

# NIGHTSHIFT

## Oxford's Music Magazine

**Free every  
month  
Issue 285  
April  
2019**

photo: Helen Messenger



"The mask probably is a defence mechanism. Focussing on this character of Tiger Mendoza rather than me as a person removes the notion of personality or race or even gender."

# TIGER MENDOZA

Oxford's collaboration king  
talks masks, movies & remixes

Also in this issue:

**THE CELLAR - RIP**

**WHEATSHEAF** in peril?

Introducing **MEANS OF PRODUCTION**  
**FESTIVAL NEWS** - the latest on Truck,  
Cornbury, Supernormal, Tandem & more

plus all your Oxford music news, previews, reviews and  
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**NIGHTSHIFT: PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU. Phone: 01865 372255**



# THE BULLINGDON

## APRIL 2019 GIG & CLUB LISTINGS

Thursday 2nd April <b>Dream State</b> Doors: 7pm	Friday 16th April <b>Dirty AC/DC</b> Doors: 7pm	Friday 16th April <b>P.Y.T</b> Doors: 8pm	Friday 24th May <b>Bloodstock Festival M2TM Final</b> Doors: 7pm
Wednesday 3rd April <b>Oxford Brookes Jazz Society Presents: Our Favorite Things</b> Doors: 7pm	Friday 19th April <b>Prism: Spectrum</b> Doors: 8pm	Saturday 4th May <b>Basic Monki</b> Doors: 8pm	Saturday 25th May <b>Rawdio Randall Indika Riggamortiz Soundsystem</b> Doors: 10pm
Thursday 4th April <b>The Brew Twisted State of Mind</b> Doors: 7pm	Saturday 20th April <b>K-Funkz House Party</b> Doors: 8pm	Thursday 1st May <b>C Duncan</b> Doors: 7pm	Sunday 26th May <b>Simple Overmono</b> Doors: 10pm
Friday 5th April <b>Oxphwoard: Feast</b> Doors: 7pm	Thursday 23rd April <b>Josefin Öhrn + The Liberation</b> Doors: 7pm	Wednesday 8th May <b>The Beths</b> Doors: 7pm	Thursday 30th May <b>Dale Watson &amp; His Lone Stars</b> Doors: 7pm
Saturday 6th April <b>Musical Medicine Rhythm Sister</b> Doors: 8pm	Wednesday 24th April <b>Whenyoung</b> Doors: 7pm	Friday 10th May <b>Stone Foundation</b> Doors: 7pm	Friday 31st May <b>We are not Devo</b> Doors: 7pm
Sunday 7th April <b>The Rock Project Oxford</b> Doors: 7pm	Thursday 25th April <b>Corduroy Nick Corbin</b> Doors: 7pm	Friday 10th May <b>Break Stuff Night of Nu-Metal Nostalgia</b> Doors: 8pm	Saturday 1st June <b>Musical Medicine FOUK</b> Doors: 10pm
Wednesday 10th April <b>Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs</b> Doors: 7pm	Friday 26th April <b>Noasis - Indie Club Show</b> Doors: 8pm	Saturday 18th May <b>Simple Helena Huaff</b> Doors: 8pm	Friday 7th June <b>Fluorescent Adolescent</b> Doors: 10pm
Thursday 11th April <b>Blue Rose Code</b> Doors: 7pm	Saturday 27th April <b>Volume DNB #15 War on Silence Album Launch Crissy Criss Kenny Ken Carasel MC</b> Doors: 8pm	Wednesday 15th May <b>Grainne Duffy</b> Doors: 7pm	Friday 14th June <b>Pinoy Rock Legends</b> Doors: 9pm
Friday 12th April <b>Love Music Hate Racism Jim Jones &amp; The Righteous Mind The Deadbeat Apostles</b> Doors: 7pm	Sunday 28th April <b>Girli</b> Doors: 7pm	Thursday 16th May <b>Ten Tonnes</b> Doors: 7pm	Saturday 15th June <b>Simple Courtesy</b> Doors: 10pm
Saturday 13th April <b>Groove Sally C</b> Doors: 8pm	Tuesday 20th April <b>Simple: MayDay DJ Rum</b> Doors: 8pm	Friday 17th May <b>Drahla</b> Doors: 7pm	Thursday 26th June <b>Ryan Bingham</b> Doors: 7pm
Sunday 14th April <b>Rare Americans</b> Doors: 7pm	Wednesday 1st May <b>MayDay After Party</b> Doors: 8pm	Saturday 18th May <b>Musical Medicine Horse Meat Disco</b> Doors: 8pm	Friday 28th June <b>The Total Stone Roses</b> Doors: 7pm
Thursday 18th April <b>The Noble Jacks</b> Doors: 7pm	Wednesday 1st May <b>Haute Mess</b> Doors: 8pm	Wednesday 22nd May <b>RHR Redfern, Hutchinson &amp; Ross</b> Doors: 7pm	Monday 8th July <b>Hamilton Loomis</b> Doors: 7pm

# NEWS

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**THE CELLAR CLOSED ITS** doors for the last time on the 11<sup>th</sup> March.

The venue, which has been at the heart of the Oxford music scene for 40 years under the ownership of the Hopkins family, was forced to shut after it failed to reach an agreement with landlords The St Michael's and All Saints "charity", over a new rent deal.

The closure comes at the end of an 18-month period that saw The Cellar survive an application for a change of use from the landlords – with almost 15,000 people signing a petition supporting the venue – and a severe cut in its capacity following a safety inspection, with supporters raising over £90,000 to help pay for structural alterations to the building. The closure of The Cellar leaves a huge hole in Oxford's live music scene and is yet another blow to the city's culture and independent business sector, already suffering from high rents and rates.

Announcing the end of the struggle to stay open, Cellar manager Tim Hopkins said in a statement: "We are very sad to inform you that The Cellar has closed its doors for the last time. After crunching the numbers a thousand times over the Hopkins family, who have run the independent music venue for nearly 40 years, have sadly come to conclusion that they cannot continue.

"After months of negotiations, we would have loved to have been able to take the landlord's final rent offer, but it came too late. What's more, even with a vaguely do-able rent

agreed, there were no guarantees on the time frame of the building work, which required access to the shop above and various structural considerations. Essentially, the whole process took far longer than we were expecting, and we simply could not keep operating under these conditions.

"We are grateful to the landlords for recognising the cultural importance of the venue, and we hope that we have saved this space from becoming a store room. Moreover, we hope that the space, in some shape or form, will continue as a live music venue. Over 2,000 people donated to the Cellar Forever campaign, showing that the people of Oxford really care about what The Cellar stands for, and the values it embodies – independence, individuality and creativity. The amazing £92K that we raised will be returned to everyone's bank accounts.

"We'd like to thank all of our Cellar Forever supporters from the bottom of our hearts. You guys have kept us going through what has been a very tough two years. We'd also like to thank the brilliant people at Crowdfunder for being so supportive and understanding. Lastly, thank you to the Music Venues Trust who gave us so much valuable advice and guidance. Without them, we certainly wouldn't have come this far."

While everyone who pledged to the fundraising campaign will have their money refunded automatically, supporters have been urged to donate



that money to the Music Venue Trust, which works tirelessly to protect live music venues across the UK and was instrumental in aiding the Cellar's campaign. Many of the rewards offered in the campaign remain open to anyone doing so.

Hundreds of music fans took to social media in the wake of The Cellar's announcement, both to decry the loss of such an iconic venue and to share memories of the place, many from musicians and DJs who played their first shows at the venue and gig goers who had met lifelong friends and even future spouses down there. The sense of loss of such a pivotal part of the local community was palpable.

Foals, Stornoway, Glass Animals and Young Knives are among local acts who cut their teeth at The Cellar.

What becomes of the empty building now is anyone's guess. St. Michael's and All Saints' own statement suggests they are open to it remaining as a venue, but that would

require an investor with the money to fund the building work and the increased rent, and the "charity"'s claims to be supportive of live music rings hollow when you consider they originally tried to get permission for a change of usage for the building.

Meanwhile **THE WHEATSHEAF** continues to face issues that could affect its live music. A planning application has been put in for two flats directly adjoining the venue, which could potentially open it up to noise complaints – one of the main causes of venue closures across the UK in recent years – while ongoing noise complaints from a single resident who moved into the vicinity last year continues to affect both live music curfews and the ability to host music in the pub's downstairs bar.

To read The Cellar's full statement, share your own photos and memories of the venue, or see how you can register your concerns about The Wheatsheaf, visit [facebook.com/nightshiftmag](https://facebook.com/nightshiftmag).



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photo: Pier Corona

# NEWS



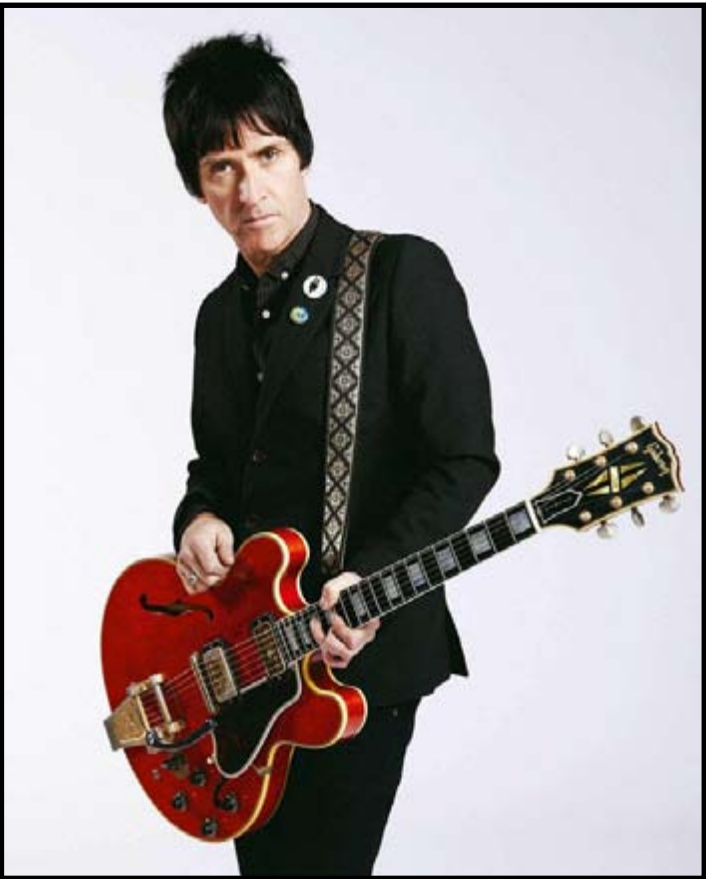
**SUPERNORMAL FESTIVAL** sold out within hours of tickets going on sale last month. The experimental music and arts festival, which takes place at **Braziers Park** in Ipsden, has earned a reputation as one of the UK's most original and uncompromising festivals and despite taking a year off in 2018 to give its volunteer organisers a break, its reputation has only grown. This year's event takes place over the weekend of the **2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> August**, with the line-up to be announced. Previous years have seen sets from the likes of Pigs x7, Hookworms, JK Flesh, Evil Blizzard, Sacred Paws, Big Joanie, Comanечи (*pictured*) and Clinic, but it is the event's adventurousness and eclectic and esoteric nature that has made it such a favourite of leftfield music fans, with off-the-wall activities like black metal yoga, Bowie-oke, jug playing and a bat orchestra lending it an anything-goes charm. Line-up news as it comes at: [supernormalfestival.co.uk](http://supernormalfestival.co.uk).

**BIG SCARY MONSTERS** host a one-day live music festival in June. **Summer in the City** is

the first hometown festival to be organised by the award-winning indie label. The event takes place on **Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> June** across a number of venues in East Oxford, including Fusion Arts; Port Mahon; The Library; Truck Store and Brew Dog. Acts so far confirmed include: Tangled Hair; Gender Roles; Colossal Squid; Lucy Leave; Flirts; Worry; Junk Whale; Masiro, and Egrets. The day runs from 3pm-2am. Early bird tickets are on sale now, priced £11, from [Wegottickets.com](http://Wegottickets.com). More info at [bsmrocks.com](http://bsmrocks.com).

**DEATH OF THE MAIDEN**, Candy Says and Willie J Healey are among a host of Oxford acts playing this year's **Are You Listening?** Festival in Reading. The one-day festival, which takes place across seven venues in Reading town centre on **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April**, is organised by Heavy Pop, who also run live music at The Jericho Tavern. Flamingods; Gengahr; Bad Sounds; Krafty Kuts; Kiran Leonard; Peaness; Madonnatron, and The Menstrual Cramps are among the acts playing. Other Oxford acts performing are: Bug Prentice; Catgod; Peerless Pirates, and Tiger Mendoza. Tickets, priced £25 in advance, are on sale from [Wegottickets](http://Wegottickets). All proceeds go to Reading Mencap. Full line-up at [areyoulistening.org.uk](http://areyoulistening.org.uk) or Are You Listening? on Facebook.

**GLOVEBOX** host a one-day Americana and roots festival at Cogges Farm in Witney on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> August. Acts confirmed so far include: Danny & The Champions of the World; William the Conqueror; Naomi Bedford & Paul Simmonds with



**JOHNNY MARR, PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING AND THE JAPANESE HOUSE** are among a host of new acts confirmed for this year's **Truck Festival**. The second wave of acts was announced on the 18<sup>th</sup> March, with other names including: **Yonaka; Sunset Sons; Dodie; Island; Mallory Knox; Hot 8 Brass Band; Fatherson; Gurr; Sean McGowan; Indoor Pets; Psychedelic Porn Crumpets; My Nu Leng; Macky G; Ocean Wisdom; Notion; Emerald, and K Motionz & MC Skibadee.** They, and many more acts announced, join headliners **Foals, Wolf Alice, Two Door Cinema Club** and **Slaves** at **Hill Farm** in Steventon from the **25<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> July**. Other acts already confirmed include Idles; Kate Nash; Shame; You Me At Six; Don Broco; She Drew the Gun and Fontaines DC. Over 75% of tickets for this year's Truck have already been sold. Remaining tickets are on sale at [truckfestival.com](http://truckfestival.com).

The Ramshackle Band; Trevor Moss & Hannah-Lou; The Black Feathers; Paul McClure; Ags Connolly, and The Niall Kelly Band. Tickets, priced £30, are on sale now through [Wegottickets.com](http://Wegottickets.com) or at Truck Store and Rapture. More

details at [www.gloveboxlive.uk](http://www.gloveboxlive.uk). **INNER PEACE RECORDS** perform their biggest hometown gig to date when they play The O2 Academy on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> May. The local hip hop collective, featuring Rawz, Tiece, Tang

the Pilgrim, Elliot Fresh, King Boyden and more, play songs from last year's collective debut 'The Forge'. The former *Nightshift* cover stars were one of the star turns at last summer's Common People. Tickets, priced £9+bf, are on sale now from the Academy box office and Ticketmaster.

**NUBIYAN TWIST** will headline this year's **Tandem Festival**. The London-based afro-jazz Collective, renowned for their fusion of jazz, soul, hip hop, African styles, Latin, dub and electronics, are the first act announced for the eco-friendly world, folk and roots music and arts festival, which takes place over the weekend the **21<sup>st</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> June** at **Lower Farm** in Ramsden, celebrating its fifth year with 2018's event selling out. The volunteer-run, cycle-powered festival celebrates world folk sounds and features talks, workshops, dance and vegan food alongside the live music. Tickets are on sale now, priced £85 for adults, with concessions for group bookings and under-18s. Under-12s go free. Visit [tandemfestival.com](http://tandemfestival.com) for full details.



**LITTLE BROTHER ELI** launch a Kickstarter campaign this month to fund a live album. The band recorded their show at the O2 Academy in November 2018, and plan to release a thirteen-track album in June. Bass player Joh Rigal told *Nightshift*: "Releasing a live album has always been an ambition of ours. People are often telling us how energetic our live shows are and that energy is sometime difficult to reproduce in the studio. For us, our show at the end of last year was one of those performances where everything just clicked into place; thankfully we filmed and recorded the audio from the entire gig and we decided that it's too good to keep to ourselves. "We're doing a Kickstarter campaign to generate enough

money to mix, master and edit the whole performance. It's an opportunity for those who were at the show to relive the experience, maybe spot themselves in the video and ultimately be able to contribute towards the band's success. It's also a chance for fans in other countries, or fans who simply live too far away, to see and hear what we're about. There are lots of exclusive rewards on offer and we perform several tracks we haven't yet released on the album." Full details on the band's Facebook and Twitter and at [littlebrothereli.com](http://littlebrothereli.com).

**TRUCK STORE** plays host to **Record Store Day** once again this month. The international celebration of independent music stores takes place on **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April**, with the Cowley Road Store – and its Witney cousin, Rapture – selling a host of limited edition vinyl releases as well as hosting live music across the day. The store will open at 8am, with early birds able to join in the shop's now traditional quiz. For a full list of special releases available, visit [truckmusicstore.co.uk](http://truckmusicstore.co.uk). Truck also hosts a number of instore shows and signings in the coming weeks.

On Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March **Emily Barker and Marry Waterson** will be performing songs from their new album together. On Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April **Rozi Plain** plays an afternoon show, promoting her new album 'What A Boost'. On Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April *Nightshift* cover star **Tiger Mendoza** launches his new remix album, 'New Ideas', while Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> sees **Sleaford Mods** signing copies of new album 'Eton Alive' ahead of their show at the O2 Academy that evening. Again, for full details and timings, visit the Truck Store website.

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

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

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# TIGER MENDOZA

photo: GlassHertzz photography



The man behind the mask - Ian de Quadros with Asher Dust

“**TIGERS ARE PRETTY great, aren’t they. Although to be fair I’m more of a dog person. I could be a Sea lion maybe. They’re pretty good.**”

**SO SAYS IAN DE QUADROS**, the artist better known as Tiger Mendoza and a man now synonymous with the tiger mask he’s worn onstage for the last decade. So much so that anyone who’s only ever seen him up onstage might not have a clue what the chap behind the mask actually looks like. Is it, then, a defence mechanism? “It probably is a defence mechanism thing. It’s kind of funny how upset people get if I play without the mask on now. I don’t know if I’m clever enough to make any form of commentary, although I guess focussing on this character of Tiger Mendoza with the mask rather than me as a person partially removes the notion of personality or race or even gender. Maybe. I dunno.”

**A FACE HIDDEN BEHIND A** mask he might be as far as gigging goes, but Tiger Mendoza has been one of the most prolific musicians and producers on the local scene over the last decade, both for his own releases and for his regular remixes of other Oxford artists as well as the likes of Public Enemy.

This month the favours are returned as Tiger Mendoza releases ‘New Ideas’, a full album of remixes of tracks from his recent ‘Old Ideas’ EPs, where acts as diverse as Worry, Kid Kin, Octavia Freud, Mowvves, Breezewax, Self Help’s Silke Blansjaar and long-time collaborator Asher Dust have remodelled Ian’s songs and soundscapes. The result is as eclectic and engaging as you’d hope, especially given Ian’s own wide-ranging musical output, one that encompasses industrial electronics, hip hop, metal, synth-pop, film score-like ambience and doom.

**MOVING TO OXFORD IN** 1998, having grown up in Slough, Tiger Mendoza is at the forefront of Oxford’s small but fertile electronic music scene, but Ian’s formative musical years were a mixed bag. “Music was always a big part of my family’s day to day life but no one played any instruments when I was at home. I have many fond memories of family parties and my Dad DJing the night from his massive stack of cassettes: lots of 60s Britpop, Kraftwerk, disco, Swahili songs from Tanzania and Black Sabbath. Oh, and Dire Straits. “I was in a couple of well meaning but shambolic indie bands before I got to Oxford but the first Oxford band I was in were EveryWhen, a

kind of hippy-ish indie rock band who actually got the Demo Dumper – a rite of passage, innit? There was a very short-lived three-piece called the Tiger Mendoza Project, then Toy #1, who were sort of post-grunge, which overlapped with starting Tiger Mendoza properly with Helena Markou in 2008 and then Dan O’Driscoll joining a bit later. “The main difference now from the early Tiger Mendoza days is the change in focus from more of a band-type structure when Dan and Helena were involved, a structure I was more used to playing within at the time, to more of an UNKLE-style producer/writer solo pseudonym project thing. There are times that I miss the camaraderie of a more regular band style set up but I’m really enjoying the flexibility that working independently and bringing in collaborators gives me. I’m still a bit of a frustrated drummer though.”

**IT’S FAIR TO SAY THAT** Tiger Mendoza is the collaboration king in Oxford. As well as the remixing, he’s released EPs and albums with former eeeblee and Witches singer Dave Griffith and singer Asher Dust and recorded with a host of others, many of whom have gone on to become part of the Tiger Mendoza live band, which brings together the multifaceted strands of

Ian’s musical output to make for a highly dynamic show. The band’s set at last year’s Common People was a high point of the weekend. That live band features Dave Griffith and Asher Dust as well as Luke Allmond from Daisy and Blood Horse; Dan Clear from Death of Hi-Fi and Peter Lloyd from Kid Kin. “The band came together very organically. When we were practising for Common People, the genuine smiles when we were in the practice room bringing these little songs that I had mostly recorded myself to life in a live context was amazing! They’re all such great musicians. I know it must sound clichéd but I honestly consider myself privileged that they agreed to join in. And it was great to get Helena back involved for the set at Common People last year too. “I guess the unspoken thing is that everyone knows that it’s not permanent which in a way is quite freeing. All of the guys you’ve mentioned, plus Half Decent, Lee Christian and all of the others I’ve coerced in to playing with Tiger Mendoza over the years, have their own thing going on which they can get right back to afterwards. The other thing is that I’ve never really been one to trek around the country gigging all of the time so it really is an intense but temporary thing.” Ian also performs occasional solo

shows, depending on the occasion and bandmate availability, exploring a more ambient/atmospheric direction. “My first thing is to realise that I am not a five-piece band and work from there. One of the things I learned from listening to DJ Shadow and Jack White talking about their live shows is that it’s not necessarily a bad idea to make things a little bit difficult for yourself when playing live. I mean I *could* just hit a button and play a drum break or predefined synth line, or I could try a play a version of it live. It may not be what you hear on the recorded version but hey, it’s live, go with it. I’m not going to pretend that I play every piece live – not enough hands, sorry – but I also don’t want it to be a just a light show with pristine CD-ready audio playing over the top. Imperfections can be good and it keeps things interesting for me and the audience.”

**OF ALL OF IAN’S** collaborators, his longest-running and most regular is Asher Dust – the chief musical moniker of maverick singer and musical explorer Andrew Jones. Both have appeared on each other’s records and played in each other’s live bands, while the track ‘Perish the Thought’ will appear on both artists’ records. “I knew of AJ before but the first time I had heard him properly was on the Death of Hi-Fi single ‘Jericho’, I think. I just thought that he had a great voice. I was working on the beat that would become ‘Lovesick Vandal’ and sent it to him to see what he thought. To my surprise he liked it and sent over a bunch of demo vocals. I used them all in the track and we’ve been collaborating ever since. Honestly, he has so much energy and positivity on stage with these dark and personal lyrics, that I’m just glad to have him there. I don’t think I’ve ever thought ‘Okay, now I need to write the Asher Dust beat’, it just kind of happens. We’ve managed to strike a good relationship where we record independently and then swap ideas over the internet. I am glad he’s put his retirement on hold for a bit longer too.”

**ALMOST AS LONG-RUNNING** is Ian’s musical relationship with Dave Griffith. The pair recorded the ‘Along Dangerous Roads’ and ‘Shadow’ albums together in 2016, marrying Ian’s electronics to Dave’s poems and prose and guitar playing. “Those two releases were so much fun! We met properly when we were both playing with Mark Wilden and The Evenings and it was actually Dave that asked me if I wanted to work on stuff with him. And I’m very glad he did! He has such a great sense of melody and poeticism; I kind of treated it like doing a remix in that he’d send me stuff and then I’d

chop it up in a sampler, re-jig it and send it back. The big shift between ‘ADR’ and ‘The Shadow’ was that we became friends while working on the first release so just got more comfortable working together. Rather than rigidly sticking to ‘Dave does strings, Ian does beats’, Dave started doing drums and Ian maybe adds a mellotron – because everything sounds great on mellotron!”

**PRIOR TO THE ‘NEW IDEAS’** album, Tiger Mendoza’s most recent releases were the ‘Old Ideas’ EPs, featuring all of those regular bedfellows and more, the first EP a brooding and angry set of songs that married Deftones to Arab Strap and beyond, while Part 2 was, in Ian’s own words, “the morning after”: spacier and warmer, closer to Vangelis and The Orb at times, leaving behind the earlier abrasiveness. “I didn’t initially plan it that way but

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***“An act may be known for being a punk band but I know they all have other musical interests so it’s gives them a chance to let those other influences come through.”***

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as I was putting them together they seemed to form these two halves. The first half was dark and angry; I don’t exactly make club bangers normally but a lot of stuff was happening personally and nationally at the time and I think that seeped in to the EP. ‘Old Ideas 2’ was a sense of realisation: I may not happy about what’s happening but fuck ‘em, you’ve got to keep going.”

**THIS MONTH OF COURSE**, the songs from those EPs re-emerge remodelled and mutated by 14 different remixers. We wonder how Ian went about selecting people to work on his original tunes and who got to remix which tracks. “It was a 50/50 split of ‘oh, X would do a great remix of this! I wonder if they would be up for it?’ and saying to people ‘how would you like to do a remix for me? You pick a track’. I’m not going to tell you which is which though! “I have friends who are my go-tos in terms of collaborating and just being musical sounding boards for ideas; people like Skellter and David Griffiths were just obvious choices and are great producers in their own right. A lot of people on this collection, like Silke and Worry, had never done a remix before and really liked the idea of giving a go. With this release particularly I wanted to look outside the normal ‘electro dudes’ a bit and see what other people could do. “I’m very, very, very happy with

the results and picking a favourite is kind of unfair because they all bring something unique to the album but I have to say getting Mowvves (aka Nick and Mooney, previously known as Coloureds) to do a remix was pretty fecking great! Them and The Evenings really heavily inspired me to start Tiger Mendoza.” Any surprises compared to what you expected from someone? “Pretty much all of them! I had no idea what Octavia Freud were going to do. Like some of the best remixes, I created a skeletal track initially and they fleshed it out. Dan Clear’s remix of ‘Missing You’ was a really nice take too: totally different vibe to the original and a great guitar line.” Some new names to Oxford music fans on there – Twin Replica in particular sound great, and Kate Herridge. “It’s really great to hear that! I love that people might go ‘I wonder what their other stuff is like?’ then go check

**FOR SOMEONE BEST KNOWN** as an electronic artist, there’s a lot of riffage in Tiger Mendoza’s music.

Is it a particular interest of his to see what happens when you give, say, an industrial hip hop track to a hardcore punk band, as with Worry and ‘Maverick Souls’? “Yes! It’s a kind of a perverse ‘let’s see if they can hack it’ thing I guess although that does sound kind of mean. Also, an act may be known for being a punk band but I know they all have other musical interests so it gives them a chance to let some of those other influences come through.” Is the idea of genre dead, or do people still cling to, albeit looser, tribal and stylistic loyalties? “Saying that genres are dead is a bit much. I always preferred where the lines started to blur: UNKLE working with Thom Yorke; Massive Attack and Hope Sandoval; 65daysofstatic and The Cure, etc. When hip hop started there were no hip hop records to sample; it evolved out of people finding snippets from old rock and soul records. And listen out for it and you’ll hear hip hop and dance samples in many rock band set ups these days. I guess the key thing is to try and have a set vision of what you want your sound to be otherwise things can get a bit... confused. Although, to be honest, that can be fun too. And then push the limits of that sound as far as you can.”

**TALKING OF GENRES**, Oxford’s electronic music scene has always been fertile but never on a par popularity wise with its indie or rock scenes; why does Ian think that is, and what does it need to break through more fully? “That’s a great question. To be honest I’m not sure. My own personal thing is to just get out there and contact promoters and play some gigs rather than just staying at home producing it. I am *not* having a go at bedroom producers – I still think of myself as one – but the fact that I’m used to playing in front of people at gigs from my time in bands helps. Not getting too worked up about replicating the produced sound exactly helps to some extent. Technology has moved on so that moving equipment around isn’t as difficult as it used to be but you still need a pretty decent sound system which could limit where you can play. “I can’t over emphasise the value of having a good stage presence and trying to form a connection with the audience and not just being about the producer. I love what Means of Production are currently doing musically and visually. “The decreasing number of smaller venues in Oxford doesn’t help. Fewer venues means less opportunity to play which in turn means promoters have fewer slots to fill and often putting on a rock band or singer-songwriter can seem like a safer bet to get people through the door.”



# RELEASED

## FOALS

### ‘Everything Not Saved Will Be Lost’

(Warner Music)

The past year or so has doubtless been a time of re-evaluation for Foals, with the departure of bassist Walter Gervers. One of the more prominent results of this has been the decision to self produce their new album, with Yannis taking over control in the studio. Not a man lacking in confidence when it comes to music, ‘Everything Not Saved...’ is a reflection of both that confidence and Foals’ restless creativity. It’s not an album that will shock or surprise longstanding fans, almost serving to encapsulate everything they already love about the band’s many changing moods over the past decade or so, but it never sounds complacent or flat. Album opener ‘Moonlight’ washes in on a bed of wintry electronics, reminiscent of some of This Mortal Coil’s most expansive pieces, while Yannis sounds simultaneously tremulous and stout of heart, like a more bullish Anohni. It closes in reflective fashion, firstly with the downbeat ‘Sunday’, which initially feels laborious compared to what’s come before, but then blossoms and finally soars, and an almost obligatory piano-led coda ‘I’m Done With The World & It’s Done With Me’, the album’s most personal moment lyrically, but in between there is muscle and groove and more than enough to suggest Foals remain at the top of their highly accomplished game. First single from the record ‘Exits’ is lithe and broad shouldered, a condensed take on the band’s big riffs and electro-pop, which keeps up the slow-build pressure over an impressive five and

## ZURICH

### ‘Out of Dust’

(Self released)

In the wake of a series of singles over the past year that have cemented their reputation as one of Oxfordshire’s most cultured and accomplished rock bands, Zurich pull those singles, plus a couple of new songs, together as a full EP release that confirms their ambition with an unabashed stadium-friendly sound. Leading Zurich’s charge is singer Adrian Banks’ rich, nuanced baritone, which is matched by the epic scale of the band’s guitars, while fluid keyboard lines cut rivers of darkness through bold, anthemic songs which sound like they’d go into orbit if they weren’t tethered. ‘My Protocol’ is the band at their melodic best with a chorus who’d swear you’ve heard blossoming from every radio station going, so immediate and familiar is it. Best of the five songs featured here is ‘While You Sleep’, a simmering, electro-heavy slice of darkwave that’s equal to anything Editors have conjured. Showing their lighter side ‘Where You’ve Been’ features Dolly Mavies, whose smokehouse voice counterpoints Adrian’s and reminds us of Snow Patrol’s collaboration with Martha Wainwright, and if the guitar solo maybe oversteps the line in



half minutes. ‘White Onions’ is more feral, given a longer leash to snap at you from, but quickly they’re back to their rinky dink funk-pop and early 80s influences on ‘In Degrees’. ‘Syrups’ finds the groove more rigid and urgent, where Steve Reich meets Pink Floyd, while ‘Cafe D’Athens’ is spacier, and funkier, based on a marimba rhythm. Lyrically the sense of longing that permeated song like ‘London Thunder’ seems to have been replaced by a sense of future fear – for the planet and everything on it, but as that closer shows, Yannis can still shift down several gears and bring the emotion. ‘Everything Not Saved...’ is no wild departure nor a resting on laurels, but a continuation of Foals’ upward journey. The next peak will be their headline set at Truck in July. It’s no exaggeration to say it’s likely to be one of the most triumphant spectacles Oxford or the band has ever experienced.

Dale Kattack

the billowing, epic stakes, the song is strong and subtle enough to survive the journey.

Ian Chesterton

## THE DEADBEAT APOSTLES

### ‘Bigger Man’

(Self released)

From The August List’s drone-laden country gothic, through The Epstein’s cinematic prairie pop, to Ags Connolly’s outlaw ballads, country music has a firm grip on the local scene, and The Deadbeat Apostles offer another angle on the scene: bold, earthy and maybe a little more showy than some of their counterparts. That probably comes from the vocal interaction between Mike Ginger and Michelle Mayes: he rough hewn and roustabout; her richly soulful, all Stetsons and leopard print, together uplifting even while singing the blues. Backed by traditional steel twang and scraping fiddle ‘Bigger Man’ marks The Deadbeats out as Oxford’s most unabashedly Nashville-friendly country act, no little hint of Kenny Rogers and Tammy Wynette about this rousingly hangdog anthem. Two more fingers of gulping whiskey please barman, we’re gonna be here all night.

Ian Chesterton

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## TIGER MENDOZA

### ‘New Ideas’

(Self released)

Described by Tiger Mendoza’s Ian De Quadros as “A remix album. Of sorts”, ‘New Ideas’ takes the collaborations forged across previous EPs – 2017’s ‘Old Ideas 1’ and 2018’s ‘Old Ideas 2’ – and explores a kind of reciprocal collaboration alongside two new tracks. There are four versions of the originally grungy hip-hop ‘Maverick Souls’ from ‘Old Ideas 2’; Asher Dust’s earnest vocals get a variety of interpretations, the most striking of which is the swift two-minute remix by hardcore punkers Worry, who cover it with a wall of frantic sampling and noise. The remix by Carterton’s Dan Clear of ‘Missing You’ – with vocals from Lucy Vee and rapper Half Decent – becomes an even more blissed-out stark juxtaposition of choppy rap and the ethereal, while ‘Jazzier’ is transformed by REELS from what *Nightshift* originally described as a “hypnotic afro-hop babble” into a starker, more frantic house number, and by Breezewax into a slower and surprisingly even more hypnotic piece that gives the beautiful acoustic guitar and orchestral backing of the original more prominence. New track ‘Find You’ has vocals from Kate Herridge from Reading’s Ocean Ruins; her shaky “Am I not enough?” refrain loops over heavy beats and reverbed synths, and eventually crunchy guitars, to create a mesmerising whole. The other new track, ‘Perish The Thought’, which will feature on Asher Dust’s upcoming final album, is an off-kilter hip-hop meld of seemingly detuned guitars and Asher’s trademark paradoxically menacing yet comforting vibrato voice. The sheer variety of approaches explored justifies the rationale of giving a track of one genre to a musician from another and seeing what they come up with. The album is well worth exploring, especially since the profits from the release will go to The Oxford Foodbank. Above all, however, ‘New Ideas’ is a fresh testament to the cohesion and bonhomie of the Oxford music scene at a time when such harmony and unity is sorely and sadly needed.

Kirsten Etheridge



## DEATH OF THE MAIDEN

### ‘The Girl With the Secret Fire’

(Self released)

A quote oft repeated in the wake of Mark Hollis’ death in February went: “Before you play two notes learn how to play one note, and don’t play one note unless you’ve got a reason to play it.” It’s a maxim Death of the Maiden seem to have taken to heart on this stunning debut album. Notes are used sparingly and every one comes with the precision and sense of purpose of a spectral assassin. Throughout ‘The Girl With the Secret Fire’ you’ll find death, grief, drama, passion, longing, militant determination and an emotional turbulence that sucks you in and shakes you to the core, but delivered with an understatement that simultaneously throws everything into sharper focus while making some of the stories sound like they’re coming at you from a dream. Dreams play an important part in Death of the Maiden’s songs. Album opener ‘Horses’ is based on a nightmare singer Tamara Parson’s Baker had where she’s pursued by midnight beasts, any escape cut off by black, icy waters. Her softly

honed voice and clipped delivery, reminiscent of Aldous Harding, combined with the sparsest of guitars and tom-heavy drums, cranks up the claustrophobia perfectly. Elsewhere album highlight ‘A Pair of Blue Eyes’ finds Tamara on acoustic guitar, accompanied just by Ben Heaney’s almost flute-like violin; it’s nothing short of magnificent, a gorgeous slice of gothic folk with a deathly romantic heart. Water, particularly the sea, also plays a big part in songs like ‘The Love of Phlebas’ and ‘Dream of Drowning’, consuming the narrator or presenting an endless, dispassionate barrier. Tamara’s songs carry an air of Bertolt Brecht’s and Amanda Palmer’s contorted dramas displaced into TS Eliot’s ‘The Waste Land’ but beneath and around them is almost a sense of serenity: be it in Hannah Bruce’s discreetly powerful guitar, almost flamenco-like on occasions, or Ben Walker’s elegant Satie-like piano playing, or Emma Coombs’ judiciously sparing use of percussion. From the breathless passion of ‘Walls’, through



the sombre desolation of ‘Waiting For You’, to the imperious venom of ‘His House’, Death of the Maiden hold up their deepest, darkest, most intimate emotions to the listener but instead of horror, there is poetry and musical beauty. This is a magnificent set of songs from a group of musicians who realise that less is so often more, and in stripping their songs down to bare bones, give us everything.

Dale Kattack

## TOM WOODHOUSE

### ‘Slowstrung’

(Self released)

A very impressive collection of electronica from Tom Woodhouse, who in earlier life was the pianist/keyboard player of flamboyant indie-prog-glam-stomp types Borderville. That band’s complicated take on catchy melody is evident in the fourteen tracks of *Slowstrung*, albeit with a more serious and studied feel. The catchily-titled ‘Xmas pt 1 [39. (ex. 26 arpytarpyw\*kyfu\*o R.I.P) v2.1]’ opens the album like a swelling Ibiza-euphoria hands-in-the-air anthem, before gleefully pitchbending everything into a sludgy, paranoid morass of digital noise. It’s a deft way to announce that “This is IDM territory, listener”. Intelligent Dance Music, of course, can represent anything from the pulsing abstractions of Autechre, to Future Sound Of London, to the post-rave experiments of Warp’s ‘Artificial Intelligence’ compilation; Tom Woodhouse sits in a similar position to Aphex Twin, his music sounding like the result of listening to a lot of *other* music (in all senses of the word), and his production and arrangements able to maintain multiple rhythmic cores while spiralling off in many directions. The whole album has keyboard, and keyboard-like melody, at its core: no real surprise given Woodhouse’s specialties. The tunes are wrapped up in various interlocking layers of tempo, timbre and tone. That organic-sounding centre to everything deals with an issue that can often occur with electronic music: that it doesn’t sound ‘real’, or like it carries any emotion or meaning. ‘Slowstrung’ is rewarding in its intricate digital constructions, its ability to feel natural, and its boundless variety. ‘Xmas pt 4 [9. REWORKED v2.12]’ places a portentous piano riff over an insistent pulse, building carefully into a energetic dance workout; ‘Thirty Two [Gritty Pianos v2.1]’ tinkles the ivories with some Jan-Hammer-does-thundering-electro-synthwave mashed in; ‘OB (“Oatmulk”) [v15.1 from v12]’ is futuristic gamelan for some alternate-world science fiction piece.

There’s a lot to take in across the album: a huge diversity of sonics, and those arcane track titles suggest that this is more a collection of individual pieces than a planned whole. Despite that, there’s such strong evidence that Woodhouse is in full control of what he’s doing that it doesn’t matter. This is mighty good stuff that demands, and then rewards, close listening.

Simon Minter

## DESPICABLE ZEE

### ‘Atigheh’

(Self released)

The latest release from local drummer, producer and Young Women’s Music Project mainstay Zahra Tehrani has an accompanying book, a rough-snipped 70s sepia collage of photographs of her father after his emigration from Iran to the UK. The music has a similarly handmade feel, combining fuzzy loops and vocal snippets with the artful looseness of a Kurt Schwitters piece, and also a similar air of parallel pride and melancholy. The EP feels wonderfully like a low-key, dewy-eyed version all your favourite highbrow electro-pop: ‘We Won’t Stop’ is late Bjork without the grandstanding and abstract frocks; ‘Counting Cars’ is The Knife with verdigris tarnishing all the shiny cyborg surfaces, and when the drums kick in on ‘Sidhe’ it’s like a timid, battle-weary Add N To (X). “There are holes in our children’s memories”, claims the opening track, and although ‘Atigheh’ is allusive and mysterious, lyrically and sonically, it may be about what is lost and what is gained as cultures meet and merge. Whilst the booklet tells of the marriage of an Iranian man and an Irish woman, the low-level police persecution and a hilarious British culinary baptism in a plate of beans on toast, it also tells of the beginning of a new family. The conflicting statements in ‘Counting Cars’ are that “no matter where we land we always feel alone” and “keep on going, keep on living, keep on striving”. The booklet states simply “roses grow, limes dry up”. Debit/

credit. The EP has a soft, wintry beauty we recommend to anyone who appreciates understated electronica and intelligent pop. Like a blurred and washed out old family snap, ‘Atigheh’ is life-affirming and achingly sad at the same time.

David Murphy

## SPANK HAIR

### ‘What’s The Rush’

(Self released)

Despite a slating in these pages the first time around, Spank Hair are back with a second release. Conceived as another genre experiment from the makers of Blood Horse (emo-hardcore), Holy Moments (emo-grunge) and Daisy (emo-emo), the trio’s math-y, proggy tendencies – changing times and tempos, constant flourishes of guitar virtuosity – are worn so lightly that to describe them as math-y or proggy doesn’t really make sense. Instead, the rhythms gently shift rather than step theatrically, and the guitar stays pretty static, which helps it avoid becoming too outlandish. More importantly, ‘Not Enough’ is about concise, hooky, melodic (and yes, emo) songs. Still, some of Luke Allmond’s guitar diddles are a bit much for me, but at their plaintive, ringing best, they are gorgeous, as on the blissed-out final, title track. Silke Blansjaar is a brilliant drummer, and I wish her playing had been given a bit more space here, but her peppy groove is the making of opener ‘Nothing Left’, allowing Ali Stores’ bass to do a great, keening counter-melody thing, and that stick-click/muted-guitar second verse is very fine. The vocal dueting is more developed this time, especially effective on ‘Best Intentions’ and ‘My Bed’, while the latter has some lovely crunchy chords as it pulls back, then somehow rushes to a close. But it’s the writing that carries this EP, the tunes and the words that stick; despite their members’ myriad other projects, Spank Hair have a distinctive sound that’s well worth your time, with details that reward repeated listening. So not ‘irredeemable’ after all.

Mike Smith



# OTG GUIDE

**MONDAY 1<sup>st</sup>**  
**SLOW READERS CLUB + BRIDGES: O2 Academy** – Manchester’s elegantly doomy synth-popsters come to town on the back of recent Top 20 album ‘Build a Tower’ – *see main preview*

**PASADENA ROOF ORCHESTRA: Oxford Playhouse** – The long-running orchestra celebrate 50 years playing around the globe, keeping the classic swing, ragtime and hot jazz dance sounds of the 1920s and 30s alive, collaborating with the likes of Bryan Ferry and Robbie Williams along the way.  
**BANTER + THE BEGINNINGS OF FAIRPORT CONVENTION: Nettlebed**

*Monday 1<sup>st</sup>*  
**SLOW READERS CLUB / BRIDGES: O2 Academy**

Selling out a venue like Manchester’s Albert Hall suggests you’re not really a secret, but there was a feeling for a while that Slow Readers Club were the city’s best kept secret, a bit like James before them, another band who built a fiercely loyal following at home before breaking through big time. Given the Top 20 success of SRC’s third album, ‘Build a Tower’, at the end of 2018, that breakthrough has just happened. On their way up the quartet, led by the rich, versatile voice of Aaron Starkie, supported James, as well as Catfish & the Bottlemen, but now they’re headline material and tonight’s show should, by rights, be a sell out. Their sound, an elegantly doomy mix of synth-pop, indie rock and electro-funk, harks back to another Manchester band, New Order, as well as to Depeche Mode and Interpol at times, alternately stately, dreamy and fidgety, while Starkie’s voice recalls Editors’ Tom Smith and even the great Julian Cope, but they’re more than the sum of their parts, writing festival-friendly tunes that sound like the idea of being anthemic is somehow slightly crass and they’d prefer to remain discreet. Their breakthrough success is well deserved. Support comes from London’s indie cult faves Bridges who’ve toured with We Were Promised Jetpacks previously, rocking out in the vein of Snow Patrol and The Gaslight Anthem.



## APRIL

**Folk Club** – Nettlebed hosts new vocal and instrumental trio Banter, featuring Melodeon, keyboards, brass and percussion, tonight alongside singer/guitarist Becky Mils and Fairport founder Ashley Hutchings, playing the band’s early songs.  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Castle** – Weekly open session.

**TUESDAY 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**YAK: O2 Academy** – High-energy alt.rocking, channelling the spirits of The Rolling Stones, Doors and even Black Sabbath at times from the Wolverhampton band, who’ve overcome their self-destructive tendencies to release overdue second album ‘Pursuit of Momentary Happiness’ earlier this year.  
**DREAM STATE + PARTING GIFT + AS EVERYTHING UNFOLDS + LASTELLE: The Bullingdon** – South Wales’ post-hardcore starlets, and winners of last year’s *Kerrang!* Awards Best Newcomers, Dream State come to town on the back of new single ‘Hand in Hand’, the band racking up over 10 million plays of ‘White Lies’, playing at Download, Slam Dunk and 2000 Trees as well as supporting Baby Metal, Neck Deep and The Amity Affliction on tour.

**WEDNESDAY 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
**MASTER OF NONE + OCEAN RUINS + BRUNO MUERTE: The Library** – Little Red man Ian Mitchell brings his electro-heavy side project Master of None to The Library as part of an All Will Be Well label showcase. Joined live by this month’s *Nightshift* cover star, Tiger Mendoza, Master of None heads into the dark depths, inspired by Mark Lanegan, The National, The Horrors and Suicide among others. They’re joined by Berkshire power rockers Ocean Ruins and cigar box guitar swamp blues from Bruno Muerte.  
**OUR FAVOURITE THINGS: The Bullingdon** – Live jazz hosted by Brookes Uni’s Jazz Society.

**THURSDAY 4<sup>th</sup>**  
**IAN PROWSE + MATT McMANAMON + JULES REID: The Jericho Tavern** – A solo, acoustic show from Liverpool rock legend Ian Prowse, former frontman of 90s indie stars Pele before forming Amsterdam with former Blow Monkeys drummer Tom Kiley. He wrote the anthemic hit ‘Does This Train Stop on Merseyside’, a song covered by Christy Moore and known to reduce the late, great John Peel to tears. While best known as an earthy, emotive songwriter documenting Liverpoolian life, he’s also backed, duetted with and supported Elvis Costello. He’s out on tour to promote his new album, ‘Here I Lie’. Support comes from ‘Riot Radio’ rudeboy, former member of The Dead 60s

and purveyor of “scally folk”, Matt McManamon, plus Oxford-resident scouse songsmith Jules Reid.  
**THE BREW + TWISTED STATE OF MIND: The Bullingdon** – A return to the Haven Club for ever-gigging heavy rockers The Brew, channelling classic 70s rock and blues in the vein of Led Zep, Hendrix and Deep Purple and touring new album ‘The Art of Persuasion’. Support from local hard rock crew Twisted State of Mind, mixing 80s thrash, NWOBHM and 70s blues-rock.  
**SPIN JAZZ CLUB: The Wheatsheaf** – Jazz fusion and funk from guitarist Mike Walker at the weekly jazz club.  
**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre** – Oxford’s longest running open night, with a varied selection of singers, musicians, poets, storytellers and performance artists.  
**SPARKY’S NEW MOON: The Half Moon** – Local stalwart Sparky hosts an open session on the first and third Thursday of every month.  
**BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford** – Open blues session.  
**IOTA: The Unicorn, Abingdon** – Folk-rock supergroup Anna Ryder, Marion Fleetwood and Sally Barker come to the Unicorn.

**FRIDAY 5<sup>th</sup>**  
**DMA’s: O2 Academy** – In a classic case of coals to Newcastle, Australia’s DMA’s continue to sell second tier Britpop back to the UK, not so much the Aussie Oasis as the Antipodean Cast.  
**GOLDIE LOOKIN’ CHAIN: O2 Academy** – Newport With Attitude keeps the comic rap bandwagon rolling.  
**KLUB KAKOFANNEY with CALLOW SAINTS + EDWIN & THE KEPPERS + ENJOYABLE LISTENS + CAROL WHITWORTH: The Wheatsheaf** – The monthly Klub Kakofanney party swings back into town, offering inclusive good vibes ad live sets from Aylesbury rockers The Callow Saints and more.  
**OXPHOARD: The Bullingdon** – Burlesque and drag night with Feast.  
**GOOD LOVELIES: The Jericho Tavern** – Toronto’s close harmony country-folk trio come to the UK as they tour latest album ‘Shapeshifters, Caroline Brooks, Kerri Ough and Sue Passmore having almost made the Juno Awards and Canadian Folk Awards their own over the past decade, but taking a poppier path on the new record.  
**GLENN TILBROOK: John the Evangelist** – Squeeze’s melody man comes to SJE as guest of Glovebox, playing songs from across his extensive and varied career, including classic Squeeze hits like ‘Take Me I’m Yours’, ‘Up the Junction’ and ‘Pulling Mussels (From the Shell)’.  
**BOSSAPHONIK with CARAVELA: East Oxford Community Centre** – With the closure of The Cellar, long-running jazz dance club night Bossaphonik takes up its new home at EOCC, tonight featuring a live set from Afro-Brazilian

quintet Caravela, playing samba-jazz and music of the Lusophone world of yesteryear with a contemporary groove and the spirit of jazz improvisation. Host Dan Ofer is on the decks, playing a world of jazz dance.  
**HI-ON MAIDEN: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Iron Maiden tribute.

**SATURDAY 6<sup>th</sup>**  
**THE DUALERS + ZAIA: O2 Academy** – Ska and reggae from Croydon’s enduring outfit, formed back in 1999 by brothers Tiber and Si Cranston, themselves sons of renowned 60s ska DJ Bill Cranston. After Top 40 hits in 2004 with ‘Truly Madly Deeply’ and ‘Kiss On the Lips’, they continue to tour, despite the departure of Si back in 2010. Tonight is the band’s first Oxford show for five years; support comes from pop-friendly local dub crew Zaia.  
**ART GARFUNKEL: The New Theatre** – One of the most recognisable voices in music over the last 50 years, Garfunkel continues to give his tremulous, keening tenor an airing, revisiting

*Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup>*  
**PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS: The Bullingdon**  
Pigs x7. That’s a lot of pigs. How much would seven pigs weigh? Helluva lot, obviously. But not nearly as much as just one of Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs’ riffs, which sound like they’re made of thunder and mountains and old Norse gods. Or maybe a terrifying iron foundry fusion of Black Sabbath, The Stooges, Motorhead and Hawkwind. Did we mention the riffs? Those huge, blackened, solid granite riffs? We did? Oh good. Cos you’ll need to be aware of those lest they crush you to a puddle of plasma and ooze. Possibly in the heart of a white dwarf star. We first encountered Pigs x7 at Supernormal Festival (as we have so many of our favourite mad, noisy bastard fave bands in recent years), where their crushing heaviosity was at once at home with the propensity for way-out noise and at odds with the summery good vibes the festival revels in. Since then their bludgeoning, downtuned psychedelic sacrifices to Thor have earned them hefty airplay both on 6Music and more dedicated metal stations and playlists and latest album ‘King of Cowards’ has threatened to turn the band into household names, at least in those houses not stomped into dust by those riffs. We did mention the riffs, didn’t we? Sorry, we just don’t want anyone getting hurt. Them things is heavy, right.




classic songs from his partnership with Paul Simon – ‘Bridge Over Trouble Water’, ‘The Boxer’, ‘Homeward Bound’, ‘Sound of Silence’, alongside his own solo compositions and traditional songs, like ‘Scarborough Fair’, and of course the best bunny song ever, ‘Bright Eyes’.  
**ANIMAL HOUSE + SEMPRE CAOZ + SELF HELP: The Wheatsheaf** – Brighton-based Aussie rockers Animal House return to town for the first time in five years, channelling The Kinks and Small Faces through The Strokes’ garage rock. Top drawer local support from fuzzgun pop kittens Self Help.  
**UKULELE NIGHT: Harcourt Arms** – Pop hits, rock classics and more on the uke.  
**MUSICAL MEDICINE: The Bullingdon** – House, funk, soul and disco club night with eclectic collective and community Rhythm Sister.  
**SPARKY’S SPONTANEOUS SHOWCASE & SPOTLIGHT JAM: The Port Mahon** – Sparky hosts his monthly bands’n’jam session, this time round with sets from Jesters, Mudslide Morris & the Revelators and No Horses. Band sets are followed by an open jam, then a late night open session at The Half Moon.  
**APOLLO SYNDROME: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Pop punk covers, including Jimmy Eat World, Blink 182, Fallout Boy, Bowling For Soup and more.  
**NINEBARROW + ODETTE MICHELL: Tiddy Hall, Ascott-under-Wychwood** – Traditional folk songs and stories rooted in English history and landscape from award-winning harmony-heavy duo Ninebarrow at tonight’s Wychwood folk Club show, the band championed by Mark Radcliffe and Mike Harding as well as Seth Lakeman and Kate Rusby.  
**QUAD: The Red Lion, Kidlington** – Britpop tribute.  
**THE A-WATTS: The Bikers Club, Littlemore** – Classic 50s rock’n’roll from the local vets.

**SUNDAY 7<sup>th</sup>**  
**SUNDAY SOCIAL: The Wheatsheaf (3.30)** – Afternoon session in the downstairs bar, with sets from Delta Hardware, Scott Gordon and more.  
**THE ROCK PROJECT: The Bullingdon** – Live show from the youth and children’s music project.  
**FRANKLIN’S TOWER + SCOTT GORDON + BEARD OF DESTINY + SONG & SUPPER ROOMS: Donnington Community Centre (6pm)** – Free evening of unplugged live music.  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: Harcourt Arms** – Weekly open session.  
**FOLK SESSION: The Half Moon** – Weekly folk night.  
**THE JAM BAND: The Red Lion, Kidlington (5.30-8.30pm)**

**MONDAY 8<sup>th</sup>**  
**DAOIRI FARRELL: Nettlebed Folk Club** – Traditional Irish folk from BBC Folk Awards Horizon winner Farrell, playing songs from his recent ‘Trueborn Irishman’ album, drawing comparisons to Christy Moore, Andy Irvine and Paul Brady.  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Castle**

**TUESDAY 9<sup>th</sup>**  
**H\_NGM\_N + ALL BETTER + SPANKHAIR + DAZE: The Library** – Co-headline tour from Brighton’s H\_ngm\_n and All Better at



*Friday 12<sup>th</sup>*  
**JIM JONES & THE RIGHTEOUS MIND: The Bullingdon**  
Jim Jones is a man on a mission. Jim Jones has always been on a mission. Seemingly, like some obsessive Victorian explorer searching for the source of the Nile, to discover the raw, untamed heart and soul of rock and roll. He began his mission back in the mid-80s in High Wycombe of all places where he formed psychedelic garage rockers Thee Hypnotics. When they split at the end of the 90s, he formed Black Moses, briefly signed to Oxford label Shifty Disco, and after that The Jim Jones Review. Since 2014 though he’s journeyed under the name Jim Jones & the Righteous Mind, but while the names change and the sound follows different paths at times, the mission remains resolute: taking inspiration of the most primal rockers through history: from Little Richard and Jerry Lee Lewis, through The Stooges and MC5 to Motorhead and The Birthday Party. It’s always righteous and raw, Jones a preacher who *BELIEVES*. And something else to believe in is the ongoing fight against racism, which tonight’s gig is in aid of, ahead of Oxford Standing Up To Racism’s main summer event. There’s never been a place for racism in music and never will be, but there is always a place in it for blood and guts and soul and swagger – things Jim Jones has by the tanker load.

tonight’s Snuggle Dice show as both bands head towards Washed Out Festival. The former draw inspiration from Motion City Soundtrack, Modern Baseball and The Wonder Years, while the latter’s sound leans more to the hook-heavy pop-punk of Jimmy Eatworld. Local emo support from Spankhaire.  
**JEWELIA + STORYTELLER + RITCHIE STIX: Cirkus** – Floaty, folksy piano pop from Romanian singer/songwriter Jewelia, touring her debut album ‘City of My Mind’. Funky fusion pop support from Storyteller.

**WEDNESDAY 10<sup>th</sup>**  
**PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS: The Bullingdon** – Behold the pig riff apocalypse – *see main preview*  
**KING NO-ONE: O2 Academy** – fidgety, spangly indie rocking in a post-Foals / Klaxons vein from the York trio, touring new single ‘Lemonade’.  
**HEJIRA + FRAN & FLORA: Tap Social, Botley** – Tandem Festival and Upcycled Sounds come together to bring London’s Hejira to town, the London-based band’s new album, ‘Thread of Gold’, a mix of Ethiopian funk and jazz, r’n’b and atmospheric electronic pop. They’re joined





*Saturday 13<sup>th</sup>*  
**NILUFER YANYA / WESTERMAN: O2 Academy**

Further proof that genre boundaries are now so blurred as to be virtually redundant, west London r’n’b / soul / indie rising star Nilufer Yanya grew up listening to Nina Simone, Amy Winehouse and Pixies, but also to her Turkish father’s music collection, jazz, trip hop and acoustic pop, all of which distil themselves into her new soul sound. And while she’s being tipped as a contender for the British r’n’b crown, she’s built up to the release of her debut album this month by supporting Broken Social Scene, being mentored by The Invisible’s Dave Okumu and covering Pixies’ ‘Hey’. Yanya’s voice is softly husky, her music sparse yet raw, mostly played on acoustic guitar, her lyrics driven equally by personal experiences and stories, and social injustices, while she and a group of friends founded the Artists in Transit charity, taking art, music and sports to refugee camps in southern Europe. She’s returning to the region as part of the tour for the album, playing in Istanbul – her dad’s ancestral home. Hers is likely a voice you’ll hear a lot more of through 2019. She’s joined on tour by near neighbour Westerman, whose chilled, romantic acoustic pop comes with a dose of Arthur Russell-like vocals.

by violin and cello duo Fran & Flora, mixing up Eastern European folk and experimental sounds, having previously worked with Sam Lee and Talvin Singh.

**THURSDAY 11<sup>th</sup>**  
**BLUE ROSE CODE: The Bullingdon** – Rich, soulful roots music from Edinburgh-via-London songsmith Ross Wilson, out on tour to promote his new EP ‘Sunday, the follow-up to last year’s ‘The Water of Leith’ album, featuring contributions from Karine Polwart and Julie Fowlis among others – his eclectic range weaving in strands of jazz, blues and downbeat pop and drawing comparisons with Van Morrison and John Martyn.  
**SPIN JAZZ CLUB: The Wheatsheaf** – Technical, fluid jazz trumpet from Manchester’s Damon Brown at tonight’s Spin session.  
**NEW DEPTH: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – EP launch show for Witney’s heavy rockers.  
**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre**  
**BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford**

**FRIDAY 12<sup>th</sup>**  
**JIM JONES & THE RIGHTEOUS MIND + THE DEADBEAT APOSTLES: The**

**Bullingdon** – Anti-racism benefit for the rock’n’roll veteran – *see main preview*  
**METAL TO THE MASSES: The Wheatsheaf** – Second quarter-final of the rock and metal battle of the bands to win a slot at Bloodstock this summer.  
**SHADES OF SEATTLE: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Grunge tribute band, playing Alice In Chains, Pearl Jam, Nirvana, Soundgarden, Stone Temple Pilots, QOTSA et al.

**SATURDAY 13<sup>th</sup>**  
**NILUFER YANYA + WESTERMAN: O2 Academy** – Sparse, acoustic soul from the rising London singer – *see main preview*  
**THE SHAPES + BAND OF HOPE + THE SCOTT GORDON BAND: Modern Art Oxford** – Unifying mix of 60s r’n’b, folk, punk and 80s college rock from the ever-excellent Shapes, mixing ruminative Oxford nostalgia with politics by way of Tom Petty, The Pogues and Elvis Costello. Indie folk in the vein of Villagers and Neil Halstead from Wallingford’s Band of Hope, plus blues, folk and Americana from The Scott Gordon Band.  
**METAL TO THE MASSES: The Wheatsheaf** – Third quarter-final.  
**HARCOURT UNPLUGGED: Harcourt Arms** – Acoustic night at the Jericho drinkery, tonight with sets from Alf Laila and Five Gallons Deep.  
**TOM WILLIAMS + BRYDE: The Jericho Tavern** – Dark-hearted but soulful gothic blues in the vein of Nick Cave, Lloyd Cole and Elliot Smith from the Kent songsmith, back in town as he tours new album ‘What Did You Want to Be?’. He’s joined by poetic former Paper Aeroplanes sing Bryde.  
**GROOVE: The Bullingdon** – disco and house club night.  
**FUSED: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – 90s and Noughties rock and indie covers.  
**THE A-WATTS: Ex Servicemen’s Club, Bicester**

**SUNDAY 14<sup>th</sup>**  
**RARE AMERICANS: The Bullingdon** – A first Oxford gig for Canadian crew Rare Americans, touring their debut album, featuring contributions from Modest Mouse and Shins and produced by ten-times Grammy winner Joe Chiccarelli, whose credits include White Stripes, The Strokes and My Morning Jacket. The band’s hot mess of pop-punk, garage rock, funk, indie and hip hop drawing comparisons to 21 Pilots and They Might Be Giants.  
**THE BOOTLEG BEATLES: The New Theatre** – Big stage tribute to the Fab Four with a two-hour set spanning their entire 60s career.  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: Harcourt Arms**  
**FOLK SESSION: The Half Moon**  
**THE A-WATTS: The Black Swan**

**MONDAY 15<sup>th</sup>**  
**CIRCA WAVES: O2 Academy** – Anthem-friendly indie-grunge from Liverpool’s Circa Waves, back in town after their showing at Truck Festival last summer, touring new album ‘What’s It Like Over There?’, the follow-up to 2017’s ‘Different Creatures’, the band increasingly moving into darker indie waters.  
**MARY BELL + WORRY + DAGS + BASIC DICKS + JEFF: The Library** – Shred or Die punk and hardcore night, with French grunge and punk crew Mary Bell headlining. Support from

local hardcore ragers Worry; Italian emo outfit Dags; anarcho-punk vegancore scrappers Basic Dicks and lo-fi bedroom popsters Jeff.  
**THE SHEE: Nettlebed Folk Club** – All-female harmony folk at Nettlebed tonight from the award-winning trio, featuring harp player Rachel Newton, 2017 BBC Folk Awards musician of the year.  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Castle**

**TUESDAY 16<sup>th</sup>**  
**PENELOPE ISLES: The Jericho Tavern** – A spingle, a spangle, a sweet indie jangle – *see main preview*

**WEDNESDAY 17<sup>th</sup>**  
**FIVE FATHOMS DEEP: The Wheatsheaf** – Traditional folk and ceilidh tunes from the London crew at tonight’s It’s All About the Music show.

**THURSDAY 18<sup>th</sup>**  
**THE NOBLE JACKS: The Bullingdon** – Rowdy folk-rocking at The Haven Club tonight from Brighton’s fiddle-led, Levellers-inspired

*Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup>*  
**PENELOPE ISLES: The Jericho Tavern**  
Bella Union was practically invented to provide a home and an outlet for bands like Penelope Isles. The band are one of those groups who sound like third generation descendents of label founder Simon Raymonde’s old outfit Cocteau Twins, possessed of an almost ethereal grace and spectral spangle that draws together spider silk threads of 60s West Coast harmony pop; shimmering dream-pop; classic indie jangle and the wooziest of motorik grooves. Formed in Brighton by brother and sister Jack and Lily Wolter, who’d grown up playing music together in the Isle of Man, and friends Becky Redford and Jack Sowton, Penelope Isles have spent the past few years drip feeding fans with single releases but signing to Bella Union finally brings their debut album, ‘Until the Tide Creeps In’, this month. Inspired by the highly textured sounds of Radiohead and Deerhunter, their delicate touch, driving grooves and multi-way harmonies have seen them compared to Grizzly Bear, Tame Impala and Beach House, though they might be what Magic Number would have sounded like had they signed to 4AD back in the late-80s, or kindred spirits of lost etherealists AC Marias. Last time they were in town was supporting BC Camplight on tour, but now the spotlight is all on them and on the evidence of that last gig and the new record, they’ll shine.



hoedown crew, recent tour support to Ferocious Dog.  
**SKERRYVORE: The Cornerstone, Didcot** – Celtic folk/rock fusion from the Scottish outfit.  
**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre**  
**SPARKY’S NEW MOON: The Half Moon**  
**BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford**

**FRIDAY 19<sup>th</sup>**  
**DIRTY JACK + THE FOOZ: The Bullingdon** – AC/DC tribute meets Foo Fighters tribute.  
**PRISM / SPECTRUM: The Bullingdon** – Annual reunion night for the leading 80s and 90s acid house and techno club night, with host Keiran and more.  
**K-LACURA + VILLAINOUS: The Wheatsheaf** – Rabidfest warm-up gig with local super heavyweight thrashcore merchants K-Lacura.  
**LEO RONDEAU + AGS CONNOLLY: Isis Farmhouse, Iffley Lock** – Outlaw country and Americana from Austin, Texas singer Leo Rondeau, alongside local Ameripolitan country roots star Ags Connolly.  
**HANNAH SANDERS & BEN SAVAGE: Holywell Music Room** – Gently intimate close harmony folk from the acclaimed duo, touring ahead of the release of a trio of singles together, beginning with ‘Hidden Things’.

**SATURDAY 20<sup>th</sup>**  
**K-FUNKZ HOUSE PARTY: The Bullingdon** – Bassline, drum&bass and hip hop club night.  
**SUPERNAUT: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Tribute to Black Sabbath.  
**STEAMROLLER: Stonesfield Sports & Social Club** – Heavyweight 60s-style r’n’b in the vein of Hendrix and Cream from the veteran local rockers.

**SUNDAY 21<sup>st</sup>**  
**WITCHING WAVES + SUGGESTED FRIENDS + LUCY LEAVE + DAISY + MYLES MANLEY: Deaf & Hard of Hearing Centre** – Another quality bill of DIY pop from Divine Schism, tonight bringing London’s fuzzed-up pop/punk trio Witching Waves to town, the band touring new album ‘Persistence’. They’re joined by indie jangle/power pop crew Suggested Friends, back in Oxford after supporting Fightmilk here last year; local oddball shape shifters Lucy Leave, mixing up Minutemen, Deerhoof, Can and Soft Machine into a many-angled pop broth, and Irish acoustic singer/songwriter Myles Manley.  
**SUNDAY SOCIAL: The Wheatsheaf (3.30)** – Afternoon session in the downstairs bar with Superloose and more.  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: Harcourt Arms**  
**FOLK SESSION: The Half Moon**  
**EASTER JAZZ SUPPER: The Abingdon Arms, Beckley (6pm)** – Free live jazz.

**MONDAY 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Castle**

**TUESDAY 23<sup>rd</sup>**  
**JOSEFIN ÖHRN + THE LIBERATION: The Bullingdon** – Hell, yes – *see main preview*  
**STUART CHALMERS & LEE RILEY + BRUNO GUASTAKLA + MIKE BANNARD: Fusion Arts** – A night of experimental noise,

hosted by local drone and improv star Lee Riley. He joins sound scavenger Stuart Chalmers who puts his array of acquired sounds through myriad FX pedals and more. He’ll also be playing a solo set; support comes from cello and violin maker Bruno Guastakla, a member of Oxford Improvisers, MUE and Set Ensemble, plus a drone set from Masiro and Unman chap Mike Bannard.  
**SINGING WITH NIGHTINGALES: Old Fire Station** – Another magical journey into music’s more unusual realms courtesy of Oxford Contemporary Music, tonight hosting Mercury-nominated folk singer, storyteller and song collector Sam Lee, joined by singer and violinist Alice Zawadzki and kora virtuoso Kadialy Kouyate for an evening of music linked to a live streaming of nightingales’ courtship songs, with stories from an on-site ornithologist to tell tales of how the birds’ song has influenced musicians and writers over the years.  
**LITTLE THIEF + SCREAMIN’ IRENE: The Wheatsheaf** – Heavy, hairy rocking from the Bristol trio.

**WEDNESDAY 24<sup>th</sup>**  
**WHENYOUNG: The Bullingdon** – London/Limerick folky indie popsters on the rise Whenyoung come to town for their first headline, having been out as tour support to Blossoms, The Vaccines, Dreamwife and Sundara Karma in the past and opened for Nick Cave, the band promoting new single ‘Never Let Go’.  
**BRIGID MAE POWER + AOIFE NESSA FRANCES + ROSIE CALDECOTT: Deaf & Hard of Hearing Centre** – Galway’s haunting, ethereal singer and multi-instrumentalist Brigid Mae Power returns to town having played with long-time collaborator Peter Broderick here back in 2016. She’s touring most recent album ‘The Two Worlds’, her trademark mix of aching torch songs, otherworldly folk tunes and clangourous piano making for a highly charged atmospheric sound. Poetic folk and psychedelic rock from Dublin’s Aoife Nessa Frances in support.  
**JOEY LANDRETH: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Rootsy, soul and gospel-infused Americana from Canadian singer-songwriter Landreth at tonight’s Empty Rooms show, the Bros.Landreth man and Juno Award winner going solo on acclaimed debut ‘Whiskey’.

**THURSDAY 25<sup>th</sup>**  
**UNDER THE APPLETREE ON TOUR with WILDWOOD KIN + LOUD MOUNTAINS + FERRIS & SYLVESTER: O2 Academy** – Daytime radio-friendly folk-pop in the vein of Haim, Fleetwood Mac and The Staves from Exeter’s close-harmony trio Wildwood Kin, headlining the inaugural Under the Appletree tour – the first time legendary DJ and country music champ Bob Harris has taken his Under the Appletree Sessions on the road. WK have recently been backing Seth Lakeman, touring their slickly produced debut album ‘Turning Tides’, and are joined for this stop-off on the tour by local American ex pats Loud Mountains, helmed by Connecticut brothers Sean and Kevin Duggan, mixing roadhouse blues and harmony-heavy country-folk in the vein of Bob Dylan and Whiskeytown.



*Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup>*  
**JOSEFIN ÖHRN + THE LIBERATION: The Bullingdon**

*Nightshift*’s favourite album of 2016 by some distance was Josefín Öhrn + The Liberation’s ‘Mirage’: a shimmering, hypnotic slab of silicon synth-pop, krautrock, psychedelia and scuzzy art-pop that immersed itself in all the best bits of Stereolab, The Velvet Underground, Suicide, Neu!, Portishead and Ladytron. Seriously, if you’re going to print a list of influences, why not make it the best list of influences ever? But the Stockholm-based singer and her band went well beyond such influences on ‘Mirage’. Across the album she created a dreamlike atmosphere with guitars and electronics and a voice that was on the seductive side of sultry, while propelling everything along on motorik grooves. A brace of shows in Oxford, including the inaugural Ritual Union, were just stunning and to say we’re excited to see her back in town goes well beyond understatement. This time round she’s touring her third album, ‘Sacred Dreams’, on first listen a softer set of songs but a definite grower that will be up there with Ladytron and Cossey Fanni Tutti for title of album of 2019. It’s a variously hushed, coruscating and breathless mix of lysergic dreampop, hypnotic synth-pop and those classic 60s and 70s psych-rock influences that comes with a double dusting of magic from one of the most exciting musicians on the planet right now. So yeah, we’re excited. In bold type, underlined twice.

**CORDUROY: The Bullingdon** – The best, and least pretentious of the 90s Acid Jazz brigade reform once again, brothers Ben and Scott Addison touring their first album in 18 years – ‘The Return of the Fabric Four’, their cinematic, mostly instrumental take on the genre eschewing muso indulgence in favour of fun.  
**DAVID THOMAS BROUGHTON: The Port Mahon** – Rare chance to catch the West Yorkshire troubadour in Oxford. His last local





showing was at Supernormal in 2013, and he’s resident in Korea for the most part. His ethereal, often improvised style of experimental folk music utilises loops, filed recordings and the use of radios, alarms and tellies alongside his delicate, ethereal voice, which has seen him compared to Anthony Hegarty/Anohni.

**MOOGIEMAN + PANDAPOPALYPSE + GOOD CANARY: The Jericho Tavern** – Idiosyncratic post-punk, electro-pop and lyrical esoterica from Moogieman at this month’s Jericho Live showcase, Shan and band joined by ebullient big beat cheerleader popsters Pandapocalypse and off-kilter piano-pop singer/songwriter Good Canary.

**REVEREND BLACK’S ACOUSTIC CABARET: The Half Moon** – Acoustic blues, country, folk and classic rock, with sets from Rich Rainford, Kef Mackowski and Richard Brotherton.

**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre**

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup>

**SLEAFORD MODS: O2 Academy**

Four years ago, when Sleaford Mods made their Oxford debut they were a scabrous thorn in music’s side, a bent and battered sore thumb of a band, telling tales from those neglected corners of Nottinghamshire life. They were pissed off and uncompromising in the language they used to convey their disgust, gob-on-a-stick frontman Jason Williamson mining the lost art of articulating the experience of life at the coalface (or call centre, or job centre, or pretty much any scabby, dead-end place you care to imagine and wish you could unimagine) with a vengeance while partner in crime Andrew Fearn stood behind him prodding buttons to make lo-fi hip hop soundtracks while supping cans of strong lager. 2014 breakthrough album ‘Divide & Exit’ featured highly in every decent end of year poll, while Williamson was an interviewer’s dream in an age of say-nothing rock stars, with a tumultuous personal past to draw on. Fast forward five years and the duo’s sound continues to evolve while their modus operandi has stayed pretty much the same – lean, mean, witty, poetic and potty-mouthed, with a keen eye to often revolting or bleakly funny details – and if a recent unprovoked spat with Idles about working class credentials, when the two acts should be natural allies, threatens to derail their righteous mission, new album ‘Eton Alive’ sees their popularity undiminished, with tonight’s show set for a sell out. Sleaford Mods: always different yet always the same, and still here for the nasty things in life.



**BLUES JAM: The Catherine Wheel, Sandford**  
**BOOT-LED ZEPPELIN: Cornerstone, Didcot**

**FRIDAY 26<sup>th</sup>**

**NOASIS: The Bullingdon** – tribute to Blur... no, Pulp... is it Elastica?

**METAL TO THE MASSES: The Wheatsheaf** – Fourth quarterfinal of the rock and metal BOTB.

**YOUTH AVOIDERS + SCRAP BRAIN + BASIC DICKS + DSA: The Library** – High-octane hardcore and speedpunk from France’s longstanding underground noise scene faves Youth Avoiders, taking inspiration from Discharge, Conflict, Minor Threat et al. Nihilistic noiseniks Scrap Brain – recent support to Screaming Females – anarcho-punk fighters Basic Dicks and Reading skatepunks DSA support.

**WILLIAM THE CONQUERER: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Back in the Shire after their set at Truck store in February, Ruarri Joseph’s new band tour their album ‘Bleeding on the Soundtrack’, the trio’s earthy blues rocking inspired by Jim Morrison and JJ Cale.

**SATURDAY 27<sup>th</sup>**

**SLEAFORD MODS: O2 Academy** – Notes from the underside of life – *see main preview*

**UK FOO FIGHTERS: O2 Academy** – Kinda does what it says on the packet.

**GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES with MOBIUS + DEATHLY PALE PARTY + KNOBBLEHEAD: The Wheatsheaf** – A quality mixed bag of sounds at the monthly GTI with former *Nightshift* Demo of the Monthers Mobius offering sullen, drama-laden gothic noise outta the house of shadows. They’re joined by atmospheric electro brooders Deathly Pale Party, inspired by Broadcast, Portishead and David Lynch soundtracks, and psych-folk crew Knobblehead.

**NICK HARPER: Modern Art Oxford** – The acoustic guitar virtuoso, highly eclectic songwriter and political folk singer returns to town, touring his new album, ‘58 Fordwych Road’, having first made his name as a member of his dad Roy’s band, before collaborating with Glenn Tilbrook and The Levellers, among others.

**THE PEPPERMINTS: Harcourt Arms** – Classic Motown hits from the Banbury soul ensemble.

**VOLUME D&B: The Bullingdon** – Drum&bass club night.

**QUAD: Fat Lil’s, Witney** – Britpop covers.

**THE A-WATTS: The Ampleforth Arms, Risinghurst**

**SUNDAY 28<sup>th</sup>**

**MAPS & ATLASES: O2 Academy** – Chicago’s multifaceted math/prog/folk/jazz/grunge-infused rockers return to Oxford for the first time in almost a decade, the band having regrouped after their 2012 hiatus and releasing new album ‘Lightlessness Is Nothing New’.

**GIRLI: The Bullingdon** – Visions in pink with the London singer/rapper – *see main preview*

**OPEN MIC SESSION: Harcourt Arms**

**FOLK SESSION: The Half Moon**

**NICK COPE: The Cornerstone, Didcot (11am)** – Whimsical, funny and educational songs for children, and adults who’ve never lost their sense



Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>

**GIRLI: The Bullingdon**

Fair to say that Girli likes the colour pink. From her hair to her threads, she’s more often than not a vision in pink, like a bubblegum pop explosion in Smiggle. The singer/rapper born Milly Toomey from south London has emerged as a sassily feminist but cutesy and kitsch star in waiting on the back of singles like ‘Girl I Met on the Internet’ and ‘Hot Mess’, a potty-mouthed heir of Lily Allen and Kate Nash’s Londoncentric pop storytelling, laying her playfully militant lyrics over DIY Taylor Swift-like electro pop, seemingly existing at the intersection between the cocksure swagger of grime, off-key emo and high performance camp. Serious, sensible rock fans might balk at an act that appears to be made up of luridly-coloured plastic, glitter and fun, but Girli’s set at Truck last summer – and her last show at the Bully last year – showed her mastery of getting a crowd going, backed by DJ Kitty, whipping a room into a gleeful pop frenzy while royally ripping the piss out of those who’d doubt her pop chops (“She doesn’t even write her own songs” she quips on ‘Hot Mess’, a brilliant slice of self aware pop which pokes fun at a certain kind of music fan). New single ‘Deal With It’, true to form so far, is an up-and-at-‘em slab of cheerleader electro-pop that’s equal parts sweetness, light and raw attitude. She and her ever-growing army of fans are here to have fun; go on, join in, you might just enjoy yourself.

of childlike wonder, from the former Candyskins star.

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

**MONDAY 29<sup>th</sup>**

**TALISK: Nettlebed Folk Club** – Lively Scottish folk dance from the former winners of the BBC Young Folk Awards and the Danny Kyle Award at Celtic Connections, back at Nettlebed after sets at Cropredy and Cambridge Folk Festival.

**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Castle**

**TUESDAY 30<sup>th</sup>**

**SIMPLE: The Bullingdon** – May Day Eve house party with DJ Rum.

**SPORTS TEAM**  
The Bullingdon  
Oxford  
26.03.19

**FUN LOVIN’ CRIMINALS**  
O2 Academy  
Oxford  
28.03.19

**YAK**  
O2 Academy2  
Oxford  
02.04.19

**DREAM STATE**  
The Bullingdon  
Oxford  
02.04.19

**KING NO ONE**  
O2 Academy2  
Oxford  
10.04.19

**PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS**  
The Bullingdon  
Oxford  
**SOLD OUT**

**BLUE ROSE CODE**  
The Bullingdon  
Oxford  
11.04.19

**NILUFER YANYA**  
O2 Academy2  
Oxford  
13.04.19

**PENELOPE ISLES**  
The Jericho Tavern  
Oxford  
16.04.19

**JOSEFIN OHRN +THE LIBERATION**  
The Bullingdon  
Oxford  
23.04.19

**WHENYOUNG**  
The Bullingdon  
Oxford  
24.04.19

**SLEAFORD MODS**  
Sub 89  
Reading  
**SOLD OUT**

**SLEAFORD MODS**  
O2 Academy  
Oxford  
27.04.19

**GIRLI**  
The Bullingdon  
Oxford  
28.04.19

**C DUNCAN**  
The Bullingdon  
Oxford  
07.05.19

**MURDER CAPITAL**  
The Jericho Tavern  
Oxford  
08.05.19

**BLAENAVON**  
O2 Academy2  
Oxford  
11.05.19

**SOAK**  
O2 Academy2  
Oxford  
15.05.19

**DRAHLA**  
The Bullingdon  
Oxford  
17.05.19

**CROCODILES**  
The Jericho Tavern  
Oxford  
23.05.19

**HONEYBLOOD**  
O2 Academy2  
Oxford  
08.06.19

**CLOUD NOTHINGS**  
The Bullingdon  
Oxford  
11.07.19

**SHONEN KNIFE**  
The Bullingdon  
Oxford  
17.07.19

**EASY STAR ALL STARS PLAYING “DUB SIDE OF THE MOON”**  
The Bullingdon  
Oxford  
24.07.19

**FONTAINES D.C.**  
O2 Academy  
Oxford  
26.11.19

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SOEUR / THE OTHER DRAMAS / PET SEMATARY

The Jericho Tavern

Pet Sematary was initially Gaby-Elise Monaghan’s deeply introspective solo project intended to work through dark times but tonight sees her backed with a full band, including Daisy’s Luke Allmond and long-time Coldredlight/Le Feye drummer Casper Miles. Any worries such a set-up would bulldoze the ghostly mood of he songs are quickly dispelled, the band going the full grunge while Gaby is at her most ferocious, turning the hurt outwards

rather than in on herself. It’s as good as we’ve seen her, tonight’s set earning an extra star for a cover of Sneaker Pimps’ ‘Six Underground’, its sultry trip-pop given a right royal rocking shake-up. Rocking out royally being something The Other Dramas are similarly adept at. On record the pair all are warm, honeyed pop charm; on stage they dispense with production niceties and bring the garage noise side of their sound to the fore. The sunshine melody of

‘The Future is a Holiday’ manages to keep its head above the onward rush but tonight’s highlight is the driving, groove-heavy ‘Something You Didn’t Know’, with the band at their most rocked out, simplest and heaviest. Bristol’s Soeur are heavier still, going the full axe hero, hair metal histrionics for their opening number and giving it some proper welly for the duration. Songs come out sugar sweet but with serious grunge bite, teetering on the edge of hysteria in

the way Pixies managed so adeptly. Sharp, succinct harmonies between Tina Maynard and Anya Pulver give the band an almost folky edge at times, and a couple of times we’re reminded of brilliant, lost 90s indie stars Sidi Bou Said. Nirvana’s rock and roll wrecking ball is where the trio’s heart lies though, set closer ‘Fight’ encapsulating what the band do so well – militant, intricate, venomous and proper damn noisy. “I don’t want to fight anymore” hollers Pulver at its peak, but here’s a band who could take on all comers. Dale Kattack

OXFORD MAQAM

Grove Auditorium, Magdalen College Oxford Maqam’s repertoire is unusual. For the first half of tonight’s concert they recreate classical Egyptian Ottoman instrumentals and songs from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and earlier. Then, in the second half, they play songs from Egyptian films and theatre of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and, in a nice touch, project black and white images of the songwriters onto the back wall. The band started exploring this musical heritage ten years ago and have been making steady progress ever since. Their only album, in 2017, used wax cylinders as part of the recording process, and earned four stars from world music magazine *Songlines*; they’ve played in Egypt and Turkey and the eight-strong acoustic ensemble are playing here prior to an Australian tour. From the start their performance is highly atmospheric; the sound of the Arabic zither, the fiddle, the oud, and the Arabic flute are all prominent and the music is anchored by three hand percussionists and the satisfying deep notes of a double bass. Mina Mikhail Salama’s virtuoso, sinuous flute solos

are particularly enthralling; you never know what he’ll come up with next. The expressive singing of Tariq Bashir and Yara Salahidden conveys the emotional feel of the songs to non Arabic speakers, and when Tariq and Yara harmonise their voices blend beautifully. The range and richness of oud maestro and singer Tariq’s baritone is well known to followers of Brickwork Lizards but Yara’s singing is a revelation. Her bold, confident performance is in striking contrast to when she started with the band; it is as if she found a new voice. After an intriguing first half when they seem a little serious the band have fun with the songs from the movies, and their ensemble playing becomes increasingly lively. The audience has fun too, and many join in with a song associated with the great late Egyptian diva Oum Kalthoum. Oxford Maqam play both the classical and the songs from the movie revivals with a verve and freshness that makes the concert a treat not only for fans of Arabic music but for anyone who loves the flow of rhythm and melody and is willing to try something different. Long may they continue onward and upward. Colin May

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## THE ORB The Bullingdon

The Good Ship Orb has been circling this planet for three decades now but tonight docks, briefly, at The Bully. The sound of my – and doubtless other readers of a certain age’s – misspent youth, they are still going strong. Last year’s album ‘No Sounds Are Out of Bounds’ neatly encapsulates their creative ethos. Dr Alex Patterson (I was disappointed to

discover the DR stands for Duncan Robert; I still prefer to think he is a professor in audio-nautic engineering) is the only original member of various line-ups, including Killing Joke’s Youth, a school buddy from Kingham, Oxfordshire. Previously Alex played drums with a punk band and was also a reggae DJ, he tells me before the gig, which explains a lot

regarding his approach to acoustics. No warm-up, but two hours of uninterrupted musical bliss is just what the Duncan Robert ordered. Made up of dense collages of sound, each track is more of a process than a song in any traditionally recognisable sense. There is a beginning, and a lot of middle. Then something else happens. There could be a Harry

Nilsson sample looming up from a cloud of intergalactic fuzz, then chopped up and looped. Random radio snippets and a BBC nature program give way to a techno bass drum groove and some flying symbols. Not so much walls, but heavy curtains of sound waft around the venue, the very capable house PA being squeezed for every last decibel.

Patterson operates three CD players simultaneously (I’ve seen him do four) while young co-pilot Michael runs a laptop and MIDI controller. They start with ‘Blue Room’ (the longest UK single ever released at 40 mins and named after NASA’s UFO evidence chamber): all sirens, train sounds and washes of ambient keys before Jah Wobble’s rolling bassline loops in. They do ‘Towers of Dub’, sampling a Revolutionaries 1977 single, barking dogs, a harmonica and a Woody Allen film. ‘Perpetual Dawn’ is mixed with some African guitar. They finish, naturally, with ‘Little Fluffy Clouds’, so mangled and disorientating, it could be at least three different tracks played in four different dimensions, but all held together by the kind of sonic alchemy that is all too rare. Visuals with footage from the moon landing, rotating dancers and random colourful imagery make the experience even more intense.

Here’s to the next anniversary of The Orb: catch them on their next rotation.

*Leo Bowder*

## THE JAPANESE HOUSE O2 Academy

The entire upstairs of the O2 Academy enters a trance the moment The Japanese House, solo project of London-based singer/songwriter Amber Bain, emerges on stage. Listeners have waited with baited breath for her recent debut album to be released, after being fed morsels of EPs and singles over the last few years. Bain had kept her identity obscured for a while, with fans musing that she might even be the side-project of The 1975’s Matt Healy. Eventually, though, the unassuming Amber Bain emerged as the creator behind The Japanese House, much like she emerges shrouded in a cloud of smoke on this Tuesday evening, modest but powerful.

As the set begins with established classic ‘Face Like Thunder’, a futuristic, woozy mood is cultivated by the sonic layering of harmonies and synth textures, presenting an unlikely harmony between the pensiveness of the tone, and the dreamlike delivery of the songs.

The autotune used to create the androgynous and experimental vocals on the album translates well to the live set, creating an incorporeal presence that commands awe from the audience. Ethereal but sharp dream pop is complemented by delicate percussion and serene instrumentation throughout, keeping the audience suspended from reality for just over an hour.

The Japanese House’s debut album, ‘Good at Falling’, encapsulates every emotion experienced during a relationship, from being set up with a friend-of-a-friend, to the despondency experienced after a turbulent end. These emotions are at the core of the set, with songs such as ‘Lilo’ enchanting the audience with its earnest narrative of falling in love almost instantly. The real gem of the evening is the heavenly ‘Saw You In a Dream’ performed acoustically; if you don’t believe in love at first sight, with The Japanese House, you might perhaps believe in love at first listen.

*Amy Barker*

## JUNIPER NIGHTS / EASTER ISLAND STATUES / QUARTERMELON

### The Jericho Tavern

Each of Oxford’s small indie promoters has their own niche or quirk that makes them unique and for Daisy Rodgers Music it’s the opportunity for anyone buying an advance ticket to vote for a cover version to be played by one of the acts.

Tonight’s winners are Easter Island Statues with a rugged take on Pixies’ ‘Here Comes Your Man’ that’s respectable if not revelatory. It’s a few minutes of familiarity and fun at the end of yet another bravura performance from a band who continue to transcend the constraints of indie rock with a boldness and rich melodic edge that gives us the likes of ‘Laika’ and set closer ‘Run to the Shadows’ as well as their new single, the lovably roustabout and ramshackle indie shanty ‘Skeleton Quay’. Everything is simple and singalong, which isn’t always easy when you’re singing about obscure historical events on the Venezuelan border, or President Roosevelt’s domestic manners, but Easter Island Statues make it all sound effortless.

A shame perhaps that Quartermelon’s chosen cover, TLC’s ‘Waterfalls’, didn’t win the vote as it might have made their set a bit more fun. We think they’ve had a line-up change since we last caught them at The Cellar but that quirky wanderlust their songs used to have seems to have been replaced by a more solid southern-

flavoured blues-rock. At their best they can be a powerful unit and their poppier moments have a sunny side of slacker vibe to match their Hawaiian shirts, but the sense of unpredictability they used to carry seems have been lost along the way.

Juniper Nights’ influences are worn proudly on their sleeves but, a little like Easter Island Statues, they escape their gravity when they’re at their best, so while the shadow of Radiohead looms large and they very occasionally flap about in standard post-grunge bluster, they’re capable of melodic elegance, wigged-out psych-rock and something dark, almost gothic. Unusually for most rock bands they’re best when they slow things down, strip away some of the superfluous noise and let the singer’s voice be heard, and his is a voice worth hearing. At these times they’re atmospheric, well structured and the sparseness of sound actually makes them sound heavier, with echoes of Mark Lanegan. That said, the all-out noise finale is fun and then they cheekily play their chosen cover, despite not having won the vote, giving us a suitably brazen but moody take on Echo & the Bunnymen’s ‘Killing Moon’. That they execute it with enough style for us not to want to execute them says a lot about Juniper Night’s appeal.

*Dale Kattack*

## JERAMESA / GRAVID / DAYDREAMER?

### The Jericho Tavern

An unusually warm February night signals the start of spring, re-birth and extended sun; what better way to welcome the new than by burying yourself in psychedelia.

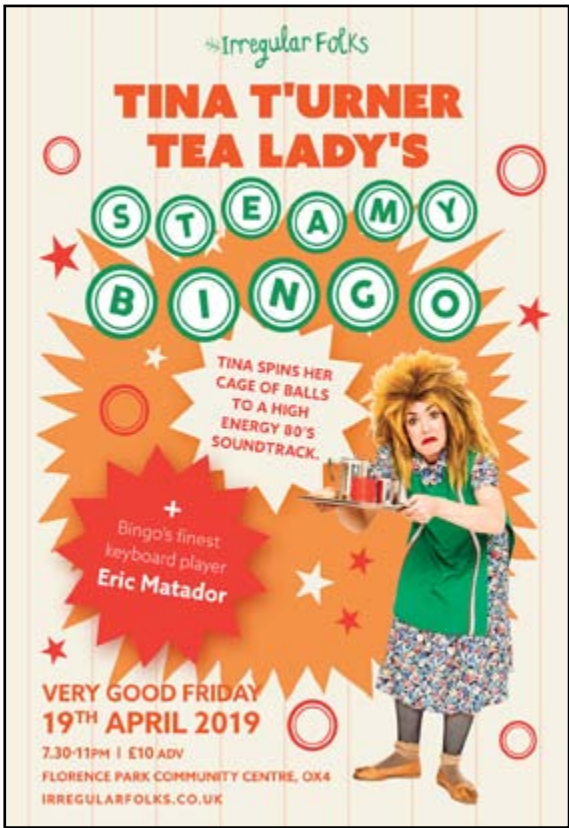
Emerging local trio Daydreamer? set the scene with a projection of the sky and an anxiety-inducing come-up. The steady drumming and bass licks juxtapose the spectrum-spanning heaviness of the guitar and the trio’s chemistry is apparent as their intensity builds; before you can ask “what the fuck was in my drink?” it hits you again, looping and rolling organically. Some transitions are a reminder that the band is still in its infancy but regardless they evoke similarities to The Flaming Lips and Sleep and serve as a reminder that it’s amazing what you can do with three instruments and a carpet of pedals.

Now we’ve come up, we’re looking for good vibes only and welcome the funky, feel-good sounds of Gravid. The playful offshoot of The Elephant Trip is a patchouli-heavy palate cleanser where the mic being plugged in actually matters. Those seasoned in the psychedelic scene know that seeing anyone other than a long-haired, lanky lad on stage is a rare occurrence and it’s refreshing to see a woman in the spotlight. Jeramesa use a conglomeration of field recordings and eerie sounds to prolong the tension in their music. Above them, slow footage from the 80s experimental film

*Koyannisqatsi* is a distraction from the band’s almost orchestral setup. A sleepy and atmospheric melodica cuts through the room, turning the page onto an ambitious and mathematical beat pattern: 5/7...7/8, no, 5/4! You realise there’s no need for overthinking it here and quickly let yourself go in whatever direction it takes you. They burst into an intense krautrock/drone session leaving you questioning whether it’s acceptable to mosh at a free-love psych event in the heart of Jericho. After some technical hitches are resolved, the vocals bellow as if it were a loudspeaker in Jonestown, reminding you of SOCIETY while the sitar chirps in and out of the soundscape. The unpredictability of the direction keeps you hanging at every odd beat. At times soft and dreamy, otherwise a precise chaos, matching the projections like The Dark Side of The Rainbow. It comes down with a call to the beginning, creating a cyclical yet satisfying end.

Though an encore is encouraged by the crowd, it just wouldn’t have been right. Refreshed, yet suitably alienated, you get the message loud and clear: the whole set’s focus on the music as well as the band’s aversion to the crowd creates an experience rather than a performance, a welcome break from fashionable egocentrism.

*Ziggy Duangjinda*



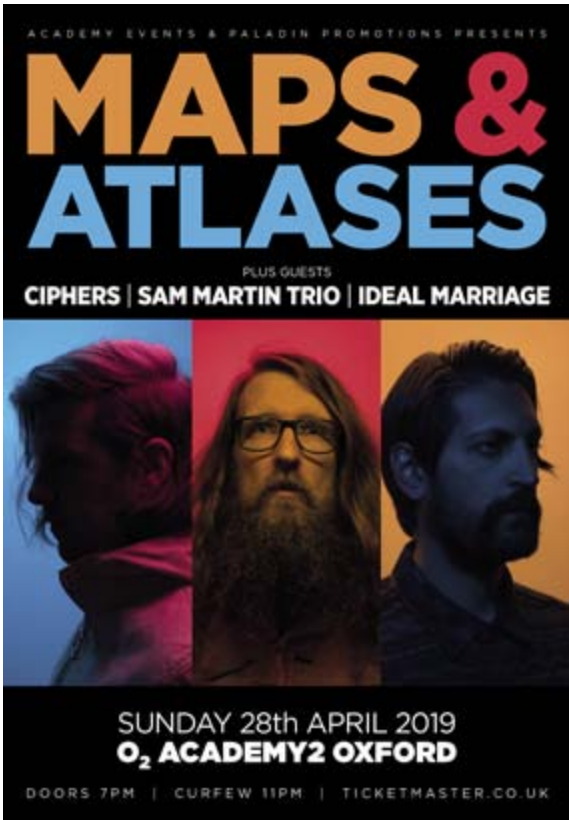
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## KRISTIN HERSH

### Holywell Music Room

“It’s so quiet,” says Kristin Hersh by way of a greeting to the hushed throng packing out Europe’s oldest purpose-built concert venue.

It isn’t for long, as Hersh and her band clatter purposefully through their set, seemingly trying to make up for centuries of classical recitals, choral concerts and occasional folk gigs over the years. And this, it turns out, is the defining issue of tonight’s show.

Kristin Hersh is possessed of one of the most gorgeous singing voices in rock music: slightly cracked and husky, but all the better to deliver the emotional bruises she’s weathered along a life and career often beset by mental health problems and addiction. But for much of this show she’s barely audible above the battering drums and meaty basslines that make up a full band show. Perhaps in the Bullingdon this would work, but the Holywell would have suited one of her mesmerising solo, acoustic shows instead, or at least a half and half set.

The scree and fizz of opener ‘LAX’ sets the scene, while ‘No Shade in Shadow’ sounds muddy up to the point it becomes a mantra and rises above the clutter. ‘Your Ghost’, one

of the most beautiful songs ever written, feels like it’s being stamped on slightly and by the time we’ve reached ‘Crooked’, we’re wishing terrible misfortune on the drummer.

All is not lost, though; ‘Loud Mouth’ benefits from being hollowed out, almost gothic, and a stripped-back ‘Husk’ reveals Hersh’s voice in all its glory. Even some of the harder tracks make the cut: ‘Halfway Home’ is thunderous and militant, a reminder that Hersh was always the twisted knife to Tanya Donnelly’s sunshine in Throwing Muses, and a couple of that old band’s songs, ‘Limbo’ and ‘Sunray Venus’, are a reminder of what a gem they were and what an enduringly great songwriter Hersh is.

Closing number ‘Broke’, a cover of a Fifty Foot Wave song, is the kind of big, psychedelic wig-out you need to bring a gig to a climax, and it’s another example of how the louder pieces *can* work, even in this environment, but we’re left slightly bemused, even disappointed, that across the full hour we don’t get to hear too much of Kristin Hersh’s voice, and it is a voice that deserves to be heard.

**Dale Kattack**

## THE CORAL

### O2 Academy

There are several different genres of bad gig. There are gigs where the musicians are simply incompetent; there are gigs where something’s happening, but it’s in poor taste, and then there are the worst bad gigs of all: the gigs that are simply bone-dry, soil-of-the-earth, honest-to-goodness boring.

The Coral’s performance at the O2 Academy captures the essence of what a boring gig is all about: the reduction of songs that at least had some energy on record to flat, rock-by-numbers covers of themselves; the complete absence of any stage banter or even any tension created by a lack of stage banter; that sense of horrifying foreboding as we realise that frontman James Skelly is never, ever going to take his sunglasses off. There are flashes amongst the plastered-over nothingness of the same spark that animated the band back in the Noughties but they’re few and far between, and by the time a surprisingly jaunty ‘Dreaming of You’ closes the set, even the superfans look depressed. It’s just fucking boring.

There are omens of what’s to come with support act Cut Glass Kings, whose backing-tracked, riff-driven

classic rock is fine, but never varies from the same chord sequence. Prescient, too, is the Coral’s opener ‘Sweet Release’, a less-than-interesting track from last album ‘Move Through the Dawn’. On record, the song’s driving rhythm and syncopated jangles at least give it a kind of forward movement; but on stage it falls victim to Skelly’s rare talent for sucking the life out of a performance, and the endless repetitions of “I’m in love, I’m in love, I’m in love” end up sounding more like a ritualistic plea to feel something – *anything* – rather than a genuine statement. “Play the hits!” yells a guy behind us two songs in. This crowd is getting restless.

Of course, it’s unfair to say that there are no enjoyable moments: new track ‘She’s a Runaway’ is good fun, and we’re treated to a decent instrumental jam with a bit of Black Sabbath thrown in. But those are like lunchbreaks at an office job; even ‘In the Morning’, the Coral’s jaunty smash-hit from 2005, sounds like a chore when it’s played by such a lacklustre group of individuals. All in all, it’s a thoroughly disappointing affair.

**Tom Kingsley**

## MEANS OF PRODUCTION /

### CYNTHIA’S PERISCOPE / LINA

### SIMON

### The Wheatsheaf

Gappy Tooth Industries has subtitled this evening as Shut Up Drumkit and scheduled an evening of electronic joys. Presumably Shut Up Drumkit II will be all about Throat Singing. Fingers crossed.

Lina Simon is a name familiar to those of a certain vintage in Oxford music circles. In a previous life she was part of the pre-Foals bands Elizabeth and The Edmund Fitzgerald but now she’s sailing alone and exploring stripped back electro. Armed only with a laptop, a Slint t-shirt and a long, dark coat, Lina’s presence onstage is almost painfully awkward, something magnified considerably by the vulnerability at the heart of her songs. A fascinating mix of disjointed disco, Joy Division chill, atonal vocals and occasional waves of serrated guitar noise, her set possesses a power that comes directly from its naivety and honesty. It’s tempting to say that a little more confidence in her performance would go a long way, but maybe it would take away some of that awkward charm.

The whirring mechanical outpourings of Paul Morrice, aka Cynthia’s Periscope, come from the opposite end of the spectrum to Lina Simon. Intropection is not something on his radar. Mashing up a range of influences as diverse as David Byrne, The Human League and The Knife

### NO VIOLET / SELF HELP / CIPHERS

### The Wheatsheaf

Ciphers open tonight’s Divine Schism show with a series of lo-fi warbles that erupt into a brutal rhythm-led onslaught that would make even your granny head-bang, while the guitar noise just grows and squeals with intensity. For the rest of the set Mila Todd joins on vocals giving it her all somewhere between Gwen Stefani and Skunk Anansie’s Skin. The band shift from twinkling post-rock guitar to heavy, driving riffs and punchy basslines a little haphazardly. While all the parts are good individually, Ciphers’ set can feel disjointed, as if too many songs are happening at once. The seeds of something great are all there, but they haven’t quite grown together yet.

Self Help introduce themselves with a quick count in and are off in a blur of power-chords and joy. The start of their set feels like being a child dizzy on lemonade who’s then been thrown in a mosh pit. With rotating vocalists the quartet manage to sit at an intersection of half a

and thrashing through the set like a particularly animated incarnation of Bez, he gives the evening a sense of the wild-eyed, dance-like-nobody’s-looking, storm-out-of-the-venue-mid-song, spirit of rave.

Performing in front of *and* behind a series of projections is something of a first, and suggests that Means Of Production have embraced at least one of the clichés of electronica. However, their commitment to the authentic sounds of the form means that they’re anything but clichéd. This is no homage; this is not worshipping at the altar of Kraftwerk et al. It is, however, utterly spellbinding. ‘Static Test Anomaly’ sounds like the kind of future that was being envisioned in the 1960s when it was predicted that robots would serve our every whim, food would come in pill form and our global leader would be a nose on life-support. The Three Rs is the key to their approach: Repetition. Repetition. Repetition. It’s something that defines ‘Recognizer’ (the 4<sup>th</sup> R) with its hypnotic pulse and refrain of “Switch On / Switch Off” becoming impossible to resist. ‘The Depths’ pulls a similar trick, forcing an impulse to dance robotically “in the middle of the landslide” into our poor fleshy human brains.

Drums? Where we’re going, we don’t need drums.

**Sam Shepherd**

## KANADIA / CANDY SAYS /

### THE AUGUST LIST

### O2 Academy

It’s one thing to see a band playing live, it’s quite another watching the music course through their veins and leave you believing the players are merely conduits for a greater force. So it is at times seeing The August List. Whether it’s Martin Child hunched intensely over his guitar, seemingly oblivious to anything else around him, electric violinist Ben Heaney a doubled-up dervish as he drags hellish birdsong from his instrument, or Kerraleigh Child stood eyes closed conducting an elaborate hand dance while exorcising demons and bad memories or summoning storms. The former on ‘Wooden Trunk Blues’, casting her past into the river; the latter on set closer ‘Distorted Mountain’, a meeting point between The Velvet Underground’s ‘Heroin’ and a pagan incantation. Like the storms and wildfire of that song, at their best The August List are less just a band, more an elemental force, and to watch them on stage is both humbling and exhilarating.

Few in Oxford – or some way beyond – can match Kerraleigh in the singing stakes, but one who can is Candy Says’ Julia Walker. Things don’t start well: the trio (Julia and husband Ben now joined by drummer Silke Blansjaar) taking to the stage in matching beanie hats that make them look like Smurfs and opening with what feels more like a chaotic set closer. It’s a bit of a mess, but soon they find their feet, a gorgeous ‘London’ allowing Julia’s voice to really

### TIECE / ELOUIZA / THEO / ANNA

### McCRAE

### Womanity, Makespace

Tonight’s gig is the topper on the great day of talks and workshops that has been Young Women’s Music Project’s annual Womanity festival, and as such features a bill including some current and past members of the project.

While Anna McCrae’s excellent new EP ‘Everytime I Let You In’ is all dreamy synths and moody beats – “if that’s your jam then I’m here for you,” she says disarmingly – tonight the songs are very effectively stripped down to their guitar-and-vocals core. The dreaminess remains though, especially in the knowing melodrama of ‘Wasted On You’, and throughout the set McCrae’s melismatic but unshowy vocals carry all the humour and the anger of her melancholy songs beautifully.

Theo, another YWMP alumna, plays thoughtful, weightless, gorgeous neo-soul, her songs inventive and atmospheric and catchy. The wordless chorus of ‘Yeti’ is a hook for the ages, and the way ‘Like You Do’’s florid electric piano arpeggios give way to an altogether moodier texture is exhilarating. Her looper-aided closing cover of Nina Simone’s ‘Four Women’ is jaw-dropping, both as a technical achievement and as a beautiful, stark example of brilliant

soar, equalled by the band’s hushed, almost alien take on ‘Running Up That Hill’ from the soundtrack to *Close*. A shame they don’t play their other song from that movie, ‘Beautiful Feeling’, already contender for best Oxford song of the year, but an energised ‘Crave Easy’ wipes away any lingering memory of that false start and ends the set in triumphant fashion.

Triumph being what tonight is all about for Kanadia, launching their debut album in front of a sold-out Academy crowd. They play the album in full, from the slowly expanding ‘Into the Flames’ and ending with singer James Bettis sat alone on stage for the sparse, solemn ballad ‘Anything For a Good Time’. In between everything is pretty much unstoppable epic, from the ambitiously expansive guitar sound to the elaborate light towers that adorn the stage. Album highlight ‘Meet the End’ is also the live zenith, showing Kanadia’s songcraft in its clearest light while also demonstrating just how important Melissa Marshall’s powerful keyboard sound is to the band, giving the band so much extra muscle when they kick back into the chorus.

The whole show feels like a last-night-of-the-tour celebration and proves that, after years of building to this point, Kanadia are big enough, bold enough and talented enough, to take on any stage in any venue in any corner of the world.

**Sue Foreman**



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# TIM TURAN’S SESSION NOTES

## Part Three CD BUSINESS - Putting it all together

*So far we have peeped at file preparation, mused over metadata and now we are going to put it all together to make a CD. One of the first questions I have for bands coming in to master their magnum opus is “Do you have a running order?” Mastering an album/EP is the last stage of production before mass duplication. So please have a track list sorted. I’ve had people ask me “well what do you think?” and my usual reply is “I think you should have thought about this earlier.” I have enough on my plate making the music sound great, getting a decent flow to the album in terms of relative volumes and EQ and of course the dreaded ‘gap’ between the songs. Most artists have a computer that they can mess around with running orders etc. Do this before mastering.*

1. There are two main indices on a regular CD-DA. Index 1 denotes the track index from which play will start. There is one index 1 per track. There is also index 0. Index 0 is defined as the “pre-gap”. On older CDs the pre-gap would show the seconds counting down to the start of the track (index 1). There is ALWAYS a two second pre-gap at the start of the disc. So if you want to put the total time on your artwork, wait until the CD is authored or your timing will be out by two seconds! Index 0 was generally used for the gap between songs on a live album so you could skip the banter, so to speak.

2. The “secret” track on a CD is now almost a thing of the past. I used to put secret tracks on nearly every CD a few years ago. This is obviously a band request and not something i do as a bit of fun. The trouble with secret tracks is that THEY ARE NOT A SECRET. You can clearly see that the CD is still playing and the ‘remain time’ on the counter is still turning. The big drawback is that iTunes and streaming platforms take no notice of them. Also they are a pain in the body part, particularly if there is a 20 minute gap between the “album” and the piece of nonsense that usually constitutes the (not so) secret track. It is also possible to put the secret track into the index 0 at the start of the album. This means you have to rewind back from the start to play it. Not fun.

3. The PQ sheet is a comprehensive list of the CD contents. Track names, index points, ISRC’s, and all text info is included along with track and total times.

CD timings are expressed as Mins, Seconds and Frames. There are 75 frames per second on a CD so your total time will always read in this format. Eg 68:23:72. There are 8 channels of subcode on a CD labelled P through W. CD’s use P & Q for pause and control and R through W for CD Text data. I used to print off the PQ sheet for inclusion with the physical CD Production Master Disc. These days the PQ sheet is included in the DDP (Disc Description Protocol) folder. DDP is now the standard for sending material off to the duplicators.

4. Gaps between the tracks are also very important to the flow of the record. There is no standard gap. Play it by ear and feel. Sometimes (not often these days) there will be a crossfade. The trouble with crossfades is that for iTunes, download and streaming they are not accepted for single tracks. The start of one track will be contaminated with the end of the previous track and the end of the previous track will be contaminated with the start of the ensuing track.

5. Finally, the total time allowable on a CD is 79:59:00. There are a few CD’s out there that transcend these limits but you’ll need to sign a waiver for the duplication plant in case CD players refuse to play the disc. Also, there is a maximum of 99 tracks per disc. All CD-DA’s are 16 bit/44.1Khz. They DO NOT contain files but a continuous stream of data.

*Next month I will simplify the unbelievably complex issues regarding mastering for VINYL, not VINYLS.*



# INTRODUCING....

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

## Means of Production

**Who are they?**

Electro duo Means of Production are Tim Day (*synths and vocals*) and Jeremy Day (*glitchers and visuals*). Tim previously played in Space Heroes of the People, but when that came to an end, “I kind of carried on writing. It soon became fairly clear that the stuff I was doing had a very different sound: Space Heroes was optimistic and I wanted to do something that seemed more of an adequate response to the times. Also, I had started spending my money on hardware synths rather than doing everything from the laptop and the whole workflow kind of leads to different sounding music.” Partner Jeremy, meanwhile, had started taking photographs: images, of warehouses, buildings, junctions, roads, traffic queues and car-parks. “As I heard the new tracks, the bleak, open, rhythmic nature of the music seemed to intersect with those cold, grubby modern images.” The band have released a series of singles to date, including ‘The Depths’, which was in *Nightshift’s* Top 10 tracks of 2018, and ‘Recogniser’, released last month.

**What do they sound like?**

Austere, minimalist and futuristic, in a strangely retro kind of way. Drawing on post-punk, early synth music and acid house, the duo create sleek, bunker grey lines of electro-pop and dystopian lyricism, usually with a backdrop of brutalist architecture, motorways and technological nightmares. At their best they sound like a future factory with all humanity removed.

**What inspires them?**

“Science; architecture; space exploration; artificial intelligence; the hope for a better future; the fear of a worse one; the sound of tyres on tarmac; municipal lighting; construction sites; safety videos.”

**Career highlight so far:**

“We were headlining at The Cellar on the night of the crowdfunder deadline and as we went onstage it became increasingly clear that they were going to make it. When we came off it was a real party atmosphere as they started setting up for the club. We were all so happy!”



**And the lowlight:**

“Finding out that The Cellar wasn’t going to be saved after all.”

**Their favourite other Oxfordshire act is:**

“Right now it’s The Overload. We supported them shortly before Christmas and they played a fantastic show.”

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

“‘After Dark 2’, a compilation from the Italians Do It Better label. Every track on it is immaculate; it’s been a big influence on the sound of the band.”

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

“2<sup>nd</sup> May at the O2 Academy. This will be the first time we’ve played there. Expect minimal synth, moments of beauty, stark visuals and dancing.”

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

“We love the enthusiasm and diversity of the artists and the small venue scene. There always seems to be something new and exciting on. You get to see lots of upcoming bands from all over. But that scene seems to be being squeezed at the moment: The Cellar obviously but also the Wheatsheaf and others. There ought to be more of a commitment from local decision makers to support local culture, because it matters!”

**You might love them if you love:**

Factory Floor; Chromatics; Cabaret Voltaire; Wrangler; Depeche Mode; A Guy Called Gerald; Throbbing Gristle.

**Hear them here:**

mnsfprdcn.bandcamp.com

THE WHEATSHEAF
Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> April – <i>THE SPIN JAZZ</i> 7:45pm <b>MIKE WALKER BAND</b>
Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> April – <i>KLUB KAKOFONIES</i> 7:45pm <b>CALLOW SAINTS / EDWIN &amp; THE KEEPERS</b> <b>ENJOYABLE LISTENS / CAROL WHITWORTH</b>
Saturday 6 <sup>th</sup> April 7:45pm <b>ANIMAL HOUSE</b> <b>SEMPRE CAOZ / SELF HELP</b>
Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> April – <i>THE SPIN JAZZ</i> 7:45pm <b>DAMON BROWN &amp; THE SPIN TRIO</b>
Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> April 7:35pm <b>METAL 2 THE MASSES - QUARTER FINAL 2</b>
Saturday 13 <sup>th</sup> April 7:35pm <b>METAL 2 THE MASSES - QUARTER FINAL 3</b>
Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> April – <i>IT’S ALL ABOUT THE MUSIC</i> 7:45pm <b>FIVE FATHOMS DEEP</b>
Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> April – <i>#ABIDEST WARM UP</i> 7:45pm <b>K-LACURA / VILLAINOUS</b>
Saturday 20 <sup>th</sup> April – <i>IT’S ALL ABOUT THE MUSIC</i> 7:45pm <b>MASTER OF NONE</b>
Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> April – <i>PUNKEL MUSIC TOUR</i> 7:35pm <b>LITTLE THIEF / SCREAMIN’ IRENE</b>
Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> April 7:35pm <b>METAL 2 THE MASSES - QUARTER FINAL 4</b>
Saturday 27 <sup>th</sup> April – <i>GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES</i> 7:45pm <b>MOBIUS</b> <b>DEATHLY PALE PARTY / KNOBBLEHEAD</b>
Wheatsheaf 129 High Street, Oxford OX1 4DF / <a href="http://www.facebook.com/wheatsheaf.oxford">www.facebook.com/wheatsheaf.oxford</a>

## Dr SHOTOVER: Velvet Punderground

Ah, there you are, Newbie Darling. Welcome to the East Indies Club bar. Or should I say, ‘Hey posh boy, what you doing uptown? Hey posh boy, you chasing our women around?’ Whateverrr. Pull up a Warhol silver-sprayed sofa and buy us all a Pernod. I know it’s dark in here, but try not to remove your shades. See that sign over there? ‘No-one served unless wearing shades’? Yes, that one. Oh, of course, you can’t read it. You’re wearing shades. Anyway, nice of you to make it along to the inaugural meeting of The VU. Yes, The VU. Let me explain. Soooo, we figure that with all these, uh, gosh-darned Muscle Mary VEGANS everywhere, it’s becoming less and less possible to, uh, dine out if one is a mere old-fashioned vegetarian... or, gee, [whispers] a *carnivore*. That’s why Morrison, Tucker and I decided to form our own sub-committee, which, as you may have gathered, we are calling ‘The VU’. Some claim it stands for ‘Vegan Upsetters’. Others say it means ‘Veggie Underground’. Whicheverrr... your function, Newbie, (aside from getting the drinks in) is to sort out the music for the first VU fundraiser – to be held on Sunday morning in the Exploding Plastic Inevitable Suite (situated in the club’s basement). Black will, obviously, be worn. Strobes will flicker. All kinds of non-vegan food will be served. Here is a list of song titles to work around [*injects methedrine into a Linda McCartney burger, clears throat*]. Now that’s what I CALL fast food! Where were we? Oh yes... *I’m Waiting for the Mac... Who Loves the Bun?... I’ll Be Your Mayo... Vegan in Furs... Ham Fatale...The Black Angel Delight Song... Oh! Sweet Trolley... Danish Blue Eyes... All Tomorrow’s Pasties... etc etc*. Cheers! Now I’d better eat this and... Run, Run, Run.



Nico: ‘Is this a WEGAN bar, Endy?’

# ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

## 20 YEARS AGO

How things change. How things stay the same. Back in April 1999 **Truck Festival** announced it would be returning for its second outing in the summer and local bands were invited to send demos into organiser **Robin Bennett**. By post. His home address was even printed in *Nightshift*. Tickets for the return Truck trip were on sale too, priced at a whopping £8 (or £5 for under-18s), available from **Chalky’s Records** in Oxford, and **Modern Music** in Abingdon. All of which probably sounds entirely alien to modern day Truck-goers. Something else different but the same was political protest music. 20 years ago we had **King Prawn** back in town, the rap/ska/punk warriors at the forefront of an underground punk movement, raging against racism and inequality at **The Point**. Good job we don’t need bands like that anymore in this perfect world.

Elsewhere in Oxford this month in history were gigs by **Add N To (X)**, **Pitchshifter**, **Jah Wobble** and **Ultrasound** at **The Zodiac**, while **Pram** and **Dawn of the Replicants** were at **The Point**; **Banco de Gaia** was at **Brookes Union**; **808 State** were at **Po Na Na** and, just to keep one foot firmly in rock’s past, **Dumpy’s Rusty Nuts** were gracing the stage at **The Dolly**. Unbelievably, a quick check on Wikipedia shows they’re still going. Credit where it’s due, that’s some serious longevity.

## 10 YEARS AGO

**Kate Garrett** and **Barney Morse-Brown** gazed from the cover of April 2009’s *Nightshift*,

the pair, dubbed “the first couple of Oxford music,” having formed their own Garrett-Brown Music label together, releasing EPs by each of them. Kate’s ‘King of the Birds’ was her finest recording since The Mystics’ debut single, and her last ever release, the influential singer and guiding light of the local Young Women’s Music Project succumbing to cancer at a tragically young age. Cellist Barney continues to create enigmatically inventive music under his **Duotone** moniker and is the go-to cellist for a host of artists.

Local music news this month was dominated by local festival line-up announcements, with **Sugababes** and **Scouting For Girls** set for **Cornbury**, and **Dodgy** and **Karine Polwart** confirmed for **WOOD**, while **The Original Rabbit Foot Spasm Band**, **Desert Storm**, **Winchell Riots**, **Black Hats** and **We Aeronauts** among the local hopefuls set for May’s **Oxford Punt**. The inaugural **Indie Guitar Company Festival** was announced, to take place at Acott Under Wychwood, with **British Sea Power**, **Mungo Jerry** and **Pigeon Detectives** set to headline. The festival never happened though, the company going into liquidation soon after. They weren’t the first and they certainly wouldn’t be the last to do so.

**David Byrne** was at **The New Theatre** this month and **PJ Harvey** and **John Parish** were together up at **Brookes Union**, while a double dose of Jamaican reggae legends in a week found both **Horace Andy** and **The Wailers** playing the O2 Academy, as were **Cancer Bats** and **Hundred Reasons**, featuring a young **Frank Turner**.

# THIS MONTH IN OXFORD MUSIC HISTORY

## 5 YEARS AGO

*Nightshift*, as anyone with a brain can tell you, is always ahead of the pack when it comes to spotting bright young talent, and so it was that back in April 2014 we featured the latest in a long line of future global stars on the cover in the form of **Glass Animals**. Back then the quartet had just returned from South By Southwest (“we played eight shows in six days, two of which were an hour apart, so it was quite mental,” said frontman **Dave Bayley** of their week in the industry spotlight, before adding, “we’re a bit overwhelmed right now.”) Things were starting to pick up at a frightening rate for the band in the wake of debut album ‘Zaba’. But before their Spotify plays started to be counted in the tens of millions and they were headlining festivals as far away as America and Australia, they were still able to remember their first ever review – a Demo of the Month in *Nightshift*. “We were really hoping for Demo Dumper,” they admitted, “that is still our first port of call in *Nightshift*; people care about that much more than Demo of the Month, don’t they?”

Glass Animals were playing a rare hometown show this month, supporting **Metronomy** at the **O2 Academy**. Also playing there were **Sophie Ellis Bextor**; **Deaf Havana**; **Gorgon City** and **Matt Cardle**, while elsewhere in town were **Polar Bear (St. John the Evangelist)**; **The Irrespressibles (The Cellar)**; **Howling Bells (Jericho Tavern)**, and **Pulled Apart by Horses (The Bullingdon** in its brief, unmissed **Art Bar** phase) Elsewhere we featured a new country singer in our Introducing piece, **Ags Connolly**. “Country of the old school, none of yer polished Nashville rubbish,” we said. He’s still avoiding that polish.



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# TRACKS

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## TOP TRACKS

### MILTON J REWOLF

We probably shouldn't be encouraging such silliness but in a world where striking schoolkids are having to show grown-ups what's important, where politicians are sending the country to hell for the sake of their own greed and egos and where maniac white supremacists can murder scores of people peacefully living their lives, we need some silliness. So here's Milton J Rewolf to lead the merry dance. It's a decade near enough since we last heard from the Banbury balladeer and almost twice as long since he was last atop this pile (with his excellent song 'Insecurity Guard') and the first bit of good news is he doesn't seem to have got any more adept at playing his instruments in the meantime. This is pure bedroom-based indulgence and whimsy from start to finish. Start being 'Chauffeur Dog', a song about, well, a dog who can drive, which is a right cheery heap of nonsense. Finish is 'Pink Cat', a ukulele thrum featuring samples of a cat chirruping and is sung by a small child. In between we get 'Myrtle', a sort of lo-fi, ramshackle skiffle number that might think it's psychedelic-period Beatles or some throwaway Syd Barrett piece, but is more like a wide-eyed pub-rock take on Nick Cope's kiddie songs, this one being about a girl who finds a headless toy in a bin and finally has a friend (until said toy gets washed down a drain). Anyone not singing along by the end should be forced to go and live with Chris Grayling, forever. "He sees things in a different way" sings Milton during 'Sykesville'. Yes he does, and the world is a tiny bit better for it.

### BEN OSBORN

Ben Osborn similarly doesn't seem to have a sensible or straightforward way of approaching songwriting. Ben used to be in ace local popstrels Where I'm Calling From many moons ago but now lives in Berlin and has attracted the attention of Nonostar Records who have also released stuff by Oxford keyboard wiz Seb Reynolds. "When I am an architect, I will build a complex bridge: a double helix, a whirlwind, a murmuration of static starlings..." writes Ben of his song 'A Bridge of Starlings', a hushed, glacial tromp and shuffle through something vaguely approaching a tune, backed by a distracting clutter of vinyl crackle and what sounds like a toddler idly knocking a small wooden mallet against a kitchen worktop. That's as close as we

Track of the Month wins a free remix from Soundworks studio in Oxford, courtesy of Umair Chaudhry. Visit [www.umairchaudhry.co.uk/nightshift](http://www.umairchaudhry.co.uk/nightshift)

get to percussion. Instead the murmured/ almost whispered vocals wander, hesitate and procrastinate along a meandering path, sounding a bit like Jarvis Cocker trying to decide if he wants to be Chris Rea or 80s oddball Momus. Second track, 'Psalm 22', is an instrumental built from lysergic piano, plucked strings and what sounds suspiciously like a sample of a creaky office chair. It's all simultaneously soothing and slightly irritating. What next, we wonder: a Beethoven sonata underpinned by someone repeatedly clearing their throat, or maybe a tender acoustic ballad backed by a sample of a mosquito whining inside a lampshade. Just give us the pretty tunes and leave the "found sounds" where you found them. It's for the best.

## BACK POCKET PROPHET

Blimey, it's wall-to-wall blasts from the past this month. Last time we reviewed a set of Back Pocket Prophet's songs was in 2008 and not only have they steadfastly refused to move with the fickle passing of fashion, we still find it hard to type or pronounce their name without getting all tongue twisted. On the musical stasis front, that's no bad thing given the band's remit is classic thrash metal, whose blueprint has been in no need of alteration for the past 35 years. So we get seven songs of thundering bass, pummelling drums, shredded guitars and rasping, ogreish vocals which all add up to something that exists in a pleasingly filthy swamp in between Judas Priest and Metallica, just along the road from Faith No More who occasionally pop round for tea and beer. It's all a bit hacked out and straight down the line, but if you're wanting odd time signatures and genre-bending exploration, thrash metal probably isn't the place you should be looking. Here be riffs. Here be beats. Here be the occasionally tolling bell (now there's a found sound we can get on board with) and here be the sound of a possibly large and hairy man pulling his own tonsils out with a pair of pliers. It's metal. It does what it says on the tin. A tin made of metal.

### MONKFISH

More veterans! This month's Tracks section is starting to look like an Oxford music scene version of *MOJO* (except that none of the acts we're writing about, so far as we know, are dead). Death of course being something a band like Monkfish would probably heartily approve of, what with them being a bit gothy and growly and living a darker shade of the blues. The first time we ever heard Monkfish we compared them to Thin White Rope and that's a comparison that still stands the test of

time, especially with Kev Riddle's gravelly vocals and spidery guitar leading the line. Here's a band made to perform in dark, dingy, low-ceilinged basement bars (shame Oxford's finest one just got shut down, eh), even when they're playing it clean, as on 'Honeybourne', sounding like music dragged backwards through a hedge and contemplating the void and all the bad stuff within. This set of new songs maybe isn't quite up there with their last Demo of the Month winning effort, but it's another sliver, or shiver, of ruggedly glum gothic country blues of the sort incorrigible nihilists like us revel in, particularly extended gothic workout 'Pipistrelle', which growls like a hungry wolf and spangles like the stars on a moonless night. In fact if the real world weren't such a depressing shit heap, we'd make this Top Track, but even we feel the need for some lighthearted silliness right now.

## PRINCESS GRAPEFRUIT

Oh come on, this is getting daft now. Princess Grapefruit might be a new name in *Nightshift* but the man behind it, George O'Connor, isn't. Under various guises, notably Sugar Darling, he's kept us supplied with a steady stream of homemade oddness and outright cheese for a fair while, sometimes missing the target but often taking an engaging left turn into something weird and daft. After recent journeys into hairy rock, this is a trip into the odder side of George's psych, a set of maniacal electronic beat-driven pieces, mostly instrumental, or dotted with snatches of repeated vocal samples ("Who is that!"; It's the truth!"), which occasionally remind us of a stripped-back Avalanches, and at other times, some long lost Playstation game soundtrack of Czech kids cartoon. Onward they all rush, stuttering and tripping over themselves, electronic squiggles and belches and the ping of a microwave punctuating the skittering beats. Nothing really shows any sign of developing into anything more advanced than the frenzied doodles of an untidy, unquiet mind or something mechanical that's going very wrong but as a metaphor for a world pulling itself apart from the inside, it's pretty effective.

## THE COMPLETE SET

Ah, at last... an actual new name to us, confirmation hopefully that people haven't abandoned making music in favour of, dunno, prepping for the apocalypse or joining Nigel Farage's glorious gammonball run march (its few dozen slightly miffed pensioners set to torch parliament if and when they find the capital). The Complete Set sound interesting on paper, promising: "no musical boundaries. Our aim is to create music with strong melodies and interesting harmonic structures, with alternative rock, psychadelic (*sic*), indie and musical hall slant.

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

Influences include the Beatles, Bach, Cream, Stravinsky, Nirvana (*sic*) and Stockhausen. But, like Farage's heroic heralding of sunlit uplands, this turns out to be so much fudge and nonsense, and like his people's march, a very muddy plod to nowhere. Vocally there's a hint of Syd Barret about it, but that's as psychedelic as things get; musically it's a mushy muddle of noisy bits of stuff that neither fit together or seem to know where, if anywhere, they're going. The sound levels are as consistent as a drunkenly wielded megaphone and lyrically and musically it all makes about as much sense as giving a ferry contract to a bankrupt company with no ferries. Like the Brexit process itself this is horribly strained, feels like it goes on forever and at the end there's nothing approaching a resolution, nor, for that matter, any bloody tunes. The Complete Set? Complete Shit, more like.

## TOILET TRACKS

## APRIL EIGHTEENTH

Songwriting is a difficult art to master, so perhaps it's understandable that some people can't be bothered. Why try writing something approaching a recognisable melody when you can hack out a few lumps of noise and shout a bit and pretend it's punk rock. Initially at least it's almost possible to imagine what April Eighteenth had in mind when they got together, first track here, 'Keaton', a distant, failed first draft of something approaching a bad Rancid tribute, all on-off ska rhythms, basic rock riffage and shouting, but anything that might be mistaken for cohesion or focus gradually gets shovelled out the window, either through apathy, drunken confusion or the guitarist deciding that kicking down statues and manning barricades isn't for him and he'd rather join an 80s stadium rock band where his random, elongated solos might be better appreciated. As far as rabble rousing revolution rock goes, 'Milford' is as defiant as a badly tuned transistor radio left in the path of a force 5 hurricane and ends up sounding like it's in as many different splintered pieces as that hapless appliance. At least it does sound mildly vexed (in the same sort of way as a lost tourist with an upside down map of a different city to the one they're in might be vexed); 'Until Further Notice' just gives up the fight, the guitarist winning out and heading off on a spangled solo that might be a hitherto unexplored fusion of shoegaze and easy reggae. Unexplored for a reason. After a couple of minutes it simply fades out and dies quietly in the corner while everyone concerned buggers off to the pub, accepting that, yes, songwriting should be left to those with an inkling of what it entails. Give it a few days and that's likely be what the ragged stragglers on Farage's march will similarly decide. Best place for them.

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Sun 24th Mar • 6.30pm

## Bars and Melody

Tue 26th Mar

## Gerry Cinnamon

Tue 26th Mar

## Skarlett Riot

+ Fahrán + Sister Shotgun  
+ Broken Empire

Thur 28th Mar

## Fun Lovin' Criminals

Fri 29th Mar • 6.30pm

## Wille & The Bandits

+ Rainbreakers  
+ The Autumn Saints

Fri 29th Mar • 11pm

## The Oxford Soul Train

Sat 30th Mar • 9.30pm

## Varsity

Mon 1st Apr

## The Slow Readers Club

+ Bridges

Tue 2nd Apr

## Yak

+ Mush + Mother

Fri 5th Apr • 6.30pm

## DMA's

Fri 5th Apr • 6.30pm

## Goldie Lookin Chain

+ Shortwave

Sat 6th Apr • 6.30pm • SOLD OUT

## The Dualers

+ ZAIA

Sat 6th Apr

## Switch Presents Holy Goof

Wed 10th Apr • 6.30pm

## KING NO-ONE

Sat 13th Apr • 6.30pm

## Nilufer Yanya

Sat 13th Apr • 9pm

## Cirque Du Soul: Oxford // Crazy P Soundsystem

Mon 15th Apr

## Circa Waves

Thur 25th Apr

## Under The Apple Tree – Live on tour with Wildwood Kin

+ Loud Mountains  
+ Ferris & Sylvester

Sat 27th Apr • 6.30pm

## Sleaford Mods

Sat 27th Apr • 6.30pm

## UK Foo Fighters

Sun 28th Apr

## Maps & Atlases

+ Ciphers + Sam Martin Trio  
+ Ideal Marriage

Thur 2nd May

## Aliens

Fri 3rd May • 11pm

## Robbo Ranx Bank Holiday Special

Sat 4th May • 6.30pm

## The Wedding Present - Bizarro Tour

Sat 11th May • 6.30pm

## Blaenavon

Sat 11th May • 11pm

## The Oxford Soul Train

Tue 14th May

## J Mascis

+ Rosali

Tue 14th May

## Lucy Spraggan

Wed 15th May • 6.30pm

## SOAK

+ Pillow Queens

Sat 18th May • 6.30pm

## Samantha Fish

Tue 21st May

## End Of An Era - Vol 1

Wed 22nd May • 6.30pm

## Sons of the East

Thur 23rd May

## End Of An Era - Vol 2

Sat 25th May • 6.30pm

## Inner Peace Records

Sat 25th May • 11pm

## I LOVE REGGAETON

Sat 25th May • 11pm

## #6MILLI Summer

## Send Off

Fri 31st May • 11pm

## Bass Odyssey

Sat 8th Jun

## Honeyblood

Thur 20th Jun

## Band Of Horses

+ Lion

Tue 25th Jun

## The Dead South

Fri 28th Jun • 11pm

## Mad Cobra

Sat 29th Jun

## The AC/DC Experience

Thur 25th Jul

## Elvana: Elvis Fronted Nirvana

Fri 20th Sep • 6.30pm

## Boyzlife

Thur 3rd Oct

## Pierce Brothers

Fri 4th Oct • 6.30pm

## CoCo and the Butterfields

Fri 11th Oct • 11pm

## The Greatest Showman Singalong Club Tour

Sat 12th Oct • 6.30pm

## Antarctic Monkeys

Fri 18th Oct • 6.30pm

## Amber Run

Sat 2nd Nov • 6.30pm

## The Dualers

Sat 9th Nov • 6.30pm

## Snarky Puppy

Mon 11th Nov

## Elder Island

Thur 14th Nov

## The Smyths... A celebration of the debut L.P

Fri 22nd Nov • 6.30pm

## Half Man Half Biscuit

Tue 26th Nov

## Fontaines D.C.

Wed 27th Nov • 6.30pm

## Electric Six

Thur 28th Nov

## Happy Mondays - Greatest Hits Tour

Sat 30th Nov • 6.30pm

## Definitely Mightbe (Oasis tribute)

Fri 6th Dec • 6.30pm

## Pearl Jam UK

Thur 12th Dec

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