

NIGHTSHIFT

Oxford's Music Magazine

**Free every
month
Issue 274
May
2018**

INNER PEACE

**"If you are seeking,
then Oxford is an
inspirational place,
conducive to
contemplative
thought"**

Oxford's hip hop collective on
collaboration, philosophy & battle raps

Also in this issue:

Introducing **WANDERING WIRES**
COMMON PEOPLE previewed

plus

All your Oxford music news, releases and
reviews and seven pages of gig listings for May

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

THE BULLINGDON

MAY 2018 GIG & CLUB LISTINGS

Wednesday 2nd May

Deep Dark Woods

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 3rd May

The Showhawk Duo

Doors: 7pm

Friday 4th May

Nine Below Zero

Doors: 7pm

Friday 4th May

Tropic Popsicle

Doors: 8pm

Wednesday 9th May

**Jizzy Pearl's Love/Hate
Doomsday Outlaw
The Black Bullets**

Doors: 7pm

Friday 11th May

**Premium Leisure
Esther Joy**

Doors: 7pm

Friday 11th May

**The House Party
Kangol vs Kappa**

Doors: 8pm

Saturday 12th May

**Simple
Mall Grab**

Doors: 8pm

Friday 18th May

**The Urban Voodoo Machine
The Long Insiders**

Doors: 6.30pm

Friday 18th May

Straight Outta Cowley - Finale

Doors: 12pm

Saturday 19th May

**Musical Medicine
Krywald & Farrer**

Doors: 11pm

Monday 21st May

The Magic Numbers

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 24th May

The Lewis Hamilton Band

Doors: 7pm

Friday 25th May

**Alboa
Storyteller
Fuji
Crystallite
Jonny Race**

Doors: 6.30pm

Saturday 26th May

**Disco Shed's
Common People Afterparty**

Doors: 8pm

Sunday 27th May

**Simple
OR:LA**

Doors: 8pm

Thursday 31st May

Space Elevator

Doors: 7pm

Friday 1st June

Absolute Bowie

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 2nd June

**Old Skool Oxford
DJ Ratty**

Doors: 8pm

Friday 8th June

Ryan McGarvey

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 9th June

**Musical Medicine
Dan Shake B2B Magnier All Night**

Doors: 8pm

Thursday 14th June

Israel Nash

Doors: 7pm

Friday 15th June

Dr Feelgood

Doors: 11pm

Saturday 16th June

**Simple
Young Marco**

Doors: 11pm

Tuesday 19th June

Graduation

Doors: 11pm

Wednesday 20th June

Rob Togoni

Doors: 7pm

Friday 22nd June

**Zodiac Reunion
After Party**

Doors: 11pm

Saturday 23rd June

**[Untitled] Present Nightslugs:
BokBok B2B Girl Unit
VLVT
Mai Gai**

Doors: 11pm

Friday 29th June

**Metal to the Masses
Final**

Doors: 7pm

Friday 29th June

**Metal to the Masses
Final - After Party**

Doors: 11pm

Saturday 30th June

Volume DnB #11

Doors: 11pm

Thursday 5th July

Oli Brown

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 12th July

Billy Branch + Giles Robson

Doors: 7pm

Friday 27th July

**Arkhive Vol: #1 Launch
Mozez**

Doors: 11pm

**Michael Arkk
Keithy Roots
w/ Empress Peppa Krutial
White Magic**

Doors: 11pm

Friday 24th August

Hookworms

Doors: 7.30pm

Saturday 25th August

Volume DnB #12

Doors: 11pm

Wednesday 29th August

**Epic Beard Men
Sage Francis + B. Dolan**

Doors: 7pm

Wednesday 5th September

**Jolie Holland & Samantha Parton
(The Be Good Tanyas)**

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 6th September

Hamilton Loomis

Doors: 7pm

Friday 14th September

Beaux Gris Gris

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 27th September

Sari Schorr

Doors: 7pm

Sunday 7th October

Jamali Maddix - Vape Lord

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 11th October

Corky Laing

Doors: 7pm

Tuesday 16th October

Clap Your Hands Say Yeah

Doors: 7pm

NEWS

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Online: nightshiftmag.co.uk



MSRY release a new EP in July. 'Safety First' is released on the 6th July and is the follow-up to the band's self-titled debut which was a *Nightshift* Demo of the Month last year.

The local hardcore trio will play the Uncommon Stage at Common People in South Park on Sunday 27th May. They then support Carcer City at the O2 Academy on the 1st June before heading off on an eight-date co-headline tour of the UK with MTXS.

Talking about the new EP MSRY singer Kial Churcher said, "Safety First is about being told that no matter how much you love something or how much it means to you that it'll all be for nothing in the end. It's the foreboding sound of hearing people dismiss you for wanting to be more than you actually are and facing the face of failure with a smug grin, knowing you'll come out better in the end despite what anyone thinks." More info at [facebook.com/MSRYBand](https://www.facebook.com/MSRYBand)

DEADBEAT APOSTLES AND ZIA are the among latest acts to be added to the line-up of *Glofest* this

summer. Soul, r'n'b and country rock outfit Deadbeat Apostles, who release their debut album, 'Day of the Deadbeats' this month, as well as playing Common People at the end of May, and reggae faves Zaia, join Ran Kan Kan; Audacity Live; Papa Nui; Heavy Dexters and Flights of Helios at the inaugural family festival in Florence Park on **Saturday 16th June**.

Glofest is the first ticketed live music event in the park and follows the annual *Flofest* daytime family festival in the park that day. Flofest, which is free, has taken place in Florence Park since 2013. Flofest runs from 11am-5pm with Glofest starting at 6.30pm and running til 10.30pm. Tickets for Glofest are on sale now, priced £5, with under-12s going free. Money raised will go back into local community projects as well as helping make Flofest more sustainable in future years. More details at www.flofest.uk

LITTLE RED release their new album at the end of May. 'Draw Blood' will be out online at the end of May on All Will Be Well Records and released in physical form early June, available from Truck Store and all online platforms. The Oxford/Reading dark-folk trio headline The Jericho Tavern on Friday 25th May with a full band show. Support comes from The Ed Lofstedt Assembly, Rosie Caldecott and Ephebe. Visit www.littleredband.co.uk.



BAS JAN, BELLATRIX AND ALABASTER DEPLUME are among the acts confirmed for this year's *Irregular Folks Summer Session*.

The annual celebration of some of the best leftfield and experimental music from around the world as well as locally, takes place over the weekend of the **7th-8th July** at *The Oxford Artisan Distillery* (TOAD), situated at the top of South Park.

For the first time Irregular Folks are hosting their Summer Session over two days with the Sunday a day of films and shorts in conjunction with The UPP.

Saturday is music day, with Serafina Steer's psychedelic electro-folk-pop outfit Bas Jan making their Oxford debut, as is cosmic wyrd-pop, jazz, blues and soul experimenter and champion beatboxer Bellatrix. Manchester's Alabaster dePlume has received widespread acclaim for his inventive approach to jazz. They are joined by former Stornoway multi-instrumentalist **Jon Ouin**, making his solo live debut, and Zahra Tehrani's experimental electronica and hip hop project *Despicable Zee*, with **Alice Haughton**, **Sephine Llo** and one more act to be announced completing the line-up.

Additionally there will be oddball talks in the *Odditorium*, hosted by David Bramwell, while absurdist comedy genius **Paul Foot** returns once again to complete the show.

Talking to *Nightshift* about this year's event, which has been funded by The Arts Council and the PRS Foundation Open Fund, organiser Vez Hoper said, "I honestly keep pinching myself each day that it's true – and, wow, that patch is starting to hurt! Irregular Folks has always been about bringing a super high level of unique creativity to people at an affordable price so people can try out something new. Having this funding means that we not only get to keep this event true to the values of creativity over commercial gain, and improving it year on year, it's also a big juicy piece of recognition from two exceptionally highly regarded organisations, The Arts Council and PRS Foundation."

Irregular Folks' Summer Sessions is open to over-16s. Tickets are on sale now from Truck Store and Wegotickets.com. Earlybird tickets are £15; advance tickets £20 and £30 on the door. Sunday's cinema day is free to Saturday ticketholders. Visit www.irregularfolks.co.uk for more details.



GAZ COOMBES plays an acoustic show at *Truck Store* this month. Gaz plays the local indie record shop on Cowley Road on **Saturday 5th May** at 6pm to launch his third solo album, 'World's Strongest Man'. The gig is part of a series of instore shows around the UK which precedes a full national tour as well as his set at *Truck Festival* in July.

Priority tickets will be given to anyone pre-ordering the new album from *Truck*.

Meanwhile, Coombes is streaming the second song from 'World's Strongest Man', 'Walk the Walk'. More tour dates at www.gazcoombes.com

LITTLE BROTHER ELI release a new single at the end of the month. 'Our Kind of Love' is released online on the 18th May to coincide with the band's appearance at The Great Escape Festival in Brighton. It will be the band's second single release of 2018, following on from 'Tooth' in January, which saw the band take a more electronic sound. Hear it when it's cooked and ready at soundcloud.com/littlebrothereli.

KELLY LEE OWENS will headline *We Are Your Friends* #3 in September. The Welsh electronic music star, whose self-



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Saturday Night Stand-Up

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NEWS

titled debut album was voted *Pitchfork*'s Number 3 electronica album of 2017 and was remixed by Bjork and St Vincent, comes to the Bullingdon on **Sunday 2nd September** as part of the annual fundraising event for the Michael Barry Fund, part of the Brain Tumour Charity, in memory of local musician and promoter Michael Barry who died in 2016. In March local post-rock legends Youthmovies reformed for two shows in his memory, raising over £6000 from their Bullingdon gigs for the fund. Tickets for the September show are on sale now from **Wegotftickets.com**.

PERHAPS CONTRAPTION are among a host of acts confirmed for this year's Tandem Festival. They join headliners Tantz at **Home Farm** in Oxford over the weekend of the **22nd-24th June**. Other acts announced for the eco-friendly folk and world music event include Peter & Kerry; Paddy Steer; Iyatra Quartet; Bamako Overground;

Bookshop Band; Jay Sunaway; Sinfonia Gaia; Owl Light Trio, and Xogara. More names are set to be added along with late night DJs and ceilidhs. As well as live music there will be workshops, talks, films, poetry, yoga and more. The cycle-powered, volunteer-run festival encourages fans to arrive by bike or public transport, with an emphasis on environmental responsibility. Early bird tickets are on sale now, priced £70 for adults, £35 for under-18s and under-12s going free. Get yours at **tandemcollective.org**.

SEBASTIAN REYNOLDS launches his 'Mahajanaka' EP this month. The local composer and promoter is releasing the Thai-inspired EP to celebrate the preview live performance of Mahajanaka Dance Drama, a project in conjunction with dance company Neon Dance and choreographer Pichet Klunchun, fusing traditional and contemporary Thai musical traditions with Western dance



CHAD VALLEY will headline this year's **If Not Now, When?** Festival. The 80s-inspired electro-pop outfit, helmed by Hugo Manuel, top the bill at the second one-day mini-festival which takes place on **Saturday 15th September** across three rooms at **East Oxford Community Centre** and **Fusion Arts** off Cowley Road. Among the other acts confirmed for the DIY/indie event are: Despicable Zee; Night Flowers; Cousin Kula; Lucy Leave; Gender Roles; Robert Sotelo; Cassels; No Violet, and Breakfast Muff. More acts are set to be announced over the summer. Tickets for INN,W?, which is sponsored by Glasshouse Studios, are on sale now, priced £20 (£15 for under-18s). More info at **facebook.com/ifnotnowhenoxford**.

and music, telling the story of Mahajanaka, from Jakatan mythology. The EP features music based around sampled loops of performances by the Thai pop band Krajidrid Band. Seb plays a show at **Modern Art Oxford** on **Wednesday 16th May**, performing music from the EP, alongside sets from guitarist Marcus Corbett and table maestro Nitin Gaikwad, playing Brit-folk/Indian classical fusion, and Irish harpist, singer and electronics experimentalist Brona McVittie, playing songs from her 'Under the Pines' album alongside guitarist Miles Cochran. Find out more at **sebastianreynolds.co.uk**.

THE FARM headline the **Witney Music Festival** in August. The Liverpoolian indie veterans will top the bill at the annual free gig on the Leys on **Saturday 18th August**. The night before Noasis will head up a bill of tribute bands on The Leys. Witney Music Festival celebrates its twelfth anniversary this year. The community-based festival, founded in memory of Jo Marie Foster, will host a variety of events across the spring and summer in the build-up to the main festival in August, with two weeks of gigs and events in Witney's pubs and clubs from **25th May to 9th June** including a show by Dr & the Medics.

UPCYCLED SOUNDS launch their new record label with a show at Truck Store this month. The production and recording team present an evening of live music from some of the local artists on their roster as well as a label mixtape to take home. The instore takes place from 6-8pm on Thursday 10th May. The label aims to be a musician-led collective. Among artists from around the UK and beyond are Oxford acts Bambino Dell'oro; Limpet Space Race; Matt Chanarin; Rosie Caldecott and Okino. Find out more at **upcycledsounds.eu**

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

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

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THE WATERBOYS	Sun 6
BEAUTIFUL – THE CAROLE KING MUSICAL	Tue 8 – Sat 12
THE ILLEGAL EAGLES	Thu 17
BOOT LED ZEPPELIN	Sun 20
THE SHIRES	Thu 24
9 TO 5 - THE MUSICAL	Tue 29 – Sat 2 June

JUNE

DAVID BYRNE – AMERICAN UTOPIA TOUR SOLD OUT	Thu 14
LES MUSICALS	Sun 17
TRAVIS - THE MAN WHO IN CONCERT	Tue 26

JULY

THE CARPENTERS STORY	Thu 5
ABBA MANIA	Sat 7
SUN RECORDS - THE CONCERT	Sat 14

AUGUST

YOU WIN AGAIN – CELEBRATING THE MUSIC OF THE BEE GEES	Fri 31
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SEPTEMBER

ISLANDS IN THE STREAM	Fri 7
FASTLOVE - A TRIBUTE TO GEORGE MICHAEL	Sat 8
MONEY FOR NOTHING	Fri 14
ALEXANDRA BURKE	Sat 15
WHITNEY - QUEEN OF THE NIGHT	Tue 25
THE SIMON AND GARFUNKEL STORY	Wed 26
JOAN ARMATRADING	Fri 28
SOME GUYS HAVE ALL THE LUCK - THE ROD STEWART STORY	Sun 30



BOOT LED ZEPPELIN
Sun 20 May



TRAVIS - THE MAN WHO IN CONCERT
Tue 26 Jun

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Thursday 17th May 2018, Fat Lil's, Witney, doors 7.30 pm

CARTER SAMPSON plus Jesse Aycock and Lauren Barth

Thursday 31st May 2018, St Barnabas Church, doors 7.30 pm

BENNETT WILSON POOLE

Friday 1st June 2018, Tingewick Village Hall, doors 7.30 pm

BOO HEWERDINE & DARDEN SMITH

Thursday 14th June 2018, The Bullingdon, doors 7.30 pm

ISRAEL NASH

Saturday 16th June 2018, Tingewick Village Hall, doors 5.30 pm

TINGESTOCK IS BACK

Friday 27th July 2018, Dinton Parish Church doors 8pm

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Thursday 8th November 2018, O2 Academy Oxford, doors 7pm

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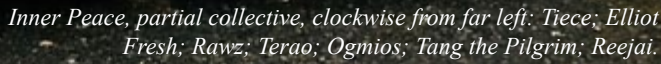
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RELEASED

GAZ COOMBES

‘World’s Strongest Man’ (Caroline International)

To track Gaz Coombes’ life through his songs really is to enter an ages-of-man journey. Early Supergrass songs like ‘Caught By the Fuzz’, ‘Strange Ones’ and ‘Sitting Up Straight’ capture youthful wonder and mischief, while ‘Road to Rouen’ was more considered, less obviously exuberant. Gaz’s songs have become ever more personal with his solo career and ‘World’s Strongest Man’ is almost autumn-of-life in its self-analysis, dealing as it does with fatherhood, breakdowns and death. Now aged 42, Gaz doesn’t sound like he’s having a full-on mid-life crisis so much as sitting down to work out where he is and what it all means. Musically ‘World’s Strongest Man’ follows closely in the footsteps of 2015’s roundly acclaimed ‘Matador’, all softly bubbling synth-pop, rhythmic Krautrock, Bowie-ish rock’n’soul and elegantly downbeat balladry, everything intricately and busily arranged, while always deferring to the tune in hand. Stand-outs are the languorously trippy ‘Shit (I’ve Done It Again)’; the epic, motorik Moroder-meets-Can pulse of lead single ‘Deep Pockets’ and the wonderfully woozy ‘The Oaks’ with its tumbling toms and lysergic atmosphere soundtracking Gaz’s reflections on his mother’s death. It’s the most personal moment on a highly personal album. There are lapses along the way: ‘Slow Motion Way’ is a tender piano ballad but lacks emotional



WANDERING WIRES ‘Homecoming’

(Self released)
There is a long tradition of jazz cross-pollinating with other genres, and for the last decade the focus of intermingling has been with electronica and dance. Bands like Portico Quartet and GoGo Penguin have brought jazz influences to the Rough Trade crowd for the last decade or so, both earning Mercury nominations in the process. The sound that has solidified in this area often tends closer to minimal dance with a double bass and live drums, but what young local act Wandering Wires do is a fascinating reflection on that attitude. They are a



bite and seems to dissipate into the ether even as its being sung, while ‘Oxygen Mask’ sounds, partially successfully, it must be said, like it’s trying to sneak its way onto a recent Radiohead album. But like ‘Matador’ this is an album that manages to marry maturity with musical invention. ‘Walk the Walk’, for example, sounds like a bizarre but pleasing mash-up of Can’s ‘You Doo Right’ and Salt’n’Pepa’s ‘Whatta Man’. The album, though, ends on a downbeat note, ‘Weird Dreams’ a somnambulating drift down darkened corridors to a shifting mosaic of electronic sounds and rhythms; “Hang onto the dark / Don’t wake me yet / I think I’m still in a dream,” croons Gaz softly, sounding like a man who’s still half asleep and clinging to the hope all the shit stuff didn’t really happen. Musically at least, his strength hasn’t left him yet. **Dale Kattack**

jazz band with broad horizons, and a good selection of synthesizers. Olivia Williams’ vocals and the rhythm section firmly ground the band in the traditional jazz club scene, with staccato rhythmic jumps and slinky vocal melodies. If Wandering Wires paired back their ideas they’d have no trouble making a good run round the club circuit. However, there is so much more here that elevates their second album ‘Homecoming’ to a genre-fluid treat. Opening track ‘Recife’ starts out with arpeggiation and keys that evoke thoughts of Cinematic Orchestra but it quickly moves into a slinky, relaxing groove with floating lyrics enticing you to sea, all finished off with blustering synth and sax solos. ‘Waiting For Your Love’ could easily be reworked into a chart-friendly pop hit, whereas ‘Stolen’ and ‘Now I Know’ stray towards what you might call lounge, but without a whiff of the red-carpet-covered horror of Murph and his Magictones. Throughout ‘Homecoming’ it’s constantly surprising how many diverse ideas Wandering Wires can hang on to what are – at their core – pretty straight jazz tunes. There are soaring strings, video game synth leads and soulful horns, while ‘Worlds Apart’ rests on a beat that that with little effort could underpin a drum&bass track. All of which could be a scattershot mess, but the reality is quite the opposite, every left-turn or unexpected segue feels natural, feels like there was no other more obvious option. **Matt Chapman Jones**

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LUCY LEAVE

‘Look//Listen’ (Self-released)

There’s a fine line between weird and wacky. It’s a line that Frank Zappa pogoed back and forth across and it’s one that Young Knives certainly flirted with. One step too far and you risk becoming a novelty act. On their debut album ‘Look//Listen’, Lucy Leave pitch their tent proudly in the weird and wonderful camp, giving us Oxford’s answer to Minutemen’s 80s classic ‘Double Nickels on the Dime’. The similarities to the Minutemen aren’t just superficial; Lucy Leave are a three-headed songwriting machine so ‘Look//Listen’ is a bountiful eighteen track trip through their wonky musical world. Anyone who has seen these guys live knows to expect a few left turns, and on ‘Look//Listen’ we’re treated to the complete gamut of their ever-switching styles. The band like to describe themselves as ‘jazz grunge’ and while they never actually quite arrive at either this is a handy indicator of their sound – noisy, tempestuous, freewheeling. There’s nary a verse-chorus-verse in these 45 minutes. Bizarre *a cappella* tracks give way to driving krautpunk before veering off into stranger terrain, all powered by Deerhoof-levels of joyful exuberance and a willingness to confound. That’s all very well and good, but at the heart of Lucy Leave is a band with a strong sense of melody, mood, and a way with a vocal earworm. This results in occasional tender, emotional moments such as the bass and guitar interplay in ‘Prints’ and the synth-laden ‘Hang Out With Now’, which features the immortal line “There’s nothing in this world that I hate more than the people you hang out with now.” They even end the album with a wry, bittersweet piano ballad. There’s something satisfying about Lucy Leave – a charming, breezy quality that makes ‘Look//Listen’ a real joy to listen to, even when they’re trying to cram all manner of weird things in your ears. They’re already one of the best live bands in Oxford, and now they’re one of the best on record. To borrow a phrase from another group of merry pranksters, slanted and enchanted. **Tom McKibbin**



CATGOD

‘Heartbeat in My Hand’ (Self released)

Catgod’s previous output has veered towards the experimental and guitarist Robin Christensen-Marriot has always shown a keenness to explore the wider parameters of sound, refusing to be pigeon-holed and yet producing a fair few good tunes to boot. It’s been an alluring combination over the band’s short history, following on from



AUDACITY LIVE

‘The Guilty Pleasures EP’ (Self released)

Over the past few years Audacity has been hosting old-school club nights at East Oxford Community Centre, keeping the flame of 90s free raves alive and featuring among the DJ sets a live set of raved-up covers of classic 70s and 80s tunes under the name Audacity Live, turning them into techno party bangers. At the heart of al this is Alan Brown, whose previous live act, Letfouterjoin, once played the

BEAVER FUEL

‘Pulling Rank’ (Self released)

In the true spirit of punk rock and 80s DIY indie, Beaver Fuel wear their tunelessness as a badge of honour with TV Personalities and The Pastels seemingly the touchstones by which they measure their high fidelity standards. Everything here is a fluster and hurry of chugging fuzz-pop, tumbling beats and almost spoken words, with both guitar and bass taking the occasional opportunity to go outside for a wander or a cigarette, leaving the

their previous existence as Roberto y Amigos and new single ‘Heartbeat in My Hand’ is a beautiful, swirling piece of cinematic pop, recalling the otherworldly enchantment of Kate Bush or Bat for Lashes. Central to this is Robin’s sister Cat – it’s her vocal performance that impresses – soaring over plaintive piano, aching synths and perfectly judged guitar, the whole atmosphere of which mirrors the paisley patterns and 60s aesthetic visible in the band’s look. There’s also a smidgeon of a hint of vocal fry to the delivery which, accompanied by the tendency of the music to veer towards less conventional territory, makes for an absorbing whole. A temptation to take too much on, be overly eclectic and to over egg the pudding are not accusations that carry water here. Lyrically, ‘Heartbeat in My Hand’ tackles those contrasting but related bedfellows, Love and Death – the importance of being able to clutch on to one’s lover for dear life as family members pass on is an aching sentiment delivered to perfection. Catgod evoke the mystery of the ancient Egyptians who used to worship the animal in question to a level that even *Nightshift* cannot quite match – mystery, magic and sorcery abound and singling this track out for special release distinct from the rest of their output is a daring but well-judged move. **Rob Langham**

Oxford Punt and flooded the Wheatsheaf with so much smoke the alarms went off, allowing punters probably their only ever view of the venue’s windows (even we never knew the place had them). While *Nightshift* isn’t one to adhere to the idea of guilty pleasures (never feel guilty about the music you love, even if it’s Sam Smith or Gary Barlow, though perhaps sit and ponder your life choices awhile), there’s a hefty cheese count in this selection, from Kenny Loggins’ ‘Footloose’, through ‘Born to Be Wild’ and onto Blondie’s ‘Atomic’. ‘Staying Alive’ only gets the lightest of a techno polishing, but it was halfway there anyway, and here lacks the Bee Gee’s trademark falsettos, while ‘Atomic’ was proto techno anyway and is missing Debbie Harry’s gloriously soaring voice, but Eurythmics’ steely synth stomp, ‘Sweet Dreams’, gets a euphoric trance makeover for its extended solo and fares better, and the take on ‘Footloose’ is fun enough (though the song was dreadful enough first time round that any remake could only be an improvement). Ultimately, like any kind of tribute act, this is something best experienced live where the band play off the communal atmosphere, where inhibitions and the concept of cool get trampled into the dirt, where you can check your guilt in at the door and just dance. **Sue Foreman**

song in hand to fend for itself. Such a rudimentary approach is endearing in a way but it does detract from Leigh Alexander’s lyrics, which have always been the core of Beaver Fuel’s music, at his best while dissecting Christianity on ‘Dogma Is For Life, Not Just For Christmas’, which would benefit from a more stripped-back sound, something like Jeffrey Lewis. The again, when he’s singing “I want to take a shit in your shoes / Fill your footwear up with number twos” with appropriate childish cheer, maybe a hefty layer of distortion is the decent thing. **Dale Kattack**

OLD ERNIE

‘Imagined Memory’ / ‘Black Cotton Wool’

(Self released)
Two full length albums here from Old Ernie, but one that squeezes seventeen tracks into its forty minutes, while the other spreads itself across just six. There’s some common ground between the two, and you can just about tell it’s the same band some of the time but taking both together gives you an idea of the restlessness of the band, fronted by David Kahl, alongside partner Gemma Kahl (who leads their alter-ego band Brown Glove) and the desire to never quite fit into any genre specific hole.

‘Imagined Memory’ is mostly instrumental: vocals tend to be buried deep in the mix, either chanted with almost hysterical verve or screamed and distorted in death metal fashion. The music is variously brutish, industrial, ambient and abstract. Too abstract at times and you wonder if David wouldn’t have done better to ditch four or five of the numbers that fill up the back end of the album. At its best though it’s an immersive, atmospheric collage of future factory clang, grind and squelch, synthetic scree, uptight metallic funk, slacker electro-rock, doomcore and mechanical menace that hits a peak with the monstrous sci-fi/horror soundtrack of ‘Visions Fall’, all industrial doom and dissonance that coheres into something resembling ‘Venus in Furs’ covered by witch-house crew Salem, while ‘You Need’ is a pummelling dirge that skirts close to Godflesh territory. ‘Black Cotton Wool’ is a more coherent selection of tracks with the ideas more fully realised or expended on, from creeping psychedelia, malevolent grunge churn, Sabbath riffing and a stoner vibe at times. Opener ‘Lynchpin’ sounds like Butthole Surfers at their most Sabbath-worshipping metal, while best of the six pieces is the slow-build oncoming storm that is ‘Eyes Like Flint’, starting with atmospheric drones that build through Melvins-heavy riffage to Bauhaus-style gothic art-rock, taking in the best post-metal noise and even a hint of the brilliant Wreckmeister Harmonies along the way.

What both albums share is a darkness and a relentless quest to kick any semblance of comfort from beneath your feet before you get the chance to grab hold of it. If they sometimes overstretch or fall just short, on both albums Old Ernie mostly get the mood just right and the band should serve as a demonic shadow lurking in the peripheral vision of any rock band out there hoping to take the easy route. **Dale Kattack**



RELEASED

THE DEADBEAT APOSTLES

‘The Day Of The Deadbeats’

(Self released)

From a six piece band you could describe as seasoned and gnarly, you’d expect the debut album by The Deadbeat Apostles to be a straightforward, evangelical, hoe-down blues romp: the kind of shit-kicking rowdiness they are adroit at regularly starting across the county. But laid out in the round, their party pieces, given the chance to show their heritage and breadth, take on a higher level of musical wisdom and reverence.

This is largely due to being individually fronted by two very special singers: Mike Ginger, whose rampant gusto can swing from a raucous Roger Daltrey on first track ‘Awkward Age’, all the way over to an urbane cowboy Mick Hucknell on ‘Can’t Stop The Rain’ and ‘Man Who Sold His Soul’, and Michelle Mayes, a real soulful belter in the mould of Eddi Reader who totally commands her tracks ‘Stand Up’ and ‘Gonna Be Different’. Better still, when their alchemy is corralled into a duet on the heavenly country of ‘Lonesome’, their combined qualities ooze out of a real peach of a song.

The band’s solid music ranges wildly too, with a clutch of rocking intro riffs that would make

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Keith Richards fall out of his coconut tree with excitement, notably in ‘Back Lane Blues’, and the eye opening ‘Dutch Rudder’ (a hearty paean to being aided with your own onanism). They are equally at home with spiritual Americana and the deep South, with the *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* chug-a-lug of ‘Shall Not Repent’ showing huge rhythmic depth, alongside the slow hand National guitar twang of ‘Bigger Man’.

So if you’re one of the breathless crowd, palpitating dangerously at the end of one of The Deadbeat Apostles’ gigs, wondering if buying the album would match and extend the evening’s joy in your front room: it does, and a whole lot more besides.

Paul Carrera

FLATLANDS

‘At The Time It Made Perfect Sense’

(Self released)

We’ve been told that guitar music is dead on and off since at least the early 90s and new waves of bands have proved the theory wrong to a greater or lesser degree. But sometimes you sit and listen to something and wonder whether the classic vocals/guitars/bass/drums line-up should maybe be put permanently out to pasture since its productivity has sunk beneath viable levels.

It’s unfair to lay the failings of an entire style of music at the feet of a humble unsigned band such as Flatlands, but this EP typifies much of what is so tired about guitar music, where proficiency trumps spark, spirit and invention.

The EP’s opening gambit ‘Philly’ is fulsome and almost heroic with its post-grunge-meets-shoegaze crunch and spangle but it never takes off from its initial promise, the passionless vocals make the whole thing feel flat and it does what every rock song does when it’s run out of ideas – heads off on an extended guitar solo that satisfies no-one beyond the guitarist’s self indulgence. ‘Friday Night’ is more buoyant and on the face of it comes with a bit of vim, but you’ll struggle to find a hook big or strong enough to hang your hat or hopes on and it thrashes and shimmers along as if it’s something that just has to be done so it can get to the end.

As with Flatland’s previous demos, and like near musical neighbours like Amazons or Catfish and the Bottlemen, there’s more than a hint of Cowell-endorsed boy band about songs like ‘Tub

JACK GOLDSTEIN

‘A Tiger Shark Might Eat a Bull Shark, A Bull Shark Might Eat a Blacktip Shark...’

(Attracted)

There’s a stark contrast between Fixers’ high-end psychedelic gloss-pop and singer Jack Goldstein’s solo pots’n’pans production, but what they share is a dedication to unruly head music, the aim to send you off on a trip.

This latest solo set – whose full title we won’t even bother repeating, lest we eat our entire word count up – is characteristically wayward and unpredictable, imaginatively crazy, not to mention kitsch to the point you occasionally wonder if Jack’s simply testing your resolve.

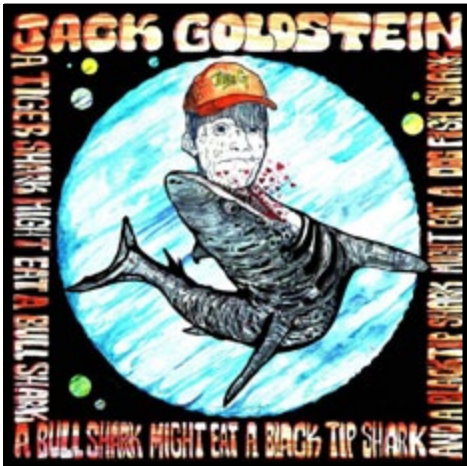
His accompanying letter mentions listening to Tom Robinson and Suzie Quatro’s 1980s output, and there’s definitely a bit of post-glam stomp about tracks like ‘Mariah Minidisc’ and ‘Self Deprecation Rock’, but across twelve tracks we get a sometimes disorientating journey from the blues to something approaching anti-folk, via The Beach Boys’ surf pop and Todd Rundgren.

Album opener ‘My Second Life’ is spaced-out sepia-tinted psychedelia that’s part full-on head trip and lost 1970s kids TV theme tune and ends with the sound of someone vomiting copiously into a toilet bowl. From here we get ‘Future Days’, which might be The Flaming Lips reincarnated as a haggard Mid-West bar band; ‘Early Morning Birds’, with its keening vocals and horrible guitar scrape that makes Daniel Johnston sound like U2, and the jarring ‘B-Love’ with its raw Dictators-style proto-punk, all bluesy guitar licks and big organ sound.

There are weird little interludes, like ‘Total Devastation & Heartbreak Emoji’, that seem left in the mix to point you in the wrong direction, but immediately followed by the softer, country-tinged rock of ‘It Might Be My Fault Again’, that edges towards Townes van Zandt. At least up to the point it flips its lid and burrows into The Killers’ ‘Human’ like a goblin Butthole Surfers. Because anything else would be almost normal. And in Jack Goldstein’s musical world, normal is a dirty word.

So take the trip, ladies and gentlemen, but buckle up tight, leave your expectations at the door and don’t expect to find the finish line where it should be, or via any route your Satnav would take you. Unless of course your Satnav is controlled by Hal 9000.

Dale Kattack



lineage as the south London scene that has spawned Fat White Family and Shame and while it will be interesting to see if Haze can match the former for sheer energetic excitement, on the evidence of this track alone, they’ve arguably already achieved more on record than the latter, authors of a no more than promising album that bears as much liking to their live show as a lighter held aloft does to a roaring fire.

Like Shame, Haze attempt to skewer lad culture but do not come across as protesting too much that the listener becomes suspicious that they may have a history as ardent misogynists. Instead, it’s an effective critique, and this single is cast from the finest post-punk traditions: a staccato assault of sharp guitars, punctuated by laconic but lusty vocal delivery.

If Haze like a game of arrows and a pint of light ale, then that’s proof that pub rock is alive and well and more interesting than we ever thought it could be again.

Rob Langham



HAZE

‘Ladz, Ladz, Ladz’

(Permanent Creeps)

The Punchbowl in Woodstock played host to a band called The Haze back in November 1993, an event commemorated in the following month’s edition of *Curfew*, the magazine describing the performers as ‘a good, crowd pleasing pub rock band’. Now, a quarter of a century of later, an act of the same name, all of whose members will almost certainly not been born at the time, have stepped in to grab hold of the flame. Happily, they don’t so much do this as carry out a spectacular pyrotechnic display replete with fire eating, arson and flame throwing to boot. Unimaginably youthful, Haze are here and in your face.

With the band fresh from an incendiary support to Phobophobes at The Cellar last month ‘Ladz, Ladz, Ladz’ emerges from the same musical

‘Got a Lot To Give’ might not be as fluid as more laidback MCs but it’s bang on point as he ponders some kind of midlife crisis over a looped Middle-Eastern vocal sample. He’s at his most political on ‘Save Our Culture’, inspired by the threatened closure of The Cellar and Fabric in London, the more electronic backing suiting his style better than the rock guitar riffs of ‘Get Out’. The latter finds him taking a more languid and brooding vocal path which sounds less natural or authoritative, and the EP’s high point comes with ‘I Don’t Care’, with Tiger Mendoza’s nasty electronic edge the perfect musical partner for Half Decent’s machine-like rhymes. ‘You Have the Power’ is a full-on, chest-thumping old-school party banger, which is pure 90s, right down to the heavy rock riffing, and while his production is far too neatly produced to qualify as lo-fi, Half Decent’s hip hop has its roots in a time when rap’s message was more important than its studio techniques.

Dale Kattack



HALF DECENT

‘Something For the Fearless’

(Quickfix)

‘Something For the Fearless’ is Half Decent’s 11th release, a testament to his staying power and professional attitude. These seven tracks feature the West Oxfordshire rapper’s trademark tropes: his militant, machine gun delivery and a tendency to soulful backing vocals and some cheesy soft rock sampling. His rapping is at its best when he goes at it full pelt: the staccato rant of EP opener

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G I G G U I D E

TUESDAY 1st

THE MIGHTY REDOX: The Wheatsheaf (*6.30am*) – The local funk, blues, ska and psych-flavoured party rockers play their traditional May Morning show.
SPARKY’S FLYING CIRCUS: The James Street Tavern – Weekly open mic night.

WEDNESDAY 2nd

OCEAN WISDOM: O2 Academy – Velocity rap, drum&bass and grime from Camden-born, Brighton-resident MC Ocean Wisdom, whose word count on his ‘Walkin’ track has seen him usurp Eminem in the speed rap stakes. He’s out on tour

Friday 4th

WILKO JOHNSON: O2 Academy NINE BELOW ZERO: The Bullingdon

Well here’s a clash to have gig goers of a certain persuasion scratching their heads, examining their loyalties and maybe flipping a coin. Two of British UK’s seminal r’n’b acts both in town on the same night. If they were sharing a stage it’d be an unmissable double bill for fans of the genre, but this clash will doubtless split the audience. At the Academy, former Dr Feelgood guitarist Wilko Johnson continues to enjoy life more than ever, having survived a diagnosis of terminal cancer and deciding to head off on a farewell tour before meeting surgeon Charlie Chan at Cornbury Festival in 2013 and subsequently getting the all-clear (returning to play an emotional set at the festival in 2016). The subject of Julien Temple’s 2015 film *The Ecstasy of Wilko Johnson*, he remains one of the most energetic performers around with a distinctive take on classic r’n’b. And just to prove he’s adept with more than one kind of axe, he’s also played the Lannisters’ executioner in chief in *Game of Thrones*. Nine Below Zero, meanwhile, shared in that late-70s r’n’b charge, while enjoying their most successful period in the early 1980s with albums ‘Live At The Marquee’ and ‘Don’t Point Your Finger’. Founding singer and guitarist Dennis Greaves still leads the band’s high-energy blues charge alongside fellow veterans Mark Feltham and Brian Bethall, and like Johnson it’s always been live that the band have made their reputation. So make your choice.



MAY

to promote new album ‘Wizville’, the follow-up to iTunes Top 10 debut ‘Chaos 93’, the new album featuring guest appearances from Method Man, Roots Manuva and Rodney P along the way.
DEEP DARK WOODS + KACEY & CLAYTON: The Bullingdon – Deep and dark by name, deep and dark by nature from the Saskatchewan sextet, back in town after their show here in 2014, the band’s exploration of late-night, empty barroom romance and regret, carrying an air of stately melancholy as chief songwriter Ryan Boldt’s maudlin baritone mixes with keyboard player Geoff Hilhurst’s exotic array of vintage instruments – including novachord, celesta and vibraphone. The band’s latest album, ‘Yarrow’, burrows into the dark heart of English folk and country blues, taking fever and death as its cheery starting point.
BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE: The Cellar – Fortnightly club night playing 80s hits; new wave; disco; synth-pop and glam.

THURSDAY 3rd

YEAR OF THE KITE: Truck Store (*6pm*) – Gorgeously gloomy pop vibes from the local band launching their new album ‘With Sparks Flying’.
LOWER THAN ATLANTIS: O2 Academy – Increasingly pop-friendly anthemic rock and post-hardcore from Watford’s enduring crew, last year’s Top 10 album ‘Safe In Sound’ as close to U2 and Coldplay as to their punk roots; live their polished sound comes into its own and a moshpit is still guaranteed.
SIR WAS: The Cellar – Smoothly eclectic blend of soul, funk, jazz, hip hop, electronica and yacht rock from Gothenburg producer Joel Wästberg, touring last year’s debut ‘Digging a Tunnel’ album and finding a middle ground between Brian Wilson and Money Mark.
BRAVE NEW WORLD: The Cellar – Techno, funk and edm club night, with a live set from Vaunce, plus DJs.
SHOWHAWK DUO: The Bullingdon – Acoustic trance from the busking duo whose interpretations of everything from ‘Bohemian Rhapsody’ and ‘Adagio for Strings’, to old school trance classics and funky house tracks has earned them appearances at Glastonbury and Secret Garden Party.
WITCH FEVER + DEATH OF THE MAIDEN + RAINBOW RESERVOIR: The Jericho Tavern – Superb triple bill courtesy of All Tamara’s Parties tonight with Manchester’s alternately dark, brooding and raw, feral punk/grunge outfit Witch Fever marrying Sabbath-heavy riffage to Seven Year Bitch-style punk venom and Madonnatron’s gothic atmospherics. Death of Maiden’s elegantly traumatic Brechtian pop and Rainbow Reservoir’s cheerily bitter-sweet post-riot grl bounce pop provide top drawer local support.
THE PETE FRYER BAND: The Wheatsheaf – Classic blues and rock covers from the veteran

guitarist and chums.
HOLY MOLY & THE CRACKERS: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Gypsy folk-rock from well-travelled septet Holy Moly & the Crackers, taking in klezmer, Balkan folk, ska and reggae in their world fusion sound.
CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre – Oxford’s longest running open night continues to showcase singers, musicians, poets, storytellers and performance artists every Thursday.
GILMORE & ROBERTS: The Unicorn, Abingdon – Instrumental acoustic folk from fiddle and mandolin player Katriona Gilmore and guitarist James Roberts, the duo, nominated for BBC Folk Awards three times, celebrating twelve years together, having previously been tour support to Fairport Convention.
SPARKY’S NEW MOON: The Half Moon – Weekly open night.
ACOUSTIC THURSDAY: Jude The Obscure – Unplugged open night.
BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford – Open blues jam.

FRIDAY 4th

MIGHTY CROWN FAR EAST RULERS: O2 Academy – The Japanese dancehall sound system hits town.
RHYS LEWIS + JACK GOLDSTEIN + WEDNESDAY’S WOLVES: O2 Academy – Oxford/London bluesman Rhys Lewis continues his rise and rise, following up sold-out shows at The Cellar and The Bullingdon with his biggest local show to date, with a soulful take on electric blues. He’s joined by Fixers frontman and psychedelic sonic adventurer Jack Goldstein and folk-pop duo Wednesday’s Wolves, whose Joan Baez and Natalie Merchant-influenced acoustic songs have seen them supporting Amber Run, Seafret and Flyte.
WILKO JOHNSON: O2 Academy – Clash of the British r’n’b legends – in the blue corner – *see main preview*
NINE BELOW ZERO: The Bullingdon – And in the red corner – *see main preview*
TROPICLE POPSICLE: The Bullingdon – The tropical house and disco club night bows out on the Oxford scene, preparing to take its exotic club experience to London.
KLUB KAKOFANNEY with PAPA NUI + LIME + PUPPET MECHANIC + STEEVO NUISSIER: The Wheatsheaf – Klub Kak’s monthly party night brings funk-pop outfit Papa Nui to the Sheaf, alongside moody Radiohead and Tindersticks-inspired rockers Puppet Mechanic and dark-hearted synth-pop man Steevo.
BOSSAPHONIK with THE TURBANS: The Cellar – World dance club night, playing Afrobeat, Balkan beats, Latin dancefloor and nu-jazz, tonight with a live set from The Turbans, fusing their Turkish, Bulgarian, Greek, Spanish, Iranian and British roots to make a sound combining eastern European traditions and Middle Eastern grooves.
EKE BUKA + THE CELETOIDS + SKY:LARK + SAVAGE REALM: The Library – Double dose of Croatian punk and hardcore at tonight’s Smash Disco show with Zagreb’s velocity hardcore crew Eke Buka and raw garage-punk outfit Celetoids, both signed to Doomtown Records, out on a

joint tour. They’re joined by London’s noise rock brutalists Sky:lark and monstrous black/death metallers Savage Realm.
MOTORHEADACHE + MOFO: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Tribute to rock god Lemmy and co.
ME & THE MOON + THE AUGUST LIST: Magoo’s Bar, Henley – Hazy indie-folk from Me & the Moon, alongside local darkwoods country-drone faves The August List.

SATURDAY 5th

GAZ COOMBES: Truck Store (*6pm*) – Acoustic show from the local hero, launching his new solo album, ‘World’s Strongest Man’. Order your copy from Truck and bag a priority ticket.
FRANK TURNER & THE SLEEPING SOULS: O2 Academy – Already sold out return to town for honorary Oxfordian Frank and his band of brothers – *see main preview*
THE REAPER + CONFRONT THE CARNAGE + DAMAGED REIGH + BLOODSHOT + RESOLVE: O2 Academy – Classic 70s and 80s-inspired heavy rock and

Saturday 5th

FRANK TURNER & THE SLEEPING SOULS: O2 Academy

Frank Turner has done a lot to defy expectations from pretty much every angle since he rose from the ashes of Million Dead in 2005, going against the grain of the grab-fame-quickly approach to build slowly and surely from the bottom via endless touring (*Nightshift* fondly remembers Frank when he was playing support down at the Wheatsheaf back at the very start), while releasing chart-topping albums on indie label Xtra Mile. He’s also defied the stereotype of the politically-minded folk-punk singer-songwriter as woolly Guardianista or Marxist firebrand by daring to declare himself a libertarian (for which he earned a whole heap of undeserved stick). But then the Bahrain-born, Eton-educated Turner simply does things his way and does them very well indeed, earning his place at the top table when he played the Olympics opening ceremony back in 2012 and selling out each and every tour he sets out on, accompanied by a trusty backing band that features Oxford scene heroes Nigel Powell, Tarrant Anderson and Ben Lloyd, which, along with his regular appearances in town, has made him an honorary Oxonian. Previous visits to Oxford have seen him play The New Theatre and Oxford Town Hall, always selling them out well in advance, so it’s no surprise that tonight’s gig has long since done the same. His debut solo release, ‘Campfire Punk Rock’, is a description that still suits his music well, mixing rock and roll performance with solo acoustic sets with highly personable passion. His seventh studio album, ‘Be More Kind’, is released the day before this show, so expect new songs from that as well as all the old favourites.



metal from The Reaper at tonight’s Skeletor show, alongside death, black and doom metallers Confront the Carnage; trash newcomers Damaged Reich and death/grind from Bloodshot.
WESTERN SAND + THE OUTLAW ORCHESTRA + BLACK BULLETS: The Cellar – Southern-fried hard rock with a classic 70s vintage from Dorset’s Western Sand at tonight’s OxRox show, joined by Southampton’s southern rock and bluegrass crew The Outlaw Orchestra and Basingstoke’s biker rock crew Black Bullets
FREERANGE: The Cellar – UK garage, grime and bassline club night.
METAL TO THE MASSES: The Wheatsheaf – Quarter-final of the competition to win a slot at this summer’s Bloodstock, tonight with Promethean Reign, Honour in Ashes, Imminent Annihilation and Repercussions of Yesterday.
AUDACITY GLOFEST TAKEOVER: East Oxford Community Centre – Audacity hosts a Glofest special, building up to the festival in June. A night of free live music includes Audacity Live’s high-energy acid house remakes and remodels of classic 70s and 80s tunes, from The Bee Gees to Blondie and beyond. They’re joined by Mad Flamenco and Collision Theory, plus Audacity DJs.
CLIVE GREGSON & LIZ SIMCOCK + LEON GORMLEY: Tiddy Hall, Ascot-under-Wychwood – Wychwood Folk Club welcomes veteran songwriter Clive Gregson – a founding member of Stiff Records signings Any Trouble but best known for this 80s musical partnership with Christine Collister – now teamed up with singer Liz Simcock and revisiting some of those old folk classics, songs that have been covered by everyone from Nanci Griffith and Mary Chapin-Carpenter to Fairport and Norma Waterson.
PETE FRYER BAND: The New Club, Wheatley

SUNDAY 6th

THE WATERBOYS: The New Theatre – Return to town for Mike Scott’s mercurial roots rockers, touring new album ‘Out of All This Blue’ – *see main preview*
MALLORY KNOX: O2 Academy – Big-boned stadium rocking from Cambridge’s Mallory Knox, back in town to promote third album ‘Wired’ after their show here last year.
TIGERCATS + BLUE HOUSE + LAUSBERG + VENUS TROPICAUX: The Library – Four doses of prime indie fillet courtesy of Divine Schism with a return to town for east London’s expansive, exuberant kalima-led pop outfit Tigercats, joined by soft-centred surf-pop duo Blue House and Rotterdam’s angular post-punk crew Venus Tropicaux.
BEARD OF DESTINY + FRANKLIN’S TOWER + THE MISSING NOTES + RIVERSIDE VOICES: Donnington Community Centre (*6pm*) – Free early evening of live music, including blues duo Beard of Destiny and Grateful Dead tribute Franklin’s Tower.
OPEN MIC SESSION: Harcourt Arms – Weekly open mic night.
FOLK JAM: The Half Moon – Open folk session, every Sunday.
MIGHTY REDOX: The Tree, Iffley (*4-6.30pm*)

MONDAY 7th

THE BLUETONES + VELVET HANDS: O2 Academy – For there is nothing certain in life except death and taxes and another Bluetones tour.
STRANGE BONES + CALVA LOUISE + SPINNER FALL: The Cellar – Raucous punked-up blues rocking from Blackpool’s Strange Bones, out on a headline tour after supporting Cabbage and



Sunday 6th

THE WATERBOYS: The New Theatre

A return to town for Mike Scott’s mercurial rockers The Waterboys, touring last year’s Top 10 album ‘Out of All This Blue’. Going against the grain of most post-punk, The Waterboys infused their gutsy, exuberant brand of rock with a traditional piano and brass-led rootsy edge and a stadium-style grandeur that for a time threatened to take them into the same stratospheric level of commercial success as Simple Minds and U2. Instead a trio of classic mid-80s albums, ‘A Pagan Place’, ‘This Is The Sea’ and ‘Fisherman’s Blues’, steered clear of that sort of pomposity and the band remained more of a cult concern. Mass acceptance did finally come in 1991 with the re-release of epic single ‘The Whole Of The Moon’, but by then Scott had already moved on, ditching the raggle taggle Celtic rock in favour of darker, more experimental waters. Last time Scott and co. (including longstanding alongside fiddle player Steve Wickham) played this venue was in 2013 to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the release of ‘Fisherman’s Blues’, but the band aren’t stuck in that past, regularly releasing new albums and with ‘Out Of All...’ rewarding them with their highest chart placing in over two decades. These days they perform live as a nine-piece, giving those big, epic songs the arrangements they deserve.

Frank Carter & the Rattlesnakes, the band mixing up Cramps-y rockabilly, early Arctic Monkeys indie and glitterstomping rhythms. They’re joined by London’s fuzzy grunge rockers Calva Louise, back in Oxford after playing last year’s Ritual Union, and local post-punk crew Spinner Fall, channelling Fugazi and Wire.
FLUORESCENT ADOLESCENT: The Cellar – Indie, alternative and post-punk club night.
LIVE JAZZ SESSION: The Bullingdon – Free jazz session in the front bar.
OPEN MIC SESSION: The Royal Blenheim – Weekly open mic night.

TUESDAY 8th

INTRUSION: The Cellar – Oxford’s only goth club night brings the darkness with Doktor Joy and Bookhouse playing classic goth, ebm, deathrock and industrial.
TRIO HLK: The Mad Hatter – Complex, rhythmic jazz deconstruction from the Scottish piano/percussion/guitar trio.
SPARKY’S FLYING CIRCUS: The James Street Tavern

WEDNESDAY 9th

MARY GAUTHIER: St Barnabas Church – The New Orleans singer/songwriter returns to Oxford for the first time in eight years – *see main preview*
JIZZY PEARL’S LOVE/HATE: + DOOMSDAY



Wednesday 9th

MARY GAUTHIER: St. Barnabas Church

Mary Gauthier's start in life might have finished many others off – abandoned at birth by her mother who, years later, refused to meet her estranged daughter; running away from her adoptive parents and becoming lost in drink and drugs, and coming to terms with her sexual identity – but the New Orleans singer-guitarist has made her life into music, worked through her experiences in songs and stories and over the course of the past two decades has released some ten albums and won enough awards to justify installing a couple of new mantelpieces in her Nashville home. After her turbulent early years, spending her 18th birthday in jail and later opening her own restaurant (she was arrested for drink-driving on the opening night and has been sober ever since) Gauthier started writing songs at the age of 35, her raw, emotive style of alt.country, folk and Americana perfect for exploring her own roots and identity – most affectingly on 2010's Michael Timmins-produced 'The Foundling'. Along the way her songs – more like stories put to music – have been adopted by artists like Tim McGraw, Bettye Lavette, Jimmy Buffet and Candi Staton, and she's won Grammys by proxy through those. Now one of the most respected songwriters and singers in contemporary country music, as well as an LGBT totem, tonight's show in the suitably ornate setting of St. Barnabas for Empty Room, is Mary's first Oxford show since her debut here in 2011 and sees her, aged 56, still at the peak of her musical powers, playing songs from her new album 'Rifles & Rosary Beads', recorded with US veterans and their families.

OUTLAW + THE BLACK BULLETS: The Bullingdon – OxRox host a return visit to town for ill-starred 90s hard rockers Love/Hate, still helmed by sole remaining original member, singer Jizzy Pearl, They toured with Ozzy Osbourne, AC/DC and Skid Row, but a volatile line-up and myriad record company fall-outs stymied any chance of wider commercial success. They're joined tonight by Derby's full-on blues rockers Doomsday Outlaws, and biker rock crew Black Bullets.

SPORTS TEAM + SEAFOAM + OLD SWING: The Cellar – Angsty, intense millennial post-punk from London newcomers Sports Team.

STEVE LAMACQ: The Jericho Tavern - An evening of conversation with the veteran DJ and music journalist and lifelong champion of up and coming bands, talking about his years at NME as well as Radio 1 and 6Music.

THURSDAY 10th

UPCYCLED LABEL LAUNCH: Truck Store (6pm) – Launch night for the local label whose roster includes Jay Sunaway, Rosie Caldecott,

Limpet Space Race and Matt Chanarin. A limited edition label mixtape will be available on the night.

JUDAS: The Cellar – Anthemic rock from Judas, out on tour after sets at Truck, Y Not, Isle of Wight Festival and a main stage slot at last year's Leeds festival.

DMA'S: O2 Academy – Having been banished to the colonies 20 years ago, Britpop's prison ship docked in Botany Bay and Oasis, The Verve and Cast alighted to bring the message of mid-paced indie rock trudge to Australia's youth. DMA's' debut album 'Hill's End' suggests they lapped it up.

MOJO DEMON + FULL CIRCLE + SOMETHINGSOMEDAY + MARK COPE: The Bullingdon – Raw, rocking blues in the vein of Led Zep, The Doors and Little Walter from Mojo Demon with Ady Davey's groove-heavy riffage battling with Markus Butler's raw, free-ranging harmonica.

CATWEAZLE: East Oxford Community Centre

SPARKY'S NEW MOON: The Half Moon

ACOUSTIC THURSDAY: Jude The Obscure

BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford

FRIDAY 11th

PREMIUM LEISURE + ESTHER JOY: The Bullingdon – Laidback, groove-led slacker funk and classic 60s psych-pop in the vein of The Kinks, Tame Impala and White Denim from songsmith Chris Barker's band, playing a hometown headline show ahead of their appearance at Common People at the end of the month. They're joined by electro-pop singer and producer and former *Nightshift* cover star Ester Joy Lane, back in Oxford after relocating to London and touring as part of Charli XCX's band.

SWEDISH DEATH CANDY: The Cellar – Pretty wonderful mix of psychedelic 60s harmonies and crunching Sabbath riffs and incantations from the not-actually-Scandinavian crew, back in town after their impressive showing at Ritual Union last year.

MARMOZETS: O2 Academy – Splenetic/melodic post-hardcore, metalcore and fuzzgun noise-pop from West Yorkshire's sibling-heavy screamers, out on tour to promote second album 'Knowing What You Know Now' after being nominated for Best Newcomers at the 2013 *Kerrang!* awards and subsequently supporting Muse on tour.

RADIATOR HOSPITAL + RESPECTFUL CHILD + THE COOLING PEARLS: The Wheatsheaf – Emotionally awkward pop-punk from Philadelphia's Radiator Hospital, led by idiosyncratic singer Sam Cook-Parrott, the band touring their latest album, 'Play the Songs You Like', after previously touring with Martha.

THE HOUSE PARTY: The Bullingdon

THE MIGHTY REDOX + ANTON BARBEAU & THE THRUST: The Black Swan – Swamp blues, festival funk, psych-pop and more from local veterans The Mighty Redox, alongside psychedelic troubadour and honorary Oxfordian Anton B.

THE OXFORD BEATLES: Old Fire Station – Following their tribute to 'Sgt. Pepper', the local Beatles acolytes perform 'The Studio Years', playing the Fab Four's later material.

QEII: Fat Lil's, Witney – Queen tribute.

SATURDAY 12th

DAY OF THE DEADBEATS: Isis Farmhouse, Iffley Lock (2-11pm) – Local soul, r'n'b and country rock ensemble The Deadbeat Apostles launch their debut album, 'Day of the Deadbeats', with an all-day mini-festival on the banks of the Thames. As well as The Apostles themselves, there are sets from r'n'b/new wave/folk-punk

party starters The Shapes; funk-pop outfit Papa Nui; rootsy country songsmith Ags Connolly; elegantly atmospheric Americana band The Great Western Tears; grizzled blues crew Francis Pugh & the Whiskey Singers; soulful jazz/blues people The Ragged Charms, and Delta blues duo Beard of Destiny. There's kids stuff (under 12s go free) and food and it all finishes off with a set by The Deadbeat Big Band, with members of all the acts on the day playing classic covers.

SEETHER: O2 Academy – South Africa's post-grunge behemoths hit the UK, touring their most recent 'Poison the Parish' album, the band, led by declared Kurt Cobain acolyte Shaun Morgan drawing heavily on Nirvana, Alice in Chains and Deftones for inspiration.

DEATH REMAINS + IMMINENT ANNIHILATION + DOOMTRODON + BRING THE ONSLAUGHT: O2 Academy – None-more-metal line-up with London's Death Remains back in action with their second album 'Destroy/Rebuild' and cranking it out in the vein of Killswitch Engage and August Burns Red. They're joined by Aylesbury's Imminent Annihilation, inspired by Meshuggah, Machine Head and Lamb of God; local old-school metallers Doomtrodon, and Aylesbury metalcore merchants Bring the Onslaught.

THE OXFORD SOUL TRAIN: O2 Academy –

Monday 14th

BLACK HONEY: O2 Academy

For a band who seemed to spend the first couple of years of their life trying quite hard not to get noticed – preferring to play low-key shows and house parties in and around their native Brighton and having precious little information about themselves available online – Black Honey are in serious danger of becoming properly famous. They played at last year's Ritual Union but tonight is a step up venue-wise for the band who played the Bullingdon last time round as headliners. Even back then singer and guitarist Izzy Baxter was showing she had the sass to match her elegant, versatile voice, dealing with laddish hecklers with badass professionalism. It's her voice that is the centrepiece of Black Honey's sound though, which moves from stylishly sad, through poppily pretty and into quietly haunting via surf rock, ethereal indie, grunge and Ennio Morricone soundtrack music, before getting its rock on when duty calls. Baxter has drawn regular comparisons to Lana del Ray and Nancy Sinatra for her ability to do sad-eyed drama and shift gears instantly from dulcet croon to startling shriek. Her commanding onstage persona proves she's her own person though and while she's previously stated – possibly disingenuously – that she'd like Black Honey to remain a secret band, two years of festival appearances, a tour support to friends Royal Blood and the imminent release of a debut album suggest that's unlikely and indie icon status is Izzy Baxter's imminent future.



Soul, funk and disco club night.

HER'S: The Cellar – Pop-friendly slacker noise in the vein of Mac de Marco from Liverpool-based Anglo-Norwegian duo Her's, touring their debut album 'Songs of Her's' after tour supports to Happyness and Dutch Uncles.

SIMPLE with MAIL GRAB: The Bullingdon – Already sold out night with the long-running house and techno club night hosting an Oxford debut for lo-fi house star Mail Grab – aka Australian DJ and producer Jordan Alexander – with a fun-focussed house sound that dips into techno and disco on tracks like 'Feel U' and 'Caught Slippin'.

METAL TO THE MASSES: The Wheatsheaf – Quarter-final with Broken Empire, 13 Burning, Ape and MSRY going all out to win a slot at Bloodstock.

40s REVIVAL NIGHT: The Harcourt Arms – Music from the 1940s.

SYNTRONIX: Fat Lil's, Witney – 80s synth-pop classics, from Numan, Visage and OMD to Human League, Depeche Mode and Ultravox.

SPARKY'S SPONTANEOUS SHOWCASE & SPOTLIGHT JAM: The White House – Sparky hosts his monthly bands and jam night, tonight with Beard of Destiny, Monk 9 and Then The Jam.

FOLK JAM: The Half Moon

TIM FRIERS & THE MERCENARIES + NOVA KICKS + THE JUNIPER CLUB: St. Michael's Hall, Summertown – Benefit gig for children's charity Pan's Pandas.

SUNDAY 13th

KLUB KAKOFANNEY with MARK ATHERTON & FRIENDS + ASTEROX + LUCA FD + THE DUSTY SUNDAYS: The Wheatsheaf (3pm) – Klub Kak host an afternoon of free live music in the Sheaf's downstairs bar.

OPEN MIC SESSION: Harcourt Arms

MONDAY 14th

BLACK HONEY: O2 Academy – Elegant, dark-edged grunge and surf rock from Brighton's rising stars – *see main preview*

SAM FENDER: The Cellar – Rich, soulful indie-blues from Newcastle's Sam Fender, whose social commentaries have drawn comparisons to Springsteen, Jeff Buckley and The Maccabees. He was longlisted for the 2018 BBC Sound Of Award, following support slots with Catfish & the Bottlemen, Hozier and Michael Kiwanuka, as well as tours with George Ezra and Nick Mulvey, while debut single 'Play Good' won him Annie Mac's endorsement.

JACK GOLDSTEIN + GUNNBUNNY + CHIBA: The Library – Jack Goldstein launches his latest solo album, 'A Tiger Shark...' (don't ask us to type out the full title, please), the Fixers frontman taking the pop path least expected, his psychedelic noise taking diversions via Flaming Lips, Butthole Surfers, Todd Rundgren, Brian Wilson and Suzie Quatro along the way. There's some double Jack action with the brief return of his old band Gunnbunny in support tonight, playing live for the first time since supporting Sextodecimo in 2014, channelling the heavy-duty downtuned grunge of Tad and Mudhoney.

OXFORD CLASSIC JAZZ: Harcourt Arms – Classic jazz and ragtime from the local ensemble, playing Jelly Roll Morton, Louis Armstrong, Fats Domino and more.

LIVE JAZZ SESSION: The Bullingdon

OPEN MIC SESSION: The Royal Blenheim

IMAR: Nettlebed Folk Club – Lively instrumental Scottish and Irish folk from the Glasgow quintet, formed by members of Talisk, RURA, Manran and Barrule.

TUESDAY 15th

FANGCLUB: The Cellar – Grunge, garage-rock and pop-punk in the vein of Foo Fighters, Dinosaur Pile-Up and Milk Teeth from Dublin trio Fangclub, back in town and touring their debut album.

MINUS KENDAL: The Cellar – Boogie, disco and funk from RevivHer Crew's Minus Kendal at tonight's Isis-hosted club night.

ROBYN HITCHCOCK: Fat Lil's, Witney – A solo acoustic show from the English psychedelic troubadour's English psychedelic troubadour and one of the nation's most oddball national treasures. From his days in The Soft Boys, through the creative highs fronting The Egyptians, to his extensive run of solo recordings, he's never lost his tight but genial grip on a very peculiar sense of whimsy and humour, in the lineage of Syd Barrett and subsequently an influence on generations of psych-minded songwriters.

SPARKY'S FLYING CIRCUS: The James Street Tavern

WEDNESDAY 16th

BARRENCE WHITFIELD & THE SAVAGES: O2 Academy – Raw, visceral garage rocking, blues, soul and rock'n'roll from the veteran Florida singer and bandleader, back in action since 2010 after a 25 year hiatus, one that's done nothing to tame his primal r'n'b style. Ooh yeah, sexy.

MEANS OF PRODUCTION + BEAVER FUEL + GRUB: The Wheatsheaf – Audio/visual electro-pop experimentation and soundscaping from former-Space Heroes Of The People person Tim Day and co. in his new Means of Production guise at tonight's Moshka gig. They're joined by scatological punk cynics Beaver Fuel and psych-grunge noisemakers Grub.

BIRDS OF CHICAGO: St. Nicholas Church, Baulking – Wonderful mix of rock'n'roll poetry, gospel, dark country blues and close harmony singing from the much-travelled US/Canadian husband and wife duo, making a rare foray into the Shire.

SEBASTIAN REYNOLDS + MARCUS CORBETT & NITIN GAIKWAD + BRONA McVITTIE: Modern Art Oxford – Pindrop presents an exotic evening of world sounds, with Seb Reynolds mixing traditional Thai music, gamelan and ambient electronica as he plays material from his 'Mahajanaka' dance project score. He's joined by guitarist Marcus Corbett and table maestro Nitin Gaikwad, playing Brit-folk/Indian classical fusion, and Irish harpist, singer and electronics experimentalist Brona McVittie, playing songs from her 'Under the Pines' album alongside guitarist Miles Cochran.

BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE: The Cellar

THURSDAY 17th

THE UNDERGROUND YOUTH + SHOTGUN SIX + CIPHERS: The Cellar – Underground by name, underground by nature – *see main preview*

ILLEGAL EAGLES: The New Theatre – Eagles tribute.

BLUE ORCHID + PORT ERIN + JONNY RACE + OAKLAND ROAD + GOOD CANARY: The Bullingdon – Blues and psych rock from Blue Orchid at tonight's It's All About the Music showcase.

CARTER SAMPSON + JESS AYCOCK + LAUREN BARTH: Fat Lil's, Witney – Rootsy Americana from much-travelled Oklahoma singer-songwriter Carter Sampson.



Thursday 17th

THE UNDERGROUND YOUTH: The Cellar

You can argue all you like, the coolest band photo ever taken was of The Velvet Underground with Nico: black clothes, Raybans and expressions of sullen boredom. It's been an inspiration for generations of musicians since and none more so than Berlin/Manchester quartet The Underground Youth, who've even borrowed two thirds of their name. Unsurprisingly they walk along pop's dark side, all reverb and repetition, gothic drone-rock, midnight surf, monochrome post-punk insouciance and a whole heap of fuzz. Does it sound great? It sounds great. Across eight albums since 2008 the band have tied together the influence of The Brian Jonestown Massacre; Spacemen 3; The Jesus & Mary Chain; Primal Scream; Neutral Milk Hotel, and of course the Velvets themselves, atmosphere controls set to midnight black, singer Craig Dyer's voice a rich, gothic growl. Lightness on the horizon comes in the form of almost devotional passages, like tracks from their 'Mademoiselle' album. Their latest, released last year, is titled 'What Kind of Dystopian Hellhole Is This?', a concept album about Swindon. Just kidding. The title is bleak, but the music, while decidedly dark, is infused with rich melodies and a heady narcotic fug. Obviously they had to play The Cellar – it's Oxford's finest underground venue, and the one with the darkest corners.

CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre

THE PETE FRYER BAND: The Wheatsheaf – Free gig in the downstairs bar.

SPARKY'S NEW MOON: The Half Moon

ACOUSTIC THURSDAY: Jude The Obscure

BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford

FRIDAY 18th

WOOD FESTIVAL: Braziers Park, Ipsden

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– Opening day of the tenth eco-friendly festival. Treetop Flyers, Yama Warashi, Grace Petrie and Julie Murphy are among the acts performing over the weekend – *see main preview*
URBAN VODOO MACHINE + THE LONG INSIDERS: The Bullingdon – Exotic and sleazy mix of bourbon-soaked gypsy dance, junkyard blues, rockabilly, mariachi and folk-punk from London’s notoriously theatrical gutterhearts, the ensemble touring their latest album ‘Hellbound Hymns’, written and recorded in the wake of the death of two of their bandmates, including guitarist and former Flesh For Lulu frontman Nick Marsh. Frontman Pau-Ronney Angel channels his inner Tom Waits as the band party in the style of The Pogues, Johnny Cash and Johnny Thunders, with an

Friday 18th – Sunday 20th
WOOD: Braziers Park

Started in 2008 by brothers Robin and Joe Bennett as a response to the floods of 2007 that devastated Truck Festival as well as much of the rest of Oxfordshire, WOOD has not only established itself in the local calendar since but become as much of a pioneer on the festival scene as Truck was. It was recently given an Outstanding Award by A Greener Festival for its dedication to environmental responsibility: one of only two UK festivals to get one.
The tenth anniversary finds WOOD continuing to do what it’s always done so well: host three days of music that falls loosely into the folk/ Americana/world/roots fold across various stages and tents powered by renewable energy (used fat, cycle, solar), alongside organic food and drink, compostable toilets, workshops, talks, kids activities and more, while again celebrating an icon of British wildlife – this year’s is The Year of the Water Vole.

Among the musical highlights is a return to Braziers for London’s delicate 60s-flavoured indie folk and Americana crew and previous WOOD headliners **TREETOP FLYERS**; singer, musician, campaigner and comedian **GRACE PETRIE**, who has recently toured with Billy Bragg and Emmy the Great, as well as Josie Long and Robin Ince; Bristolian Japanese folk dance-influenced art-rock collective **YAMA WARASHI**; Welsh folk singer **JULIE MURPHY**; Americana outfit **ORPHAN COLOURS**, formed by former members of Ahab and Noah & the Whale; solo singer and fiddle player **JACKIE OATES**; local kids songwriter **NICK COPE**; loved-up country duo **TREVOR MOSS & HANNAH LOU** and many more, with potential highlight of the festival being a set by **BENNETT, WILSON, POOLE**, WOOD host and Dreaming Spires frontman Robin Bennett joining Danny & the Champions of the World’s Danny Wilson, and guitarist/producer Tony Poole for some CS&N-flavoured Americana. The original spirit of Glastonbury and the free festivals is alive, and in its own small way it’s here to save the world.



added burlesque flourish and Latin swing. Who else to provide local support than The Long Insiders, with their midnight surf and rockabilly, Gretsch-ing it up in the style of The Cramps, Dick Dale, Johnny Burnette and Jerry Lee Lewis.
UPRISING with FLIGHTS OF HELIOS + SELF HELP + THEO + LAKE ACACIA + LACUNA COMMON: O2 Academy – Another quality bill of local music from the O2 Academy’s team-up with BBC Introducing in Oxford. Space-age electro-pop, folktronica and self-described griefcore from Flights of Helios, alongside exuberant garage pop and punk from Self Help; delicately soulful electro-pop from recent Kele Okereke support Theo; post-grunge rocking from Lake Acacia, and dirty, energetic, bluesy garage-rock from Lacuna Common.
HYMN TO APOLLO + ENJOY ALL HUMANS + JOKERS PARADE + GHOUL: The Wheatsheaf – Church of the Heavy local rock and metal showcase.
EYRE LLEW + KID KIN + GHOSTS IN THE PHOTOGRAPHS: The Cellar – Epic, Sigur Ros-styled sounds from Eyre Llew, back in town after their excellent set at Ritual Union back in October. They’re out on an extensive European tour to promote new album ‘Atelo’ and joined tonight by two of Oxford’s best ambient/post-rock acts, Kid Kin and Ghosts in the Photographs. Rescheduled from March.
SOUL SESSIONS: The Cellar – Disco, soul and funk club night.
STRAIGHT OUTTA COWLEY – FINALE: The Bullingdon – Hip hop classics, from Jay-Z to Jurassic 5 and Biggie to Buster Rhymes.
FLATLANDS + ADAM BARNES: Magoo’s Bar, Henley – Melodic and grungy punk-pop from Flatlands alongside poetic musical melancholy from Mr Barnes, playing songs from his recent ‘Vacancy at NASA’ album.

SATURDAY 19th

WOOD FESTIVAL: Braziers Park, Ipsden FAREWELL ALL-DAYER: The Bear & Bean – Cowley Road’s coolest coffee shop sadly bows out but on a noisy high with a full day of free live music and DJs. From 3pm there’s punk and noise from the likes of Worry, Fancy Dress Party and Drama Kids, plus loads more to be confirmed.
MUSICAL MEDICINE with KRYWALD & FARRER: The Bullingdon – The monthly funk, disco and house club night hosts Percolate residents Krywald and Farrer for a set of international nu-disco and house.
GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES with DAISY + FANCY DRESS PARTY + PET SEMATARY: The Wheatsheaf – The monthly live music club night hosts dark-hearted emo and punk-pop starlets Daisy alongside melancholic sulkwave popstrels Fancy Dress Party and gloomy blues vibes from Pet Sematary, the new solo project from Coldredlight and Le Feye singer/guitarist Gaby-Elise.
DAVE GIBB + THE PARSONS: The Swan Inn, Ascott-under-Wychwood – Wychwood Folk Club hosts Scottish singer, guitarist and storyteller Dave Gibb, mixing traditional songs with his own compositions and supported tonight by Irish/ Wiltshire male/female folk duo The Parsons.
DRIVIN’ SIDEWAYS: The Brewery Tap, Abingdon – Harmonica-led rocking blues covers.
F.U.D.: The Old Anchor Inn, Abingdon – Classic rock covers.

SUNDAY 20th

WOOD FESTIVAL: Braziers Park, Ipsden BOOTLED ZEPPELIN: The New Theatre – Big



Monday 21st
FATHER MURPHY / LUCY LEAVE / JACKDAW WITH CROWBAR:

The Library
In an age where words like alternative and experimental are bandied about without meaning or context, genuine *outré* bands remain a rare treat. Italy’s Father Murphy are happy to describe themselves as the sound of catholic guilt, though there’s little that’s happy about their songs of love, death, religion and more death as they mix occultism and funeral marches with wayward psychedelia, industrial churn and pulse, religious chants and the strangest of southern European folk music. Here’s where This Heat and Robert Wyatt meets Carl Orff. No surprise that the trio have collaborated with former Swans siren Jarboe and toured with Deerhoof, or that they released a four-sided vinyl EP that needed each side to be played concurrent to others to make sense. Sadly this is their farewell tour, so make sure you get your wyrd rock (cruci)fix before they call it a day. Superlative support in the form of local post-punk/jazz-rock oddballs Lucy Leave, fresh from releasing their debut album, Cardiacs, Deerhoof, Soft Machine and Minutemen colliding sideways on with an oblique approach to rhythm and melody to make for one of the most inventive bands around. And while Father Murphy are bowing out, former Peel faves Jackdaw With Crowbar reformed a few years back after an extended hiatus, the Leamington band’s visual approach to music and gigs having pre-empted much of today’s multi-media artists. Musically their spiky, dark-edged Beeheart-inspired blues and punk won them cult status among acolytes of late night 80s and early 90s alternative radio.

stage tribute to Led Zep.
THE UNDERCOVER HIPPY: The Cellar – Anthemic reggae vibes and hip hop floor fillers.
OPEN MIC SESSION: Harcourt Arms FOLK JAM: The Half Moon

MONDAY 21st

THE MAGIC NUMBERS: The Bullingdon – The double brother and sister quartet – Romeo and Michele Stodart and Angela and Sean Gannon – make their first visit to Oxford since 2014, returning to action to promote new album ‘Outsiders’, the follow-up to 2014’s ‘Alias’, continuing to balance joyous 70s-style harmony pop with elegant melancholy, their once charmingly anachronistic sound increasingly sounding prescient with the advent of Americana’s rebirth.
FATHER MURPHY + LUCY LEAVE + JACKDAW WITH CROWBAR: The Library

– Decidedly oddball triple bill of musical adventurous – *see main preview*
FAIRPORT CONVENTION: Nettlebed Folk Club – The Godfathers of English folk-rock return to the intimate setting of Nettlebed’s historic folk club for their annual pre-festival season show.
LIVE JAZZ SESSION: The Bullingdon OPEN MIC SESSION: The Royal Blenheim

TUESDAY 22nd

ADAM BARNES + GITTA DE RITTER + THE IDLE WOMEN: Old Fire Station – Tender-hearted musical melancholy from Adam Barnes, leavening his reflection, longing and sorrow with a poetic approach to songwriting and moments of genuine euphoria.
THE C-BOMB: The Cellar – Sex-positive disco and feminist party bangers.
SPARKY’S FLYING CIRCUS: The James Street Tavern

WEDNESDAY 23rd

COCO & THE BUTTERFIELDS: O2 Academy – Canterbury’s folk-pop-hip hop crew come to town, the band lead by singers Dulcima Showa and Toma Twyman, who met on their local busking circuit, the pair’s duets lending a sense of drama to beatbox-driven Celtic folk and bluegrass-flavoured pop.
STARBELLY + MERRIMACK P.D. + JAMIE FELTON: The Wheatsheaf – It’s All About the Music showcase night.
RISE & CUNTRY LIVING: The Cellar – House and electro club night with rising young south London DJ and producer Mallard on the decks. Benefit night for environmental charity Rise and local feminist zine *Cuntry Living*.

THURSDAY 24th

THE SHIRES: The New Theatre – Authentic Nashville-style country out of Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire with duo Ben Earle and Crissie Rhodes becoming the first British country act to sign to a major Nashville record label, 2016’s debut album, ‘Brave’, becoming the first homegrown country album to go Top 10. The pair are out on their biggest tour to date to promote third album, ‘Accidentally on Purpose’, and doubtless hoping for a hat trick of Number 1s.
THE LEWIS HAMILTON BAND: The Bullingdon – Undoubtedly the fastest rock band on the circuit, brothers Lewis and Nick Hamilton mixing up blues, rock and Americana at tonight’s Haven Club show.
CURSE OF LONO: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Dark, cinematic Americana and gothic southern rocking from the London band, out on tour.
CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre
SPARKY’S NEW MOON: The Half Moon ACOUSTIC THURSDAY: Jude The Obscure

FRIDAY 25th

ALBOA + STORYTELLER + FUJI + CRYSTALLITE + JONNY RACE: The Bullingdon – It’s All About the Music local bands showcase.
MEANSTEED + DISCIPLES OF SIN +

SILVERVOID: The Wheatsheaf – OxRox rock and metal night with Harrow’s Thin Lizzy and AD/DC-influenced heavyweights Meansteed back in town alongside Midlands outfit Disciples of Sin, whose glammy horror-punk is inspired by W.A.S.P, Murder Dolls, Motley Crue and Alice Cooper
NAOMI SCOTT: The Cellar – The actress and singer tours her third EP ‘Vows’.
RUBIX BRISTOL TAKEOVER: The Cellar – Reggae, jungle and drum&bass club night hosted by Rubix with Bristol’s Garda, Fat Stash and Traction taking over the decks, alongside Belgium’s The Deeper Way and residents.
LITTLE RED: The Jericho Tavern – Album launch show for the Oxford/Reading dark-folk trio and recent *Nightshift* cover stars, ‘Draw Blood’ featuring recent singles ‘Woebegone’, ‘Diamond Back’ and ‘Siren Song’ and finding a sweet, gothic meeting point between *The Wicker Man* and *O, Brother; Where Art Thou?*
ORPHAN COLOURS: The Cornerstone, Didcot – Country-tinged rocking and Americana from the band formed by members of Ahab and Noah & the Whale, out on tour and fresh from playing WOOD Festival.
KING HAMMOND & THE RUDEBOY MAFIA: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Classic ska and Two Tone from former Bad Manners and Selecter man King Hammond, who’s also worked with Lee ‘Scratch’ Perry, Laurel Aitken and Prince Buster.
THE TOM IVEY BAND: Prince of Wales, Shippon – Blues, rock and funk covers and originals.

SATURDAY 26th

COMMON PEOPLE: South Park – The Jacksons, The New Power Generation, Aswad and Boney M head up the disco-themed first day of Common People – *see main preview*
DISCO SHED COMMON PEOPLE AFTERPARTY: The Bullingdon – Count Skylarkin’ and his Disco Shed chums host their own after party, with reggae, dancehall, funk, soul, ska and more.
SOUNDER: The Cellar – Deep house and underground sounds with Finest Wear from Nordic Trax and Large Music, plus Damian Charles and Lone Soldier.
METAL TO THE MASSES: The Wheatsheaf – First semi final of the heavyweight BOTB.
FAT ORANGE WOLF + FINISTERRE + ROSIE CALDECOTT: Harcourt Arms – Jazz’n’blues from local trio Fat Orange Wolf, alongside Newbury’s Finisterre, playing covers and originals, and sweet-natured acoustic folk-pop from Rosie Caldecott.
BUDDY – LEGEND REBORN: The Cornerstone, Didcot – Tribute to Buddy Holly.
DAMN GOOD REASON: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Blues and rock covers.

SUNDAY 27th

COMMON PEOPLE: South Park – It’s indie day at Common People, with Ride, James, Sparks and Maximo Park on the main stage – *see main preview*
COCAINE PISS: O2 Academy – Simmering and splenetic hardcore, noise-pop and riot grrl from Belgium’s difficult-to-forget-the-name Cocaine Piss, touring their

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Saturday 26th / Sunday 27th

COMMON PEOPLE:
South Park

While previous festivals in South Park seem to have been cursed (anyone remember Summer Fayre or Oxford Oxford? No, because they never even went ahead), Common People has proved how to get things right and now, in its third year, already feels like an established part of the local music calendar. Its mix of big name acts and a strong local line-up means it feels like a big event but also a community one. The fact it’s enjoyed great weather in its first two years hasn’t done it any harm either.

So, the difficult third? Not at all, as this year’s Common People has both a good selection of star names, and a more cohesive main stage line-up than last year. Saturday has been designated Disco Day – complete with the world’s largest disco ball on site, which will doubtless do battle with the world’s largest bouncy castle. Heading the bill are **THE JACKSONS**, whose enviable hitlist includes ‘Can You Feel It’; ‘Blame It On The Boogie’; ‘I Want You Back’; ‘ABC’, and ‘Wanna Be Startin’ Somethin’’. Feelgood pop gems from start to finish. Prince could probably match The Jacksons on that score, and while he’s tragically no longer with us, **THE NEW POWER GENERATION** continue his legacy, with typically virtuosos runs through of ‘Sign O’ The Times’; ‘U Got The Look’; ‘Nothing Compares 2 U’; ‘Raspberry Beret’ and more, so really, what are you doing sitting there reading this when you could be out on the dancefloor? Elsewhere on Saturday there’s more classic 70s disco from **BONEY M**, from ‘Rasputin’ and ‘Ma Baker’ to ‘Brown Girl in the Ring’ and ‘Rivers of Babylon’; soulful trip hop from **MORCHEEBA**; classic British reggae from London veterans **ASWAD**; house-friendly rappers **THE JUNGLE BROTHERS**; raga DJ **GENERAL LEVY**; potty-mouthed Latino funk and hip hop crew **CUBAN BROTHERS**, and Devon drum&bass duo **FRED V & GRAFIX**.

Sunday’s line-up brings indie more to the fore, with headline sets from **JAMES** and **RIDE**. The Manchester heroes’ euphoric guitar pop is perfectly suited to a festival crowd, and if ‘Sit Down’ is the inevitable mass singalong, it’s the likes of ‘Sometimes’; ‘Come Home’ and ‘She’s A Star’ that have made them such an enduring success. Ride’s set will be something of a triumphant homecoming for the band who more than any took

Oxford music to the world, paving the way for Radiohead, Supergrass, Foals and others. After their emotional reunion show at the O2 Academy in 2015, and last year’s return to The New Theatre, South Park feels like the natural next step up as the band re-establish their rock crown. From ‘Drive Blind’ and Chelsea Girl’ through to ‘Charm Assault’ and ‘Pulsar’, they’re as immersive a spectacle as rock music gets.

Sunday’s impressive line-up also features a seriously rare treat in the form of **SPARKS**, who *Nightshift* has wanted to see live for as long as we can remember. Ron and Russell Mael’s quirky, acerbic art-rock band have been in a league of their own since the early 70s – from hits like ‘This Town Ain’t Big Enough For the Both of Us’ and ‘Number 1 Song In Heaven’, through to last year’s comeback album ‘Hippopotamus’, which went Top 10 in the UK, the duo always far more successful over here than in their native USA. Glasgow’s superb garage-pop duo **HONEYBLOOD** add more guitar noise to Sunday’s line-up, while **CRAIG CHARLES** brings the funk and soul. There’s lo-fi house from **ROSS FROM FRIENDS**; **THE LONDON AFRICAN GOSPEL CHOIR** perform Paul Simon’s ‘Gracelands’ in its entirety; **ELVANA** provide the necessary Elvis-fronted Nirvana tribute, and **LOW ISLAND** make the move from the Uncommon stage last year to the main stage, proving they are an Oxford band on the rise.

Talking of the Uncommon stage, *Nightshift* is once again proud to host the local bands stage, with a hopefully eclectic line-up that takes in hardcore punk; atmospheric electro-pop; hip hop and r’n’b; post-rock; alt.country; Brechtian baroque pop; Egyptian and Turkish folk dance and a fair few things in between and beyond. This month’s *Nightshift* cover stars **INNER PEACE RECORDS** join country/soul collective **DEADBEAT APOSTLES** atop Saturday’s line-up and are joined by **TIGER MENDOZA**; **THE AUGUST LIST**; **CANDY SAYS**; **DEATH OF THE MAIDEN**; **EARINADE**; **LAIMA BITE**; **PREMIUM LEISURE** and **WORRY**. Sunday features a headline set from recent cover stars **BRICKWORK LIZARDS**, who are joined by **THE GREAT WESTERN TEARS**; **DRORE**; **MSRY**; **LUCY LEAVE**; **YOUNG WOMEN’S MUSIC PROJECT**; **HAZE**; **31 HOURS**; **GHOSTS IN THE PHOTOGRAPHS**, and **SELF HELP**. Quality from start to finish, so pop in and see the cream of the local scene in action.

And there’s even more talent in action in the dance tent and in the legendary Disco Shed, with sets from **NATTY MARK**; **SIR SAMBO SOUND**; **EM WILLIAMS**; **WHITE MAGIC**; **COUNT SKYLARKIN**; **NICK & NELLY’S ZODIAC DISCOTEQUE**; **PEEPSHOW PADDY**; **BOSSAPHONIK DAN**, and loads more. Throw in The Pig’s Big Ballroom, hosting all manner of vintage sounds, from **TERRY & JERRY** to **VOTE PEDRO**; a kids area; a gin festival; circus skills; carnival dance classes and... hang, did someone say gin festival? This is going to get messy.

This is also going to be bloody brilliant. Don’t forget to visit the local stage and don’t forget to buy us gin. *Full line-up and ticket details at:* **oxford.commonpeople.net**

Steve Albini-produced ‘The Dancer’ album – wired and wonderful. Shame it coincides with Common People – be great to see them on the same bill as Droke and Worry. **SIMPLE with OR:LA: The Bullingdon** – Acid and techno bangers from Northern Ireland-via-Liverpool producer and DJ Or:la, founder of the Deep Sea Frequency label. **OPEN MIC SESSION: Harcourt Arms** **FOLK JAM: The Half Moon**

MONDAY 28th
LIVE JAZZ SESSION: The Bullingdon

TUESDAY 29th
SPARKY’S FLYING CIRCUS: The James Street Tavern

WEDNESDAY 30th
AVI BUFFALO + LOWPINS: The Jericho Tavern – Avi Zahner-Isenburg returns to live performance after taking time out of his band to concentrate on producing other acts, the Californian songsmith’s cracked, reedy voice and rootsy psychedelia reminiscent of Flaming Lips, Built To Spill and even Fleet Foxes at time. **DUCKING PUNCHES + WE BLESS THIS MESS + ASH LEWIS: The Wheatsheaf** – Indie-punk from Norwich’s Ducking Punches, touring their new ‘Alamort’ album. **BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE: The Cellar** **GALICIAN MUSIC SESSION: James Street Tavern** – Traditional music from northern Spain.

THURSDAY 31st
CINDER WELL with ROSIE CALDECOTT: Truck Store (6pm) – Dark folk from Amelia Baker, also of Californian anarcho-folk-punk outfit Blackbird Raum, on tour in the UK to promote new album ‘The Unconscious Echo’. **SPACE ELEVATOR: The Bullingdon** – Polished 80s-style stadium rocking and glam from the band formed by guitarist David Young from the We Will Rock You West End musical, unsurprisingly inspired by Queen as well as The Darkness, Heart and Fleetwood Mac. **BENNETT WILSON POOLE: St Barnabas Church** – Album launch gig for Dreaming Spires frontman (and Truck and WOOD Festivals founder) Robin Bennett; Danny Wilson from Danny & the Champions of the World, and producer and 12-string Rickenbacker player Tony Poole, the trio’s eponymous debut mixing up their love for Crosby, Stills and Nash with an occasional earthy bluegrass feel and sweet three-way harmonies.

ZED PENGUIN + EGRETS + GHOSTS IN THE PHOTOGRAPHS: The Library – Impossible to pigeonhole, taut, theatrical, sometimes awkward post-punk from Edinburgh’s Zed Penguin, lead by Aussie ex-pat Matthew Winter, the band’s sounds touching base with Modest Mouse, My Bloody Valentine, Joseph K and Captain Beethheart at various points, but rarely sitting still long enough to get a firm fix. Support at tonight’s Divine Schism show comes from 90s-inspired post hardcore/shoegaze crew Egrets and cinematic post-rock instrumentalists Ghosts in the Photographs. **SOMETHING FOR NOTHING: The Black Swan** – Free live music session.

Nightshift listings are free. Deadline for inclusion is the 20th of each month, no exceptions. Listings are copyright of Nightshift and may not be used without permission.

SIR WAS The Cellar 03.05.18 £10	HER’S The Cellar 12.05.18 £8	DRAHLA The Cellar 07.06.18 £6	JOLIE HOLLAND & SAMANTHA PARTON The Bullingdon 05.09.18 £16
RHYS LEWIS O2 Academy 04.05.18 £9	BLACK HONEY O2 Academy 14.05.18 £10	SEAN McGOWAN The Cellar 08.06.18 £7	THE MAGIC GANG O2 Academy 05.10.18 £13.50
STRANGE BONES The Cellar 07.05.18 £6	SAM FENDER The Cellar 14.05.18 £8	LOMA The Cellar 09.06.18 £9	HOLLIE COOK O2 Academy 12.10.18 £14
SPORTS TEAM The Cellar 09.05.18 £5	FANGCLUB The Cellar 15.05.18 £6	CATGOD The Cellar 23.06.18 Free Entry	CLAP YOUR HANDS SAY YEAH The Bullingdon 16.10.18 £16
JUDAS The Cellar 10.05.18 £6	THE UNDERGROUND YOUTH The Cellar 17.05.18 £10	LA WITCH The Cellar 28.06.18 £12	STEVE DAVIS & KAVUS TORABI The Cellar 20.10.18 £6
SWEDISH DEATH CANDY The Cellar 11.05.18 £7	EYRE LLEW The Cellar 18.05.18 £7	SUPER HANS O2 Academy 2 06.07.18 £15	PUMA BLUE O2 Academy 22.10.18 £8
PREMIUM LEISURE The Bullingdon 11.05.18 Free Entry	MELT DUNES The Library 01.06.18 £5	HOOKWORMS The Bullingdon 24.08.18 £12.50	SHAME O2 Academy 27.11.18 £13.50

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PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING / JANE WEAVER

The New Theatre

Stalking her few square feet of the New Theatre’s expansive stage with a nervy intensity, Jane Weaver’s voice is an enchanting mix of the comfort of a mother’s lullaby and the breathless black of night. Her music is motorik and otherworldly, taking Kraftwerk’s silicon highway into the depths of a darkened forest, synths fluttering and fizzing over stark, metronomic beats and basslines. At her lightest, as on set closer ‘I Need a Connection’, the song’s almost hymnal feel reminds us of Goldfrapp’s folkier moments but for the most part this set, almost entirely culled from last year’s astonishing ‘Modern Kosmology’ album, is dark, enveloping and utterly hypnotic, a musical dream of futuristic cities and ancient banshees.

Weaver and her band are squeezed tightly into a small space because Public Service Broadcasting’s set up is elaborate and expansive, giant colliery wheels bookending the stage, which is lit by an array of miners’ lamps. Giant screens project archive footage of the mining industry and its communities as the band – the original duo of J Willgoose Esq. and Wrigglesworth now a quartet of tweedy electro-prog geeks, augmented at time by a brass trio. The opening numbers are drawn from recent album ‘Every Valley’, which documents that community, from the exuberant optimism of ‘People Will Always Need Coal’, to the sombre reflection of its title track. The music mirrors the hard rhythms of heavy industry and, along with

the screen footage and extravagant lightshow provides an immersive experience. They dip into their back catalogue for the celebratory ‘Valentina’, the story of the first woman – and civilian – in space, and the heroic ‘Spitfire’, not a celebration of war but of human ingenuity, which along with ‘Night Mail’, finds PSB soundtracking an optimistic future that contrasts with the emotive observance of the human side of industrial decline. It’s a very special talent to be able to wring such emotions out of music that comes without lyrics beyond those narratives pulled from Pathe archives, but they carry it off in almost heroic style and you regularly find yourself thrust disorientatingly back into the real world when tracks

end. There are points where the set wanders slightly, but ending with ‘Go!’, featuring NASA commentary on the Apollo 11 mission, brings everything to an exuberant climax, the audience finally roused to its feet and singing the title line back at the band. Celebration too in the encores, the playful jazz-funk of ‘Gagarin’ and the euphoric, motorik sheen of ‘Everest’, the band again hoisting a banner for human endeavour. For a band that for the most part looks and sounds like a giant machine, Public Service Broadcasting’s heart is so very human. And while it’s almost a shock to see them playing to a packed New Theatre having last seen them tucked neatly onto The Jericho Tavern’s tiny stage, it’s the best kind of surprise – a band like no other and one that deserve every ounce of success. *Dale Kattack*

CABBAGE / SHE DREW THE GUN

O2 Academy

As we enter the venue She Drew the Gun’s casually charismatic Louisa Roach is in the middle of a poem-cum-rant about the destruction of the NHS; moments later she and her band are singing about homelessness, zero hours contracts and wealth inequality to the soundtrack of a summery psychedelic surf shimmer. It’s this weird juxtaposition of words and music that makes the band so enthralling. Roach’s rich Wirral accent lends everything she sings a slightly laconic edge and her band’s spacey, melodic, grunge-tinged pop is an easy joy, so the simmering rage and disgust that oozes from her lyrics almost sounds like a sunbeam love song. Make her prime minister immediately. Disgust is an emotion that fuels much of Cabbage’s music. The band’s Mossley Uber Alles slogan pays due homage to Dead Kennedys, and they have similar targets in their sight. They fly out of the traps tonight, the sleazy, queasy scree of ‘Reptiles State Funeral’, with its scouring analogue Korg base, takes punk down into the sewers while ‘Uber Capitalist Death

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COTSWOLD LIFE

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SILK ROAD / SKAM / PSYCHOBABYLON / THE MOTIVE

The Wheatsheaf

You can always depend on OxRox to provide a no-frills bill of metal and heavy rock, normally leaning towards the more accessible end of the spectrum. Tonight is no exception, with four bands eager to break into a scene that has survived changes in musical fashion for well over forty years.

The Motive are one of the growing number of bands oozing out of Witney. Tight and animated, their above average singer and drummer give them a head start, though the songs lack enough sparkle to make them truly memorable quite yet; ‘The Middle’ is an honourable exception, starting out as almost a rock ballad before moving into a catchy singalong refrain.

Many of The Motive’s fans then head for the exit, which is a shame as Psychobabylon are highly entertaining, if only for the singer Rusty D’s pure metal antics, shaking his mane of hair and bellowing with considerably more enthusiasm than technical prowess. The trick up their sleeve is a terrific lead guitarist, looking like a young Springsteen with a light, playful touch that can bring The Buzzcocks to mind. The Halloween and white face paint theme running through their artwork detracts from the experience of a

good old-fashioned pub metal band.

Skam turn out to be the cherry on tonight’s cake, with the key word being economy. Just as a three-legged stool can’t wobble the Leicester three-piece use their resources sparingly and to great effect. Frontman Steve Hill’s powerful and versatile voice has echoes of the late Chester Bennington from Linkin Park, while his guitar work is a whole lot more angular and three dimensional than the metal scene tends to produce. ‘Between The Eyes’ is a strong single and fully deserves the attention it’s gaining.

Since we’ve been looking at Silk Road’s backdrop all evening behind the supports, expectations are high for the Oxford band now relocated to London. Unfortunately they’re the least interesting band of the night, from the lackadaisical drummer, through shambolic guitar to a singer lacking the power and presence the genre requires. They appear stuck between Black Crowes-style looseness and the hard-edge of bands like Pantera, but fail to achieve a successful resolution. Their four years together should have allowed them to sort this, the clock won’t tick forever.

Art Lagun

GIRLI The Bullingdon

Girli is an artist who manages to exist at the intersection between the cocksure swagger of grime, the off-key emo melody of Rilo Kiley and the high camp performance of Ru Paul’s Drag Race. Her music can be seen as a variant of the hypnagogic pop craze, with chief reference points being student garage nights and early 2000s chart music instead of The Radiophonic Workshop.

Girli, the singer/rapper born Milly Toomey from south London with a predilection for lurid pink attire, achieves all of this without losing a massive part of her appeal which has the ability to draw in a very young and diverse crowd. As live performers she and her MC DJ Kitty command the crowd, managing to send a group of young fans down the front into a gleeful pop frenzy, all the while possessing a normal, down to earth but hugely confident stage presence, assuring those young fans that she is in fact one of them: a normal, everyday pop star. Tonight’s show sees her playing some of her newer material, with the insatiable ‘Up and Down’, an as yet unreleased song which, much like the majority

of her work, exhibits an extremely wide palate of sonic influences, including Frankie Knuckles-esque arpeggio synths and the sweeping vocal melody of early 90s emo acts like Knapsack.

The pair leave the stage on a high note with the brilliant, ferocious ‘Hot Mess’; the song is Girli at her best, a brilliant slice of self aware pop which pokes fun at the indie music fan that we all love to hate (“She probably doesn’t even write her own songs”). The energy and response of the crowd is palpable and the live performance contains a sense of excitability and good natured yet angry gregariousness which is so often missing from modern pop acts.

Tonight’s set is on the short side, but quite frankly that doesn’t make a jot of difference when you can put on as frenetic and enjoyable a show. It also proves what we’ve known all along: that pop music can be melodic without being safe; that the music industry knows bugger all about what kids really like, and that the best sort of pop is made by outsiders and independent thinkers.

Charlie Wells

31 HOURS / ZURICH / DAISY

The Jericho Tavern







Hypothesis: many performers portray characters, but some performers come to believe in them. David Bowie donned theatrical masks, and Randy Newman’s vignettes are all voiced by different characters, but they were obvious artistic techniques, whereas Sun Ra really actually seemed to believe his interstellar back-story, and Anton Newcombe apparently doesn’t realise he’s talentless arse rather than rock saviour. Although Daisy’s early recordings were strong, we were worried that their violent, obsessive imagery was proof of incipient stalkerism rather than a taste for macabre trappings. Thankfully newer material veers away from this theme – and is, if anything, musically superior. The new quartet is tight but light on its feet, decorating emo-pop tunes with mathy curlicues and post-rock textures. There’s still a little darkness in the lyrics though: the new songs have more obvious hooks, but they hide plenty of barbs.

Hypothesis: you can love music, without being particularly knowledgeable about it. We may have spent more of our life than we like to remember studying sleeve notes and sitting through support bands, but our experience is not necessarily deeper than someone whose record collection consists of ‘Rubber Soul’, the best of ELO and

a Motown compilation strewn in a passenger seat footwell. Similarly, although we can get everything Coldplay has to offer from elsewhere, they don’t deserve the abuse they get. Zurich is another band that provides a handy, one-stop rock digest for the busy listener, squishing together a world of epically sad pop stretching from Joy Division to Maximo Park, via Doves’ dusky disco bombast. Zurich might deal in broad strokes, big themes and barn door targets, but their arranging skill and melodic ear make them well worth the effort.

Hypothesis: prog has its plus points, but decent tunes isn’t one of them. When 31 Hours start up, with a web of impressive polyrhythms masking an anonymous composition, we’re inclined to agree. However, it doesn’t take long for the set to reveal subtly catchy tunes hidden amongst ELP wigouts and late Floyd billows – we had David Sylvian jotted in our notebook before being treated to a one-off Japan cover – and we realise 31 Hours have more in common with the carbonite-frozen pop of Glass Animals than anything Gong once wafted out of The Manor’s back door, with single ‘Castile’ a window on a world where Gomez made ‘Kid A’. Top tunes married to muso structure, in other words. Hypothesis: even we aren’t right all the time.

David Murphy

 RHYS LEWIS FRIDAY 4TH MAY O2 ACADEMY 2 OXFORD	 HER'S SATURDAY 12TH MAY THE CELLAR
 BLACK HONEY MONDAY 14TH MAY O2 ACADEMY 2 OXFORD	 LA WITCH THURSDAY 28TH JUNE THE CELLAR
 THE MAGIC GANG FRIDAY 5TH OCTOBER O2 ACADEMY OXFORD	 HOLLIE COOK FRIDAY 12TH OCTOBER O2 ACADEMY OXFORD
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SHAME / GURR

The Bullingdon

“It’s the sound a pigeon makes in German.” In case you were wondering; that’s how to pronounce “Gurr”, a German two-piece masquerading as a four-piece whose banter is as good as their songs. And that’s saying something. The band has one strong album out there and another on its way, but their live act is something else entirely, dovetailing indie-leaning, bass-led bops with tongue-in-cheek

witticisms about the English.

Not that there isn’t space for a parable about some dickhead who was rude to Laura Lee outside the venue: “I was insulting the people of Oxford with my dress code,” she observes to the audience, before launching into a sneering rendition of ‘Hollaback Girl’. But it’s Gurr’s cover of ‘Kids in America’ – a brilliantly executed routine as much as a song, involving

forgotten lyrics, jibes at Robbie Williams and straight up great music—that lifts this set into momentary genius.

Lee and her partner in crime Andrey Casablanca give us a quick tutorial on how to pronounce Shame – “It’s Shuh-ee-uh-eeme” – before leaving the stage to riotous applause and laughter.

However you pronounce it, Shame is an appropriately ironic name for a band whose lead singer, the eternally extroverted Charlie Steen, is already crowd-surfing halfway into the first song of a set that bristles with all the turbocharged, physically compulsive energy of their debut album ‘Songs of Praise’. The moshing starts early and doesn’t stop. We’re far enough from the front to hold onto our beers but there are plenty of liquids flying tonight, from spittle to Staropramen to pure, distilled vitriol.

Steen knows his crowd here, and he knows what they want. The music almost becomes a soundtrack to his own sweat-drenched, soon shirtless performance: ‘The Lick’'s shamanistic reprise “Bathe me in blood and call it a christening” is accompanied by Steen pouring a bottle of water over his head, while for much of album-closer ‘Angie’ he seems to be conducting an orchestra. It’s all true to the spirit of the music, whose obvious nostalgia – see every review comparing them to Killing Joke and Gang of Four – is never all that far from pastiche. And Steen’s overly sincere punk-spiritedness can occasionally seem patronising as a result: “Just remember,” he proclaims, “at the end of the day this is just entertainment. Don’t take it so fucking seriously.” Try telling that to the guys in the mosh-pit, Charlie.

Tom Kingsley

GWENNO

The Bullingdon

It’s a brave move releasing an album sung entirely in Cornish, given the limited audience fluent in the language. Then again it could also be a smart move – as Gwenno Saunders says herself tonight, if no one can understand what you’re singing, they can’t hear where you’ve stolen your ideas from.

As it is, Gwenno packs more ideas into her albums than most bands will ever imagine, and she helpfully explains a lot of them in plain English between songs. ‘Le Kov’, her latest, centres around an imagined Cornish Utopia and takes in themes of landscape, displacement, feminism and, yes, cheese, along its elegantly exotic journey.

Possessed of a dry humour and affable warmth, Gwenno is as much a storyteller as a singer, inspired by her activist parents and obscure Welsh language science fiction, but couching her parables in instantly accessible electro-pop, her voice murmuring with the buzz and hum of the synths behind her on ‘Tir Ha Mor’. She spends most of the set either sashaying around the stage shaking a tambourine above her head, or crouched over her own keyboard, her band bolstering the sound with an undulating robotic funk, almost jazzy

interludes and sweeping, cinematic electronics. The richness of her voice and the unfamiliar language coupled with that sweep takes songs like ‘Hy a Skoellys Liva Dhagrow’ into French chanson territory at times and comparisons to Stereolab aren’t unjustified, or unwelcome.

Gwenno is at her best when the synths are heaviest and the band at their most motorik, as on the gorgeous ‘Chwyldro’ from her 2014 Welsh language debut album ‘Y Dydd Olaf’, based on a novel about brainwashing alien robots who cannot understand, and therefore conquer, Welsh speakers; beyond its pulp sci-fi premise it’s a clarion call for individuality in an increasingly homogenised world.

And for anyone doubting Gwenno’s place at the head of music’s vanguard, where else would you find a venue full of English speaking pop fans singing along to a song about cheese, entirely in Cornish, ‘Eus Keus?’ (‘Is There Cheese?’), a dramatic, clamouring set closer which finds Gwenno at her most demonstrative and celebratory, visibly cheered by the size and enthusiasm of the crowds she’s now playing to. A genuinely unique talent.

Dale Kattack

THE CELLAR

WHAT’S ON IN MAY

Wed 2nd

BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE

80s / New Wave / Disco

11pm–3am • £5

Thurs 3rd

Future Perfect sir WAS + GUESTS

7.30–10.30

£10 adv • 16+

Thurs 3rd

BRAVE NEW WORLD

Art Pop / Funk / Electronic

VAUNCE + NEIL + RANCID JAZZ + JOHN JONES

10.30pm–3am

£3 adv • £4 otd

Fri 4th

BOSSAPHONIK

Global Beats / Nu Jazz Bizniz

THE TURBANS + DJ'S

10pm–3am

Sat 5th

OXROX

Southern Rock / Punk-Sleaze Rock

WESTERN SAND + THE OUTLAW ORCHESTRA + THE BLACK BULLETTs

7–10.30pm

£8 adv • £10 otd

Sat 5th

FREERANGE

UKG / Grime / Bassline

11pm–3am • £5 all night

Mon 7th

Future Perfect STRANGE BONES + CALVA LOUISE

7.30–10.30 • £6 adv 16+

Mon 7th

FLUORESCENT ADOLESCENT

Indie/ Alternative/ Post-Punk

11pm–3am • £3

Tues 8th

INTRUSION

Goth / EBM / Industrial

RESIDENT DJS DOKTOR JOY + BOOK-HOUSE + GUESTS

8.30pm–2am • £4 otd

Wed 9th

Future Perfect SPORTS TEAM + SEAFOAM + OLD SWING

7.30–10.30pm

£5 adv • 16+

Thurs 10th

Future Perfect JUDAS + GUESTS

7.30–10.30

£6 adv • 16+

Thurs 10th

BAD RAP

Disco

11pm–3am

£4 adv • £5

Fri 11th

Future Perfect SWEDISH DEATH CANDY + GUESTS

7.30–10.30

£7 adv • 16+

Fri 11th

LOVE SPECS x AB^NV present...FRUITY BLISS

Dance / Fruity Disco

11pm–3am

Sat 12th

Future Perfect HERS + GUESTS

7.30–10.30

£8 adv • 16+

Sat 12th

TOTAL LIFE FOREVER

Indie Hits All Night Long

11pm–3am

£4 adv • £5

Mon 14th

Future Perfect SAM FENDER + STEREO HONEY

7.30–10.30

£8 adv • 16+

Tues 15th

Future Perfect FANGCLUB + FINE CREATURES

7.30–10.30

£6 adv • 16+

Tues 15th

The ISIS present EARTH DISK-O

Boogie / Leftfield Disco / Funk

MINUS KENDAL + OSCAR BARNES + HUGO JACQUEMIN

11pm–3am • £5 otd

Wed 16th

BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE

80s / New Wave / Disco

11pm–3am • £5

Thurs 17th

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LIVE

GHOSTS IN THE PHOTOGRAPHS / DEATH OF THE MAIDEN

The Wheatsheaf
 Death Of The Maiden are making quite a name for themselves lately and when they open up with recent single ‘Soldier’ it’s easy to see why. A militaristic folk ballad that looks at the effects of war and fighting for causes on the body and mind. Tamara Parsons Baker’s vocals fill the song with considerable emotion and throughout the band’s set she impresses with a passionate performance. It’s only between songs when she launches into rambling monologues that she breaks the spell. New bassist Jen Oliver (also of Lucy Leave) adds considerable muscle to the band’s songs, while Hannah Bruce might just be the most underrated guitarist in Oxford. Her way of creating subtle lines and melodies behind Parsons Baker can be easily missed, but during the instrumental sections, the band really soar, with Bruce leading the charge.
 No strangers to creating spellbinding instrumentals, Ghosts In The Photographs travel the well-worn post-rock path. Playing in almost total darkness tonight (due to a “technical error” on their new projector there’s no visuals tonight), they create an undulating maelstrom of noise,

veering from almost silence to all-out bombast. When they’re at full tilt, it’s impossible not to get swept along in the sheer thundering joy of it all. Of course, the loud bits wouldn’t hit as hard if the quiet bits weren’t as well performed and written as they are. It’s hard to make a mark as a post-rock band, but Ghosts In The Photographs add enough of a twist to elevate them above other bands that merely apply the template laid down by Mogwai and GY!BE. Maybe the projector dying is a sign that they should play under bright white light and step away from the projector/darkness trope, because when the band really let go, it’s not unlike watching a hardcore band like Fugazi at their peak. They feel confrontational at times, and that is something they should really embrace.

Sam Shepherd

SKYLARKIN’ SOUNDSYSTEM with MUNGO’S HI-FI

The Bullingdon
 The Bullingdon continues its rich, varied association with sound system culture, tonight hosting one of the most well established in Glasgow’s Mungo’s Hi Fi. While Oxford’s other main reggae venue, the Cellar, has an incredible P.A and a superlative in-house sound engineer, is it also more challenging to safely transport several tons (probably) of speaker boxes, mixers, and assorted audio equipment down to the subterranean venue. Mungo’s not only have one of the biggest stacks in the business, but they

have a large wooden platform complete with a roof, from which they perform. This suits our first selector, Count Skylarkin’ who famously sometimes plays from a garden shed. Opening with a rootsy set, including some from his beloved Alton Ellis, the Count, who also compères in a very subtle way, thus warms up a reassuringly large and active crowd ahead of the main event. Don Letts once told us Mungo’s Hi-Fi had an “analogue attitude”. Although their sound is based on 80s Prince Jammy dancehall dub, it still feels very contemporary. This is illustrated by the format they use to play. We’re struck by the fact that they seem to just be playing the one record for the whole set. This is actually a scratch interface system whereby the digital audio program on a laptop is manipulated by the vinyl. The sound is then pumped out to a bone-shaking sound system. No less than six sub woofer bass scoops are used and you can feel the sonic frequencies flapping your trousers: always a good sign.
 Tunes like ‘The Herbalizer’, ‘Walk and Skank’ and ‘Serious Time’ – nu-reggae anthems all – are all heard exactly as intended: on the system operated by the people who made them. Tom Tattersall, Mungo’s wizardly main producer, is joined by Tom Spirals, resident MC with Scotch Bonnet Records, who displays real warmth and playfulness which complements the sound when he is given space to do so within the tracks. We don’t stay till the end (the clocks go forward tonight, so a 3am finish would be 4am in the real world) but apparently they don’t want to leave. Which means they’ll hopefully be back to orchestrate more serious skanking soon.

Leo Bowder



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Dr SHOTOVER: Seven Cycle Paths

Ah, there you are, Cavendish. Welcome to the East Indies Club bar. Pull up a pew, or, if you prefer, saddle. Would I care for a refreshment? Ra-ther, old boy. A pint of Finest Deraillieur would oil the wheels nicely. So, Froome and I were just discussing the fact that it is coming up to the Tour de Cowley, and we will obviously be competing... though in my case I will have to see my deal-, ahem, personal trainer Spanish Tony well in advance, and pray for no drug-testing. Not sure yet whether I'll be taking the Prisoner-style penny-farthing out, or the Boadicea roadster with the blades on the wheels, but either way I'll be cutting quite a dash on the highways and byways of East Oxford. Dress code? Tweed plus-fours are clearly *de rigueur*. Music will of course be supplied by RIDE, who are I gather putting together a remix of Leave Them All Behind especially for the event, with a new 'Wiggins Wig-Out' coda section composed by Andy 'Bicycle' Bell. The East Indies Club will be fielding a loose hip-hop combo too, with Yours Truly on disc brake beats. Not sure what to call ourselves yet, but, after some mat-ure reflection, we've definitely decided against THE VELOCI-PEDE-OPIHILES. Now, whose turn is it to get the drinks in? Can you handle bar duties, Froome? I said, 'Can you handle bar...?' – Oh suit your-selves. Cheers! Down the slope! Next month: HEAVY PEDAL KIDS



'Hello my good man, I say HELLO THERE, is this Magdalen Bridge?'

INTRODUCING....

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

WANDERING WIRES

Who are they?

Oxford jazz quintet Wandering Wires are: Tim Davies (*drums*); John Young (*keys*); Olivia Williams (*vocals*); Joe Bradley (*bass*), and Ben Clapin (*tenor sax*). The band started as a duo of Tim and John, experimenting with synths in their second year at university and expanded via various university ensembles. The band have been featured on BBC Introducing in Oxford; supported The Comet is Coming at the O2 Academy; played last year's Truck Festival, as well as playing gigs at the Mad Hatter, Sandy's Piano Bar, and Modern Art Oxford. In 2017 they released their debut album 'Departures'. 'Homecoming', their second, is out now via Spotify and iTunes.

What do they sound like?

Contemporary jazz meets synth-pop, with infusions of soul, Brazilian rhythms and orchestral sounds, occasional hints of Herbie Hancock's prog-jazz and Olivia's smooth, soulful voice adding some Sade-like sweetness to the more abstract departures.

What inspires them?

"Watching top contemporary jazz musicians live always gives us fresh ideas. Two stand-out gigs for us were seeing Dinosaur and Flying Machines at the Mad Hatter last year. Young British jazz is going in really compelling directions right now; there are loads of new artists to take inspiration from."

Career highlight so far:

"Listening to 'Homecoming' on Spotify on Joe's phone, outside in the snow, at midnight on the day it was released. We'd worked on the album for nine months, and finally getting it out there for people to listen to was a real high."

And the lowlight:

"Being completely blinded by dry ice on stage at Truck Festival last year. We were playing songs that we'd written two or three days beforehand and there was so much of the stuff on stage that we couldn't see each other to make eye contact: definitely a lesson in not getting carried away when the lighting manager asks what you want for your set."

Their favourite other Oxfordshire act is:



"Low Island: not only is their music so good, but they're top people. They've helped us out a lot as a young band."

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

"Michael Jackson: 'Off The Wall' – an iconic album with some of the greatest tunes you will ever hear, with big collaborators, but it also effortlessly combines so many different influences and styles of music."

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

"After a great gig at Modern Art Oxford last month with fully orchestrated arrangements of the album, we'll be playing Oriel Ball in June; lucky ticket holders can expect cool synths; funky shirts, and unexpected covers - definitely music you shouldn't be dancing to in white tie."

Their favourite and least favourite things about Oxford music are:

"There loads of opportunities to perform, and in so many different settings. It's great for bands who are starting out, because it gives you the chance to perfect your live show and see how it's received by different demographics. One thing we've found difficult is that music-making at Oxford University is quite isolated from the wider Oxford music scene, and vice versa."

You might love them if you love:

Jordan Rakei; Robert Glasper; Lianne la Havas; Moonchild; Bonobo.

Hear them here:

Spotify; iTunes; Bandcamp.

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

20 YEARS AGO

You know you've made it when you get on the telly, and in May 1998 **Channel 4** were in Oxford to film an episode of **John Peel's Sounds of the Suburbs** series, investigating grassroots music scenes around the UK. The great man was in town to talk to **Dustball**, **Nought**, **The Secret**, **Lab-4** and **The Samurai Seven**. On watching **James Sedwards** from Nought playing an improvised solo piece, Peel declared "That's the only time I've been jealous of someone who wasn't a footballer."

Talking of *bona fide* legends, **Debbie Harry** was also in town this month, though in a radical departure from Blondie she was fronting New York jazz improvisers **Jazz Passengers** at **The Oxford Playhouse**, which we remember featured several members of the audience sneaking out during the half time interval, confused by the music and perhaps expecting some kind of Blondie Greatest Hits set. That weren't ever gonna happen.

On a more local legend level, former **Talulah Gosh** and **Heavenly** people Amelia Fletcher, Pete Momtchiloff, Cathy Rogers and Rob Pursey returned to action with a debut show under the name **Marine Salvage & Research Limited**, soon, thankfully, to be shorted to **Marine Research**. The quartet were joined by DJ Downfall in a line-up that dispensed with much of the old twee-pop sound in favour of a more electronic, soul and beat-driven vibe. Other acts in town this month included **St**



'Hello my good man, I say HELLO THERE, is this Magdalen Bridge?'

THIS MONTH IN OXFORD
MUSIC HISTORY

founders **Robin and Joe Bennett** and aiming to create a festival that paid more than lip service to green issues. So, aside from live music from **Get Cape, Wear Cape, Fly**, **Lightspeed Champion** and **King Creosote**, there were hay bale construction workshops, solar-powered stages, compost toilets, junk modelling and plenty of organic food and ale. Good to see the whole thing still with us and more successful than ever.

5 YEARS AGO

More Punt action in May 2013 with **The Duke's Cut** the venue now residing in the Where Are They Now drawer. Band-wise **The August List** (also the month's Introducing act) made their presence felt, alongside **Candy Says**, **Death of Hi-Fi** and **Ags Connolly**. As well as those **After The Thought** are still with us, and we think **Poledo** might still exist, if not in Oxford. Gone and not yet forgotten were **Mother Corona**; **Duchess**; **Listing Ships**; **The Graceful Slicks**; **Bear Trap**; **Empire Divided**; **Yellow Fever** and **Traps**.

Beyond that rather special night there were gig treats to be had in the form of **Simple Minds**, and **OMD** and **John Foxx** (**The New Theatre**); **Major Lazer**, **Gaz Coombes**, **John Grant** and **Catfish & the Bottlemen** (all **O2 Academy**), and **The Handsome Family** (**The Bullingdon**), while **WOOD** hosted **Mary Epworth**; **Paper Aeroplanes** and **Danny & the Champions of the World**.

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DEMOS

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DEMO OF THE MONTH

MOBIUS

Following last month's demo reviews some friends of a band who got a bit of a critical kicking, took their umbrage to Twitter (the go-to wankbooth for impotent rage) to bleat and whine about the fact *Nightshift* thinks it's silly calling bogstandard rock "alternative" when it's anything but (the band themselves having laughed it all off). Time was, a band like Mobius would neatly have fitted into what was considered alternative, their sullen, drama-laden gothic noise starkly at odds with the prevailing guitar-based music mood of the time. It'd be simplistic to label them goth, but here's a band who seem happy to lurk in the shadows. Or if not happy then at least cheerfully glum. 'Bite My Hand' sounds like it's wearing shades indoors and has an unfiltered cigarette drooping from its fingertips as its simple pulsing/wandering bass takes it into Bauhaus territory while the singer conjures the spirit of The National's Matt Berninger. 'Omnipotence' is even more dramatically gothic, sparse, yet OTT, vocals full of Hammer Horror theatricality, the clanging rhythms awash with malevolence as the guitar glissando scours any chinks of light from the room, while closer, the instrumental 'Two Minutes Hate', is pretty much exactly that. There's something almost ostentatious about it all, but what is rock music if not theatre, and give us this kind of self-conscious staginess over earnest blokiess any day (or night) of the week.

LIFELUST

Lifelust's accompanying portrait looks like a Top Man photo shoot of a metalcore band, the quartet prettily arranged under pink and purple lights, tats and discreetly distressed clothes all in good order. Musically they don't stray too far from accepted formulae, but for all that, this is enjoyable enough: well-honed metal riffage, gloomy electronic atmospheres, a full-throated vocal roar and a dynamic that places emphasis on getting to the meat of the matter rather than fanning about trying to be too clever or worrying about clean vocals. No, it's all blast beats, shredded guitars and lava-gargling belligerence, with chunks and splinters of thrash, tech, death and djent hurled into the mixing pit. In fact crank it up loud enough and there's more than a hint of Killing Joke about it at times. Even typing those words makes us happier than you can possibly imagine.

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

FINAL SUN

At last month's Brookes University symposium on *Nightshift* (yeah, get us, we're worthy of academic study – like Shakespeare and pre-Raphaelite art and dinosaur fossils. Oh, hang on...) the idea of what constitutes a demo came up, and we fully accept the word is arcane in an age of digital self releases and affordable recording technology, but even so, this would count as a demo in anyone's book, since even the most lackadaisical teenage cave troll would admit it wasn't anything close to being the finished product. It sounds like it was recorded under several metres of thick mud in a church hall on an old cassette player that was perched the wrong way up against a wall several postcodes away. Which makes it bloody terrible, yeah? Like, compared to all those nicely, neatly recorded fancy tracks we get sent by proper studio producer types? Well, yes. But no. It does sound fucking awful on that level, but brush away the cobwebs, mud, hiss and crackle and more mud and it's a potentially fun slab of growly, down-tuned sludge metal that needs, if not a bit of polish (fi and tish to polished downtuned sludge metal) then some kind of balance. Through the murk and mud (by god there's a lot of mud in here), we even detect what might be a cover of Sepultura's 'Refuse/Resist'. Final Sun aren't the final deal yet, but they're on the right path at least, albeit it a rather muddy one.

JOIN THE RIOT

The name alone suggests a continuation of this month's nasty, noisy, gloomy and glowering demo theme, but that couldn't be further from the truth. Try frothy, euphoric electro-pop. 'Fantasies' is all softly flowering synths, gated drums and even a decent stab at Neil Tennant's soulfully detached vocals. It's positively fluffy in its delicate bounce, with a bubbling indie-dance vibe that, on 'Pretenders', comes close to Friendly Fires' 'Hawaiian Air'. Elsewhere they touch on the lighter side of Foals and even Everything Everything, and if it's all a bit lacking in substance at times – the wimpy semi-acoustic 'X My Heart' in particular, which sounds like an extremely ill-advised stab at folk-pop – and probably far too polished to be allowed anywhere near a mud-spattered field, you can imagine them getting a packed tent going at some mid-sized festivals through the summer. More riotous than a parish council meeting but considerably less so than a toddlers' ball pit party.

STRAWBERRY THIEVES

If Join the Riot want lessons on how to do folk music properly they'd do worse than

give Strawberry Thieves a shout. Duo Elsa Field and Ian Hall are unreconstructed folkies of the old school – cajon, bouzouki and mandolin all in da house. They also list yellow skull and dark frog among their instruments, which get us to thinking of Mulligan and O'Hare. Their songs are about blacksmiths and mermaids and they've got one called 'Once I Had a Sweetheart', so you know they're not making rash promises about being alt.folk or that self-delusional "folk played with punk spirit" boast, just simple, old-as-the-hills folk music that's as trad.arr as trad.arr gets, right down to some decent Gaelic singing from Elsa on 'An Mhaighdean Mhara', her high, limpid voice very much in the lineage of Sandy Denny and Maddy Prior. Here be maidens. Here be meadows. Here be thee merrie monthe of May. Here be liege and leaf, not to mention Willy O Winsbury. Frankly when Trump and Putin are doing their damndest to make the future as bleak and terrifying as possible, a retreat into some distant past rural idyll doesn't seem such a bad idea, does it.

LUXE FOR FUN

One horrific vision of the future that's already come true is music being written by robots – and not the cool sort of robots Kraftwerk have onstage. No, the ones whose job it is to write hit songs based on algorithms that refine and distil the essence of previous hits to create something as utterly soulless as is (non) humanly possible, like the musical equivalent of Dairy Lea Cheese Strings. Luxe For Fun don't sound like they've got a hit single in them but they do sound like there was precious little human involvement in their music. They present us with one song here, 'Motions', which apparently features "a Guild Hall jazz singing graduate and a producer." They describe themselves as "80s inspired sophisti-pop with tropical and electronic leanings," which sounds like the formula some marketing exec programmed into the computer while trying to get a soundtrack for his corporation's new pineapple and kumquat-flavoured soft drink. What comes out the other end is hardly tropical and contains little or no fizz, just a staid, sterile, overly polished soft soul ballad with a synthesized steel drum wobbling about in the background. Oh, hang about – polished 'Motions'? There's a joke in there somewhere but we can't quite put our finger on it. Nor would we want to, thinking about it.

GHOUL

If Ghoul's music was written by computer it must have been a knackered old Amstrad console with half its circuits fucked to buggery. No, only humans could write music like this. Terminally flawed humans with their own internal components worn down by booze and fags and exposure to dangerous levels of bad blues rock.

Send demos for review to: *Nightshift*, PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU, or email links to editor@nightshiftmag.co.uk, clearly marked Demos. **IMPORTANT:** no review without a contact phone number. If you can't handle criticism, please don't send us your demo. Same goes for your stupid, over-sensitive mates.

They call themselves Ghoul and describe themselves as punk and horror rock but unlike Mobius earlier in the pile, there's nothing fun and gothic about this, just awful, leaden pub rock bilge that makes Dumpy's Rusty Nuts sound like Tune-yards. 'Invisible Simon' just about gets away with its semi-comic premise by having something almost recognisable as a tune but the likes of 'Behind the Cobweb Veil' and 'Intruders' are nothing more than shouty dirges, no more musical than the delusional rantings of shouty park bench meth drinkers. Maybe one day, when Artificial Intelligence has fully taken over, some desperate, depressed cyborg songwriter will look in the mirror and realise every supposed party banger it's written is as shit and sterile as anything Drake could conjure and it will slump on the pavement outside the computer café with a four pack of Tennant's Super in its trembling robot hand, bellowing incoherent gibberish at passersby. Until then, we'll have to make do with Ghoul.

THE DEMO DUMPER

MICHAEL LEE

While it's easy to sit here contemplating some terrifying machine-ruled future, we must never forget that the past contained myriad horrors that we're still trying to understand, never mind come to terms with. And a lot of them happened in the 1980s. Thatcherism; the Cold War; AIDS; Level 42; Shakatak. Oh yeah, the 80s were a positive fucking joy on the soulless plastic jazz-funk front. Who doesn't hanker for the days of pencil moustachioed blokes with rolled up jacket sleeves, driving Capris and dancing to Johnny Hates Jazz? Michael Lee here obviously does. He's written an album's worth of tributes to it all. And he's allowed us the privilege of listening to it in its entirety, like sitting Vietnam vets suffering from PTSD in front of a 3D rendering of *Hamburger Hill*. And because Michael thinks we deserve an extra special treat on top of this particular turd trifle, he's thrown in some boyband balladry and what might be the scrapings from the bottom of a bag of Jamie Cullum processed potato snacks for good measure. Thoughtful old Michael. Well, here at *Nightshift* we live by the credo that every well-intentioned act of cruelty deserves a disproportionate response. So tonight we're off round to Mr Lee's house with several rolls of gaffer tape, a few tabs of LSD and a copy of every single Nurse With Wound recording ever made, including live bootlegs of their notorious 24-hour shows. And to make sure he enjoys every moment of his experience as much as we enjoyed his album, we've got a set of bolt cutters handy in case he doesn't applaud enthusiastically enough after every song. Right, which of you fuckers is next?

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- Introduce a band / block booking / student deals
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Four hours from £30!
 Call **07882569425**, e-mail info@tadstudios.co.uk or find us on Facebook to make an enquiry / booking

Sun 22nd Apr • 7.00pm

MC Lars + Koo Koo Kanga Roo

Thur 26th Apr • 7.00pm

Will Heard

Thur 26th Apr • 7.00pm

Don Broco + The LaFontaines + Yungblud

Fri 27th Apr • 6.30pm

Heather Small -
the voice of M People

Fri 27th Apr • 6.30pm

I Want To Play Common
People: Oxford

Sat 28th Apr • 7.00pm

Bingo Lingo
A New Breed Of Bingo

Sat 28th Apr • 6.30pm

UK Foo Fighters
Banging On the Ceiling Tour

Wed 2nd May • 6.30pm

Ocean Wisdom

Thur 3rd May • 7.00pm

Lower Than Atlantis

Fri 4th May • 6.30pm

Rhys Lewis

Fri 4th May • 6.30pm

Wilko Johnson + Hugh Cornwell Band

Fri 4th May • 11.00pm

Mighty Crown Far East Rulers

Sat 5th May • SOLD OUT • 6.00pm

Frank Turner
& The Sleeping Souls

Sat 5th May • 7.00pm

Skeletor feat. The Reaper

Sun 6th May • 7.00pm

Mallory Knox
+ Better Than Never + Towers

Mon 7th May • 7.00pm

The Bluetones + The Velvet Hands

Thur 10th May • 7.00pm

DMA's

Fri 11th May • 6.30pm

Marmozets

Sat 12th May • 6.00pm

Death Remains

Sat 12th May • 6.00pm

Seether

Mon 14th May • 7.00pm

Black Honey

Wed 16th May • 6.30pm

Barrence Whitfield
& The Savages

Fri 18th May • 7.00pm

Uprising – BBC Introducing
In Oxford (biggest
Weekend Fringe event)

Wed 23rd May • 6.30pm

Coco and the Butterfields

Sun 27th May • 6.30pm

Cocaine Piss

Fri 1st Jun • 7.00pm

Carcer City

Sat 2nd Jun • 7.00pm

OMYO

Sat 2nd Jun • 7.00pm

Miles Kane

Thur 7th Jun • 7.00pm

The Wedding Present
"Tommy" 30th Anniversary Tour

Thur 7th Jun • 7.00pm

Tony Christie

Sat 9th Jun • 7.00pm

A Band Called Malice
The Definitive Tribute to The Jam

Thur 14th Jun • 7.00pm

Sona Jobarteh

Fri 15th Jun • 6.30pm

Nick Heyward + Pugwash

Fri 22nd Jun • 7.00pm

Zodiac Reunion Party
Disques Voge, Sky Larkin, Transformation, Osprey

Mon 25th Jun • 7.00pm

Kiefer Sutherland

Sat 30th Jun • 7.00pm

Black Skies Burn
ft Diablo, Last Rites, Hymn To Apollo

Fri 6th Jul • 7.00pm

Super Hans

Fri 3rd Aug • 7.00pm

One State Drive

Thur 6th Sep • 7.00pm

Ben Miller Band

Fri 14th Sep • 6.00pm

Molotov Jukebox

Sat 22nd Sep • 6.30pm

Dressed To Kill - A Tribute To
KISS + Electric Circus (A Tribute to W.A.S.P)

Fri 5th Oct • 6.00pm

Imperial Leisure

Fri 5th Oct • 6.30pm

The Magic Gang

Sat 6th Oct • 6.30pm

The Smyths
Unite and Take Over Tour 2018

Fri 12th Oct • 6.30pm

Hollie Cook

Fri 12th Oct • 6.30pm

Antarctic Monkeys

Sat 13th Oct • 6.30pm

Britpop Boys

Thur 18th Oct • 7.00pm

Tom Grennan

Thur 18th Oct • 7.00pm

The Daniel Wakeford
Experience

Fri 19th Oct • 6.30pm

Boyzlife

Sat 27th Oct • 6.30pm

Guns 2 Roses

Tue 30th Oct • 7.00pm

Superorganism

Thur 1st Nov • 7.00pm

The Feeling

Fri 2nd Nov • 7.00pm

Neil Hilborn

Sat 10th Nov • 6.30pm

Dubioza Kolektiv

Fri 16th Nov • 6.30pm

Killing Joke

Sat 17th Nov • 6.30pm

Definitely Mightbe
Oasis tribute

Tue 27th Nov • 7.00pm

Shame

Fri 7th Dec • 6.30pm

Pearl Jam UK

Sun 2nd Dec • 7.00pm

Bjorn Again

Sat 22nd Dec • 6.30pm

Faith – The George Michael
Legacy

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