

NIGHTSHIFT

Oxford's Music Magazine

**Free every
month
Issue 287
June
2019**

"When we were writing our new music, we found it exhilarating when people just started throwing their best shapes"



Oxford's discofied dance rockers bring the party to **Glofest**

Also in this issue:

THE PORT MAHON returns!

RIDE are back in town!

Introducing **CIPHERS**!

Win **CORNBURY** tickets!

plus

All your Oxford music news, previews and reviews, plus five pages of local gigs for June

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

THE BULLINGDON

JUNE 2019 GIG & CLUB LISTINGS

Saturday 1st June
Musical Medicine
FOUK

Doors: 11pm

Thursday 6th June

Sisters of Funk

Doors: 8.30pm

Friday 7th June

Candy Says

Doors: 7pm

Friday 7th June

Fluorescent Adolescent

Doors: 11pm

Friday 7th June

Reggaeton Party

Doors: 11pm

Thursday 13th June

Be Good

Doors: 7pm

Friday 14th June

Pinoy Rock Legends

Doors: 8pm

Friday 14th June

Terraforms

Ed Rush

Doors: 11pm

Saturday 15th June

Simple

Courtesy

Doors: 11pm

Thursday 19th June

Oxford Brookes

Graduation Party

Doors: 11pm

Wednesday 19th June

Jesse Malin

Doors: 7pm

Wednesday 19th June

Haute Mess

Doors: 11pm

Thursday 20th June

Ryan Bingham

Doors: 7pm

Friday 21st June
Deep Cover
Lucy

Doors: 11pm

Saturday 22nd June

Night Tube feat. Dali

Doors: 11pm

Wednesday 26th June

Jeffrey Lewis & Los Bolts

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 27th June

Goodness Day & Night

Feat. Laurel Halo

Doors: 11pm

Friday 28th June

The Total Stone Roses

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 29th June

Volume

Danny Byrd

Doors: 11pm

Wednesday 3rd July

Here Lies Titania

Failure is an Option

Twisted State of Mind

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 4th July

Algiers

Doors: 7pm

Monday 8th July

Hamilton Loomis

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 11th July

Cloud Nothings

Doors: 7pm

Friday 12th July

British Sea Power

Doors: 7pm

Friday 12th July

The Dub Feat. Nick Manasseh

Field Frequency Soundsystem

Doors: 11pm

Saturday 13th July

Outlook Festival Launch Party

Dub Phizix & Strategy

T>1 B2B Limited

Outlook DJs

Doors: 11pm

Wednesday 17th July

Shonen Knife

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 20th July

The Rock Project Oxford

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 20th July

Pitch Black: Summer Party

Doors: 11pm

Wednesday 24th July

Easy Star All-Stars

Playing 'Dub Side of the Moon'

Doors: 7pm

Sunday 28th July

Outright Resistance

Karybdis

Order 227

Man Make Fire

Doors: 7pm

Friday 3rd August

WhitesnakeUK

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 10th August

Cave Sounds

Jason Kaakoush

Cheh

Nazz B2B J.P.

Doors: 11pm

Saturday 17th August

Rabidfest

Conan

Red Method

Confessions of a Traitor

Vig

Hell's Gazelles

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 17th August

Rabidfest: After Party

Doors: 11pm

Sunday 18th August

Rabidfest

feat. Secret Guest

Desert Storm

Bast

Gutlocker

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 21st August

Wayne Hussey

Doors: 7pm

Wednesday 25th September

Childcare

Doors: 7pm

Saturday 7th September

Ox-Skool Breaks #1

Pete Cannon

Sunny & Deck Hussy

Side FX B2B Beeno

Bustin B2B Skampy

Lowercase B2B Paul Bradley

Alk-E-D B2B Deluxe

Doors: 11pm

Wednesday 26th September

Skinny Molly

Doors: 7pm

Friday 13th September

Thunderstruck

AC/DC Tribute

Doors: 7pm

Friday 13th September

Break Stuff

A Night of Nu-Metal Nostalgia

Doors: 11pm

Tuesday 1st October

Hunkpapa

Doors: 7pm

Wednesday 2nd October

Plastic Mermaids

Doors: 7pm

Friday 4th October

Apré

Doors: 7pm

Thursday 10th October

David Ford

Doors: 7pm

NEWS

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Online: nightshiftmag.co.uk



RIDE play a homecoming show at **Oxford Town Hall** on **Tuesday 3rd December**. The gig, at the venue where they played one of their earliest hometown headline concerts back in May 1990, is part of an extensive European, American and UK tour starting in the summer and finishing on the 12th December in Manchester, to promote the band's sixth studio album 'This Is Not a Safe Place'. The new album, produced by Erol Alkan, who also helmed their 2017 comeback 'Weather Diaries', is released on the 16th August on Wichita Records. Tickets for all UK dates are due on sale soon – go to www.thebandride.com for details.

TWO TONE ALL-SKAS AND HOPE & GLORY are among the local acts confirmed for **The Riverside Stage** at this year's **Cornbury Festival**. The two ska tribute bands have been among the star turns of recent Cornburys and with The Specials headlining the Friday night main stage this year, are a perfect fit for the festival.

The Riverside stage traditionally features a heavy contingent of Oxfordshire acts and this year's line-up also features: The Shapes; Pandapocalypse; Easter Island Statues; Kanadia; Premium Leisure;

Knights of Mentis; Black Hats; Les Clochards; The Deadbeat Apostles; The Other Dramas; Brickwork Lizards; Molly Davies, and The Wonderbeers, among others. They join festival headliners The Beach Boys, Keane and The Specials over the weekend of the 5th – 7th July at Great Tew Country Park. Echo & the Bunnymen; Gaz Coombes; KT Tunstall; Beverly Knight and The Trevor Horn Band are among the other star names on the line-up. Visit cornburyfestival.com for full line-up news and ticket details.

MAKE MUSIC DAY comes to **Abingdon** on **Friday 21st June**. The international celebration of live music takes place across over 1,000 towns and cities in 120 countries on the longest day of the year. Events in Abingdon kick off at midday with drumming, ukulele, songwriting, community singing, fiddle playing and body music workshops in the Library and the Guildhall rooms, before heading outdoors from 4-9pm with live performances in the market square from the likes of Megan Henwood; Adam Barnes; The People Vs; Opera Anywhere and Hex Collective. Thereafter local pubs and cafés will host a range of live music events, with Dan Rawle; Saving Cathren; Tony Batey; Waterfahl; Max Blansjaar and Simon Gregory among the acts confirmed to perform. Arts Council England is just one of the 60 organisations involved in Making Music Day. More details at www.makemusicday.co.uk.

QUICKFIX RECORDINGS have compiled a decades-spanning Spotify *cont'd over...*



THE PORT MAHON reopens as a live music venue this month after undergoing a refurbishment, with its owners looking to put the pub back at the heart of the Oxford music scene.

The Port, on St. Clement's, was a regular gig venue until five years ago when its upstairs room was turned into a dance studio, but under the ownership of Johnnie Fisher and Cassie Jane, who also run The Half Moon on St. Clement's, and the management of Nell Wimpenny, it will return to its former glory, officially reopening on the 31st May. The news is all the more welcome in the wake of the closure of The Cellar in March. "The Oxford music scene has suffered some hard losses over the last few years and yet, here on St. Clement's, we have an absolute gem of a venue that was going to waste," explained Johnny, talking to *Nightshift* ahead of its relaunch; "with our incredible team I am so excited to open its doors again and give it back to local artists to showcase just how much talent Oxford has to offer."

"After re-establishing The Half Moon to be a welcoming and vibrant pub for live music it was only natural for us to turn our efforts to The Port Mahon – once a vital hub for Oxford's music scene. We wanted to create a warm and much needed space space to showcase local and national artists. We're really excited to get the doors open and start giving Oxford an essential part of its musical heritage back."

Band and promoters wanting to book gigs, can contact Nell at oxfordportmahon@gmail.com or on 07711 836382.

TELEMAN, THE COMET IS COMING AND IBIBIO SOUND MACHINE are among the acts announced for this year's **Ritual Union**. The one-day, multi-venue festival returns to east Oxford on **Saturday 19th October**, with music running from 11am through to 3am at the **O2 Academy, The Bullingdon, The Library** and **Truck Store**. Other acts confirmed include **Pigs x7; Self Esteem; Young Knives; Flamingods; Twin Peaks; The Soft Cavalry; Heavy Lungs; The Murder Capital; Chastity Belt; Trudy & the Romance; Porridge Radio; Bess Atwell; Scalping; Premium Leisure; Working Men's Club; Egyptian Blue; The Cooling Pearls** and **Pet Semetary**.

Last year's event, featuring Nadine Shah; Ghostpoet; Fontaines DC; The Lovely Eggs; Jane Weaver and Gaz Coombes among others, was hailed as one of the highlights of 2018's live music calendar and this year's event is likely to sell out. Super earlybird tickets are on sale now, priced £25, with the price rising to £30 for earlybird tickets and then £35 for standard tickets. Get them at ritualunion.co.uk or at Truck Store.



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NEWS

playlist of Oxford music. The playlist features over 100 songs, ranging from 80s indie stars Talulah Gosh, through cult local heroes such as The Rock of Travolta; Meanwhile, Back in Communist Russia and Beaker, to the current crop of young stars. Fans are encouraged to suggest additions to the playlist. Search This Is Oxford Music or Quickfix on Spotify.

GLASSHOUSE STUDIOS host their annual family open day this month. The rehearsal and recording studio in Cumnor opens its doors for the day on Saturday 15th June, from midday through to 7pm, with studio tours, live music from Max Blansjaar; Emma Hunter; Juniper Nights; The Dollymops and special guests, plus a bbq, and Oxfordshire’s largest crisp buffet. Visit glasshousestudios.org.

OXFORD CITY FESTIVAL returns from the 15th November – 1st December. The multi-venue festival, hosted by It’s All About the Music, is open to all local acts. To apply just message the Oxford City Festival Facebook page.

DAVID ASHBOURNE returns to musical action this month with a new single. The singer-songwriter, who previously gigged and recorded under

the name Samuel Zasada, earning a *Nightshift* Demo of the Month back in 2009 before releasing a series of EPs, is back with a new project Mosa and releases a new single, ‘Losts & Founds’ on local label Fourtwenny. The new project promises a more electronic sound for the singer, with a full EP set for release in June.

LUNCHTIME FOR THE WILD YOUTH fanzine are starting promoting all-ages matinee shows on weekends at the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Centre in Oxford and are looking for bands to play. Contact russellsmusicreviews@gmail.com or @RussellBarker12 on Twitter with a link to some music if you want to play.

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

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



REPUBLICA headline this year’s Witney Music Festival. The electro-rock band best known for 90s hit ‘Ready To Go’ top the bill on Saturday 15th June when the festival climaxes with a two-day live music event on The Leys. Republica are joined on the Saturday by 90s ravers N-Trance; electro-swing stars The Dutty Moonshine Big Band; veteran ska tribute act The Inflatables and a cast of local acts including Trauma; Twisted State of Mind; Fused; Iota and Dead Section, plus the winners of the Witney Battle of the bands and a showcase of acts from the town’s MuzaAkademy. The Friday night (14th) features a headline set from Prodigy tribute act Jilted Generation, as well as tributes to T-Rex and Talking Heads, plus local acts. Friday’s action runs from 6-1ppm with Saturday starting at midday. Both shows are free. The festival on The Leys is the culmination of two weeks of live music around Witney, with gigs and open mic sessions in pubs and venues across the town, from the 24th May through to the 10th June. More details at www.witneymusicfestival.co.uk.

WIN CORNBURY FESTIVAL TICKETS!

At sixteen years of age Cornbury should be a horrible, stropky sod of a festival, sat sulking in a filthy midden, probably with the light off. Instead, it remains a serenely welcoming affair in one of rural Oxfordshire’s most picturesque corners.

Surviving all those things life chucks at live music festivals, from the weather to financial difficulties, Cornbury continues to be one of the cornerstones of our local festival calendar, hosting its trademark mix of legends, heritage acts, cult heroes and rising stars.

This year’s Cornbury Festival runs over the weekend of the 5th-7th JULY at GREAT TEW COUNTRY PARK. This year’s headline acts are THE SPECIALS, THE BEACH BOYS and KEANE. The former will give anyone with an ounce of complacency a kick in the pants, the band, once again led by Terry Hall, still as potent as they were in the 80s with the relase of this year’s Number 1 album ‘Encore’, while any Beach Boys set is bound to be a greatest hits singalong.

So too will be THE TREVOR HORN BAND, back for more after their 2015 appearance which is regarded as one of the Cornbury greats. Elsewhere on one of the event’s strongest line-ups for a while are Liverpudlian post-punk legends and Cornbury regulars ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN; timeless soul and r’n’b diva BEVERLY KNIGHT; award-winning Scottish hitmaker KT TUNSTALL; 70s pop siren and stage



2 Tone Legends The Specials headline Friday.

star ELKIE BROOKS; groundbreaking British star country duo THE SHIRES; veteran singer PAUL CARRACK; folk legends STEELEYE SPAN and of course local icon GAZ COOMBES, while there’s a very welcome return to the shire for one of last year’s star turns – THE KOLARS. Other names on the bill include HOTHOUSE FLOWERS; TOM SPEIGHT; KATY HURT; WILDWOOD KIN; ALFIE BO and this month’s Nightshift cover stars LITTLE BROTHER ELI, while Squeeze mainman CHRIS DIFFORD takes a step down from the main stage to head up the festival’s Caffè Nero tent.

Also back for more, after an impressive, sold-out debut last year, are THE HAIRY BIKERS, who’ll be hosting banquets throughout the weekend, and

the comedy tent welcomes BGT winner LOST VOICE GUY alongside JOSIE LONG and ROSE MATAFEO.

Plenty more besides, plus of course the Riverside stage, featuring a host of local and up and coming acts, tribute bands and school bands. Tickets for Cornbury Festival are on sale now at cornburyfestival.com, with adult weekend tickets priced from £180 (£215 with camping), with day tickets available and discounts for over-70s, teens and kids. And thanks, as ever, to our chums at Cornbury, we have two pairs of weekend adult camping tickets to give away, for free, in a competition. Oh yes. To be in with a chance of winning, just answer the following question:

Which of the following acts has never played at Cornbury?

A. Blondie B. Amy Winehouse C. XXtentacion.

Email answers, clearly marked Cornbury Competition, to editor@nightshiftmag.co.uk, or on a postcard to Cornbury Competition, Nightshift Magazine, PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU. Please include full name, address and daytime telephone number. Deadline for inclusion is the 20th June. The editor’s decision is to spend all weekend wishing he was half as cool as Terry Hall.

RITUAL UNION

TELEMAN
THE COMET IS COMING
IBIBIO SOUND MACHINE
PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS
YOUNG KNIVES

SELF
ESTEEM
TWIN PEAKS

FLAMINGODS
THE MURDER CAPTIAL
CHASTITY BELT

THE SOFT CAVALRY
HEAVY LUNGS
TRUDY & THE ROMANCE

WORKING MENS CLUB
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BESS ATWELL
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LITTLE BROTHER ELI

Eric Duvel Photography - www.ericduvelphotography.com



“AS CLICHÉD AS IT SOUNDS, *I think the most important thing for us is connecting with the people that are watching us live,” says Adam Stowe, Little Brother Eli’s guitarist, talking to Nightshift about his band’s change of musical direction over the course of their most recent releases.*

“Initially, our blues-y phase tickled our collective pickles with us watching our audience rocking out,” he continues. “When the door to that sound was pulled-to and we were writing and showcasing our new music, we found it newly exhilarating and rewarding when people just started throwing their best shapes. We became a little obsessed with the term ‘dark disco’ and I think that set the writing parameters for the continuity of our newer tracks.”

THE LAST TIME LITTLE Brother Eli appeared on the cover of *Nightshift* was back in June 2016 when they released their debut album, ‘Cold Tales’. Then the band were a blues and funk-soaked rock machine with a reputation as one of the slickest live acts in town. A series of singles released since the beginning of 2018 has seen them leave that rootsy edge behind and move into more electronic, almost disco, territory. While it hasn’t been a wholesale scrapping of the

sound we first loved them for – that funkiness remains, as does singer Alex Grew’s instantly recognisable voice – the introduction of snappier beats, electronics (in particular the use of Moog synths) and choppiier guitar lines, has tightened up the band’s sound and moved things on, while retaining its core aim: to make people dance.

AND DANCE THEY STILL DO. Little Brother Eli’s headline set at the O2 Academy at the end of last year was a packed-out party that showed the band doing what they do best. So much so that a recording of the gig is now set to be released as a live album this month. After the steady stream of singles over the past 12 months a live album feels like the natural thing to do for a band whose reputation has been so firmly established on stage, even if it wasn’t planned as such. “All of us, minus Josh [Rigal, the band’s bass player], were under the impression that we were going to record and film a few tracks, mostly for material to send to promoters,” explains Adam. “Josh, obviously wringing his hands in a Machiavellian manner, masterminded the whole scheme and had his plans for the outset. He knew that if he told us all, we’d get our undies in a twist and it might compromise the performance, so we

played one of our best shows to date and Josh pulled away the veil at a rehearsal and... here we are!”

LITTLE BROTHER ELI HAVE undergone a couple of line-up changes since we last featured them on the cover, notably the departure of original guitarist Tom Williams, whose slide style gave the band much of their old trademark blues-rock sound. The current line-up features singer Alex; bass player Josh and drummer Benji Page alongside Adam, who is chatting to *Nightshift* today. While the new line-up features all original members, those changes were key to their new sound. “We went from a five-piece, to a different five-piece and now we’re a four-piece,” says Adam; “I suppose not dissimilar to reassembling your Ikea furniture when you move. If you want to continue the metaphor, all current members were contained in the original packaging. “It’s been totally vital to the new sound. When Tom left, we’d just slipped into our comfiest slippers: we knew what the sound was, we knew what the act was and everything was ready for the release of ‘Cold Tales’. His announcement came out of the blue and at least one of us – me, actually – thought it was curtains for the band, as he was an integral part of ‘the sound’.

“Needless to say, we pulled our socks up and went on the search for another member, which in turn steered us away from one person’s artistic pleasures and displeasures and immersed us in another’s. Finally, with the newest, and I suppose the oldest, arrangement of the ensemble, we’ve found the freedom to throw all caution to the wind. I think we’re more open and experimental, musically, than we’ve ever been and it’s the first time that nothing has felt off limits.”

SUCH A CONSCIOUS SHIFT in sound for a band whose reputation and fanbase was built on a particular style – inspired by the likes of Jack White, Alabama Shakes and Black Keys – was obviously a risk, but it’s one that’s paid off, with singles like ‘Our Kind of Love’ and ‘Tooth’ the same band but different – still Little Brother Eli, still funky, but sharper and leaner. Their famously loyal fanbase certainly seem to have taken to it. Adam: “In terms of approaching the electronics, this was just another element, which was easy to flick the switch on. With our previous work, we wanted to compose our music as purists: everything must come from things that exist! Therefore, initially, it was great to start playing around with drum sounds from an SPD and – as we speak – we’re really going

down the rabbit hole with our latest songs. “Our fanbase has remained amazingly loyal, which is perhaps surprising as our newer stuff is a real departure from ‘Cold Tales’, which we toured extensively and was probably where most people became aware of us. As a music fan myself, I think you owe it to your followers to try and do something different at every point in your musical career; there are plenty of artists that release an album and I say ‘That’s it, *please* just release the same thing over and over again for the rest of time’ ... but the truth is, I end up bored of the acts that do that. No pleasing some people!” Little Brother Eli singer Alex Grew has an instantly recognisable voice, so it’s been evolution rather than complete revolution as far as the band and fans are concerned. Does Adam think that anchors the band’s sound to a degree?

“To some extent, I guess it does, but without wanting to appear too lofty, I think that’s important as a band. It’s a signature and that allows us congruency whilst stylistically modulating. We’re all very proud to have Alex as a vocalist and I don’t think it limits the direction of the band.” How do you feel when you listen back to ‘Cold Tales’ now? Which songs from that period have survived into the new set?

“I’m really proud of the album; it was a snapshot of what we were back then and there’s nothing on there that I’m ashamed about, although I do listen to it in secret. Maybe in the car. Beware Narcissus. Or Carsicknus – the lesser known Greek Deity. “‘Beautiful People’ has remained a pumper; people still like that at gigs. ‘Shake Me’ shakes them... and we’ve recently started having another pop at ‘Oceans’ because lyrically it meant a lot to us. Other than that, we pretty much just play our newest material.”

Most bands want to see their music evolving with each new release; where, then, does Adam think Little Brother Eli’s sound will go next? “One of the liberating things about getting older is that you care less and less what people think; as a result, we’ve become less concerned about what is ‘us’ or trying to make something to impress upon the music industry; if something feels good, then we persist, if it doesn’t, we throw it away: you can’t feed a fed horse, to use a vegetarian-friendly malapropism.”

Nightshift described ‘Our Kind of Love’ as the place where Aerosmith meets The Trammps; is that fair, and with increased use of Moog in the sound, can you see yourselves going

the full Moroder? “Ha ha! I’m not so sure that I hear those elements in the track, but I suppose in its essence that might be what we’re trying to achieve. Interestingly, we’ve referred to Daft Punk regularly in our newer songs and so by extension, we’ve hopefully assimilated some Moroder. The Moog is a recent addition and – I think – it came after our latest studio releases. It’s been another method to break out of ruts. A few years ago we sniggered at a stage manager who asked ‘how many synths in the band?’ ... If only we knew we were speaking to a prophet... little synth-gag there. Recently, we’ve written remotely, which by its nature has added more computer elements, virtual

“I don’t think an indie band can support themselves just by touring. We’ve done our fair share of five hours driving to the Dog and Duck to play to one man and his dachshund.”

instruments etc, so it looks like we have gone Moroder!”

AS SEEMS TO BE PAR FOR the course for unsigned acts these days, Little Brother Eli launched a crowdfunder to pay for the new album and it raised double its target within days. Does Adam think the band have a particularly loyal bunch of fans?

“It was astonishing! Our fans are incredible; we’ve got many who rarely miss any gigs and travel far and wide to support us. The level of support really did move us, though. Josh put so much work into the crowdfund and I think we expected an uphill skate, but the amount was raised so quickly. We’re over the moon and the additional in the coffers will give us a head start in recording and releasing our new tracks, which we’re really fired-up about! Thank you, you massive legends.”

Crowdfunding seems to be the way forward for a lot of unsigned acts now; with the near extinction of the mainstream music industry as far as actual bands goes, do you think it’s a sustainable model or is there a risk of fatigue among fans? “We all try to remain quite positive about the collapse of the industry and view it rather as changing. I think whatever period you’re writing music in, you’re going to encounter difficulties in one way or another and us blaming another element doesn’t help our cause. “With the positive response we’ve received, I’d imagine we’ll do it again at some point, but I

think you’re right and constant fundraising would be exhausting for all parties. I’d like to explore some pre-orders, which fund the next releases. We’ve got some exciting ideas, Watch this space.”

ANOTHER SIDE OF financing a band in the modern era is the issue of touring – the lifeblood of bands at a certain level in an age of free streaming. Around the time of ‘Cold Tales’ Little Brother Eli were playing 100 gigs a year; is that something they’ve been able to keep up and is touring a way of financially sustaining the band? “No. Touring to that degree taught us enormously important lessons, and I’d extol the virtues to any young band. However, when all of

your energy and time is devoted to gigging, it’s nearly impossible to find the headspace to write new music and we’re loving doing that at the moment! We’ve picked up fans at every stop along the way and they’ve remained very supportive, so we try and play at new places and keep our old fans informed. “Financially, I don’t think an indie band can support themselves just by touring. We’ve done our fair share of five hours driving to the Dog and Duck to play to one man and his dachshund and, understandably, a venue can’t remunerate yourselves and make a profit. It’s the Catch 22 of promoters wanting bands to bring fans and bands wanting promoters to do it. I suppose local people have to support their nearest music venue, to allow promoters to put on great music and then for bands to make money. We’ve all invested a lot to make the band work.”

IF THEIR NON-STOP gigging days are behind them, live is still where Little Brother Eli most excel. They’re an infectious, all-energy spectacle on stage, and with summer upon us, they’re the perfect fit for festivals, so it’s no surprise to see them featuring at so many of the local outdoor events over the next couple of months, starting with a headline set at Glofest in Florence Park this month. “Oh my, yes! We’re looking forward to this. We’re actually working our little socks off to put a load of new pumpers in the set, so if you haven’t seen us in a while, make sure you check us out! There’ll

definitely be links between the live album and our performance, so people can get a sneak preview.” You’re also playing Cornbury in July and Big Feastival in August. “Yes. This is fantastic and we’re being supported by the incredible platform, which is BBC Introducing. We’re prioritising writing at the moment, but we are doing a select few performances and may add a few more.” Are Little Brother Eli a particularly natural fit for festivals? “I’d like to think so! We always do our best to put on an exhilarating and energetic live show and that’s what festivals are all about! We love recording music, but it’s most exciting when you can bring it to the people and a festival is the dream platform – we don’t take things too seriously and just want to get people moving.”

WITH THE LIVE ALBUM also out this summer, the perfect introduction to the band for those who’ve yet to hear them ahead of those festival appearances, we wonder if there will there be another studio album from the band or if the scenery has changed too much for unsigned bands and continuing to release a series of singles is the way forward. “Lots of people are mourning the death of the album, but as an artist it’s quite liberating. You’re not bound by your sound and everything’s a bit more transient; people don’t go ‘ah, that’s them catalogued – they’re the band that do xyz,’ you can have a pop at something and if it doesn’t work – whatever ‘work’ means – you just go back to the drawing board and try something new. I think the plan is, for the time being, to release new singles on a regular basis. Then, maybe when we have the right tracks, it’d be fun for us to release it on an old-school platform, like vinyl, or something. That said, I think that if we stumble upon a sound that we can’t navigate in a few tracks, we’d do an album again.” And we can’t let Adam go without asking, given the band’s musical and sartorial changes over the past couple of years: where are the waistcoats, once synonymous with their live shows and photoshoots living now? And, given their move towards a disco sound can we expect to see them sporting silver flares any time soon? “Waistcoats? I don’t know what you’re talking about. We’ve buried them and destroyed any evidence of their existence. It’s glittery lizard suits and moustaches from here on in.”

Little Brother Eli play Glofest on Saturday 8th June. Follow them at facebook.com/LittleBrotherEli

RELEASED

EARINADE

‘Hard Shapes’

(Self released)
‘How Evil was Evel Knievel?’ made the *Nightshift* Top 25 at the end of 2017 and signalled not only the presence of a fine band but also some arch experts when it comes to choosing song and album titles: ‘Musical and Personal Differences’ was the title of Earinade’s first long player and succeeded in being in all probability factually accurate and ironic at the same time.

‘Hard Shapes’ carries on the momentum. Made up of various ex-members of Oxford’s musical past – Hot Hooves, the Candyskins and Les Chochards along them – it’s a musical pot pourri spanning many of the more pleasing styles of the past forty years – Cardiacs, ‘Trompe Le Monde’ era Pixies, Moonlandingz and a touch of Rentaghost all thrown into the mix amid a lot of other things and all punctuated by the vital addition of tunes – and very good ones at that.

Among many highlights, it’s ‘Sleepy Serpentine’ that is the most arresting, providing a real sense of music hall drama, a piano-led ditty that evokes pearly kings and queens and dark alleyways cobwebbing the East End of London, gorgeous backing vocals adding a real ghostliness. Third up, this follows on from the



obligatory corker to start the LP – ‘Naturally Realistic’, evolving into a fair old wig out. The middle section edges more into, if not Britpop, but early 90s territory – Cardiacs again but also Mansun without the annoying bits. ‘Sweet Loveless’ starts with a sub-Phil Daniels/Jason Williamson bit of spoken word and then goes all Kinks. All of this is accompanied by some super cover artwork – an image that would appear to depict the interior of an especially dystopian fancy dress shop, a nightmarishly distressed Humpty Dumpty bawling at the prospect of having to wear an Easter bonnet.

Rob Langham



SOLO COLLECTIVE

‘Part Two’

(Nonostar)
To dyed-in-the-wool pub venue noise fans, the strange, shifting hinterland between classical and ambient/experimental music can be a daunting place. We could name you several dozen metal sub-genres but would struggle to tell Bach from Beethoven, so reviewing this second collaborative album between local piano and electronics maestro Seb Reynolds, German cellist Anne Muller and violinist/producer Alex Stolze, fills us with trepidation. A soothing sense of serenity and comfort seems to be the actual purpose of the music here, initially at least, tinged with a hefty hint of discord as things progress. The trio’s name

comes from the fact they were individually fed up of composing and performing alone and craved musical company, as well as the fact they mix and match their talents, so each can still play solo, or as a duo, as well as the full trio, which keeps the chemistry fresh, Reynolds’ plangent piano mostly taking centre stage, the strings augmenting the mood when required. ‘By the Tower at Nightfall’ finds the trio most in harmony, the sound at its lushest and most harmonious. That edge of something more discomforting creeps in on ‘For Matthew’, a bluntness to the piano jarring the listener from any reverie, while album centrepiece and highlight ‘Ripeness is All’ is an about turn into the shadows, abrasive electronics and sharp violin stabs shifting above and around a disembodied voice reading from *Catch 22* for some highly effective horror flick soundtracking, not a million miles from some of Cosey Fanni Tutti’s glowering compositions. The oblique ‘Mildenhall’ feels like a suitable follow-up to this, but closer ‘Holy Island’ a collective take on an earlier Reynolds composition returns us to calmer waters, closer in feel to Sigur Ros’ most classical-inclined pieces.

It’s a well crafted journey from light through darkness and back to light, though we’ll always prefer the atmospheric dread and disorientation of the darker pieces, and while we remain none the wiser about the ins and outs of classical music, Solo Collective provide us with more than enough bite to match their Bach.

Dale Kattack

Sponsored by



TREV WILLIAMS

‘Greedy Pigs’

(Self released)
Having taken almost a decade to follow-up his debut album, Trev Williams produces the sequel to ‘The Start Line’ just two years on.

As with that record he’s joined by a robust cast of guest musicians who add colour and depth to his songs, but this feels more like a solo album, without Hannah Rhodes and Bethany Weimers to add extra vocals. Instead Trev takes the lead throughout, revealing both his strengths and weaknesses.

His chief strengths are emotional honesty and an ability to sound both plaintive and cynical simultaneously. The latter is most apparent on the album’s title track, a piano ballad backed by inventive strings that complement its solemn nature. His piano playing too can be powerful in an understated manner, as on ‘Crying in Silence’, where his sparse arrangements recall the great Annie Hogan.

Not that this is a completely downbeat album. Opener ‘Come Home’ is positively jovial, with its jaunty piano and fluttering flute, eventually dissipating via an unexpected trombone coda.

Where Trev falters is on more overwrought numbers like ‘Do You Miss Me, which is heartfelt but clumsy, Trev sounding adenoidal as he pushes his voice. Similarly, ‘Dragon’ sounds like he’s trying too hard, though here the strings rescue the song. Album closer ‘The Power’ feels like it should be a bullish send-off but feels uncertain rather than determined, for all its well intentioned lyrics ‘The Only One’ serves as a reminder that Trev is at his best when he doesn’t try too hard, dropping things down a notch or two tonally and all the more powerful for it.

Such a heart-on-sleeve style always leaves a singer and songwriter vulnerable to occasional clumsiness, but perhaps Trev’s missteps are also his hidden strength: rather than smoothness and bland consistency, he’s prepared to stumble, all the better to find his feet. And while ‘Greedy Pigs’ lacks some of ‘The Start Lines’ variety and impact, it’s an album that should allow Trev to stand proud.

Dale Kattack



SHAVEN PRIMATES

‘Evolution’

(Self released)
Even while rock music lingers on the sidelines hoping to make a comeback, prog remains its uncool cousin whose very existence is denied even by those who privately retain an affection for it. So a warm – and doubtless suitably ostentatious – welcome to Shaven Primates, a band for whom elaborate song structures, virtuoso flights of fancy and technical prowess are worn proudly – and loudly.

KNOBBLEHEAD

‘Aeroplane Membrane’

(All Will Be Well)
Alongside Jeramesa, Gravid and Daydreamer? Knobblehead are carving out a new psychedelic sub-scene in Oxford; they’re among the local acts playing the inaugural Oddball Festival this month and cosmic vibes are very much their bag, man.

We caught the band live last month and counted nine members on (or near) the stage but this debut single boasts just five, of whom multi-instrumentalist Row Janjuah seems to be the mainstay. ‘Aeroplane Membrane’ has its heart in the mid-60s and its head in a fluffy lysergic cloud of swirling psych tropes, Eastern vibes and the exotically monikered Trinity De Simone’s limpid vocals. Here’s where psychedelia emerged from the wyrdner reaches of folk music as well as pop’s fascination with acid and Indian spiritualism and ragas, and we even get a sample of Maharishi Maheshi Yogi’s introduction to transcendental meditation on tripped-out b-side ‘Don’t Get Lost’. Tambourines are shaken lustily, guitars spangle and head off on heavily treated solos, electronics swirl, there’s something that sounds like a sitar in there, and Trinity maintains a wide-eyed but coolly imperious presence at the heart of it all, reminding us a little of Espers’ Meg Baird. If there’s a feeling that here’s a new band trying to squeeze everything they know about psychedelia into five minutes, it’s overridden by the simple, spaced out charm of the record.

For a city that inspired *Alice in Wonderland* and ‘Itchycoo Park’, Oxford has been sadly lacking on the psych front in recent years and we welcome these new wave of merry pranksters in town.

Dale Kattack

The band’s debut EP even comes with a concept: the story behind singer Mark Elphinstone’s recovery from meningitis, which left with him with no memory and needing to relearn pretty much everything. Not that he appears to be lacking in any of necessary skills here, providing a variously harsh, rasping, desperate or wailing vocal centrepiece to the often elongated musical journeys that retain a caustic, imperious disdain for simplicity or lo-fi values.

‘Child of Dirt’ in particular traverses mood swings and stylistic detours to emerge like some powerhouse approximation of Tool cranking out the angriest passages from Pink Floyd’s ‘The Wall’. Elsewhere soaring keys hint at Keith Emerson, spiced-up guitar solos veer into Robert Fripp’s airspace and Elphinstone’s epic, questing vocals bring a bit of The Who’s ‘Tommy’ to the party. EP closer ‘Outside’ initially feels like an aberration compared to the rest of the songs here, like a wild pier-end blues revue where Muddy Waters and Tom Waits are shouting and fighting in almost comical fashion over the last riff in the jar, but it has a mania about it and an almost Doors-like vibe in its dark-side-of-the-drunken-blues and overall, for all their technique and technology, Shaven Primates come armed with more than enough substance and power to earn your love as well as your respect.

Ian Chesterton

MASTER OF NONE

‘You Will Get What You

Deserve’

(All Will Be Well)
After a patchy but promising full-length debut album in his Master of None guise, Ian Mitchell hit his stride with his ‘Great White Shark’ EP at the end of 2018 and continues to gain strength with this new three-song release.

While mental health issues are never a cause for celebration, so much great music has been fuelled by them and Ian has regularly used his experiences to bring emotional depth to his songs, including with Little Red, his other band, currently on hiatus.

With Master of None Ian continues to dig deeper musically, the dark-folk of Little Red replaced with a harder, harsher form of goth. ‘Hunt You Down’ here, the high point of an impressive EP, harks back to the machine goth pulse of bands like James Ray & the Performance and Cassandra Complex, all churning, snarled-up guitars and sequencer pulses to back up his casually menacing “I’m going to hunt you down” refrain. ‘Get What You Deserve’ is more sprawling, less confined by the walls that you feel are closing in on Ian, with an almost shoegaze vibe about it, albeit if those shoes were steel-bladed ice skates. Vocally he has an almost languorous croon on him that sits in the middle of the often turbulent music, contemplating his own personal darkness, where “blood runs black”. Still pretty much a solo project as far as the studio goes, there’s still a rough, simplistic edge to the songs, and Ian’s full band adds extra bite live, but this is impressive stuff from a man channelling personal demons and black dogs into creativity, and on that score it’s a triumph.

Sue Foreman

DAISY

‘Access / Agency’

(Snuggle Dice)
Sweetness and a light and sharp edges from Daisy on this new single, the deceptively soft centred opening twinkle and lullaby vocals rapidly rising to more giddy heights, a still tender-hearted blossom of anthemic pop-punk anchored by Angus Mackay’s dinky guitar spangle. Even when Luke Allmond sings “I am freaking the fuck out” he sounds more like he needs a good cuddle rather than he’s about to trash the room as Daisy find that neat balance between losing control and keeping their feelings close to their chest.

Dale Kattack

CIPHERS

‘Future Tribes’

(Self released)
You can’t accuse Ciphers of lacking of vision. The three tracks that comprise ‘Future Tribes’ add up to over sixteen minutes’ worth of music, so we’re clearly not in the realms of the three-minute pop song. These are exceptionally well-produced, carefully-crafted miniature epics, extending traditional songwriting templates and structures into new and interesting directions.

It may be my lack of focus, or simple-minded will for straightforwardness, that makes me find these songs rather, well, dull. What these lengthy track times add is luxurious space, creating expanses for ponderous meditations on life. This, though, is countered by a feeling of aimlessness, of wandering around a song’s core, edging away from punchiness and quick-hit effectiveness.

The EP sounds expansive; ‘Feeder’ circles around light, repeating melodies; ‘Twiggy’ has at its core a pleasingly strident bass riff, while ‘Fox’ is delicate, heartfelt and honest sounding. There are no issues with the sounds being created here, although the highly-strung vocal style isn’t entirely for me. It all just feels as if a little brevity or editing would be hugely positive: at present, we’re awkwardly caught between strong, up-front alternative rock, and exploratory, indulgent post-rock. Upping the pace, shortening the length, increasing the contrast, or a combination of all three, could turn these into three fierce, in-your-face songs. I realise that this may not be what Ciphers aim for. They have vision, but for me it feels a little blurred.

Simon Minter



G1G GUIDE

SATURDAY 1st
DANTEVILLES + 31HOURS + CAVEGIRL: The Wheatsheaf – Manchester’s rising indie rockers Dantevilles make their Oxford debut alongside local atmospheric indie-synth-pop crew 31Hours.

SPARKY’S SPONTANEOUS SHOWCASE AND SPOTLIGHT JAM: The Port Mahon – And it’s a very welcome back to live music action for the Port Mahon, open again after a refurb and once again hosting gigs and open mics in its upstairs venue, tonight with Sparky’s monthly bands and open jam session.
MEANS OF PRODUCTION + OCTAVIA FREUD: Cirkus – Double dose of electro-pop at tonight’s It’s All About the Music show with gloomy, brutalist post-punk/electro duo Means of

JUNE

Production taking inspiration from Chromatics, OMD and Cabaret Voltaire among others.
MUSICAL MEDICINE with FOUK: The Bullingdon – The final Musical Medicine til after the summer brings Dutch duo Fouk – Daniel Lesman and Junction – to the funk, disco and disco-house party, the pair having released EPs on Detroit Swindle, Room With a View and Razor’n’Tape as well as their own Outplay label.

SUNDAY 2nd
BEARD OF DESTINY + FRANKLIN’S TOWER + FIREGAZER + THE MARK BOSLEY BAND: Donnington Community Centre (6pm) – Free night of unplugged live music, with bluesman Beard of Destiny; Grateful Dead tribute Franklin’s Tower; atmospheric folkies Firegazer and dark-hearted pop man Mark Bosley.
MARK ATHERTON & FRIENDS + SCREAMIN’ IRENE + TRACY ISLAND + THE JESTERS: The Wheatsheaf (3.30-7pm) – Klub Kakofanney host an afternoon of free live music in the Sheaf’s downstairs bar.
THE DEADBEAT APOSTLES + MARCUS CORBETT + NITIN GAIKWAD: Port Mahon – Country soul and roots rocking from the Deadbeats at the newly reopened Port as part of tonight’s Pindrop show.
OPEN MIC SESSION: Harcourt Arms – Weekly open session.

MONDAY 3rd
CHRIS & KELLIE WHILE: Nettlebed Folk Club – St Agnes Fountain singer Chris While teams up with daughter Kellie for a night of traditional folk tunes.
OPEN MIC: The Castle – Weekly open session.

TUESDAY 4th
FAIRPORT CONVENTION: Chipping Norton Theatre – The Godfathers of English folk-rock build up to this year’s Cropredy Festival with another show in the Shire.

WEDNESDAY 5th
FIREFLY BURNING + IYATRA QUARTET: Tap Social, Botley – Atmospheric folk music, gamelan and acoustic pop inspired by Sufjan Stevens, Joni Mitchell and Steve Reich from north London’s string-led quartet at tonight’s Tandem launch show, hosted by Tandem, OCM and Upcycled Sounds. They’re joined by world-spanning folk collective Iyatra Quartet, mixing up influences from Indian raga and Arabic folk to Bolivian charango and Medieval plainsong.
TOOLOLOGY + CENTRE LINE UK: The Wheatsheaf – Tool tribute band.

THURSDAY 6th
IDEAL MARRIAGE + TREV WILLIAMS: Truck Store (6pm) – A double dose of local talent launching new releases, with former-Lowws and The Sea The Sea indie crew Ideal Marriage, plus emotive singer/songwriter Trev Williams.
SISTERS OF FUNK: The Bullingdon – Classic funk and soul from Oxford’s expansive all-female funk ensemble.
SUMMER CULTURE Pt.2: The Bullingdon Cocktail Bar – Free night of drum&bass and dub from Subculture in the Bully’s front bar.
CATWEAZLE: East Oxford Community Centre – Oxford’s longest running open session continues to showcase local singers, musicians, poets, storytellers, performance artists and more every week.
SPARKY’S NEW MOON: The Half Moon – Sparky hosts his open mic night on the first and third Thursday of the month.

FRIDAY 7th
CANDY SAYS: The Bullingdon – Soulfully atmospheric electro-pop from the swoonsome Candy Says, following the release of latest single ‘Gravity’, the trio having gone Youtube ballistic earlier this year with their cover of Kate Bush’s ‘Running Up That Hill’, from the film *Close*, as well as their own song ‘Beautiful Feeling’, a contender for song of the year.
KLUB KAKOFANNEY with RADICAL DANCE FACTION + THE MIGHTY REDOX + PUPPET MECHANIC: The Wheatsheaf – Monthly live music club night Klub Kak welcomes free festival veterans RDF back to town, the political punk/dub/ska outfit still helmed by founder and frontman Chris Bowsher over 30 years after they formed (having split and reformed in the interim). KK hosts The Mighty Redox join them onstage for what will be a proper old hoedown. Atmospheric indie crew Puppet Mechanic bring a more stately Radiohead/Tindersticks vibe to the party.
THE ORIGINAL RABBIT FOOT SPASM BAND + MOOGIEMAN: The Jericho Tavern – Return of the hot jazz and jump blues party-starters as they being recording their new album, the band evoking the spirit of 1920s and 30s speakeasies, while singing about Oxfordshire folklore and more. Electro-pop and post-punk maverick spirit Moogiemán supports.
FLUORESCENT ADOLESCENT: The Bullingdon – Indie rock club night.
KING PLEASURE & THE BISCUIT BOYS: The Cornerstone, Didcot – The veteran kings of swing return to the Shire.
A FOREIGNER’S JOURNEY: Fat Lil’s, Witney – A two hour tribute to Foreigner and Journey. Two hours. Of Foreigner and Journey. Foreigner. And Journey. For two hours. Anyone got Amnesty International’s number?

SATURDAY 8th
ODDBALL FESTIVAL: Isis Farmhouse (midday-2am) – The Sun Ra Arkestra make their Oxford debut at the inaugural psych festival – *see*

main preview
ALL TAMARA’S PARTIES FESTIVAL: The Jericho Tavern (1-11pm) – ATP host a full day of live music, and true to the club’s ethos with the emphasis on female performers. London’s Dream Nails headline, the quartet’s mix of punk, riot grrl and power pop inspired by Bikini Kill, X-Ray Spex and Sleater Kinney. They’re joined by Tamara’s own band Death of the Maiden, whose gorgeous, emotionally racked debut, ‘The Girl With the Secret Fire’, is destined to be one of *Nightshift*’s albums of the year; raucous pop-punkers Self Help, joining the dots between Slaves and Supergrass; exuberant and cynical sunshine posters Rainbow Reservoir; Bristol’s folk-punk protest trio Drunken Butterfly; soulful acoustic singer Jen Bercova and more.
HONEYBLOOD: O2 Academy – Glasgow’s supercharged indie fuzzsters return – *see main preview*
REGGAETON: The Bullingdon – Club night playing the Puerto Rican melange of hip hop and Latin American and Caribbean dance.
EARINADE + FAT ORANGE WOLF + SCIENCE FICTION TWINS: The Wheatsheaf – Album launch show for the local post-punk supergroup – featuring former members of ATL?,

Saturday 8th

ODDBALL: Isis Farmhouse

An unusual and very welcome new addition to the local boutique festival scene, with the Oxford Psychedelic Society setting up a day of spaced-out sounds and art on the banks of the Thames. Not only that, they’ve somehow managed to bring the legendary **SUN RA ARKESTRA** to town for what we’re pretty sure is the first time. Bandleader, composer and keyboard player Sun Ra himself might have flown home to Saturn back in 1993 but his cosmic spirit lives on in the Arkestra, currently led by saxophonist Marshall Allen, bringing their free-ranging psychedelic jazz to the people of the earth. They’re a band who really deserve the tag ‘legendary’. They’ll be joined across the day by a cast of live acts, including Brighton’s inventive hip hop DJ **JFB** and a DJ set from electro-swing star **DUTTY MOONSHINE**. A strong local live contingent features industrial hip hop, electro, sci-fi soundscaping star and recent *Nightshift* cover star **TIGER MENDOZA**; atmospheric psychedelic griefcore crew **FLIGHTS OF HELIOS**; Witney-based griot and kora maestro **JALI FILY CISSOKHO**; dark-hearted heavy-duty psych-rockers **JERAMESA**; midnight-hued surf-noir rockers **ART THEEFE** and expansive folk-tinged psych outfit **KNOBBLEHEAD**. A whole host more besides, plus, beyond the music, a day of theatre, circus skills, art installations, poetry slams, discussion panels and healing, all hopefully adding up to some kind of cosmic experience. Man.



The Candyskins, Medal and The Anyways, together making a playfully caustic noise that joins dots between Pixies, Cardiacs and Fat White Family among others.
TRASHYNESS: The Port Mahon – With Nelly B Page.
JERICHO STREET FAIR: Various venues, Jericho – Live music across the day at the annual community celebration, including sets from The Mighty Redox and The Pete Fryer Band.
RICHARD DURRANT: St Nicholas’ Church, Baulking – An exploration of eleven centuries of British music from the virtuoso acoustic guitarist, mixing classical, baroque and folk traditions.

SUNDAY 9th
OPEN MIC SESSION: Harcourt Arms
ABOUT LIFE: The Bullingdon Cocktail Bar – Free funk, Latin, techno and Afrobeat night.
THE PETE FRYER BAND: The Tree, Iffley (4-6.30pm) – Rock and blues covers from the veteran local singer and guitarist and band.

MONDAY 10th
FRENCH FOLK SESSION: The Port Mahon – Gallic folk sounds at the monthly session.
THE CHURCHFITTERS: Nettlebed Folk Club – Energetic folk fusion from the Anglo-Irish-French band, mixing up original songs with updated takes on traditional British folk tunes.
OPEN MIC: The Castle

TUESDAY 11th
JEREMY JOHNSON: The Bullingdon Cocktail Bar – Free show in the Bully’s front bar for the Kent-born singer-songwriter.
WEDNESDAY 12th
COMFORT + FATAMORGANA + ACACIA SPINES: The Library – Great night of electronic music at tonight’s Smash Disco show, with Glaswegian brother/sister duo Comfort mixing live drums, industrial synths and militant punk vocals into the future-primitive sound. Support from Catalanian synth-popsters Fatamorgana, mixing up early Depeche Mode synth bubbles with sleek, emotionally detached Ladytron/Client-style vocals, and choral drone and minimal-wave pop from Acacia Spines.

THURSDAY 13th
ESYA: Truck Store (6pm) – Brooding industrial pop from Savages bassist Ayse Hassan performing under her new Esysa guise.
BE GOOD + PREMIUM LEISURE: The Bullingdon – Airy, atmospheric indie-soul from local stars Be Good, plus funky psychedelic slacker pop in the vein of Mac Demarco and Tame Impala from Premium Leisure in support.
SHERYL BAILEY: The Wheatsheaf – Spin Jazz Club with American guitarist Sheryl Bailey.
REVEREND BLACK’S ACOUSTIC CABARET: The Half Moon – Acoustic blues, country, folk and classic rock with Mark Atherton & Friends, The Factory Lights and Richard Brotherton.
CATWEAZLE: East Oxford Community Centre

FRIDAY 14th
PINOY ROCK LEGENDS: The Bullingdon – An evening of Filipino rock with Gary Perez and Sons of Abrakadabra.
TERRAFORMS: The Bullingdon – Drum&bass



Thursday 20th – Sunday 23rd

NOCTURNE LIVE: Blenheim Palace

After last year’s sold-out season, Nocturne Live returns with more open air shows in the grandiose surroundings of Blenheim Palace. Bit different to our usual gigging environs but we all need a bit of the high life sometimes. Undoubted highlight of this year’s programme comes on the Sunday with an already sold-out Oxford live debut for **KYLIE MINOGUE**, whose got more pop hits under her belt than *Nightshift* has drunk bottles of Prosecco, and that’s a lot of hits. From ‘Can’t Get You Out of My Head’ and ‘Better the Devil You Know’ to ‘Spinning Around’ and ‘Slow’, it’ll be a one-night hit factory as well as a pop spectacular. On the Thursday it’s Empress of Soul **GLADYS KNIGHT**’s job to open the season, singing hits from across her extensive solo and Pips career, including classic soul covers like ‘Heard It Through the Grapevine’. She’ll be teaming up with **SISTER SLEDGE**, so we’ll get ‘He’s the Greatest Dancer’ and ‘We Are Family’ along the way too. Friday sees former Fugees hip hop megastar **LAUREN HILL** top the bill, her 1998 multi-platinum selling solo debut ‘The Miseducation of...’ ensuring her enduring popularity even as her recording and touring become sporadic and not always successful. She’s joined by Birmingham’s own soul queen **LAURA MVULA**.
TEARS FOR FEARS complete the weekend line-up, the 80s popmeisters superb 1983 debut ‘The Hurting’ spawning some of the finest hits of the time – ‘Pale Shelter’, ‘Mad World’ and ‘Change’ before they got even bigger with the likes of ‘Everybody Wants to Rule the World’. An impressive Saturday bill sees them joined by more contemporary synth-led indie stars **WHITE LIES** as well as fellow 80s pop gems **SCRITTI POLITTI**. Classy stuff from start to finish. No wonder they need such a posh venue to host it.

at the longstanding club night with Ed Rush.
WHO KILLED NANCY JOHNSON? + JULIET & THE RAGING ROMEOS + ORDER#227 + LAIMA BITE: The Wheatsheaf – Punk and hardcore night with Reading’s Who Killed Nancy Johnson mixing the old school righteousness of Dead Kennedys with epic rock. Reading neighbours Juliet & The Raging Romeos bring a spiky and playful approach to punk in the mould of The Modettes, The Slits or Kleenex, while local hardcore monsters Order#227 keep it brutal and Laima opens proceedings in a more gothic pop style.
SOLO COLLECTIVE: St Michael at the Northgate – Experimental classical and electronic music from keyboard player Seb Reynolds





Thursday 20th

BAND OF HORSES: O2 Academy

It’s almost a decade since Band of Horses first – and last – came to Oxford. We were excited then (their rare forays to the UK were always sold out in a matter of minutes) and we’re excited now. Much has changed in Band of Horses Land over the years, not least the line-up, with Ben Bridwell leaking bandmates at an alarming rate since he formed the band in Seattle back in 2004, with him as the sole constant. Musically too they’ve explored new lands within their more mainstream albums, but lately returned to what they do best: a wistful yet euphoric brand of Americana centred around Bridwell’s airy, keening voice and his sense of romantic longing, wonderment and homecoming. While, like so many American touring bands, Band of Horses are prone to rock out a fair bit live compared to their records, with the band finding a meeting point between the dream-like splendour of Flaming Lips and Eels on one hand and the stadium-pleasing grandeur of Springsteen, Crazy Horse and The Allman Brothers on the other. But it’s often in the quieter moments their magic shines through, with the likes of ‘Is There a Ghost’ and ‘No-one’s Gonna Love You’ as perfect and hymnal as American roots rock gets. The Jason Lytle-produced ‘Why Are You Okay’ brought Bridwell and co. back to that classic old sound, where the intimate meets the anthemic, and while there’s no news on an imminent follow-up, this is going to be a very welcome, if overdue, return to town.

alongside cellist Anne Muller and violinist/producer Alex Stolze, together and separately exploring shades of instrumental music, from dulcet pianism to harsh, industrial electronic soundscaping.

WITNEY MUSIC FESTIVAL: The Leys, Witney (6-11pm) – Prodigy tribute band Jilted generation, T-Rex tribute Too Rex and talking Heads tribute Heads Up play the first night of Witney’s annual free music extravaganza, with live music around the town for the first half of the month – *see news feature*

MOTHER: The Port Mahon – First of a two-night celebration of *Oxfordshire Music Scene* mag’s 40th issue, featuring a pair of headline sets from stadium-sized grunge stars Mother, who’ve just released new single ‘School Days’, the band playing a different set each night.

BYE BYE BABY: The Cornerstone, Didcot – Tribute to Frankie Valli & the Four Seasons.

SATURDAY 15th

WITNEY MUSIC FESTIVAL: The Leys, Witney (midday-11pm) – 90s electro-rock

hitmakers Republica top the bill at the free all-day culmination of the town’s annual music fest. They’re joined by N-Trance, The Dutty Moonshine Big Band and a host of local bands and music projects – *see news feature*

SIMPLE with COURTESY: The Bullingdon – The long-running house and techno club night hosts Danish DJ Najaaraq Vestbirk, with her unique Scandi-centric sets, in particular championing the club sounds of her native Copenhagen. Simple residents Em Williams and Tim Gore also man the decks.

MOTHER: The Port Mahon

GLASSHOUSE STUDIOS SUMMER FETE: Glasshouse Studios, Cumnor (Midday-7pm) – The local studio hosts its annual family day, with live music from Max Blansjaar; Emma Hunter; Juniper Nights; The Dollymops and special guests, plus bbq, and Oxfordshire’s largest crisp buffet.

BOTT & BURN FESTIVAL: Isis Farmhouse (2pm-midnight) – Ten hours of disco, house, techno, garage, jungle and drum&bass across two stages with sets from Ben Holt & Diamond; Cave Sounds; Deep Cover; Made to Move; Musical Medicine; Shireboy Recordings; Subculture; XODOS and more.

STEVE KNIGHTLEY: Tiddy Hall, Ascott-under-Wychwood – Intimate show at the Wychwood Folk Club for Show of Hands frontman Knightley, out on a one-man tour presenting his ‘Roadworks’ show, which builds on the success of his sell-out 2018 solo tour ‘Songs and Stories’.

RORKE’S DRIFT: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Rock and metal covers.

SUNDAY 16th

PERSONAL BEST + GARDEN CENTRE + OH PEAS + DREAM PHONE: The Library – Classic indie courtesy of Divine Schism with Southsea’s spirited power-pop crew Personal Best touring their second album, the band, led by singer Katie Gatts, channelling the 90s indie pop of Lush, Posies and Sleeper. Weird and wired creep-pop from Max Levy’s Garden Centre in support, plus 80s-styled shambling indie in the vein of Talulah Gosh etc from Cardiff’s Oh Peas.

OPEN MIC SESSION: Harcourt Arms

SUNDAY SOCIAL: The Wheatsheaf (3.30pm) – Unplugged live music in the downstairs bar hosted by It’s All About the Music.

THE MIGHTY REDOX: The Tree, Iffley (4-6.30pm) – Goodtime blues, funk, rock, ska, psychedelic folk and more from the local stalwarts.

MONDAY 17th

SCANDINANVIAN FOLK SESSIONS: The Port Mahon – Traditional songs from the north of the wall.

JON BODEN: Nettlebed Folk Club – Post-Bellowhead, Jon Boden continues his journey to becoming the greatest living British folk musician, while having to build a succession of new mantelpieces to keep all his awards on. Virtuoso, maestro, genius – probably all labels you could stick on him, his skill with the fiddle, as well as myriad other instruments, put him in the top echelon of folk music people.

OPEN MIC: The Castle

OPEN MIC SESSION: Rose Hill Social Club – New monthly open night hosted by Trev Williams and Self Help’s Lizzie Couves.

TUESDAY 18th

WEDNESDAY 19th

JESS MALIN: The Bullingdon – Grimy, downbeat tales from New York from Jesse Malin, former glam-punk with D Generation; Ryan Adams collaborator, and mate of Bruce Springsteen, back in the UK having previously supported Chuck Prophet and set to release a new album, his first since 2015’s ‘Outsiders’.

CINDER WELL + GWENIFER RAYMOND + THE AUGUST LIST: The Jericho Tavern – Superb triple bill of atmospheric folk-inspired sounds at tonight’s Divine Schism show with Amelia Baker’s Cinder Well drawing on American and Irish traditions to create haunting songs of loss, longing and memory, her mournful vocal style accompanied by sparse, plucked acoustic guitar and shruti box. Tonight also sees a return to town for Gwenifer Raymond after her show in January, the Welsh-born, Brighton-resident guitarist drawing on the inspiration of John Fahey, Mississippi John Hurt and Skip James for a virtuoso, and highly authentic fusion of American primitive, Delta blues, Appalachian folk and Indian raga. Local gothic drone-folk duo The August List continue to be the magical

Thursday 20th

THE RYAN BINGHAM BAND: The Bullingdon

A-Grade Americana from Empty Room promotions again tonight with a visit to town for itinerant troubadour Ryan Bingham, whose soul-searching, wrong-side-of-the-tracks country blues comes informed by Woody Guthrie’s protest folk songs, Mexican folk, southern hip hop, hard rock and Cajun traditions, the result of a turbulent upbringing that meant he never lived in the same place for more than two years until, as an adult, he rocked up in California. Its raw, honest nature has earned him an Oscar and a Grammy (for ‘The Weary Kind’, his theme song to the film *Crazy Heart*) and he was voted Artist of the Year at the 2010 Americana Music Association Awards, although that high point of his career came at the same time as he lost his mother to alcoholism and his father to suicide, and the subsequent mental health problems have further fuelled the introspective nature of his songs. He’s over in the UK to tour third album ‘American Love Song’, his tribute to the women who have inspired him – from his mother, to singers like Janis Joplin and Aretha Franklin – and it’s an album that combines autobiographical reflection with a bittersweet celebration of the human spirit in the face of enduring difficulties.



eye of the music storm that all others must aspire to.

THURSDAY 20th

BAND OF HORSES: O2 Academy – Epic melancholy from Ben Bridwell’s Americana survivors – *see main preview*

GLADYS KNIGHT + SISTER SLEDGE: Blenheim Palace – Opening night of the Nocturne Live 2019 season sees the Empress of Soul coming to the palace – *see main preview*

THE RYAN BINGHAM BAND: The Bullingdon – A-Grade Americana from Empty Room Promotions again tonight with a visit to town for itinerant troubadour Bingham – *see main preview*

ADAM BARNES + JOE HICKS: The Jericho Tavern – Return to live action for melancholic local singer Adam Barnes, whose poetic and sombre acoustic songs draw on Damien Rice, Bon Iver, Elliot Smith and Frightened Rabbit. He’s back in the UK to play a short series of shows with Newbury singer-songwriter Joe Hicks.

CATWEAZLE: East Oxford Community Centre

SPARKY’S NEW MOON: The Half Moon

FRIDAY 21st

LAURYN HILL + LAURA MVULA: Blenheim Palace – The former Fugees star comes to Nocturne Live – *see main preview*

TANDEM FESTIVAL: Lower Farm, Ramsden – Opening day of the annual eco-conscious world music celebration, featuring a headline set from Nubian Twist – *see main preview*

THE DOLLYMOPS + SARPASALPA + TV COMA: The Jericho Tavern – Militant, mutant indie-rock from The Dollymops, mixing up the more scabrous side of 80s alt.pop – Josef K and Big Flame among them – with The Wedding Present and Orange Juice’s melodic noise.

GLUEMAN: The Wheatsheaf – Heavyweight indie rocking from Glueman at tonight’s It’s All About the Music show.

DEEP COVER: The Bullingdon – Hip hop and UK bass club night.

LATIN OPEN MIC SESSION: The Port Mahon

ROWAN RHEINGANS: Holywell Music Room – A solo show from the Lady Maisery and Rheingans Sisters fiddle, guitar and banjo player, songwriter and award-winning folk pioneer, her ‘Dispatches on the Red Dress’ tour telling the story of her German great grandmother’s childhood in Nazi Germany.

MAKE MUSIC DAY: Various venues, Abingdon – A full day of live music and more as part of International Make Music Day. From workshops in the library and guildhall early on, through live sets in the town’s market square, to an evening of gigs and open mics at various venues in the evening.

SATURDAY 22nd

FLOFEST / GLOFEST: Florence Park – East Oxford’s annual community festival returns. Flofest, from 11am through til 4pm, is a free, family-friendly mix of live music and activities, with sets from Brickwork Lizards, The Owl Light Trio, Collision Theory, Valentino and Jen Berkova. In the evening Glofest takes over, a ticketed event headlined by this month’s *Nightshift* cover stars Little Brother Eli along

with a light and laser show to accompany DJ James Ussher. Live sets too from ska tribute Hope & Glory, plus The Shapes and Ska Ba Doo Ba – *see main interview feature*

SUMMER IN THE CITY: Various venues (3pm-2am) – Big Scary Monsters debut their multi-venue one-day festival in east Oxford. Across The Library, Fusion Arts, Brewdog, Truck Store and Port Mahon, the cast of indie, punk and DIY acts includes math rockers Tangled Hair; waywardly inventive jazz-infused crew Lucy Leave; hardcore ragers Worry and mathcore merchants Masiro. Other confirmed names include Gender Roles, Colossal Squid, Flirting and Egrets. There are also DJ sets from the likes of Vacuous Pop, Divine Schism and Snuggle Dice people.

TEARS FOR FEARS + WHITE LIES + SCRITTI POLITTI: Blenheim Palace – The 80s hitmakers come to nocturne Live – *see main preview*

LOVE MUSIC HATE RACISM SUMMER FESTIVAL: Isis Farmhouse, Iffley Lock (2pm-midnight) – A full day and night of music in aid of the anti-racism charity. Among the acts on show are Arabic folk, soul and hip hop collective Brickwork Lizards; rapper Rhymeskeemz; hip hop collective Inner Peace Records; soul singer Tiece, and country-folksters My Crooked Teeth. Much more besides.

TANDEM FESTIVAL: Lower Farm, Ramsden – Second day of the eclectic eco fest.

FLINTLOCK RIFLES + ALBOA + FIRST RESERVES: The Bullingdon – It’s All About the Music show with new local indie rockers Flintlock Rifles and Wallingford’s 70s rock/indie crew Alboa.

CANDY SAYS + MAX BLANSJAAR: Old Fire Station – As part of Offbeat festival showcasing theatre, music, comedy, spoken word, dance and more, atmospheric local electro-pop duo Candy Says bring their sensual world to the OFS alongside teen pop titan Max Blansjaar.

HEADS UP: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Talking Heads tribute.

SIMON & GARFUNKEL THROUGH THE YEARS: The Cornerstone, Didcot – Career-spanning tribute to the legendary duo.

SUNDAY 23rd

KYLIE MINOGUE: Blenheim Palace – Wall to wall hits, glamour and costume changes from the Princess of Pop – *see main preview*

TANDEM FESTIVAL: Lower Farm, Ramsden – Final day of the fest – *see main preview*

HELLO AGAIN: The New Theatre – Big stage tribute to Neil Diamond.

OPEN MIC SESSION: Harcourt Arms

MONDAY 24th

CARA DILLON: Nettlebed Folk Club – Traditional folk music from the multiple award-winning Irish singer, back at Nettlebed once again.

OPEN MIC: The Castle

TUESDAY 25th

THE DEAD SOUTH: O2 Academy – Lively but dark-hearted American folk and bluegrass from the Canadian quartet, singing stories of the Old West’s violent past in songs like ‘That Bastard Son’ and ‘In Hell I’ll Be In Good Company’.

ELAINE BAKER & OXFORD



Friday 21st – Sunday 23rd

TANDEM FESTIVAL: Lower Farm, Ramsden

Following in the footsteps of WOOD Festival, Tandem has carved its niche in the local scene as an environmentally-responsible celebration of music, arts, dance, cinema, food and more, the event founded and continuing to be run by a team of volunteers. Musically, Tandem draws inspiration from WOMAD, offering a world of eclectic sounds that’s never confined to rootsiness. This year’s headliners are London’s twelve-strong collective **NUBIAN TWIST**, whose fusion of jazz, soul, hip hop, Latin, dub and electro has seem them take Glastonbury, Boomtown and Shambala by storm in recent times. They’re joined over the weekend by Bristol’s warped psych quartet **EVIL USSES**, somehow finding a meeting point between Captain Beefheart, Tortoise and The Cardiacs; **ME & MY FRIENDS’** euphoric blend of Jamaican roots, Ghanaian highlife and Afro-Brazilian folk; **BLOOM’s** harmony-led astral-pop; trance instrumentalists **FREE MOVEMENTS**; jazz supergroup **THE TOM GREEN SEPTET**; community orchestra **SINFONIA GAIA**; Edinburgh’s folktronica band **YOKO PWNO**; twenty-piece exchange student project **ETHNO-ENGLAND BAND**, and established local stars **CATGOD**; **LUCY LEAVE** and **THE YOUNG WOMEN’S MUSIC PROJECT**. Beyond the main music stages there are activities both eco and spiritual as well as purely practical as artisans demonstrate their various skills. Another weekend pocket of escapism from the world and its cars, plastic and meat. Take the musical good vibes home with you but also lessons in how to help the planet.

IMPROVISERS: Old Fire Station – Poet Elaine Baker teams up with Oxford Improvisers for a set of spoken word pieces backed by and reflected by improvised music.

WEDNESDAY 26th

JEFFREY LEWIS & LOS BOLTS: The Bullingdon – Continuing to be a beacon of genuine wit and humour in music, New York’s Jeffrey Lewis returns to town with his current band, his sleight of hand as a lyricist matched by his talent as an artist, and his way with a story that marks him out as a genuinely funny entertainer; his songs tread a fine line between melancholic introspection and jaunty whimsy, like a young Paul Simon. Stylistically he can flit from grunge to skiffle with ease, unconstrained by style or the anti-folk tag that forever dogs him. He’s out on tour to promote last year’s ‘13 Fall Songs’ – a spiritual follow-up to 2007’s ‘12 Crass Songs’, and something like his 30th studio album, but frankly it’s impossible to keep up.

BLACK PEACHES: The Jericho Tavern – Rob Smoughton from Hot Chip and Scritti Politti, and usually better known under his solo alias Grosvenor, brings his new band to town, mixing up jazz, funk, southern boogie and country soul.

GALICIAN FOLK SESSION: The Port Mahon – Traditional music from northern Spain.

JESSE DAYTON BAND: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Outlaw country blues, rockabilly, Cajun and zydeco with a punk spirit from Texan Telecaster troubadour Jesse Dayton at tonight’s Empty Room show, the cult legend having begun musical life playing with zydeco bands in his teens and working with Rockin Dopsy before touring as support for Supersuckers, X and Social Distortion, all while topping the Americana charts. He subsequently played lead guitar for Johnny Cash, Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson and Glen Campbell. Rarely off the road, he’s currently touring his album ‘The Outlaw’.

Thursday 27th

CAT POWER: O2 Academy

Against stiff competition Cat Power’s ‘Names’ is the most gut-wrenchingly sad song *Nightshift* has ever heard. It only feels more tragic when you learn it’s based on stories of people she once knew. But then Chan Marshall – who is Cat Power – hardly enjoyed the most stable childhood, the daughter of a travelling blues musician who was regularly left in the care of her oppressively religious grandmother. If her experiences have fuelled much of her music, they’ve also occasionally left her with stage fright so extreme she’s abandoned gigs and whole tours, or played rambling shows, which she’s put down to alcohol abuse, itself to counter anxiety and depression. Around the release of breakthrough album ‘Sun’ in 2012, she was hospitalised with an inherited immune disorder, which has since recurred. Despite all this Marshall has been a chameleon-like musical talent, the self-taught “Queen of Sad” moving from blues, punk and folk, into soul and increasingly electronic music, while retaining the gorgeous, emotive lyrical and vocal heart of her music. Over the years she’s collaborated with some of the greats, including Dave Grohl, Warren Ellis and Eddie Vedder’ on her 2003 masterpiece ‘You Are Free’; latest album ‘Wanderer’ features Lana del Rey alongside a cover of Rihanna’s ‘Sky’, while beyond music she’s worked as a model and narrated kids’ stories. Tonight’s gig is Cat Power’s first in Oxford and she’s someone we feared we’d never see come to town. So make the most of the opportunity to see a unique talent in action.



THURSDAY 27th

CAT POWER: O2 Academy – Chan Marshall brings the sadness – *see main preview*

THE MURDER CAPITAL: The Jericho Tavern – Rearranged from last month, Dublin’s artfully brutish post-punk crew make their Oxford debut, following their showing at The Great Escape, the band mixing up the influences of Joy Division, The Bad Seeds and Pixies and touring debut single ‘Feeling Fades’ following supports to Idles, Shame and Slaves.

PETE BOSS: The Bullingdon – Clapton-inspired electric blues and rock from Oxford’s own Slowhand at tonight’s Haven Club show.

GOODNESS DAY & NIGHT: Isis Farmhouse / The Bullingdon (2pm-4am) – The travelling techno, house, disco and jazz dance club night brings a full 14 hours clubbing to town, kicking off with an eight-hour daytime session at the Isis with Gerd Janson and Carista, followed by a late night-early morning session at The Bully with Laurel Halo and Joe.

CATWEAZLE: East Oxford Community Centre

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

FRIDAY 28th

MAD COBRA: O2 Academy – Oxford debut for the Jamaican dancehall star, whose string of hits, including ‘Flex’, ‘Shoot To Kill’ and ‘Merciless Bad Boy’ made him one of the country’s biggest stars through the 90s and early Noughties.

TOTAL STONE ROSES: The Bullingdon – All of it, yeah.

SMASH FALCON + GRUB + GRUDGEWOOD: The Wheatsheaf – It’s All About the Music showcase with Oxford-Northampton heavy rockers Smash Falcon, psych-garage—grunge noisemakers Grub and heavyweights Grudgewood, featuring former members of Marconi’s Voodoo and Junkie Brush.

OWL LIGHT TRIO + BRACKENBURY & NEILSON: Quaker Meeting House, St. Giles – Trad folk, jazz and contemporary classical music.

THE UMBRELLAS: Fat Lil’s, Witney – Covers, from REM and Bowie to Stevie Wonder and Maroon 5, from the veteran band.

SATURDAY 29th

FRONT ROW FESTIVAL: Fritwell Playing Fields – Full day of live music and family activities in the north Oxfordshire village, with a headline set from brilliant indie-goth stars Desperate Journalist – *see main preview*

GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES with STARBELLY + PETER CAT + EMMA HUNTER: The Wheatsheaf – Heavyweight glam-goth-grunge rocking from Starbelly at tonight’s Gappy Tooth show. They’re joined by quirky Glaswegian Peter Cat, channelling Divine Comedy, Jarvis Cocker and Luke Haines, plus smoky, gothic jazz-pop from former Halcyons singer Emma Hunter.

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



Saturday 29th

FRONTROW FESTIVAL: Fritwell Playing Field

While every village worth its salt seems to have an annual music festival these days, most of them content themselves with a couple of tribute acts and a school band competition winner. Not so Frontrow, who’ve coaxed ace indie-goth stars **DESPERATE JOURNALIST**, more used to playing Tramlines, Camden Rocks or Benicassim, to a quiet corner of north-east Oxfordshire. The London outfit draw their name from a Cure song mocking pretentious music journo Paul Morley and come inspired by the dark end of 80s alt.pop, from The Cure themselves, through New Order and The Smiths to German cult heroes Xmal Deutschland, whose Anja Huwe, Desperate Journalist frontwoman Jo Bevan sometimes echoes. Reverb permeates the band’s wall of chiming fuzz and every song carries an air of raw intensity about it, like a can of well shaken coke that no-one wants to open because they know it’ll explode everywhere, so they’re perfectly suited to a sunny rural celebration and more than worth a trip out into the rustic wilds. Among the supporting cast are Bath’s harmony-heavy folk-pop and skiffle crew **SAINT LOE**; Northampton hard rockers **EMPYRE**, plus **THE LILYHAMMERS**; **JAGUAR MILK**; **LITTLE SPARROW**; **DEVON MAYSON**, and **PLUCKING DIFFERENT**.

THE AC/DC EXPERIENCE: O2 Academy – Tribute to the rock legends.

VOLUME: The Bullingdon – Drum& bass club night with Danny Byrd.

CATGOD: Modern Art Oxford (2-4pm) – Concert in the courtyard from last month’s *Nightshift* cover stars with their eclectic mix of folk-pop, jazz, electro-pop and pastoral prog. Plus DJ sets from Tiger Mendoza and Octavia Freud.

OSPREY & CO.: The Half Moon – Funky blues from local stalwart Osprey and chums.

SUNDAY 30th

SUNDAY SOCIAL: The Wheatsheaf (3.30pm) – Unplugged live music in the downstairs bar hosted by It’s All About the Music.

OPEN MIC SESSION: Harcourt Arms

BLUES JAM: Fat Lil’s, Witney (3-7pm) – Open blues session.

CANDY SAYS The Bullingdon Oxford 07.06.19	EASY STAR ALL STARS PLAYING “DUB SIDE OF THE MOON” The Bullingdon Oxford 24.07.19	THYLA The Bullingdon Oxford 16.10.19
HONEYBLOOD O2 Academy2 Oxford 08.06.19	THIS IS THE KIT O2 Academy Oxford 15.08.19	RITUAL UNION Cowley Road Oxford 19.10.19
OMS MAGAZINE 40th ISSUE PARTY Ft. MOTHER Port Mahon Oxford 14.06.19	POTTERY The Jericho Tavern Oxford 19.08.19	DREADZONE The Bullingdon Oxford 25.10.19
OMS MAGAZINE 40th ISSUE PARTY Ft. MOTHER Port Mahon Oxford 15.06.19	CHILDCARE The Bullingdon Oxford 04.09.19	JESCA HOOP The Bullingdon Oxford 31.10.19
THE MURDER CAPITAL The Jericho Tavern Oxford 27.06.19	THE NIGHT CAFE O2 Academy 2 Oxford 30.09.19	DREADZONE Sub89 Reading 09.11.19
ALGIERS The Bullingdon Oxford 04.07.19	PLASTIC MERMAIDS The Bullingdon Oxford 02.10.19	JOSEFIN OHRN + THE LIBERATION The Bullingdon Oxford 11.11.19
CLOUD NOTHINGS The Bullingdon Oxford 11.07.19	APRE The Bullingdon Oxford 04.10.19	JAWS The Bullingdon Oxford 18.11.19
MALCOLM MIDDLETON The Jericho Tavern Oxford 16.07.19	RICHARD HAWLEY O2 Academy Oxford 06.10.19	FONTAINES D.C. O2 Academy Oxford 26.11.19
SHONEN KNIFE The Bullingdon Oxford 17.07.19	EASY LIFE O2 Academy Oxford 08.10.19	PENELOPE ISLES The Jericho Tavern Oxford 27.11.19

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MOBIUS / DEATHLY PALE PARTY

The Wheatsheaf

Well obviously a band called Deathly Pale Party are going to be goths. What were you expecting, sunshine and samba?

No, the duo, from near Birmingham, come to Gappy Tooth Industries’ 200th gig, not to celebrate, but to take us for a guided tour through the haunted dollhouse of their musical imaginations, ghostly waltzes and chamber dirges, to quote their own web page, that find them creating quite a wall of noise for a two-piece. Synths, bowed guitar, loops and voices conjure a picture of The Cure’s ‘Faith’ re-imagined

as a Victorian penny dreadful; often none of the composite bits seem to fit together comfortably – the tumbling beats, hissing electronics and almost Spanish sounding guitar jarring with Emma Castella’s ghostly vocals – but then we guess you’re not meant to feel comfortable, particularly when one number rises to a clamouring cacophonous clockwork climax that suggests the ghost is very much in the machine. Not everything they do is engaging and they lose the atmosphere they’ve just created a couple of times, but at their best Deathly Pale Party are

an intriguing curio, a bewitched music box that might just put its spell on you.

There’s more than a hint of the gothic about Mobius too. The violin player’s crushed velvet suit alone demands to sit drinking snakebite and black in a suburban graveyard. The man wearing it is all limbs and strident, sweeping strings, taking the band’s sturdy, almost Led Zep-style rock to more hysterical heights, before swooping down again and spending the time between songs inviting the crowd to come and chat about Extinction Rebellion afterwards.

New Model Army and The Levellers might be the obvious first-glance touchstones for a band of Mobius’ nature but they’ve a bit in common with Batcave bands like Specimen as those folkier acts, seemingly at ease with the slightly camp, Hammer Horror nature of their songs, that camp almost nudging them into B52 territory at one point. Suitably for a night where gothic sensibilities dominate, Mobius close on their most downbeat number, ‘The Force’, and if they, like Deathly Pale Party, still have some untidy stitching around the edges, they’re a pleasingly ostentatious antidote to the laddish sterility of so many rock bands.

Ian Chesterton

THE BETHS

The Bullingdon

Having dutifully watched the rather boring first half of the Spurs-Ajax Champions League semi-final and predicted an easy Ajax win, we set off to the Bullingdon.

It’s true what they say about New Zealanders being polite and The Beths are no exception. Frontwoman Elizabeth Stokes is unassuming, calm and modest with a wry sense of humour. Yet, despite the whole band’s anti-bravado, they’re intensely watchable as they allow their music to speak for them. They open with their debut album’s title track, ‘Future Me Hates Me’, which sounds exactly like the kind of thing you would have wanted to come on at The Purple Turtle (may it rest in peace) at 1am, and which anyone who knows us will tell you is an enormous compliment. We’d read that the band had all studied jazz at college and their sound is certainly a reaction to this; they swap meandering improv for tight four-piece indie-rock tinged with a pop punk vibe.

That’s not to say their music isn’t complex or interestingly put together; the pre-chorus of ‘You Wouldn’t Like Me’ has interlocking melodies that fall over one another in a way that sounds like they might not resolve tidily, but do in an incredibly satisfying and catchy chorus. Though many of The Beths’ songs sound quite samey (not necessarily a bad thing), a new song nestled in the middle of the set feels more mature and confident and shows promise that the band will consolidate and grow into the more original aspects of their sound.

For their much requested encore, Stokes announces a Death Cab for Cutie cover, then ends with ‘Little Death’ – both songs that show off her vocal prowess. She’s got a pure and effortless voice live which is especially impressive given the tendency for female pop-punk singers to sound strained.

We check our phones for the semi-final score as we leave; Tottenham have done the impossible and had won on away goals. We’d missed some bona fide unmissable football but we don’t care; The Beths are that good.

Amelia Gabaldoni

TEN TONNES

The Bullingdon

Ten Tonnes (aka. Ethan Barnett, younger brother of the inexplicably popular George Ezra) and band come on stage looking like The Early Learning Centre’s My First Indie-Pop Band™. Everything about them screams corporate creation; an unremarkable Frankenstein of default-looking Home Counties boys in carefully selected and painfully pristine Levi’s and Docs. This formula seems to be airtight though, as The Bullingdon is rammed with fans, many sporting newly purchased merch. A girl in front of me mutters to her friend, “there’s a *lot* of oestrogen in here,” and she’s not wrong. Ten Tonnes are here touring their debut album and to their credit, they’ve timed the release well, managing to hit both the ‘soundtrack to GCSE revision’ and the ‘getting ready for the year 11 prom’ markets head on. The self-titled debut is upbeat, palatable and very slightly edgier than his brother’s chart-topping offerings. The band are slick, Barnett has a good voice and their opening few tracks are catchy enough, managing to get a lot of hands, and even more phones, in the air. Barnett as frontman is a bit (but not too) cheeky and his inoffensive banter with the crowd helps him sail through a couple of sticky moments where his amp lets him down.

Crowd favourites seem to be ‘Better Than Me’, ‘G.I.V.E.’ and the set’s closing

number, ‘Lucy’. The opening minute or so of ‘Better Than Me’ betrays some of Ten Tonnes’ rockier influences and is of a distinctly different flavour to the rest of his tracks. It’s bassier and more self assured than the slightly simpering (though very popular) ‘Lucy’, and seemed to hint that really Barnett would quite like to be in a band closer in sound to Arctic Monkeys than Busted.

Before one of his songs (I can’t tell you which, but I imagine it’s true of most of them) Barnett explains “this one’s about going out and having a good time, it’s just about having fun.” It’s easy to be cynical about a band like this, especially when your finger is absolutely not on the Radio 1 pulse, but it’s undeniable that Barnett and co. are a good laugh. They’re easy to listen to and provide their fans with exactly what they need: singable melodies plus vaguely pitched, and therefore intensely relatable, lyrics.

Ten Tonnes aren’t overwhelmingly good or overwhelmingly bad: they’re not overwhelmingly anything really. Like a serviceable chain restaurant, Ten Tonnes gives you exactly what you’re expecting, which in this case is mediocre indie-pop rather than a lukewarm pizza margarita. But, if people like it, and they really seem to, who are we to judge.

Amelia Gabaldoni

MASTER OF NONE

The Wheatsheaf

If local dark-folk trio Little Red’s music is a walk into the deep, dark forest, singer/guitarist Ian Mitchell’s side project Master of None is a climb down a ladder into the yet darker depths of an abandoned fallout shelter in that forest.

Dispensing with any kind of folk niceties that make his other band such a serene experience, here’s he’s gathered together a belligerently powerful band around him, including Tiger Mendoza’s Ian de Quadros (who has turned his trademark mask inside out to make it look like he’s wearing a gimp mask) and Moogieman Shan Sriharan and tonight’s set is a shock and a slap to anyone expecting rustic fairytales, however shadowy.

Instead set opener ‘Wolf & Ram’ is urgent and militant, while ‘Head Down’ is a gothic wander along synth-lined passageways. Best of the lot is ‘This Animal’, part Richard Hawley midnight croon, part Horrors-like skyride, part uptight post-punk scurry, a metaphorical flight from mental health issues that have haunted the songwriter.

Or perhaps Master of None’s best is saved til last and the galloping thunder that is ‘Tsunami’, a black-eyed cousin of Mark Lanegan’s blackened blues.

Most of tonight’s short set is drawn from Master of None’s recent second EP, but they find room for a cover of Tom Waits’ ‘Going Out West’, bringing the band’s bluesy undercurrent more to the fore, mixing it up with some electro cabaret and painting the whole thing black. It’s pleasingly punishing stuff for the most part; only the monotone chant of ‘Fluffy Bunnies & Unicorns’, from Ian’s early solo set of songs, failing to hit the mark. For his part Ian casts an oddly avuncular figure, kind of Frankie Boyle if he’d been cast as Bauhaus’ Pete Murphy in some weird, twisted drama production. Bespectacled and besuited, he also reminds us a bit of The Nightingales’ Robert Lloyd, with that air of a disillusioned college lecturer one shot of whisky away from taking out the entire faculty with a semi automatic.

Where previously he was singing of black dogs and bad wolves in an almost pastoral setting, now Ian’s nightmares come coated in steel and are proper heavy demons. The rate of ascent of the quality of his music matches the downward spiral of its mood. Paint it black indeed. And then add a second coat.

Dale Kattack

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SOAK / PILLOW QUEENS

O2 Academy

Pillow Queens’ songs are compelling, energetic and the musicianship of the four Irish women is near flawless. There is no needless ostentation or gimmick, they just simply deliver really, really good rock music without fuss. They are stoic and driven, with big choruses and endless harmonies across the whole band. The riffs evoke Weezer and two vocals sharing lead duties complement each other and keep the set fresh. Perhaps they’re not show-stoppingly exciting, but writing catchy rock with this consistently high standard is no mean feat. SOAK is the stage name of Northern Irish singer-songwriter Bridie Monds-Watson, who on this tour is returning to play excerpts from recent second album ‘Grim Town’: so named for her conflicting relationship with her home town of Derry. You could definitely categorise SOAK alongside The National at the more pessimistic end of the creative expression spectrum, as seen when the twinkling dream pop and infectious positivity of lead

single ‘Knock Me Off My Feet’, shifts into the predominant mood of emotive catharsis with ‘B A Nobody’ and pretty much the rest of the set. Not to say that the set is samey, more that Monds-Watson has a consistent approach to her music that results in a sound you can lay back and float around in, as the reflections on lost lovers and parental divorce wash over your subconscious. This all typified by ‘Déjà vu’, which is simply as near to perfect 21st Century pop song as we can imagine, balancing between light and dark, synth and guitar, catchy chorus and poetry. Bridie is great performer, a gay rights activist, a talented musician and singer, but what stands out is how human she is. She’s not shy with the crowd; we learn lots about her life and outlook through the night and that intimacy is what takes good music and makes it great. Someone else could play these songs and they would be good, but an artist like SOAK makes them emotional, impactful and unforgettable. *Matt Chapman Jones*

THE WEDDING PRESENT

O2 Academy

Tonight’s visit from the Leeds legends has been prefaced by an extra treat for Weddoes’ fans in the shape of *The Wedding Present: Something Left Behind*, a movie that tracks the quartet’s early days in the 1980s leading up to the release of seminal album ‘George Best’. Staged by the good folk at the Ultimate Picture Palace, the screening is accompanied by a Q&A with director Andrew Jezard and front man David Gedge himself; it’s an entertaining enough tribute, albeit one that might have benefited from a wider time frame. Key moments in the band’s career such as their move to a major label for the recording of ‘Bizarro’, the emergence of the Ukrainians side project and subsequent work with Steve Albini on the album ‘Seamonsters’ are disappointingly left to one side. On the other hand, ‘Bizarro’ is far from neglected when it comes to the gig as this is the latest of the group’s tours to focus on a single album; the RCA published major commercial breakthrough-of-sorts is thus played in its entirety. There are renditions of perhaps the Wedding Present’s two most

famous tunes; ‘Brassneck’ kicks of the evening in thrilling style while the incomparable indie disco fave that is ‘Kennedy’ is met with such gusto by the audience that Gedge himself wonders out loud if it might have been one of the best ever crowd reactions to the tune. The album is punctuated by a few longer songs and these are duly given an airing, current bassist Melanie Howard twanging especially impressively, but the set is notable for its exorcism of relative obscurities from the band’s back catalogue. Their cover of Close Lobsters’ ‘Let’s Make Some Plans’ is a case in point, while the only pre-1989 tune is ‘Nothing Comes Easy’, a b-side to early single ‘Nobody’s Twisting Your Arm’. New song ‘Palisades’ provides a degree of southwestern desert drama, while Gedge also launches into ‘Careless’ by Cinerama. At times, The Wedding Present’s million miles an hour thrash can be almost as tiring to listen to as it must be to play, but this is a highly varied set that belies that reputation magnificently. *Rob Langham*

FARA

The North Wall

“It’s been a beautiful day; we’re all a bit lobster-ish from the sun,” says Jeanie Leslie by way of announcement to her band’s second visit to Oxford. Ironically their native Orkney has been even warmer today, but as the quartet explain, the vagaries of the Scottish Islands’ weather patterns are something else. Warmth and weather is a theme running through tonight’s evening, each song or tune introduced with a sweet, sometimes funny, sometimes tragic story, from freezing cold winters spent in obscure German mining towns, to local fishermen lost at sea in a storm. Fara – three fiddlers, plus keyboard player Jennifer Austin – are easy to warm to: they grew up together and have the easy, playful rapport that makes any great folk act. They’re also obviously enjoying their current wave of popularity on the back of second album ‘Times From Times Fall’, a mix of original instrumentals and songs based on traditional Scottish poems. The former are standard folk fare: varying in mood from lively polkas to more considered pieces, as well

as a lovely, solemn solo sonata from Austin towards the end, the more high energy ones managing to get tonight’s appreciative but restrained audience tapping and clapping along, but occasionally a bit too smooth to stir the blood. The ballads are the best part of the show, not least because there are few things more beautiful in music than the sound of a soft Scottish voice in song. ‘Three Fishers’ in particular is a beautifully bleak lament for the loss of family and friends. Elsewhere ‘Speir Thoo the West Wind’ captures the sense of longing and isolation of an abandoned lover, while Edwin Muir’s ‘Love Gathers All’ is a celebration of positivity that almost provokes a mass singalong. The chemistry between all four members, personally and musically is clear to see and hear and creates an infectiousness about the set, even when it occasionally fails to hit the highs you’re hoping for, and when Leslie announces they’re having a break to get some fresh air because it’s so warm in here, that warmth isn’t just due to the weather. *Dale Kattack*

DOLLY MAVIES / JOELY

Deaf & Hard of Hearing Centre

It might be the venue’s acoustics, with their natural reverb, but there’s something of the lost jazz siren about Joely, something of the wee small hours and the loneliness of faded jazz bars. Her voice is languid and engaging, allowed to make itself felt fully above the sparse musical arrangements – just her electric guitar and a bassist. Within those confines there’s enough variety to keep tonight’s short support set fresh: something dark, almost gothic here, a sprinkling of something funkier there, a bit of 60s folk-pop confessional at times, but it’s always her voice that you follow, at its best on ‘Tuesday’ and occasionally reminding us of Pet Semetary’s Gaby-Elise Monaghan, making a virtue of her hesitancy. Launching her new EP, local singer/songwriter Dolly Mavies has gone to serious lengths to make the room fit the occasion, the drapes and curtains of tinsel bringing both glamour and intimacy to the room, part 70s disco, part elfin grotto. Musically understatement is more Dolly’s game; even tonight, backed by a full band, she’s reticent about anything resembling rocking out, the guitarist instead adding subtle

shades and textures to songs like ‘My Buoy’ and the almost Cocteau Twins-like ‘Losing My Mind’. The few occasions when the band do ramp it up a notch or two, they can sound regimented, which doesn’t suit these songs: songs about love and loss and water. Lots of water. Along with ‘My Buoy’, there’s castaway highlight ‘Distance’, all romantic longing swelled by Adrian Banks’ warm washes of bass. Mavies can let her voice soar as well as look inward, and she does defiance as well as she does introspection, her voice sometimes like a cross between Stevie Nicks and Minnie Riperton, lush 70s pop mixed with summery, butterfly-light soul. Perhaps the bravest move of tonight’s show is a cover of The Corrs’ ‘Dreams’ – as uncool as you can get but here carried off with confidence and something of her own personality. And if Dolly Mavies’ music is still probably best listened to at home (probably alone and in the dark), tonight’s launch shows she can reach across not just metaphorical oceans, but sizeable venues, to entice listeners into those depths. *Dale Kattack*

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GIRLI The Bullingdon

A feverish throng of glitter-clad teens buzz beneath a giant disco ball suspended from the ceiling of the Bullingdon. Adorned in a luminous yellow dress and hot pink hair, GIRLI is every parent’s worst nightmare. But more importantly, she is a gift to teenage – and 20-something – girls. Navigating the hordes of heartbreak – be it romantic or platonic – that come with growing up is dizzying, but there is comfort in artists like GIRLI wearing the label ‘Hot Mess’ proudly on their sleeve, embracing the chaos of youth. GIRLI carries out her mission of empowerment in a form of pop

music that exists in the ether, blending pop, rap, electro, punk, and even 80s new wave. Despite not knowing exactly what it is, this glorious crucible produces some of the more gratifying approaches to pop of recent times. Adolescent angst is never more prevalent than on songs such as ‘Young’, where GIRLI bemoans how “They never told us / How much it hurts to be young,” with the crowd singing along to every word in bittersweet sympathy. Some of GIRLI’s lyrics may be on the superficial side, with tracks such as ‘Deal With It’ portraying the eternal energy of party-driven

youths and their inability to quit, even after ending the night in the back of a police car (fear not, it escorted them to the next bar). However, while hailing euphoric independence, the majority of GIRLI’s songs are incredibly validating to teens adjusting to their unfamiliar feelings and experiences. In particular, the song ‘Up and Down’ focuses on the trials of mental health: whether one feels like a “fat giraffe who likes pea soup,” someone with “belly rolls and spots on tap” or a “karaoke teenage dream,” the track emphasises the ever-fluctuating

nature of self-image, and it’s ability to set one’s world on fire. Whether it’s the intrepidity brought by support act Ashnikko, singing vital messages of consent (‘Invitation’) and condemning perpetrators of sexual assault; the tannoy-style message before GIRLI’s set announcing that the bathrooms of the Bullingdon had been made gender-neutral for the occasion; or the overarching message of tenacity that laces every song, GIRLI is an ineffable goddess that younger generations are lucky to have. Judging by the vehemence of the audience on Sunday night, people are more than willing to worship at her altar. *Amy Barker*

KNOBBLEHEAD The Wheatsheaf

Entering the comforting darkness of The Wheatsheaf, we’re greeted with blaring optimism spilling off the stage, quite literally, as the nine-piece Knobblehead are forced to have two percussionists shaking their tambourines amongst the crowd; there just isn’t enough room up there to fit them all on. What strikes you first about the band is their youthfulness, the joy of the moment twinkling in their eyes, feeding into their dancing and that, despite the clean and well-rehearsed structure, makes their set feel organic instead of rigid and precise. Scanning the stage, you find happiness emanating from their faces, everyone wanting to be there, enjoying the moment. In what appears to be an understated, modern take on the Summer

of Love, Knobblehead’s melodies are not muddled in the crossfire of stomp-boxes and keys; the archetypes of psychedelia shine through with the acoustic elements of the trumpet and guitar, yet it doesn’t have that tiredness that the original pioneers now feel in their knees. Revived with a pulse of 90s distortion, keys that we can only liken to Crumb, and of course unquestionable musicianship that these students are adorned with, we’re amazed at how ‘off the album’ they sounds live. The band appears to be fronted by two women, which is similarly refreshing in psychedelia and that modernity sweeps across the playful melodies, and also the band’s selection of musicians and their roles. Images of sun-soaked days, coming of age and societal change spring to mind and, caught up in their infectious optimism, we’re glad to see them signalling the future. *Ziggy Jinda*

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TOP TRACKS

BLOOD HORSE

As we sit down to this month's pile of sounds *Game of Thrones* has just collided with the crash barriers at the end of the line, leaving blood, ruined cities and an army of hysterical viewers bleating and weeping because it didn't work out like they wanted it to, and we half considered doing a *GoT* themed Tracks review to celebrate the end of the most epic telly show ever. But then people would bleat and weep about spoilers (who'd have guessed Bruce Willis was a ghost all along?), so we'll let it go. But, if we had done that and we'd assigned a *GoT* character to each act appropriate to their character then Blood Horse here would be the Dothraki. All of them. There they go, charging full-pelt at the enemy, screaming and whooping as they go, off to wreak some serious butchery. And like the Dothraki charge at the Battle of Winterfell, it doesn't last long and ends in a glorious blood-spattered mess. Only two of the twelve tracks here outlast a full minute and then only by a few seconds. Mostly they crank everything up loud, nasty and distorted, there is screaming and more screaming, and a bit more screaming and then they stop. And then do it all again. Flights of stairs fall down flights of stairs, heads get chopped off and pretty much everyone dies. "I wish I was happy / I wish I was healthy" screams the lead Dothraki screamer man. Hey, to quote Ramsay Bolton: "if you think this has a happy ending, you haven't been paying attention."

RAGGEDTOOTH

Not much information with this one, although a glance at Raggedtooth's Facebook page suggests it's a one-man band made up of a slightly nervous looking skinhead from Didcot called Dan who lists Idles, Slaves, Rage Against the Machine and The Sex Pistols as influences. So initially we're expecting something a bit savage. Instead he's more like one of his other stated influences: Queens of the Stone-Age, particularly on rumblin' and grumblin' heavyweight track 'Carpal Tunnel', which chugs along with an almost poppy sense of purpose for all its meaty riffage. It even gets its funk on a bit towards the end. Maybe it isn't the ferocious dire wolf we thought it might be but it turns out to be a likably bouncy and mildly destructive large doggy, which is something no sane person would turn away from the door. 'Silver Line' then ramps things up another notch and brings a lysergic psych-rock edge into the mix, like someone tried

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to be Black Sabbath or Blue Cheer but got it slightly wrong in the best kind of way. If this turned up at some mad Brazilian psych festival, people would be hailing Dan as a rock hero. So perhaps not as red raw as we felt we were led to believe, but all is forgiven: this is a very solid slab of rock. And when we say solid we don't mean 'competent if uninspired', we mean 'if it landed on your car there'd be nothing left but an aluminium pancake'.

BRIXTONS

We saw Brixtons last year and made some cruel jibe about them being the Temperate Thames Valley Monkeys as opposed to The Arctic Monkeys, who they bore a distinct resemblance to. "Since then, our sound has massively changed and matured to a The Cure, Coldplay, Oasis melodic sound," they promise, and more cruel jibes well up inside us and it takes an entire packet of Rennie to quell the rising gorge of vitriol and bile. We guess that to a snail the width of a pavement is the span of the universe. Anyway, what they say is partly true. Not the Cure or Coldplay bits particularly, but certainly the Oasis thing. 'Emily' might well have been half-inched from a mid-period Oasis album, and in all likelihood, even Noel wouldn't have noticed it had gone. The singer's previous yobby, gobby Alex Turner snarl is replaced with a more languorous, stretched-out Liam sense of anthemic pleading over solid indie rock riffage. And in this case, when we say solid, we really do mean competent and uninspired, rather than anything that could crush your car to scrap. Maybe heavy enough to crack poor Mr Snail's shell, but in all likelihood that'd only make him more sluggish. There's probably a joke about Noel Gallagher's music in there somewhere.

BRASCO

Along with idiots pushing doors that clearly state "Pull!"; entitled fucknuts losing their rags because TV shows don't end how they wanted them to and anything that involves Tommy Robinson and milkshake, one of the things that makes us laugh here at *Nightshift* is ostentatious or deluded press releases. Brasc0 tickle us with this gem: "Brasc0, formed by Oxford academics, is releasing its first single following a whirlwind rise to local success, performing their unique combination of jazz and hip-hop. After forming in early 2018, the seven strong band have gained popularity after playing local venues such as the Cape of Good Hope, and Sandy's piano bar." Fuck our old boots: from nowhere to The Cape of Good Hope (a "venue" that manages to squeeze its artists into a corner next to an oversized burger grill) in only a few months. Whirlwind indeed. The seven-strong unbiased jazz/hip hop ensemble then list which courses they're studying alongside what they play, as if we're going to be impressed

by a DPhil in biochemistry (actually, we are but not in the context of music where a doctorate in outdrinking Keith Richards or a professorship in playing so loud and heavy people's brains actually turn to soup would be more appropriate). All of which means we've got 200 words into the review and not even mentioned the music. Which is passable: one track, titled 'Story of the Ronin', a laidback rap over easy but lithe lounge jazz that would neatly into the space between The Streets and Loyle Carner, though the rapper in question, James Boyes, seems to have an almost Mancunian edge to his voice. Anyway, it's decent enough but we'd need to hear more than this solitary offering to form a proper opinion. Until then, don't give up the studies – something to fall back on if this music lark doesn't rake in the millions.

THE ADY BAKER SOUND

For all that we joke about drugs being all cool and stuff, they do have a habit of leaving you unsure who you are or what you came in here to do. Was I meant to stick the kettle on or feed the cats? Sing a spaced-out psychedelic pop lullaby or somehow try to sound like a cross between a New York rapper and a 70s blues explorer? Such is the quandary Ady Baker here appears to find himself in on his one song, conveniently named 'O.N.E.' which starts off as creeping narcotic spangle pop and mind-in-the-stars vocals which add up to a sort of blissed-out Charlatans or even Ride, but then comes over all unsteady on its feet and lurches off on a wave of wah wah and something approaching what we imagine the singer from Cast would sound like if he thought he was a rap star for a few seconds. It feels incongruously uptight and wigged-out but just as you're coming to terms with it, they're back to that lilting, lysergic groove rock. And then back again: suddenly it's all psychological gangsters and real-life Al Capones. And then it stops and we've only gone and poured the cats a cup of tea each and there's a horribly meaty odour emanating from the kettle. It's alright actually this, we like it, but we are a bit confused, as we, suspect, are they. Roll another spliff; everything will be better after some more drugs, right?

THE UNBLESSED

However irresponsible it sounds, we regularly imagine some bands would be far better off if they did take shedloads of drugs before they wrote, recorded or performed their music. Then again, there's a sneaking suspicion The Unblessed are on something heavy duty given their biog suggests "their music blends influences of seminal rock artists like David Bowie and Bruce Springsteen," when the Sunday afternoon market town pub corner-friendly chugaboogie we're listening to would suggest something rather different and considerably less seminal. With his hat and substantive beard the singer looks a fair bit like Rag N' Bone Man and this bearded, behatted, workaday soul-rock would sit comfortably into

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that current class of soulful singer-songwriters like Jack Savoretti or Lewis Capaldi or Toms Grennan and Walker. It's earthy. It's authentic. It's got soul. And the blues. And it might as well be dead, it's so lacking in vitality. Everything is perfectly in place. Both singers have fine voices. The organ player provides a funky, jazzy vibe. Jools Holland is probably rubbing his thighs excitedly even as we write this. But there's not a single iota of a hint of a shadow of anything here that you'd sit in a bar and think, "wow, these guys are the future of music," or "I could listen to this forever." Instead, we'd sit there drinking too quickly and wondering if there was another pub up the road we could escape to where music was banned. Or, failing that option, find a Dothraki warrior to prod and provoke until he lopped our head off, which would at least save us from hearing another second of this. "Give me honesty, every day of the week," pleads bearded behatted soulful singer man, "Give me uninspired competence," he continues. Only kidding; we added that line, but he's welcome to use it.

TOILET TRACKS

ANDY VAIC

Is there a more clichéd setting for a music photoshoot or video than the zebra crossing by Abbey Road Studio? And is there a worse Beatles song than 'Come Together'? Throw in a one-man band with a rather smug attitude to musicality and performance art and what have you got? This month's Toilet Track is what. Andy Vaic here has set his equipment up on the pavement next to said landmark, doubtless early enough in the morning that his shoot won't be interrupted by several thousand confused tourists, and off he goes. Yes, off he goes. Playing everything, from guitar and bass to drums, on a karaoke cover of the song that is almost single handedly responsible for the existence of Beady Eye and Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds. It's all done in a single take, from the looped handclaps to the singing, which is flatter than that car pancake we mentioned earlier and Andy looks immeasurably pleased with himself about it all. So pleased in fact he segues seamlessly into 'I Am the Walrus' without dropping a crumb of self satisfaction in the process. An early morning jogger trundles past, paying no heed to what's going on, doubtless too embarrassed for all concerned to say anything. It all climaxes with Andy walking onto the crossing and a car stopping conveniently for him to climb atop and play his masturbatory guitar solo. And while we're not violent people here at *Nightshift*, just slightly belligerent once we've got a few beers inside us, we can't help wishing it was a white van full of builders in a hurry to get to work and they'd just run the fucker over while yelling derogatory abuse at his guitar skills. The video closes to black with the legend "To John Lennon". John who's turning in his grave and, perhaps looking down from Heaven, wishing he'd just becoming a builder if this is the legacy he's left on the world.

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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

ft Keeva Mairéad,
The Auburn Project,
Novacane, The Chess Club

Wed 22nd May • 6.30pm

Sons of the East

ft Amistat, Five Fathoms Deep

Thur 23rd May

End Of An Era - Vol 2

ft Ellie Armetta, Kiera
Gabrielle, The Roaches,
RedShift, A Dying Breed

Sat 25th May • 6.30pm

Inner Peace

Records

ft DeSide, DeeQ, Erbz & Those
That Know DJs

Sat 25th May • 11pm

I LOVE REGGAETON

Sat 25th May • 11pm

**#6MILLI Summer
Send Off**

Fri 31st May • 6pm

**All Ears Avow
& Kill The Ideal**

+ Be Still

+ Thousand Thoughts

+ Born Ideal

Fri 31st May • 11pm

Bass Odyssey

Sat 8th Jun

Honeyblood

+ LUCIA

Thur 20th Jun

Band Of Horses

+ Lion

Tue 25th Jun

The Dead South

Thur 27th Jun

Cat Power

Fri 28th Jun • 11pm

Mad Cobra

Sat 29th Jun

**The AC/DC
Experience - Who's
Got Big Balls**

Thur 4th Jul • SOLD OUT

Belle & Sebastian

Tue 9th Jul

Comeback Kid

+ Svalbard

+ I Cried Wolf

Thur 25th Jul

**Elvana: Elvis
Fronted Nirvana**

+ Cherokii

Fri 2nd Aug

White Denim

+ Boy Azooga

Thur 15th Aug

This Is The Kit

+ Rozi Plain

Sun 25th Aug

**Little Steven &
The Disciples Of Soul**

Fri 30th Aug

Palmist

Fri 6th Sep • 6.30pm

Ultimate Coldplay

Fri 20th Sep • 6.30pm

Boyzlife

Tue 24th Sep

New Hope Club

Thur 26th Sep

**Submotion
Orchestra**

Sat 28th Sep • 6.30pm

Evil Scarecrow

+ The Grand Mal

+ Damaged Reich

+ Imminent Annihilation

Mon 30th Sep

The Night Café

Thur 3rd Oct

Pierce Brothers

Fri 4th Oct • 6.30pm

**CoCo and the
Butterfields**

Tue 8th Oct

Easy Life

Fri 11th Oct • 6.30pm

King Prawn

+ Popes of Chillitown

Sat 12th Oct • 6.30pm

Antarctic Monkeys

Sat 12th Oct • 6.30pm

The Divine Comedy

Fri 18th Oct • 6.30pm

Amber Run

Tue 22nd Oct

Striking Matches

+ Tenille Townes

Fri 25th Oct • 6.30pm

Jake Clemons

+ Ben McKelvey

Sat 26th Oct • 6.30pm

Guns 2 Roses

+ MOTLEY CRUED

Sat 2nd Nov • 6pm

Hip Hop Hooray

Sat 2nd Nov • 6.30pm

The Dualers

+ Kioko

Sun 3rd Nov

Bear's Den

Mon 4th Nov

Feeder

Thur 7th Nov

Little Comets

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 15th Nov • 6.30pm

The Treatment

+ Airrace

+ Lake Acacia

Sun 17th Nov

Black Water County

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**

+ Jon Dasilva

Fri 29th Nov • 6.30pm

Mad Dog Mcrea

Sat 30th Nov • 6.30pm

**Definitely Mightbe
(Oasis tribute)**

Fri 6th Dec • 6.30pm

Pearl Jam UK

Sat 7th Dec • 6.30pm

Absolute Bowie

- Legacy Tour

Fri 13th Mar 2020

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