine, hot food, roots rock and good company that its Christmas Jamboree provides. The Isis benefits as a venue from cold, dark nights almost as much as it does from hot summer days: **AL RYAN’S SWINGTET** is an appropriate opener for the evening, with a middle-of-the-road take on the Great American Songbook that’s the musical equivalent of cheap mulled wine. They’re affable enough.

We move out to the barn for **THE KNIGHTS OF MENTIS**, who have dressed for the occasion in flatcaps, scarves and Fair Isles. This is the “foot stompin’ roots”, and the band delivers as advertised: it’s all good fun in the major key, with plenty of eye-watering dancing from certain members of the audience. There’s at least nine people on stage at any one time, with more than enough energy to raise the barn roof (figuratively speaking). The Knights are known for their multi-

instrumentalism, and there’s plenty of that on display tonight, with the two lead singers making fine use of a banjo and a Dobro guitar. As their set comes to an end, some audience members seem to be genuinely considering getting up on stage and joining in.

Headlining the night is **JAKE LA BOTZ**, a folky blues singer from Nashville. “Oxford’s a pretty happening place,” he says without apparent irony, before launching into a set that’s pleasantly varied, touching on Robert Cray-ish contemporary blues, Dylan-esque ballads and a long skit about a sacred comb. There’s a lot of fiddling about with levels early on, which honestly *does* get a bit distracting – but as a headliner la Botz largely delivers, and his mythologizing paean to Howlin’ Wolf is more endearing than it is awkward.

By this time the drink has been flowing for many, many hours, and la Botz leaves the stage to riotous applause and some rather confused chanting. The festivities continue into the night; but slowly the crowd dwindles, as ever-so-slightly swaying figures pick their way through the benches and disappear down the dark, narrow towpath. We’re left wishing we brought a torch.

**Tom White**

## TOUCH MY SECRET

### The Cellar

Unlike books and covers you can tell a lot about a band from their name. After all, how could a band called The Fall be anything but supremely wonderful and frightening? How could a band called My Chemical Romance be anything but a hopeless embarrassment? And so to tonight: how could a band called Touch My Secret be anything but a young Japanese glam metal band? That description may be less than forensically accurate but it’s closer than the J-Punk tag that they’ve come to be landed with. Less than two years old and one album into their career the three-piece are very fast, very precise and tight, and generally loads of fun.

Normally reviewers have to guess the size of a crowd but here it’s easy to report that seventeen people greet them, not that the band show any signs of disappointment. Launching into the opening number it seems Louis’ drumming is aided by some kind of triggered added beats, particularly on the kick drum, but

he’s powerful and wild enough to make that unimportant. Bassist Chloe and singer/guitarist Anne have the tiniest fingers in rock, not that they stop moving long enough to enable a sober judgement, breathless guitar runs and deft bass lines compliment the machine gun drumming perfectly. Metal is always better at high speed, obvious exceptions like Black Sabbath acknowledged, though this is more tuneful pop-metal than nihilistic speed-metal. ‘Liar’ and ‘Revenge’ (they don’t waste words) are catchy and engaging, the kind of songs Japanese bands do so well: no European boozy headbanging anthems here.

It’s the last night of the tour and Anne thanks us for all our support, which just makes us feel worse and we shout ourselves hoarse, mired in collective guilt for our indolent, stay-at-home city. But the brave seventeen, and a few more by the end, enjoy a fun night and possibly witness a new star ascending.

**Art Lagun**

# The Cellar

## Music history begins underground.



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

IT IS AN OFFENCE TO STEAL, DRINKING OR SMOKING IN THE PUBLIC HIGHWAY IS A CRIME AND IT IS ILLEGAL TO DRINK OR SMOKE IN THE STREET

# The Cellar

est 1999  
Home of Oxford’s Cutting Edge Music Scene



Frewin Court, Off Cornmarket St, Oxford



PETER KNIGHT’S GIGSPANNER

Nettlebed Folk Club

The convention is that people who play folk music on the violin are said to be playing the fiddle. But to talk of Peter Knight in this way just doesn’t seem right. Rather he is a violinist who brings a prodigious technique, many musical influences and a fertile musical imagination to the party whenever he plays a folk tune. Knight has had a very long career as part of folk rock band Steeleye Span but also several side projects as well, including excursions into jazz and even prog rock. Since leaving Steeleye Span Knight, who recently turned seventy and shows no sign of slowing down, has been putting his energy into Gigspanner, his trio with Roger Flack on guitar and now with Sasha Trochet on djembe and hand percussion. They have become known for mesmerizing playing and for stretching the folk tradition by fusing it with touches of folk-rock and jazz and other influences, including elements drawn from world music, and their recently released fourth album has garnered rave reviews. Tonight they begin with what Knight calls “a sort of version” of the well known ‘She Moved Through The Fair’. It’s “a sort of” because while it starts with the tune and finishes with the tune about eight minutes later, in between there are flourishes which head off in the direction of classical music; there are echoes of ‘The Lark Ascending’, and passages which would not be out of place at a free jazz session. While the band’s great strength is their instrumental playing, with Flack and Trochet providing a totally sympathetic foundation for Knight’s virtuosity and sublime creativity, Knight and his colleagues’ soft vocals are surprisingly affecting, especially when it comes to doing weary resignation. This quiet vocal style makes a ballad about the post-Napoleonic economic depression (and austerity now?), ‘Hard Times For Old England’, and about a wife who leaves her husband and child for a stranger (it ends badly, of course), particularly evocative. With the instrumental ‘Sharp Goes Walkabout’, the trio make you feel the aboriginal heritage and the heat of the Australian Outback, while with the tune ‘King Of The Fairies’ the fairy king seems to be playing jazz violin inspired by Stephane Grappelli mixed in with a Cuban beat. It’s impressive playing and totally beguiling, and on the evidence of this gig Peter Knight and his Gigspanner colleagues look like they will be a force for good in the folk world and perhaps beyond for years to come. *Colin May*

WAYNE McARTHUR & THE UNIVERSAL PLAYERS

The Wheatsheaf

We have been fortunate in our manifold ventures into the world of reggae to have met some truly lovely people: Mad Professor, Earl Gateshead, DJ Derek and Askala Selassie: a true Princess of Positivity. However roots singer Wayne McArthur takes it to another level entirely. His diminutive stature belies a massive heart: arms outstretched, friendly fingers spread and with a broad smile, it seems he wants to embrace the crowd with his message of universal upliftment and the love of Jah. But is The Wheatsheaf – sweaty rockpit that it is – quite ready for this? I *think* so, because it’s Klub Kakofanney on a cold Friday night and so a characteristically eclectic line up. To the sounds of Easy Star All Stars the Universal Players – who are mainly the talented daughters of Wayne – set up. Between heartfelt calls for love and unity, social justice and a deeper engagement with reality, McArthur plays largely from his last LP ‘Roots Criteria’, plus others which showcase both the breadth and depth of his output. Wayne McArthur is most prolific;

although his style is largely roots rock, his output is varied, having worked with a large number of producers as well as on his own. He covers the major reggae styles of steppers, one drop and roots and culture. At the same time, Wayne has had a long and productive relationship with Oxford, having recorded with Spider and Jonas from Dubwiser. Last time *Nightshift* caught Ras McArthur was at the tribute to David Norland at the Bullingdon when Earl 16 was also guesting. Another Oxfordian in support onstage tonight is percussionist Hugo Makepeace, from resting local reggae favourites Makating (as well as Desta\*Nation sound system and Jamatone). The Wheatsheaf is not usually associated with reggae, but Chief Kakofannist Phil Freizinger tells me he’s asked many local instigators lots of times, but to no avail. Given the punchy sound of the mix and the positive vibes, let’s hope that changes- because you can never have *too* much reggae in Oxford, especially in the darkest, coldest months of the year. *Leo Bowder*

THE MARK LANEGAN BAND

O2 Academy

When you think of the people whose voices are suited to playing God, Morgan Freeman doubtless tops most lists, but Mark Lanegan would make a great deity: possessed of a Stentorian soulfulness that could seduce or disembowel at fifty paces, it’s a lived-in, ageless growl that’s both benevolent and vengeful. Lanegan really is a lived-in character, one who’s somehow survived over three decades of music making at its darkest corner and the lifestyle that follows it, from the fury of Screaming Trees, through more collaborations than even he can probably remember, from Queens of the Stone-Age and Isobel Campbell to The Twilight Singers and Greg Dulli and onto Tim Simeon and Soulsavers. Many and varied his projects have been but at the heart of each is his distinctive baritone: weather-beaten, scuffed and scarred and soaked in bourbon. His most recent solo albums have seen him bringing the influence of British post-punk and synth-pop to bear on gothic blues, which reaches its zenith on tonight’s second track, ‘Gavedigger’s Song’, a murderous rumble with a devilish sense of romance about it (“To the stars my love / To the sea / To the wheels my love / Til they roll over me”). Tracks

from most recent album ‘Gargoyle’ too find him digging deep down into the dirt while ranging through the firmament, the glorious ‘Beehive’ simultaneously earthy and warm but as immovable and determined as an Easter Island statue. Lanegan’s band are an impressive force, tearing through the set with bass-heavy, pile-driving intent, singer Shelley Brien a great foil to Lanegan on those tracks she sings alongside him. Now 53 and having lived the life, so to speak, while barely standing still for a moment along the way Lanegan’s health maybe isn’t as good as it could be. He’s walking with a stick tonight and when he closes his set with two songs in the encore - ‘One Way Street’ and ‘Bombed’ – we’ve barely had seventy minutes. Given the breadth and depth of his back catalogue, that’s a disappointment. But then seventy minutes in the company of a man whose voice sounds like it’s rising up from some unknowable depth, armed with a whole world of hurt and hope and love and hate and hard liquor, is seventy minutes to savour. Anyway, he’s surely got a fair few years left in him, hasn’t he. What with being immortal and all that.

*Dale Kattack*

PROTECTION SPELLS / SLONK / KATE STAPLEY

The Library

We’ve seen metallers destroy a lager crate in minutes, and Gnawa musicians take turns onstage to sip strong, sweet tea, but we can’t recall ever seeing a line-up where every performer is getting squiffy on rosé. And if we have, it was probably not on one of the coldest nights of the year. First to take time between pink slurps to sing a few songs is Bristol’s Kate Stapley, last seen in Oxford as part of fuzzy pop act Spring Break. An acoustic performance reveals the lyricism in her songs, where long lines swirl like smoke around jazz-tinged chords. Stand-out piece ‘Laburnum’ has the cracked bombast of Jeff Buckley, and at other times the calmer wisdom of Joni Mitchell takes over. With approximately half the lyrics about empty houses, and no fewer than two songs about dementia, this should be an unrelentingly bleak set, but it’s quietly life affirming. Fellow Bristolian Slonk has a louder, more aggressive style – or perhaps it’s just evidence of an extra 30 minutes on the Mateus. He has a slack, yet melodic voice, as if the young Dylan had been in thrall to J Mascis rather than W Guthrie, and

is not scared of wilder dynamics than your average solo strummer. Moments in the set recall Jeffrey Lewis or anti-folk originator Lach, but in ‘I’m Pursuing A Career Outside Of Conveyancing’ Slonk most resembles the melancholic rage of Hamell On Trial. It’s an enjoyable set, though by the end the industrial-strength nanny goat vibrato and predictable distortion pedal stomps do start to grate. This duo’s called Protection Spells, but they’re not really witches, right? Right? Because from the outset, their spooky, woozily gaseous half-songs do seem like esoteric rituals (eye of newt, and ton of reverb). No sooner has the arcane mood of “respecting the darkness of the woods” been set, than one of the members swaps guitar for drums, and despite a strange jerky *Thunderbirds* style, actually plays crisp and sparsely funky rhythms. Alright, if they’re not witches, can we at least decide whether this London band are a micro-Devo, a pocket Cocteau or a Toytown Lynch soundtrack? Oh, who cares, just enjoy it. Can we interest you in some rosé? *David Murphy*



THE CRIBS MONDAY 15TH JANUARY O2 ACADEMY OXFORD



THIS IS THE KIT SUNDAY 28TH JANUARY O2 ACADEMY 2 OXFORD



MOTHER THURSDAY 1ST FEBRUARY THE CELLAR



LOW ISLAND SATURDAY 27TH JANUARY THE CELLAR



FLAMINGODS WEDNESDAY 31ST JANUARY THE CELLAR



JESCA HOOP SUNDAY 4TH FEBRUARY THE BULLINGDON



@futureperfectt  
www.seetickets.com  
www.thefutureisperfect.co.uk





OXFORD'S  
INDEPENDENT  
MUSIC HUB

ALL THE LATEST RELEASES ON CD, VINYL & DVD

CLASSIC ALBUMS, CULT FAVOURITES, RECOMMENDATIONS  
NEW & PRE-OWNED STOCK, LIVE MUSIC IN-STORE, TICKETS

WE'RE MORE THAN JUST A RECORD SHOP!

ALSO HOME TO

**MOSTRO**  
- COFFEE -

PURVEYOURS OF EXQUISITE, INNOVATIVE,  
DELICIOUS COFFEE PLUS THE FINEST  
TEAS, SOFT DRINKS, CAKE AND MORE

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK 101 COWLEY ROAD OX4 1HU  
01865 793866 TRUCKMUSICSTORE.CO.UK

CUT OUT THIS COUPON FOR A FREE MOSTRO COFFEE!  
1 PER CUSTOMER, PER TRANSACTION. VALID UNTIL 30TH OCTOBER  
We reserve the right to remove this offer at any time.

HARCOURT ARMS

SATURDAY JANUARY 27TH

CANUTE'S

PLASTIC

ARMY

PLUS SUPPORT FROM  
RACHEL RUSCOMBE-KING  
BECKI REED

MONDAY JANUARY 15TH

OXFORD CLASSIC JAZZ

OPEN MIC EVERY SUNDAY

LIVE MUSIC AT THE HEART OF JERICHO  
CRANHAM TERRACE JERICHO OXFORD OX2 6DG  
01865 556669

INTRODUCING....

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

MOTHER

Who are they?  
Indie rockers Mother are Josh Alden (*guitar/vocals*); Sam Alden (*drums*); Danny Fisher (*guitar*), and Everton Barbato (*bass*). Danny and Josh met four years ago. Josh was forming a band back then and got Danny onboard while Everton was introduced by a friend. A year later, that band broke up. Danny and Josh started a new project and asked Everton to get involved. Josh's cousin Sam played drums and had three weeks left of uni and was dying to get back behind the kit. Under their old name Temper Cartel 2017 saw them supporting The Bluetones, The Strypes, and Willie J Healey, as well as playing at Ritual Union Festival. The newly renamed band have recorded with Ride's Mark Gardener. Their 'Crusade' EP was released in 2017 and a new five-song EP, 'Remnants Of A Wasted Dream' is released in February.

What do they sound like?  
Airy indie guitar pop meets its grungier cousin on new single 'Petrichor', an alternately fidgety and elegant track that mixes up classic 60s pop with Britpop and Noughties NYC rock.

What inspires them?  
"Other artists on the scene that are doing things in interesting ways; we always have a keen eye on how people are releasing music and we all have an interest in going to gigs, watching acts develop and performances grow."

Career highlight so far:  
"Supporting Willie J Healey at the O2 in December; his band is amazing, so it was a real treat to play the same stage and watch them work. We already had tickets to the show because it didn't even enter our minds that we would be support for it."

And the lowlight:  
"Sitting in traffic for three hours driving to play at the New Cross Inn in front of the four other bands that were playing that night and the bartender. We left so disheartened but you just have to regroup and keep pushing back."

Their favourite other Oxfordshire act is:  
"Chris Barker, who also plays guitar for Willie J Healey. He's got really



strong solo material and performs with an Oxfordshire Super Group with Ash Cooke of Be Good, Willie J Healey and Mike Monaghan."

If they could only keep one album in the world, it would be:  
"Radiohead's 'In Rainbows': it's got everything that you'd want in an album."

When is their next local gig and what can newcomers expect?  
"The Cellar on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> February. We'll be launching our EP. Expect a loud, high energy, slightly theatrical performance designed to take you with us. We give everything in our live shows, it's one of those things where the more people put into it with us the more we all get from it."

Their favourite and least favourite things about Oxford music are:  
"We love the community that surrounds the scene and its heritage but having some of the biggest and best bands in the world come from your home town is both a blessing and a curse. It seems to overshadow everything. When an act gets to a certain point on the circuit it always feels like people are waiting, ready to pounce on 'what's the next big band to break out of Oxford?'. It feels quite pressured but it makes us work harder."

You might love them if you love:  
The Strokes; Spring King; Muse; Temples; Radiohead; Foo Fighters.

Hear them here:  
New single 'Petrichor' is on Spotify; the video is on Youtube.

THE WHEATSHEAF

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January – KLUB KAKOFANNEY

STORYTELLER THE SHAPES + FRANKLIN'S TOWER 7:45pm

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> January – METAL TO THE MASSES

RATS EAT RATS + FALL OF THE TYRANT

BRING THE ONSLAUGHT 7:45pm

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January – PALADIN PROMOTIONS

OUTTA PEAK ONE STATE DRIVE + TORRE VALLEY 7:45pm

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January - METAL TO THE MASSES

MSRY + THE MOTIVE + KING BOLSTER 7:45pm

Friday 19<sup>th</sup> January – JAM CITY

PROMETHEAN REIGN NOMOS + R.O.Y 7:45pm

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> January – ABOLITION 2018

ELYSIAN DIVIDE

THE FINAL CLAUSE OF TACITUS + CRIMSON TUSK 7:45pm

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January - METAL TO THE MASSES

RESOLVE + FORCE OF MORTALITY

ORPHEUS OBLIVION 7:45pm

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> January – OXROX

VOODOO VEGAS FLOWERPOT + SILVERVOID

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January – GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES


FREEMANTLE RAT THE MAGNIFICENT + EARINADE 7:45pm

The Wheatsheaf 129 High Street, Oxford OX1 4DF / [www.facebook.com/wheatsheaf.oxford](http://www.facebook.com/wheatsheaf.oxford)

DR SHOTOVER: Honest Sonsie Face

Ah, there you are, wee man. You'll have had your tea, but pull up a pew and buy us all a Loch Peatie, why don't you? Slàinte! Yes, in case you hadn't noticed, Scots Month has rolled around again here at the East Indies Club. Eh? I said, SCOTS MONTH... Bedingfield, I say BEDINGFIELD, will ye no' turn down *The Massed Pipes of the Black Watch* ft. *Kenneth McKellar*? I can barely hear myself ROAR, man. Ah, that's better. As I was saying, it's been decided that, in tribute to the late, great, much-lamented STORNOWAY (who ceased trading in March 2017), all Oxford acts will revert to Caledonian names in January 2018, from Hogmanay through to Burns Nicht. The move is of course heartily endorsed by the McMafia who actually run the Oxford Music Scene – you know who you are, you wee Teuchters. So, FOALS have – as it were – led the charge, opting to be SHETLAND PONIES... RIDE were toying with changing their name to EAST KILBRIDE, and another famous Oxford act were considering PETERHEAD. But, in shock news akin to a Scottish World Cup win, the two bands are joining forces to form a supergroup, to be known collectively as RADIO CLYDE. Look out also for THE MOTHERWELL DRAMAS, IRN-ADE, LUCY LEVEN, and of course OOR WULLIE J. HEALEY. And now, more whusky, I say! Here's tae us... wha's like us... damn few, and they're a' deid!

Next month: *RUNRIG and Panic*



*"Whit like, Oxford...? We're The Sensational Alex Candyskins Band... and we're BACK!"*

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

20 YEARS AGO  
The Samurai Seven, The Secret, The Animalhouse, The Full Monty, Lab-4 and Medal were among the acts tipped for bigger, better, brighter futures in January 1998's *Nightshift*, and for a while many of them proved us right yet again, Lab-4 and The Secret leading a new wave of techno music out of Oxford that won giant rooms full of fans at clubs like **Escape From Samsara**, while The Animalhouse, featuring Mark Gardener and Loz Colbert from Ride alongside Supergrass producer Sam Williams, got themselves a deal with **BMG**. Medal, taken under the wing of Radiohead and Supergrass' Courtyard Management, signed to Polydor. The Sammies, meanwhile were embarking on a journey that would earn them half a dozen **Peel Sessions**, a deal with **Fierce Panda** and a fanatical local following over the next few years. Making their own bid for stardom were **Arthur Turner's Lovechild**, who released their debut single 'Son of the Human Cannonball' on **Shifty Disco**. And who could forget **The Kangaroo Project**, whose 'How Things Look' EP was also out this month. Us for starters. A typically quiet January gig calendar featured visits to town from **Catatonia**, just about to become stadium huge, at **The Zodiac**, as were Liverpudlian electro hooligans **Earl Brutus** and folk hero **Martin Simpson**. Local names in the gig guide included **Suriki**; **Plastiscene**; **Crackout**; **Glue**; **Maniacal** and **Dolly**, the last of which featured a young Julia Heslop on vocals, later to front **Little Fish** and latterly **Candy Says**.

10 YEARS AGO  
"There are no proper stars left," proclaimed **Joe Swarbrick**, singer with **Borderville**, who graced *Nightshift's* front cover in January 2008, before declaring that "there is not a shred of glamour in any famous British musician currently being hyped by the press. Punk has left us a damaging legacy – what was at the time a necessary spring clean, a definition of rock music as protest and pure energy, has become a reductive, fascistic ideology clung to by journalists terrified of not seeming cool enough." Always one of our favourite interviewees, Joe set out his ideas for the band who were to blossom into one of the most musically and lyrically ambitious acts in Oxford before they split. Oxford's big guns were gearing up for action, with **Radiohead** releasing 'Jigsaw Falling Into Place' as the first single from their groundbreaking 'In Rainbows, while **Supergrass** released a limited edition 7" single, 'Diamond Hoo Ha Man' ahead of their 'Diamond Hoo Ha' album. **Foals**, meanwhile, announced their biggest hometown show to date with a gig at the Academy in March, and tracklisting for 'Antidotes'. Elsewhere this month, **Mary's Garden** released their debut album, 'Mind Control'; former **Rock Of Travolta** founder Phill Honey's **Boywithatoy** project were Demo of the Month, while **GTA**, the rap duo featuring Chima Anya, were down in the Dumper, sounding like "being stuck on the last bus out of town on a Saturday night in front of two juvenile wannabe rap stars whose tolerance of alcohol extends to two cans of cheap cider."

THIS MONTH IN OXFORD MUSIC HISTORY

5 YEARS AGO  
The two masked figures peering android-like from the cover of January 2013's *Nightshift* were Andy Hill and Dan Clear, together known as **Death of Hi-Fi**, making their debut on the cover and talking about their debut album, 'Anthropocene', featuring a host of guest MC turns, including **Dizzy Dustin**, **Mark Deez** and **Copywrite**, alongside local rappers **Half Decent**, **Asher Dust** and **N-Zyme**, which *Nightshift* acclaimed as "the best hip hop album to come out of Oxford." "We bonded over wobbly, low-budget BBC sci-fi, said Andy, "although there was nearly a beef as I was a ZX Spectrum fan and he was firmly in the Oric 1 camp." Introducing act this month were hip hop duo **Flooded Hallways**, whose lo-fi stoner rap looked like making them an overdue local hip hop breakthrough act, but we've not heard from them lately. Among a slender legion of acts coming to town were **JD McPherson**, **Tall Ships** and **Cerebral Bore**, but mostly everyone stayed at home, waiting for spring. Down in the demos **Mustard & the Monocle** went head to head with **Masiro** for top spot, while down the bottom we found "self proclaimed Christian songwriter" **Martin Ash** "expecting lots of gratuitous swearing and religion bashing in the ritual placing of the Demo Dumper" and we didn't want to disappoint him in his absolute certainty and, whaddya know, his music was "a shrill, worryingly jaunty piano and fiddle-led pit of of musical slurry that might be a French & Saunders attempt to parody Steeleye Span". We were, then, to paraphrase *The Wicker Man*, able to confer upon Mr Ash a rare honour – a martyr's review.



**Appletree Studios**  
**Celebrating 30 Years**  
 Oxfordshires longest running recording studios  
[www.appletreestudios.com](http://www.appletreestudios.com)  
**01844 237916**  
 Come and see why so many Oxfordshire artists use Appletree

**WAREHOUSE STUDIOS**  
 Recording and rehearsal studios  
 3 Rehearsal rooms  
**25 years of quality recording**  
**Tel: 07876487923**  
 Email: [info@warehousestudios.com](mailto:info@warehousestudios.com)  
[www.warehousestudios.com](http://www.warehousestudios.com)

**EVOLUTION**  
 RECORDING STUDIOS

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

Experienced Engineers, Session musicians and Producers in-house.

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

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

**01865 203073**  
[info@evolutionstudios.co.uk](mailto:info@evolutionstudios.co.uk)  
[www.evolutionstudios.co.uk](http://www.evolutionstudios.co.uk)

**Glasshouse Studios**  
 Rehearsal and Recording studios

Four state of the art rehearsal rooms and a professional recording studio.

For bookings call Jamie on 07917685935  
 Glasshouse studios, Cumnor, Oxford • [glasshousetudios.org](http://glasshousetudios.org)

# DEMOS

Sponsored by



## DEMO OF THE MONTH

### SPRUNG FROM CAGES

The offspring of top footballers and managers generally find it hard to follow in their footsteps and the same is true of musicians. For all of the great privileges his parentage brought him, Julian Lennon's genuine talents are often overlooked or dismissed purely because of his dad's legendary status. Locally Burt Cope has sidestepped his ex-Candyskin dad's legacy to become a renowned bassline producer and DJ, and here we have Alfie Macintyre making his first foray into music making, aged just 15, and following more closely in his father's footsteps with some straight-down-the-line punk rock. Alfie's dad of course being legendary Jericho Tavern and Point promoter and Arthur Turner's Lovechild? and Earinade frontman Mac. He's definitely inherited dad's attitude: four tracks here clocking in at just nine minutes, the band's tender year's barely apparent as they hurtle full throttle through '28', like The Ramones and Motorhead seeing who can get to the end of a song first with fewest distractions along the way. Further in there's sullenness, the occasional moment of awkwardness – musically and lyrically – and plenty of cranked-up belligerence. The high point is 'Pitch Invader', a yobbish approximation of The Fall's earliest outings taken to Adam & the Ant's first rehearsal and told to stand in the middle and misbehave. They're young and raw and, like teenage footballers, haven't had all that enthusiasm and flair coached out of them yet. 15 years old and the things they could teach the rest of this month's demo pile...

### MILVER

What is it about so many rappers they feel compelled to stick a bunch of skits between tracks? 90% of them are either pointless or simply cringeworthy, and all of them distract from the music. Milver here falls into that clichéd pitfall from the off, so by the time he gets going, on 'Judge Me', he's already got our backs up. So it takes a us a minute or two to warm to his funky hip hop, which, lyrical clichés aside, is up and at 'em enough to warrant attention. And then just as

*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)*

we're getting into the swing of things we get another intermission, some cod-philosophical ramble that neither offers any great wisdom nor adds anything to the music. At his best Milver is an adept MC with a confident, unbroken flow and, on demo highlight 'Contraddict', something to say, particularly about hypocrisy, over a sharp, jazz/funk backing. But on 'Floatation Device' he speeds through six and half minutes of rhymes without pause or variety and no amount of flow can hold your attention that long without some hook to hang onto. Moments of promise from a new MC on the scene, but perhaps more attention to arrangements, so what he's saying doesn't just get lost in the rush.

### HENRY SOOTHILL

Like a recidivist schoolboy, young Soothill here keeps coming back for more critical punishment, despite repeated attempts to put him on the musical straight and narrow. Although, we do sometimes wonder who's the hunter and who's the hunted in Henry's case, since what with him being formerly of Balloon Ascents/ Neverlnd, and also currently a member of Catgod, he's more than capable of making excellent music, which makes us wonder if he's just teasing us with this. Left to his solo devices, he becomes sonic torturer-in-chief, and not in a fun blitzkrieg industrial hardcore kind of way. More in the slow and steady drip, drip, drip Chinese water torture manner. Here he sounds like Eeyore from Winnie the Pooh given freedom of a recording studio and a couple of Elliot Smith albums and a scratched copy of Eno's 'Another Green World' for inspiration. So everything's a relentlessly downbeat slog through stumbling electronic beats, airy guitar spangle and mournful vocals which sound like they've been recorded on an old tape which has then been stretched to shift the pitch down for extra clinically depressed donkey value. Deep down inside we get the feeling that in some radically reworked form all this could be a decent listen. But closer to the surface is an increasing sense of dread that existence itself is pointless and everything good in the world will one day die and become dust. And just in time for Christmas too. Might as well have another slab of cake and open that second bottle of port, then.

### PAUL LeROCQ

That feeling of possibly being the butt of some elaborate joke builds exponentially with this offering, somehow from an

Argentinean singer called Paul LeRocq (or Pablo Sciepora, depending on which name we're supposed to believe in the email). First up he looks like Enrique Iglesias trying to look like Chad Kroeger, which is several shades of horrible before we even get to the music. Music which can only have come from the bottom of the barrel after every terrible 80s soft rock band in the world gave up scraping and headed home to polish their Spandex trousers and perms. It starts with an overblown guitar solo and then turns into what we can only describe at Ugly Kid Joe trying to cover Falco's 'Rock Me Amadeus' in the style of Bon Jovi. It's somehow cheesier than a Christmas Stilton wheel but without an ounce of fun about it, just an overbearing sense of worthiness, like a humourless hippie uncle who turns up to the festive feast but complains the cracker jokes are offensive to elves and thinks all the kids' toys should be handcrafted from Fairtrade sticks. It's a fucking abomination of a song and should be killed with fire before it can ruin 2018 before it's even begun. Paul LeRocq? Paul the Cock, more like.

### PRTN3

With a name that sounds like one of R2D2's even more irritating mates, it should come as no surprise that Prtn3 make synth si-fi music. Like Mr Cock-knob or whatever he was called back then, there's a hefty cheese element at work here, but it comes with at least a hint of a sense of fun, notably the doubtless ironically titled 'Thunder in Paradise', which sounds like a malfunctioning take on a mid-80s American cop series theme. Or possibly a glitched Nintendo NES game soundtrack. It's all a bit formless and might well be the sound of a Casio home recording system left on autoplay, but after those last couple of shitshows, and what's still to come, we're prepared to let it pass this time.

### BAMBINO

While we occasionally (alright then, often) sit around being all smug and up ourselves and laughing at musicians' astonishing lack of self awareness, sometimes they surprise us by being fully conscious of their own shortcomings. So, we click on Bambino's Bandcamp link and... nothing. It doesn't exist. Refine the link and all that exists is something from 2012. Between sending it in for review and us taking a break from self medicating with Vanilla Absolut long enough to give it a quick once over, they've chickened out wanting our opinion and deleted everything. Maybe it was brilliant and we'll never know. Maybe it sounded like an even less thrilling James Arthur and

*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.*

it's for the best we didn't get to comment on such a concept. Whatever, no music at all is still better than this next one.

## THE DEMO DUMPER

### QUALMS

If your lyrics are terrible it's probably best not to make a video with them splashed all over the screen. Cos horrible bastards like us will laugh at them and pick holes in them and use them as a weapon against you. Not that you'd need a weapon of any great substance to defeat Qualms by the sound of this insipid trawl through spaced-out wimp-pop balladeering. But let's focus on those lyrics for now, shall we. "I'm breathing clouds under red lights," simpers the opening line over footage of some starry nebula and wafy sky stuff that might be considered too mawkish for an inspirational Facebook meme. Sounds like the opening to a particularly far-fetched Year 8 sci-fi story, albeit uttered by an out of breath seven stone weakling after trying to cart two heavy shopping bags up a flight of stairs. Sorry, carry on. "They're way too high, but then so am I." If they're too high, how can you be breathing them, young fella? Oh, it's because you're *off your fucking tits* and it's just a metaphor, right? You bloody rebel (incidentally, we may use this admission as evidence in court should you start getting shirty with us for this review). "The ceiling tries, it's hypnotising." The ceiling tries what? Tries suffocating you before you can bore it rigid with any more of your insufferable dreamy-eyed miserying? "As I wait for you." Aw, he's just a lovestruck Romeo, waiting for his belle or beau. We're almost starting to warm to him now. "To come and fight me." Eh? What? Punch-up? A puny, out-of-breath wuss like you? Do us a favour. "You're breathing loud under a lace tie." Okay, the hallucinogens have kicked in royally now, that doesn't even make sense. Nor does "A hurricane dressed in bombshell disguise." We can't be arsed to repeat any more lines. You don't want to have to see any more of them. We'll just enjoy the fluffy floaty film of clouds and mountains and sunsets and the sound of organic, low-fat, sugar-free yoghurt dying inside the ghost of one of Sam Smith's discarded daydreams. Oh go on, then, one more for you: "She walks across the sun / And everyone feels safe inside her eclipse." Do you see, dear reader: it's almost like poetry. Cue extended soft rock guitar solo. Cue "Fuck off and never come back." No, that isn't one of the lines in the song. That's us being kind. The alternative involved chisels, pliers and no anaesthetic.

**Soundworks**  
 Recording Studios Oxford  
 Established in 1999  
 Comfortable, friendly, professional

\* Recording \* Mixing \* Mastering \*  
 \* Rehearsal \* Gear Hire \* Live Sound \*

01865 401585  
[www.soundworks-oxford.co.uk](http://www.soundworks-oxford.co.uk)  
[info@soundworks-oxford.co.uk](mailto:info@soundworks-oxford.co.uk)

**Shonk**  
 Recording Studio

Full Backline Available  
 Great Sounding Live Room with Natural Light  
 Special Rates For Local Bands  
[www.theshonk.com](http://www.theshonk.com)  
[shonkstudio@gmail.com](mailto:shonkstudio@gmail.com) - 01865 203 922

**TURAN AUDIO**.co.uk  
 Professional, independent audio mastering

Mastered in the studio last month;  
**WIDE OPEN SKIES, STOLBY, THEE CREEPFREAKS, JOHN KNOWLES, TIMON SINGH, KEVIN JENKINS, YOUNG WOMENS MUSIC PROJECT.**

01865 716466 [tim@turanaudio.co.uk](mailto:tim@turanaudio.co.uk)

**COURTYARD RECORDING STUDIO**  
 2 Tracking Rooms. Superb Control Room with: NEVE 5106 32 Channel Console. ProTools HD3 MTR 90 2" 24 Track Tape Machine. Vintage EMT Plate Reverb Loads of Brilliant Outboard Gear Loads of Great Mics, Vintage and Modern Old School Akai/Roland Synth Modules Upright Piano, Fender Rhodes, Amps and great vibes. Residential recording studio in Sutton Courtenay.  
[www.courtyardrecordingstudio.co.uk](http://www.courtyardrecordingstudio.co.uk)  
 In-house producer: Ian Davenport [www.ian-davenport.co.uk](http://www.ian-davenport.co.uk)  
**Email: [kate@cyard.com](mailto:kate@cyard.com)**  
**Phone: Kate on 01235 845800**

**TAD STUDIOS**  
[www.tadstudios.co.uk](http://www.tadstudios.co.uk)  
[www.facebook.com/tadstudios](https://www.facebook.com/tadstudios)

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

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

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



Thu 21st Dec • £23 adv

## Slade

+ Kassettika

Thu 21st Dec • £9 adv

## Brixtons + Restructure

+ TMA + Lost Darren

Fri 22nd Dec • £17.50 adv

## Dreadzone

+ Greg Dread (DJ Set)

Sun 31st Dec • £14 adv • 9.30pm

## Switch NYE 2017 Feat. My Nu Leng & Redlight

Mon 15th Jan • £20 adv

## The Crips

Sat 27th Jan • £5 adv • 9.00pm

## Two Icons Dub: Celebrating The Lives of Bob Marley and Dennis Brown

+ Ras Keith + ZAIA + TOKA + Jamatone  
+ More

Sat 27th Jan • £10 adv • 10pm

## SASASAS - Up Another Lvl

Sun 28th Jan • £16 adv

## This Is The Kit

+ Seamus Fogarty + Emma Gatrill

Fri 2nd Feb • £30 adv • 6.30pm

## Natalie Imbruglia

Sat 3rd Feb • £13.50 adv • 6.30pm

## The Sherlocks

Sat 10th Feb • £12 adv • 6.30pm

## Cash - A Tribute To The Man in Black

+ Tony Goff & the Broken Colours  
+ Andy Robbins

Sun 11th Feb • **SOLD OUT**

## Jorja Smith

+ Mahalia

Mon 12th Feb • £22 adv

## Newton Faulkner

Thu 15th Feb • £17.50 adv

## Hayseed Dixie

+ Emma McGrath

Sat 17th Feb • £22.50 adv • 6.30pm

## Dr John Cooper Clarke

Sat 24th Feb • £12 adv

## KING 810

Sat 3rd Mar • £20 adv • 6pm

## The Blockheads

+ Chasing Daylight



Tues 6th Feb • £20 adv

## Rejjie Snow

Wed 7th Mar • £17.50 ad • 6.30pm

## Paul Draper

Fri 9th March • £16 adv • 6.30pm

## Space

+ The Shapes  
+ Candidates

Sat 10th Mar • £20 adv • 6.00pm

## Sleeper

Mon 12th Mar • £12 adv

## Fickle Friends

Fri 16th March • £20 adv • 6.30pm

## Alabama 3



Fri 16th March • £14 adv • 6.30pm

## The Amy Winehouse Experience ...A.K.A Lioness

Sat 17th March • £15 adv • 6.30pm

## Ferocious Dog

Sun 18th Mar • £13 adv

## The AC/DC Experience

Tue 20th Mar • £13 adv

## Rae Morris

Sat 24th Mar • £20 adv • 6.30pm

## Turin Brakes

Fri 30th Mar • £15 adv

## Super Hans

Sun 8th Apr • £20 adv

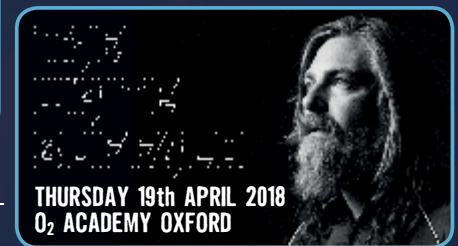
## 3 Generations of Ska

Mon 16th Apr • £20 adv

## Little Comets

Thu 19th Apr • £16.50 adv

## The White Buffalo



Thu 26th Apr • £14 adv

## Will Heard

Fri 27th Apr • £28.50 adv • 6.30pm

## Heather Small - The voice of M People

Sat 28th Apr • £15 adv • 6.30pm

## UK Foo Fighters - Banging On the Ceiling Tour

Thu 3rd May • £16.50 adv

## Lower Than Atlantis

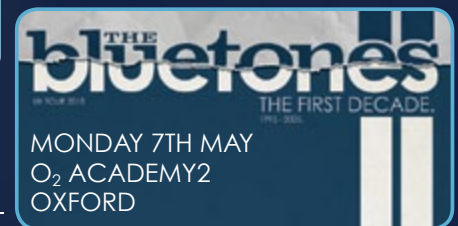
Fri 4th May • £25 adv • 6.30pm

## Wilko Johnson

+ Hugh Cornwell Band

Mon 7th May • £21 adv

## The Bluetones



Fri 15th Jun • £16.50 adv • 6.30pm

## Nick Heyward

Sat 22nd Sep • £15 adv • 6.30pm

## Dressed To kill - A Tribute To KISS

Sat 6th Oct • £13 adv • 6.30pm

## The Smyths - Unite and Take Over Tour 2018

**ticketmaster®** o2academyoxford.co.uk  
 ticketmaster.co.uk

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