

# NIGHTSHIFT

## Oxford's Music Magazine

Free every  
month  
Issue 320  
July  
2023



# FESTIVAL FEVER

Truck &  
Riverside  
*previewed*  
Kite & Wood  
*reviewed*

*plus... Introducing* **KILLER KOWALSKI**  
*at work with* **TRUCK FESTIVAL**

photo: Jason Warner @ Pyrefly Studios



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# THE BULLINGDON

JULY 2023

GIG & CLUB LISTINGS

Friday 30th June  
*The Operation*  
**Neffa T**  
Doors: 11PM

Saturday 1st July  
*Party Time Again*  
**Celebrity International**  
Likkle Platinum + Kirky Vibes  
Empire Sound  
DJ White Magic  
Doors: 11PM

Sunday 2nd July  
**Thomas Headon**  
Doors: 7PM

Friday 7th July  
**Jealous Nostril**  
Doors: 7PM

Friday 7th July  
**Best of Afrobeats & Amapiano**  
Doors: 11PM

Thursday 13th July  
**James Oliver**  
Doors: 7PM

Friday 14th July  
*Front Row Festival*  
**Candid**  
Silvi, La Phooka, Velvet Starlings  
Doors: 7PM

Wednesday 15th July  
**Roots & Reggae Mix Non-Stop**  
Doors: 11PM

Wednesday 19th July  
**Rev Peyton's Big Damn Band**  
Doors: 7PM

Saturday 22nd July  
**Reggaeton Party**  
Doors: 11PM

Wednesday 26th July  
*Quantum meets Music*  
**Prof Carlo Rovelli**  
**Prof Eduardo Miranda**  
**Prof Bob Coecke**  
Doors: 7PM

Friday 28th July  
**Ang Grupong Pendong**  
Doors: 5PM

Saturday 29th July  
**Inair**  
Detroit Run  
Chasing Mallory  
Local Support  
Doors: 7PM

Saturday 29th July  
*Terraforms*  
**Twisted Individual**  
Doors: 11PM

Friday 11th August  
**Space Elevator**  
Doors: 7PM

Saturday 12th August  
**Alyndra Segarra**  
Doors: 7PM

Saturday 19th August  
**Special Kinda Madness**  
Doors: 7PM

Saturday 19th August  
**Reggaeton Party**  
Doors: 11PM

Tuesday 22nd August  
**Sea Power**  
Doors: 7PM

Friday 25th August  
*Audio Friends*  
**3LIAS**  
Maxquerade, Marble Sun, Nazz  
Doors: 11PM

Monday 28th August  
**Deerhoof**  
Doors: 7PM

Friday 8th September  
**Richard Marriott & Chris Jordan**  
Doors: 7PM

Friday 15th September  
**Badly Drawn Boy** *SOLD OUT*  
Doors: 7PM

Thursday 21st September  
**Pierre Novellie:**  
*Why Can't I Just Enjoy Things?*  
Doors: 7PM

Friday 22nd September  
**Darren Harriott Roadman**  
Doors: 7PM

Saturday 30th September  
**Rawdio**  
Doors: 11PM

Thursday 5th October  
**Dan Nightingale:**  
*Is Special*  
Doors: 7PM

Sunday 8th October  
**Coach Party**  
Doors: 7PM

Wednesday 11th October  
**Trampoline**  
Doors: 7PM

Friday 13th October  
**The Style Councillors**  
Doors: 7PM

Sunday 15th October  
**John Kearns:**  
*The Varnishing Days*  
Doors: 7PM

Wednesday 18th October  
**Dom Martin Band**  
Delta Fuse  
Doors: 7PM

Friday 20th October  
**Cut Capers**  
Doors: 7PM

Tuesday 24th October  
**Tiger Cub**  
Doors: 7PM

Thursday 26th October  
**Tom Stade:**  
*Natural Born Killer*  
Doors: 7PM

Friday 27th October  
**Noasis**  
*'The Definitive Oasis Tribute Band'*  
Doors: 7PM

Saturday 28th October  
**Rawdio**  
Doors: 11PM

Thursday 29th October  
**Myra Dubois: Be Well**  
Doors: 7PM

Wednesday 1st November  
**Future Utopia**  
Doors: 7PM

Friday 3rd November  
**Steve Williams & Steve Hall**  
Doors: 7PM

Saturday & Sunday 4-5th November  
**Rabidfest 2023**  
Doors: 12PM

Tuesday 7th November  
**The Old 97's**  
Doors: 7PM

# NEWS

email: [editor@nightshiftmag.co.uk](mailto:editor@nightshiftmag.co.uk)

Online: [nightshiftmag.co.uk](http://nightshiftmag.co.uk)



**COWLEY ROAD CARNIVAL** has been cancelled for 2023. The event, due to take place along Cowley Road on Sunday 9th July after three years away, announced the cancellation at the start of June, citing rising costs and a financial shortfall. A statement from the Carnival trustees said: "It is with deep regret that we must inform you of the decision made by the Cowley Road Carnival Trustees to not proceed with the delivery of the Carnival this year. Despite the Carnival management's relentless efforts and extensive preparations to bring back the Carnival after a three-year absence, several significant challenges have led to this difficult outcome."

Among the financial issues were a 177% increase in Carnival service fees; a failure to secure Arts Council funding; a reduction in the Oxford City Council grant, and time constraints and infrastructure costs. Carnival trustee Sarah Connor commented: "We understand the immense disappointment this announcement may bring to our community, stakeholders and supporters who have eagerly awaited the return of this cherished event. Please know that this decision was made with great consideration for the well-being of our organisation and the quality of the Carnival experience we strive to deliver. We remain committed to the Cowley Road Carnival's long-standing legacy and its integral place within our community"

Trustee and Community Champion Amir Ali continued: "Our focus will now shift to exploring sustainable funding options, strengthening partnerships, and regrouping for the future. We will keep you informed of any developments, and we encourage you to stay connected with us through our website and social media channels."

**THE ZOMBIES** are among the latest acts to be added to this year's **Wilderness Festival** line-up. The 60s psychedelia legends will play on the main Wilderness stage over the weekend of the 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> August at **Cornbury Park**. They join already announced headliners **The Chemical Brothers**, **Fatboy Slim** and **Christine & the Queens**, as well

as Arlo Parks, Sugababes and Todd Terry.

Among the other new additions to the line-up are: viral hitmaker Mae Stephens; deep house originator Kerri 'Kaos' Chandler; award-winning DJ Gabrielle Kwarteng; Elliot Schooling & Liam Palmer; Storm Mollison; Groover Armada's Andy Cato b2b with his son Spooky Cash-Cash; violinist Diana Yukawa; Icelandic pianist Eydis Evensen, and duo Cash Cows.

Full line-up and ticket details for the festival are at [wildernessfestival.com](http://wildernessfestival.com).

## BIG SCARY MONSTERS

**SOCIAL** is set to close down at the end of September. The record store and craft beer bar on Cowley Road, which opened in 2020, has regularly hosted live music, including various Divine Schism take-overs and has become a popular hang-out for local music fans.

Announcing the closure on Twitter, BSM said: "We're very sad to say the Social Club will be closing at the end of September. We've had the absolute best three years but we've reached a break in our lease and unfortunately due to skyrocketing bills, we've had to make the difficult decision to call it a day. We'll be planning some events to help see the place out in style, and wanted to give all of you as much notice as possible to say if you'd like to hang out, or perhaps still haven't had a chance to visit, you have until the end of September. We'll be announcing plans and other things as time goes by, but for now; THANK YOU. You honestly mean the world to us and we hope to see you soon."

Follow BSM Social on Twitter at [@bsmsocialclub](https://twitter.com/bsmsocialclub).

**STORNOWAY**'s homecoming show at Oxford Town Hall, and **UNBELIEVABLE TRUTH**'s one-off reunion show at The Jericho Tavern both sold out within hours of tickets going on sale.

Stornoway play the Town Hall on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> October, with the reformed local heroes touring comeback album 'Dig The Mountain', while Unbelievable Truth will play at the Jericho Tavern on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> September to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the release of debut album 'Almost Here', which reached Number 21 in the album charts in 1998.



**GAZ COOMBES** is set to play his biggest solo hometown show ever later this year.

Gaz will play at **The New Theatre** on **Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December**, his first solo show in Oxford for five years. Gaz previously headlined The New Theatre with Supergrass. The show will be the first chance for local fans to hear songs from his fourth album, 'Turn The Car Around', live. Tickets for the show are available from [www.atgtickets.com](http://www.atgtickets.com)

**POTENTIALLY GOOD NEWS** in the search for a new live music for Oxford city centre with the news that Thirst Bar have obtained a live music license for The Jam Factory. The venue closed down in September last year after the tenants were unable to reach a deal with owners Nuffield College but now Thirst have been given approval by the City Council's licensing committee to host live music, as well as film screenings, until midnight from Thursday through to Saturday. It is unknown how long live music will take at the venue when it reopens but we live in hope.

Meanwhile an **open meeting** to discuss the future of Oxford's music scene, including a potential new community venue in the city, will be held on **Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> July** at **Modern Art Oxford** from 10am. The meeting, hosted by Oxford Contemporary Music, is free and open to all but with limited capacity, anyone wishing to attend and contribute should book a ticket via [Wegotickets.com](http://Wegotickets.com). More information at [ocmevents.org](http://ocmevents.org).

**BANDSCANNER** is a new gig guide app for phones, laptops and PCs that lets gig-goers instantly access videos by artists playing in Oxfordshire. Steven Taylor, who designed the app, explained: "I'm always on the hunt to hear new and exciting bands and I found Oxford had so many venues, events and festivals going on I couldn't keep up. I used to spend ages Googling bands from *Nightshift* and festival lines-ups to see if I wanted to go. I had a bit of time on my hands earlier in the year, so I wrote the BandsScanner.net website; it's mainly focused on the music scene

in Oxford and local festivals like Truck and Wilderness. The idea is to provide a simple interface to help people discover new live music in the area by showing the videos of the bands directly. BandsScanner also allows you to keep track of the gigs you like, so if you go to a festival you have a nice interactive schedule rather than a bit of paper that you lose." You can find BandsScanner at [bandsScanner.net](http://bandsScanner.net). Steven is also open to inquiries, suggestions or feedback; email him at [blackwhippy@gmail.com](mailto:blackwhippy@gmail.com).

**STRUMMER ROOM** in Banbury is moving to a new premises in Banbury this month. The record store has a new shop and live room at Cherwell Business Village and is hosting a grand opening on **Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> July**. The Long Time Dead will be playing in-store at midday with *Nightshift* faves The Pink Diamond Revue performing at 7.30. Entry is free and there's a licenced bar, though capacity is limited so get tickets in advance at [strummerroom.com](http://strummerroom.com)

**BBC INTRODUCING IN OXFORD** continues to showcase local musical talent every Saturday between 8-9pm on 95.2fm and on DAB. The show, presented by Dave Gilyeat, is available to listen to online on BBC Sounds.

**MELTING POT** on Get Radio continue to showcase and celebrate Oxford music on their fortnightly Thursday night shows hosted by Rich and Deadly, as well as hosting regular In The Mix shows with playlists from Oxford music luminaries. Local acts can submit music to be played by emailing [info@getmeltingpot.co.uk](mailto:info@getmeltingpot.co.uk).

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# RELEASED

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## RICH RAINFORD

### **‘The Project’**

*(Self released)*

One of Oxford’s hardest working musicians on the acoustic circuit, Rich Rainford has now turned in his most accomplished effort yet. This six-track EP is an enjoyable escape with moments similar to John Martyn’s work with double-bassist Danny Thompson and has tracks reminiscent of Nizlopi’s more stripped-back recordings.

Opener, ‘Compass’, sets the precedent that this will be a more fleshed out offering than previous endeavours, with piano and double bass accompanying Rainford on guitar. It’s pleasing stuff and reminds *Nightshift* of Stephen Fretwell’s debut album, ‘Magpie’. ‘Dominoes’, meanwhile, is a big hitter, with the minor-key-tinged piano and vocal refrains evoking Damien Rice’s finer moments, really showing how far Rich has come. ‘Saved The Night’, verges into slightly cheesy territory, however, though it’s bravely stark and bold; some vocal lines here are a bit too on the nose for this particular reviewer’s liking; in saying that though, if you like material more likely to get played on Radio 1, this one might be for you.

‘Fool’ optimises the wonderful bass lines that run throughout this set of songs and showcases just how much progress Rich has made due to his commendable work ethic and constant gigging. He’s pushing himself and being braver, but one does wonder if this could be elevated even further with some female backing vocals; that being said, it’s a beautiful song in its own right.

A tune that was recently given the Tiger



Mendoza treatment, ‘Raise Your Voice’, is perhaps the biggest surprise on the EP. It works well and has a chorus that demands respect; however, you can’t help but wish that the arrangement was a little different; some drums and sub-bass wouldn’t go amiss either, but still perhaps that just means one should just go and enjoy the TM version instead. ‘Hold On’ is a stunning track that showcases Rich at his best. He’s clearly got a big heart and that comes across in abundance on this closer. It startles you as it takes you on a journey and hits you around the head with lyrics like “A part of me was hoping we’d be alright / But now the bond is broken, it’s out of sight.”

Rainford has been putting the hours in and it’s really starting to show; there is a lot of soul on this EP. You get the impression that this is a very personal record and, for that, we can only commend this set of songs and its industrious composer.

**Caitlin Helm**



## CHIIKA

### **‘Villain’**

*(Self released)*

I grew up watching WWF, long before it became WWE and every wrestler ended up in Hollywood. Anyone who grew up like I did knows it is often more fun to root for the

villain, at least in wrestling, and this is where the new release by Chiika sits too.

The lyrics of ‘Villain’ delve into the complexities of human nature and explore the idea that sometimes we all have a bit of a darker side. It’s a refreshing departure from the usual themes found in mainstream music, as Chiika fearlessly embraces her inner demons and urges listeners to confront their own.

What truly sets ‘Villain’ apart is Chiika’s ability to balance darkness with an infectious sensibility. The song manages to be simultaneously brooding and catchy, making it an enthralling listening experience. It’s a testament to her talent as both a vocalist and a songwriter, merging both Hindi and English effortlessly.

If you were wondering what Taylor Swift’s ‘Antihero’ would sound like if she hung out with Trent Reznor and A.R.Rahman, this is your song right here. If you never considered that combination (and why would you), seek out this single and do yourself a favour.

**Damon Boughen**

## IN-FLIGHT MOVIE

### **‘The EP’**

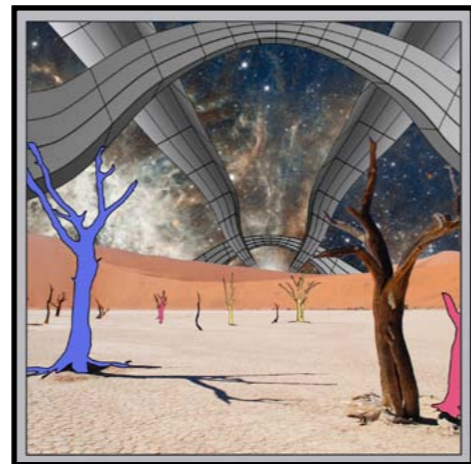
*(Self released)*

The only criticism I have for the brilliant new In-Flight Movie release is that the modest title doesn’t do justice to the exciting sound that has come to fruition in this project. Opening track ‘Aliens’ sets the tone for the rest of the record, establishing their punk-infused synthwave sound, but it also sparks off the EP’s chain of unapologetic experimentalism. The burst of sudden energy the song provides is not only due to the up-tempo verses and the borderline chaotic chorus, but to the impressive drum work that remains consistent throughout the record. The band themselves describe their sound as being driven by “frenzied drums”; while that captures the sentiment, these fills aren’t random and uncontrolled, but testament to the band’s attention to detail. Layer this with some analogue synth and distorted, echoic vocals (the kind that wouldn’t sound out of place on The Killers’ ‘Hot Fuss’) and you’ve got the sound that makes this EP so engaging from start to finish.

‘Worldly Departures’ sticks with the extra-terrestrial theme and the fuzzy production of the first track, sounding like it could have a place on an album like Gerard Way’s ‘Hesitant Alien’. The contrast between the distorted vocals and the distinctive beat comes to a particular sort of climax on this song. The next two tracks, ‘Easy’ and ‘Pure Indifference’, keep the electronic loop as a driving force, but use this as a chance to experiment in other areas; in the latter half of ‘Easy’ the driving guitar really comes to the forefront, and ‘Pure Indifference’ sees the band meddling with the time signature to a really fruitful end.

The EP ends on ‘Promises’, which possesses much the same qualities as the rest of the EP, but with a heavier spin on the chorus. This final track flaunts the coupling of electronic synth with the heavier, more live sound of the drums and guitars. The result is an EP that is teeming with personality. Particularly impressive for the band’s first multi-track release; this is one I’d recommend to everyone.

**Madison Collier**



## GRANT

### **‘The Imagined Hill’**

*(Self released)*

With a history on the local music scene going back to the 1980s, originally as frontman for No Joy In Mudville, and over 20 years as a prolific studio-based solo artist, Grant Baldwin has nothing to prove but he remains a one-of-a-kind singer and musician, and, on the strength of this latest album, neither age nor experience have wearied his invention.

Anyone familiar with Grant’s music will recognise his voice instantly – languidly opulent, almost operatic, with a hint of the gothic about it, not far from Scott Walker in his later years or even John Cale at times. At his best, as on ‘The Cloud Girl’ or ‘In Absentia’, this allows a little portent into proceedings and lends an almost orchestral feeling to tracks that are home recorded almost completely solo (long-time friend and collaborator Martin Newton is the only other person credited here). At other times this can dip into overwrought, as on the lullaby-like ‘Leman’, or sound like Grant is maybe trying a little too hard to sound grandiose.

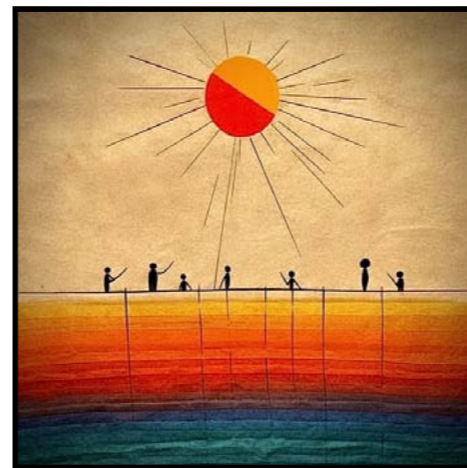
Mostly though this is a fine record, from the stark, spacious psychedelic vibe of the opening title track, through ‘Sublimation’, where the



rich timbre of Grant’s voice reminds us of This Mortal Coil’s Dominic Appleton, to ‘Aubade’, a track that initially sounds muddled but resolves into overlapping layers of voice and instrumentation that captures a feeling of being lost in mist.

‘The Cloud Girl’ is the album’s peak, with Grant at his most musically playful and inventive and the song coming closest to capturing that sonic adventuring that made Scott Walker’s last few outings so intriguing. Well into his fourth decade of music making, it seems Grant Baldwin still has plenty of musical road to run.

**Ian Chesterton**



## THE KITE SOCIETY

### **‘Cult of the Sun’**

*(Self released)*

With previous releases, The Kite Society have offered us a variety of pop options: relaxed loafer swing, surf-edged forcefulness and refined and quirky mini-epics. Cutting across it all, and binding everything together, is the distinctive singing voice of Don Campbell, which has a kind of Jonathan Richman/Stephen Malkmus sardonic slacker friendliness.

‘Cult Of The Sun’ introduces a Quality 80s Independently-Minded Pop flavour to proceedings: chiming, pretty guitars, traditionally clear and direct structures, and beautifully intertwined music and vocals. As with Orange Juice, Haircut 100, Pale Fountains, even The Smiths, this is finely-crafted music, prioritising listenability and clarity.

It’s a refreshingly straightforward song, and when considered with The Kite Society’s previous work, it seems that there is a strong

vision here. There are a variety of musical styles – all within certain melodic and structural boundaries to keep things understandable and coherent – and an overall feeling of buoyancy, positivity and quiet inventiveness. ‘Cult of the Sun’ is Campbell’s “homage to alienation” – “how can we work it out?” ask the mellifluous lyrics – but it has less of a solitary and troubled feel, more of a resigned acceptance that things will probably, fingers crossed, just maybe, be alright. It’s a nice feeling.

**Simon Minter**

## THE PEOPLE VERSUS

### **‘A Little Bit Of Love’**

*(Self released)*

Released during Pride week, ‘A Little Bit Of Love’ – like Emma Hunter’s ‘Love Is Not a Choice’ last year – is a reminder that love knows no boundaries nor pigeonholes, at least as far as the video to the single goes, a neat period piece and pastiche of 80s and 90s dating shows.

The song is also a reminder that in The People Versus Oxford has a great unabashed pop band on its hands, one that has just been flying the local flag at prestige industry showcase festival North x North East in Canada. Over a bubbling, sleek electro-pop backing Alice Edwards’ limpid, crystalline voice performs an expressive vocal hand dance: fluttering, gently soaring, and onto sad-eyed. This is chart-ready pop with an aching tender heart; if it doesn’t exactly sound like a happy ending made song, rest assured – at the end of the video the girl gets the girl and love conquers all.

**Bekti Manish**

## KONE

### **‘Kone One’**

*(Divine Schism)*

Back in 2015 Kone emerged onto the local scene armed with several sacks of sparse post-punk loveliness. The trio, led by Alice Ream and Jonny Munday and joined by former-Youthmovies drummer Graeme Murray, married the disparate strands of post-punk: the darkhearted gothic pop of The Psychedelic Furs; the simple, propulsive funk of The Delta 5, and the cool minimalism of Young Marble Giants. They released a clutch of singles and EPs and had an album in the can, but then they took a step back to have a family and we haven’t heard from them since. Until now.

Because the band are back, and that album finally sees the light of day courtesy of Divine Schism. The risk of releasing something recorded some time ago is that it might sound dated, but that is never the case with ‘Kone One’. Because the band were ahead of the curve back then and now fit in better with what’s going on, as post-punk becomes an almost ubiquitous touchstone for underground and DIY artists.

Opener ‘Are You Sure’ is stark and precise, particularly rhythmically, abiding by the band’s regularly used mantra of “two notes good, more note... unnecessary”, and you can hear the influence of producer Henry Dartnall’s band Young Knives in the sound. ‘A Persistent Sense of Dread’ is more rhythmic and mechanical, the guitars alternately martial and discordant, the twin vocals almost a chant, while recent single ‘Downtown’ is more complex, switching from disco, funk to some kind of psychedelic alt.folk as it crests to something like a euphoric finale. Kone’s ability to build a song without resorting to cliché comes to the fore again on ‘Groceries’, and we’re reminded a bit of fellow off-kilter pop travellers Lucy Leave.

High point of the record though is 2017 single ‘For John Heartfield’, an ode to the heroic anti-Nazi artist that reveals Kone at their melodic best, Jonny’s sombre baritone contrasting neatly with Alice’s more sing-song voice.

Given their dedication to simplicity, both of instrumentation and song structure, ‘Kone One’ is a wonderfully realised and varied album that rewards repeated listen. There was a feeling of potential lost when they went on hiatus in 2017 but if this return heralds a new wave of songwriting from the trio, they may yet claim their place at the head of the local pack after all.

**Dale Kattack**



# GIG GUIDE

## SATURDAY 1<sup>st</sup>

**NO HORSES:** The Harcourt Arms – Electric blues from the local outfit.

**PURPLE ZEPPELIN:** The Cornerstone, **Didcot** – Tribute to Led Zep and Deep Purple.  
**HATS OFF TO EYNHAM:** The Red Lion – All-day Eynsham carnival party including live funk, boss nova and blues from Maracutaya.

## SUNDAY 2<sup>nd</sup>

**THOMAS HEADON:** The Bullingdon – Conversational bedroom pop from London-born, Melbourne-raised, now London again based singer-songwriter Thomas Headon, best known

## Monday 10<sup>th</sup>

### LAURA CANTRELL: St. John the Evangelist

Oddly for such a traditional country singer, Laura Cantrell left her native Nashville for New York in her late-teens to study law and accountancy, and where she's remained since. Early in her musical career she played in a band with future Superchunk chap Mac McCaughan and later future They Might Be Giants man John Flansburgh. She's had the pleasure of Calexico playing as her backing band (on a tribute album to 50s country pioneer Kitty Wells), and her debut album, 'Not The Tremblin' Kind' was declared "my favourite album of all time" by none other than John Peel, for whom she recorded five sessions in the early-Noughties and to whose memory she dedicated her 2005 album 'Humming By The Flowered Vine', so Cantrell's indie credentials are faultless. For all that she is a country singer and songwriter of the most simple, unpretentious and traditional variety, channelling the likes of Wells' singalong weepies into her own acoustic laments. Her country music career has always run parallel to her career on Wall Street, as well as hosting a country music radio show and writing for assorted broadsheets, but in injecting an indie spirit into country she was years ahead of the game.

# July

for his multi-million streaming singles 'Grace' and 'Clean Me Up'.

**OPEN MIC NIGHT:** The Harcourt Arms – Weekly open mic session.

**SUNDAY SOCIAL:** The Port Mahon (3pm) – Free weekly blues, Americana, folk and roots session.

**FOLK SESSION:** The Half Moon – Weekly Irish folk session.

**OPEN MIC:** James Street Tavern (3pm) – Weekly open afternoon

**DAN PRYDE:** The Brewery Tap, Abingdon (5pm) – Covers and originals from the singer and guitarist.

## MONDAY 3<sup>rd</sup>

**ELECTRIC JAM:** The Catherine Wheel, Sandford – Fortnightly electric blues jam session.

## WEDNESDAY 5<sup>th</sup>

**GORDIE MACKEE MAN & HIS RHYTHM BOYS:** St. Nicholas Church, Baulking – Old-time roots music and bluegrass from Canadian fiddler MacKeeman and his outfit as the Prince Edward Island outfit return to the Shire after their show here back in 2018.

## THURSDAY 6<sup>th</sup>

**STEPH PIRRIE:** The Harcourt Arms – Live jazz from the singer and trumpeter and her band.  
**DALBY'S OPEN MIC:** The Fox Inn, Steventon – Weekly open mic night hosted by musician Tom Dalby.

## FRIDAY 7<sup>th</sup>

**JEALOUS NOSTRIL:** The Bullingdon – New band from Razorlight's Johnny Borrell and Mystery Jets' Jack Flanagan.

**BEST OF AFROBEATS & AMAPIANO:** The Bullingdon – Club night.

**KLUB KAKOFANNEY with JUNIPER NIGHTS + FOUR MINUTE WARNING + BRUNO MUERTE + FAITH NYC:** The Gladiator Club – Indie rocking from rising local stars Juniper Nights at this month's KK shindig.

**HOLY FOOLS + THE KIRALS + TERMANN MILUH:** The Jericho Tavern – Bluesy, Tennessee-flavoured Americana from Holy Fools at tonight's Towpath Productions show.

**FIVER + DANIEL MA'ANI:** The Port Mahon – It's All About the Music showcase.

**A FOREIGNER'S JOURNEY:** Fat Lil's, Witney – Double tribute night.

## SATURDAY 8<sup>th</sup>

**LOVE with JOHNNY ECHOLS:** O2 Academy – Love's original guitarist keeps the 60s psychedelic bandwagon rolling as the band revisit classics like 'Alone Again Or', 'She Comes in Colors' and '7 And 7 Is'.

**THE SHAKES + BANKSIDE BLUES BAND:** The Harcourt Arms – Live rocking blues.

**METAL TO THE MASSES FINAL:** The Jericho Tavern – Final of the rock and metal battle of the bands to win a slot at this year's Bloodstock.

**GITTA DE RIDDER + YELLOW COUNTY + SIMON VEANEY:** The Port Mahon – Gentle, rustic indie-folk inspired by Paul Simon and Ane Brun from the Dutch singer-songwriter at tonight's OMS showcase. Support comes from former-Catgod folk Yellow County and downbeat songsmith Simon Veaney, channelling Low, Will Oldham and Sparklehorse.

**OXFORD GOSPEL CHOIR:** The Cornerstone, Didcot – Gospel, soul and pop classics with a summer vibe from the local choir.  
**SYSTEM EIGHTIES:** Fat Lil's, Witney – 80s hits.

## SUNDAY 9<sup>th</sup>

**RALFE BAND:** Truck Store (4pm) – Gently rustic homemade pop from travelling troubadour Oly Ralfe, launching new album 'Achilles Was a Hound Dog'.

**OPEN MIC NIGHT:** The Harcourt Arms  
**SUNDAY SOCIAL:** The Port Mahon (3pm)

**FOLK SESSION:** The Half Moon  
**OPEN MIC:** James Street Tavern (3pm)

**DAMIAN DELAHUNTY:** The Brewery Tap, Abingdon (5pm) – Acoustic covers and originals.

## MONDAY 10<sup>th</sup>

**LAURA CANTRELL:** Wesley Memorial Church – First Oxford gig in over six years from the New York country singer – see main preview

## TUESDAY 11<sup>th</sup>

## WEDNESDAY 12<sup>th</sup>

## THURSDAY 13<sup>th</sup>

**BELLE & SEBASTIAN + SACRED PAWS:** O2 Academy – Long-since sold-out show from Stuart Murdoch's band of sensitive pop warriors, out on tour to promote most recent album 'Late Developers', their twelfth.

**JAMES OLIVER:** The Bullingdon – Passionate roots rocking and blues from James Oliver at tonight's Haven Club show, the guitarist having played alongside Bill Kirchen, Albert Lee and Greg Koch.

**SHAKE CHAIN + PEACH + SINEWS:** The Port Mahon – Intense, challenging art-punk from Divine Schism faves Shake Chain, led by Kate Mahoney, mixing wiry post-punk with Diamanda Gallas-like operatics and a whole lotta performance art fun. Support from Peach, a new

heavy post punk/desert rock band with Ellie of No Violet on vocals, plus local post-hardcore crew Sinews.

**DALBY'S OPEN MIC:** The Fox Inn, Steventon

## FRIDAY 14<sup>th</sup>

**FRONT ROW FESTIVAL:** The Bullingdon – Four-band bill mini-festival style with sets from Candid, Silvi, La Phooka and Velvet Starlings.

**ALL WILL BE WIRED:** The Library – All Will Be Well Records host their bi-monthly electronic music night, this time round featuring dark, whimsical synth-popsters Cradle alongside haunting electronic songwriter and composer Lee Switzer-Woolf, and Cheeks.

**MEANS OF PRODUCTION + FOAM HEADS + NEW ACCELERATOR:** The Port Mahon – Stark post-punk electro-pop and acid house from MOP at tonight's It's All About the Music showcase, plus epic 80s-inspired indie from Foam Heads.

**WITTSTOCK:** The Plough, Long Wittenham – Opening evening of the annual festival with sets from Studio 6, Hazy Soul, The Mighty Redox and Let It Bleed.

**BLUE FRIDAY:** The Midget, Abingdon – Monthly live blues session with Artisan Blues and guests.

**BLURD:** Fat Lil's, Witney – Blur tribute.

## SATURDAY 15<sup>th</sup>

**OH, COMMUNITY!:** Tap Social (2-11pm) – Another great DIY all-dayer from Divine Schism in aid of the Young Women's Music Project and featuring sets across two stages from Supermilk; Fortitude Valley; Lucy Leave; Dream Phone; Duck; Lost Lyra; Wormboys; Frank Lloyd Wleft; Spring Major; BarrelHaus; Atomic Flame; Eliot's Graveyard, and more.

**NINA WHITFIELD:** The Harcourt Arms  
**THE BLACK PARADE:** O2 Academy – 00's emo anthems club night.

**ROOTS & REGGAE MIX NON-STOP:** The Bullingdon – Club night.

**WITTSTOCK:** The Plough, Long Wittenham (12midday-1pm) – Full day of live music and family fun with sets from O Moon; Alcon Blue; Pandapocalypse; Darkgnoss; Superloose; Los Libidos; 13 Burning; Barricane; Beard of Destiny; Zaia, and Zen Lewis.

## SUNDAY 16<sup>th</sup>

**OPEN MIC NIGHT:** The Harcourt Arms  
**FOLK SESSION:** The Half Moon  
**THE MIGHTY REDOX:** The Tree, Iffley (3.45-5.45pm) – Free afternoon session from the local funk, blues, ska, folk and psych stalwarts.

**SUNDAY SOCIAL:** The Port Mahon (3pm)  
**OPEN MIC:** James Street Tavern (3pm)

**WITTSTOCK:** The Plough, Long Wittenham (12-6pm) – Rounding the weekend off are Sarah Knowles; Rockingham; Franklin's Tower; The Mark Bosley Band, and Momojo.

**STEPH WILLIS:** The Brewery Tap, Abingdon (5pm) – Soulful pop covers and originals.

## MONDAY 17<sup>th</sup>

## TUESDAY 18<sup>th</sup>

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



## Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup>

### TRUCK FESTIVAL: Hill Farm, Steventon

The centrepiece of Oxfordshire's music calendar comes round again, a quarter of a century old now and, as with last year's post-Covid comeback event, already sold out, which in many ways makes a preview a bit of a pointless task. If you're lucky enough to have a ticket already you're likely already planning your weekend itinerary, while those without either don't know what they're missing or won't care. But writing about stuff is what we're here for, so here goes.

Truck has come a long, long way since that inaugural event back in 1998 when the Bennett family stuck a couple of dozen local acts on a flatbed truck and an institution was born. These days it's a far bigger (30,000 capacity) and more commercial event and attracts fans from well beyond the county.

This year's headliners are Truck regulars **TWO DOOR CINEMA CLUB**, Leeds indie stars **ALT.J**, and rock duo **ROYAL BLOOD**, who you better cheer and applaud extra loud in case they tell their mum on you.

The latter might just have their arses handed to them on a plate before they play anyway since they're preceded on stage on Sunday by **SELF ESTEEM**, who are easily one of the best live acts currently on the planet, their recent Oxford show a masterclass in both musical invention and performance art and if you're not singing along to 'Fucking Wizardry' with a huge grin on your face you're beyond help.

Elsewhere on the main stage you'll find **THE VACCINES**; **KATE NASH**, and Eurovision star **MAE MULLER** (Friday); **DMA'S**, **MAISIE PETERS** and **CIRCA WAVES** (Saturday), and **THE LATHUMS** – potentially the liveliest set of the weekend of their increasingly legendary gigs are anything to go by – **PALE WAVES**; **PRIMA QUEEN**, and **CIAN DUGROT** (Sunday).

Challenging The Lathums for liveliest set could be **REYTONS** on The Market Stage on Friday, who're joined on the day by **WUNDERHORSE**; **RED RUM CLUB**; **HIGHSCHOOL**; **MODERN LOVE** and **CARSICK**, while the Saturday brings the brilliant **SQUID** to the stage as headliners, with an excellent supporting cast that includes **THE BETHS**; **PORIJ**; **COURTING**; **ENGLISH TEACHER**; **DEADLETTER** and **HUMOUR**. Sunday sees a similarly top-class headline set, this time from **EVERYTHING EVERYTHING**, who'll share the stage with **GENGAHR**; **RACHEL CHINOURIRI**; **STONE**; **SPRINTS**; **BEAUX** and fast-rising

indie-goths **LAST DINNER PARTY**, while opening the stage on the Sunday will be *Nightshift's* own pick, **KANADIA**, who are a band fully deserving and equipped to be playing the biggest stages in the land with their fantastic stadium-sized anthems.

As with more recent years, Truck provides an early opening session on the Thursday, and this year sees **THE WOMBATS**; **SWIM DEEP**; **THE BUG CLUB**; **DEAD PONY**; **JOELY**; **THE UTOPIATES** and more getting early birds into the mood for the rest of the weekend.

Of course, at all the best festivals, much of the fun is to be had exploring the smaller stages for exciting new bands and hidden gems – and possibly the main stage headliners of the future. Pop over to The Nest to see grassroots stars **LARRYPINK THE HUMAN**, **OPUS KINK**; **HEAVY LUNGS**; **LAMBRINI GIRLS**; **GAFFA TAPE SANDY**; **CRAWLERS**; **PANIC SHACK**; **CONNIE CONSTANCE**; **SNAKE EYES**; **THE MARY WALLPERS**; **FEET**; **SHE'S IN PARTIES**; **PERSIAN FURS** and of course Oxford's own electro-pop stars **LOW ISLAND**.

Much of the Oxford contingent can be found on the Veterans & Virgins stage – that corner of the festival site that retains Truck's roots. **LOW ISLAND** make their second appearance of the weekend here and are joined across the weekend by **THE BOBO**; **THE MEZZ**; **LEONIDAS**; **DOG MILK**; **THE KITE SOCIETY**; **DANNY & THE CHAMPIONS OF THE WORLD**; **THE DREAMING SPIRES** (the band led by Truck founders Robin and Joe Bennett, so give them an extra huge cheer); **KATIE ROSE BENNETT**; **MAX BLANSJAAR**; **THE RALFE BAND**; **THE COOLING PEARLS**; recent *Nightshift* cover stars **THE PEOPLE VERSUS**, and quite possibly the best band in Oxfordshire – **THE AUGUST LIST**.

What else to tell? Palm City as ever brings the dance, hosted by legendary local club night **SIMPLE** and featuring **HYBRID MINDS**, **SHY FX** and **DAVID RODIGAN**; there's comedy from **EMMAUNUEL SONUBI**, **JONATHAN PIE**; **SEAN WALSH** and more on the Rocking Chair stage, as well as hip hop karaoke and Barrioke with Shaun Williamson, and really, plenty more.

In an age where festivals seem increasingly to be middle class lifestyle weekends with live music a sideline or distraction to talks or cookery displays, Truck continues to stick to what it's done best for 25 years – bringing the music. Have a great weekend everyone.





Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup>

## REVEREND PEYTON'S BIG DAMN BAND: The Bullingdon

Named in a roundabout way after a stuffed bear Reverend Peyton won at the fair while on a first date with the woman who was to become his wife and bandmate The Big Damn Band have unusual origins and unexpectedly wide appeal. The Rev met Breezy when she was nursing him back to health after an operation on his hand. He introduced her to Charley Patton; she played him Jimbo Mathus. Two decades later they average 250 gigs a year, including, over the years, a tour support to Clutch, gigs with Flogging Molly and a full Vans Warped tour. Not bad for a bluegrass band. They're also frequent visitors to blues and country bars across The States and Canada and went down a storm at Combury Festival a few years ago. They're fiercely proud of their rootsy authenticity – The Rev's dad was an occasional fur trapper and he learned to play guitar on his family's front porch before acquiring his own handmade cigar box guitar to alongside his 1930s steel bodied National. What gives the band their broad appeal is their raw, punky approach to their traditional music – Breezy's washboards often ended up a splintered wreck after gigs and fragments of them can be bought from the merch desk, while Rev's voice is gutsy and full-blooded. Perfect for singing songs called things like 'Let's Raise Some Hell'. They preach authenticity and it's a sermon well worth hearing.

WEDNESDAY 19<sup>th</sup>

**THE REVEREND PEYTON'S BIG DAMN BAND: The Bullingdon** – Bluegrass with punk spirit from the Reverend and his family – *see main preview*  
**MARK LOCKHEART: Iffley Church Hall**

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– Former Loose Tubes saxophonist Mark Lockheart comes to town, having been at the forefront of contemporary UK jazz since the 1980s and having worked with Django Bates, Kenny Wheeler and Norma Winstone as well as playing with Stereolab, Radiohead and Jah Wobble.

THURSDAY 20<sup>th</sup>

**TRUCK FESTIVAL: Hill Farm, Steventon** – Truck's now traditional early-opening evening gets the quarter-century celebrations off with a bang featuring a headline set from The Wombats, plus Swim Deep, The Bug Club, Dead Pony, Joely and more – *see main preview*  
**DALBY'S OPEN MIC: The Fox Inn, Steventon**

FRIDAY 21<sup>st</sup>

**TRUCK FESTIVAL: Hill Farm, Steventon** – First full day of the festival with a headline set from Two Door Cinema Club, plus main stage sets from The Vaccines, Kate Nash, Mae Muller and many more – *see main preview*  
**KONE + JUNODEF: Modern Art Oxford** – A return to action after a near-seven-year hiatus for the local post-punk trio who are releasing their long-awaited debut album on Divine Schism this month. Dark-hearted alt-pop melancholy from Swedish-born, London-based trio Junodef in support  
**BOSSAPHONIK featuring THE KATE LUXMOORE GROUP** – The monthly world jazz dance night welcomes acclaimed clarinettist Kate Luxmoor and her band, playing upbeat original English folk and Afro-jazz and featuring renowned percussionist Lekan Babalola.  
**THE INFLATABLES: Tap Social** – Classic ska and Two Tone.  
**A HEAD FULL OF COLDPLAY: The Cornerstone, Didcot** – Tribute night.

SATURDAY 22<sup>nd</sup>

**TRUCK FESTIVAL: Hill Farm, Steventon** – Alt.j top today's bill, joined by DMA's, Maisie Peters, Circa Waves and more – *see main preview*  
**GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRY with KILLER KOWALSKI + DEAD PATRONS + ZARBI: The Port Mahon** – Spiky, sardonic and uptight punk-funk from this month's Introducing feature stars Killer Kowalski at this month's GTI shindig. They're joined by London's euphoric grunge rockers Dead Patrons, while newcomer Zarbi produces a dark-sounding mix of early UK dubstep, trip hop and jungle, with jazz and gothic rock elements.  
**REGGAETON PARTY: The Bullingdon** – Club night.  
**OSMOSIS The Harcourt Arms** – Blues and roots from the local outfit.  
**THE PINK DIAMOND REVUE + THE LONG TIME DEAD: Strummerroom, Banbury** – Strummerroom Records host the grand opening of their new record shop and live room at Cherwell Business Village, with live music from local rockers The Long Time Dead at midday and Reading psych-surf duo The Pink Diamond Revue in the evening.

SUNDAY 23<sup>rd</sup>

**TRUCK FESTIVAL: Hill Farm, Steventon** – Final day of the festival with headliners Royal Blood joined on the main stage by Self Esteem, The Lathums and Pale Waves among a cast of thousands – *see main preview*  
**JUMPER BOY + PILLOW FORT: The Library** – Snuggle Dice host Sheffield's math rock indie popsters Jumper Boy and Leicester's emo crew Pillow Fort.  
**OPEN MIC NIGHT: The Harcourt Arms**  
**SUNDAY SOCIAL: The Port Mahon (3pm)**  
**FOLK SESSION: The Half Moon**  
**THE PETE FRYER BAND: The Tree, Iffley (3.45-5.45pm)** – Rock and blues classics from the veteran local guitarist and chums.  
**OPEN MIC: James Street Tavern (3pm)**  
**MOJO WORKING: The Brewery Tap, Abingdon (5pm)**

MONDAY 24<sup>th</sup>

**TEDDY SWIMS: O2 Academy** – Roots blues, soul and country from the Atlanta Youtube sensation, touring songs from his 'Tough Love' and 'Sleep is Exhausting' EPs.

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup>

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: The Library

We've been hoping Glasgow's Current Affairs would make it to town at some point for bloody ages and now thanks to the ever brilliant Divine Schism, it's happening, and we're very happy indeed. Not that happy is a particularly apposite word for a band steeped in the sounds of 80s new wave, goth and post-punk and who you could clearly imagine recording a slew of Peel sessions back in the day. The quartet are rooted in Glasgow but were drawn together from all over the place and they're something of an underground supergroup with singer Joan Sweeney having played with Rose McDowall's band as well as Aggi Doom and The Royal, while her bandmates have various played with the likes of Shopping, Anxiety and The Wharves among myriad others. They came together via Glasgow's Spitehouse collective, which aims to promote queer and female-fronted music. A string of singles and EPs has built their reputation and last month they released new album 'Off The Tongue', which shows their musical horizons widening and maybe even brightening. If you're unfamiliar but you love Siouxsie & The Banshees, The Raincoats, Girls At Our Best and the very earliest incarnation of Altered Images – gothic vocals, spidery guitars, propulsive rhythms and a dark exuberance – then you'll love them as much as we do.



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Friday 28<sup>th</sup>

## THANK: The Port Mahon

Any band who describes their album as “grim observations of human cruelty” and claims to be inspired by the terror of nuclear warnings is our kind of band, and Thank are so far up our street they’re practically peering in through our letter box. Which wouldn’t surprise us on the strength of their gnarly, misanthropic noise-rock. We genuinely worry for The Port Mahon’s structural integrity tonight at the Leeds collective come to town as guests of Divine Schism. Their beats are unforgiving, their grooves are monstrous, and their vocals are scabrous. Abstract, abrasive and thunderous, Thank sound like a potent cocktail of Gilla Band, Pissed Jeans, The Body and These New Puritans; they sound like men on the edge of total breakdown and set to do unspeakable things. What do you expect from a band with titles like ‘Sexghost Hellscape’ and a debut album title ‘Thoughtless Cruelty’. It’s seen them support McLusky and win the love of Idles along the way. They’re not without humour though, with frontman Freddy Vinehill-Cliffe infecting his bile-ridden outpourings with a knowing snarkiness and deliver lines like “Tonight Matthew, I’m going to shit in my hands and clap”, and “There’s never been a good band from London”, but it’s fair to say those of a nervous disposition might want to give this one a miss. Your loss; this is going to be magnificent.

**JEANINES + Mt. MISERY + GARDENBACK: The Library** – Double dose of classic 80s-inspired indie at tonight’s Divine Schism show with Jeanines bringing the jangle in the vein of TV Personalities, The Pastels and The Marine Girls, while Hartlepool’s Mt. Misery keep the spirit of Sarah Records alive and kicking.

**TUESDAY 25<sup>th</sup>**

**WEDNESDAY 26<sup>th</sup>**

**ELECTRONIC MUSIC OPEN MIC: The Jericho Tavern** – Free night of grassroots electronic music.

**THURSDAY 27<sup>th</sup>**

**CURRENT AFFAIRS + PARACETAMOL + TONGUE: The Library** – Gothic pop loveliness from the Glaswegian quartet – *see main preview*  
**DALBY’S OPEN MIC: The Fox Inn, Steventon**

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

**FRIDAY 28<sup>th</sup>**

**ANG GUPONG PENDONG: The Bullingdon** – An exploration of the musical possibilities between Filipino indigenous instruments and contemporary musical forms from the longstanding outfit.

**THANK + GENDER WARFARE + BASIC DICKS: The Port Mahon** – Scabrous, misanthropic noise-rock from the Leeds beasts – *see main preview*

**THE DEADBEAT APOSTLES + SHAVEN PRIMATES + PEERLESS PIRATES + CAPTAIN KUPPA T & THE ZEPPELIN CREW: Tap Social** – Album launch show for Shaven Primates’ new album, ‘Birds Aren’t Real’, the darkhearted art-rock outfit’s second and following on from their debut concept record ‘Children of Dirt. They’re joined by punk-hearted blues-rockers The Deadbeat Apostles, swashbuckling indie rockers The Peerless Pirates and a capella mischief makers Captain Kuppa T.

**KNIGHTS OF MENTIS: The Harcourt Arms** – Folk, blues and Americana from the expansive local crew.

**FORGOTTEN GODS + SECOND HOUR + JOKERS PARADE: The Port Mahon**

**SATURDAY 29<sup>th</sup>**

**RIVERSIDE FESTIVAL: Charlbury** – First day of the annual community music festival with sets from Self Help, Tiger Mendoza and more – *see main preview*

**INAIR + DETROIT RUN + CHASING MALLORY: The Bullingdon** – Alt.rock inspired by Fightstar, Arcane Roots and Enter Shikari from Reading outfit InAir.

**SEA GIRLS: O2 Academy** – Sold out show from London’s anthemic indie guitar popsters, in the vein of Magic Gang and Fickle Friends, back in town

**RUSTY STREET PARTY: The Rusty Bicycle** – The East Oxford pub hosts its annual street party with live music all day. Acts confirmed so far include: Bare Jams; Frozemode; Hot Sauce Rhythm & Brass; Floodlights; Aphra Taylor; Danny Melin; Shock Horror, and Nick Cope.

**TERRAFORMS ft. TWISTED INDIVIDUAL: The Bullingdon** – Drum&bass club night.  
**BROOK ELLINGWORTH: The Harcourt Arms** – Nashville-flavoured country.  
**NOT THE ROLLING STONES: The Cornerstone, Didcot** – They’re really not.

**SUNDAY 30<sup>th</sup>**

**RIVERSIDE FESTIVAL: Charlbury** – Dolly Mavies tops the bill on the second day of the Charlbury music bonanza, alongside Flamingo, Bedd, The Mighty Redox and many more – *see main preview*

**OPEN MIC NIGHT: The Harcourt Arms**  
**SUNDAY SOCIAL: The Bullingdon (3pm)** – The Oxford Blues Corporation and guests play the free afternoon session.

**FOLK SESSION: The Half Moon**  
**OPEN MIC: James Street Tavern (3pm)**  
**SCAMPY: The Brewery Tap, Abingdon (5pm)** – Covers and originals from the acoustic harmony duo.

**MONDAY 31<sup>st</sup>**

**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 30<sup>th</sup>**

## RIVERSIDE

### FESTIVAL: Charlbury

For a very long time we’ve known Riverside Festival was a real treasure but beyond the county borders its being recognised too; only last month *The Guardian* listed the Charlbury weekender among its Top 10 best free events in the UK – deserved recognition for the team of volunteers who’ve kept it running through rain and shine for a quarter of a century. It’s also Oxfordshire’s most dedicated local music festival with a line-up of some 50 artists across three stages, the overwhelming majority of whom are from the Shire.

Main stage headliners this year are indie-punk warriors **SELF HELP** on the Saturday and folk-pop singer **DOLLY MAVIES** (pictured) on the Sunday. Elsewhere on the main stage on Saturday are **PAPA NUI**; **TIGER MENDOZA**; **YELLOW COUNTY**; **JUNIPER NIGHTS** and **XITA**, among others, while Sunday’s bill includes **FLAMINGO**; **BEDD**; **THE MIGHTY REDOX**; **THE STANDARD**, and **BEARD OF DESTINY**.

This year’s Riverside features a few reunions to look forward to on the **QUICKFIX**-curated second stage, notably 90s indie stars **THE DAISIES**, who play together for the first time since 1998, and **20/20 VISION**, whose members went on to play in myriad local heavy rock and metal bands, playing for the first time in 15 years. One of those bands was **DESERT STORM** who headline the second stage on the Sunday, where they’ll be joined by **HEALTHY JUNKIES**; **BARRELHAUS**; **LEST WE FORGET**; **WALL**; **SILENT WEAPON**; **HE DIDNT**, and more, while on the Saturday **THE DAISIES** will be joined by **BLACKOUT ORCHESTRA**; a one-off **SMILEX** performance; **ERIKA**; **BLUE SPECTRE**; **CHIIKA**; **GIGSY**, bill topper **SONNY E**, and a set of Bowie songs from Quickfix and Smilex chap **LEE CHRISTIAN** alongside **GRACE DB**.

Beyond the two main stages there’ll be an acoustic music tent as well as the usual kids activities, a wellbeing area and more. For those who’ve made the annual pilgrimage you don’t need reminding what a special festival it is; for newcomers, enjoy something very special indeed – a short walk from the railway station and next to the river. Hats off once again to the volunteers involved and we say again: Riverside Festival is an absolute treasure.



<p><b>STIFF LITTLE FINGERS</b> //EVERYONE IS SOMEONE TOUR PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS FRIDAY 30 JUNE 2023 O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY OXFORD WWW.SLF.ROCKS</p>	<p><b>BRUCE COCKBURN</b> O SUN O MOON IN CONCERT THURSDAY 24<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2023 O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY OXFORD</p>	<p><b>OBITUARY</b> PEST CONTROL BARELY ALIVE IN THE UK JUNE 2023 FRIDAY 8<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY OXFORD</p>	<p><b>SPACE</b> 25<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY TOUR AND MORE FRIDAY 29<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY OXFORD</p>
<p><b>OASIS</b> THE DEFINITIVE TRIBUTE TO <b>DEFINITELY MIGHT BE</b> SATURDAY 30<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023 O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY2 OXFORD</p>	<p><b>SAM OFFENDER</b> THE UK'S No.1 TRIBUTE TO SAM FENDER PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS <b>COURTBETWEENERS</b> UK TOUR 2023 FRIDAY 6<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY2 OXFORD</p>	<p><b>ANTARCTIC MONKEYS</b> THE UK'S No.1 TRIBUTE TO THE ARCTIC MONKEYS PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS SAT 7<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2023 O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY OXFORD</p>	<p><b>ANDREW CUSHIN</b> TUE 17 OCTOBER 2023 O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY2 OXFORD</p>
<p><b>REYTONS</b> UK TOUR 2023 FRIDAY 20<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY OXFORD</p>	<p><b>THE BOO RADLEYS VS GHD</b> CO-HEADLINE TOUR 2023 FRIDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> NOVEMBER O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY2 OXFORD</p>	<p><b>The Smyths</b> 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Tour Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2023 O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY2 OXFORD</p>	<p><b>ERIC TENFACED GONG</b> FRUIT SALAD LIGHTS FRIDAY 17<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2023 O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY OXFORD</p>
<p><b>THE BOB MARLEY TRIBUTE REVIVAL</b> SATURDAY 18<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2023 O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY2 OXFORD</p>	<p><b>DON'T STOP QUEEN NOW</b> SATURDAY 25<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2023 O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY OXFORD</p>	<p><b>CRAIG CHARLES</b> FUNK &amp; SOUL HOUSE PARTY FRIDAY 8<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2023 OXFORD O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY</p>	<p><b>SLADE</b> CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF CUM ON FEEL THE NOIZE &amp; MERRY XMAS EVERYBODY FRIDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> DECEMBER 2023 O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY OXFORD</p>



## LIVE

### KITE FESTIVAL

#### Kirtlington Park

It's Sunday morning and *Nightshift* is sat at the tea bus in between the Town Hall tent and the Pod stage. On the former shadow chancellor Rachel Reeves is in conversation; on the latter singer Jay Foreman is performing rude songs for kids and encouraging his enthusiastic audience to make farting noises every time he finishes a number. The soundclash this causes is bizarre and highly amusing and probably more grown up than anything at PMQs. A few hours later we'll be watching a man in an adult nappy playing sleazy acid synth-pop for a storm-drenched audience. You can't say Kite Festival isn't eclectic.

Kite might be as much if not more about talks, debates and news reviews as it is rock and roll, but it already feels like a welcome addition to the Oxfordshire calendar, although – and let's get this criticism out of the way early – it'd be good to see some kind of local musical representation across the weekend, even on the smaller stages. There's a lot of perfectly pleasant but hardly essential musical fluff on the Bloom stage for example: lots of breathy, folksy acoustic singer-songwriters, although **CASKIE TRIO**'s airy chamber pop is just about quirky enough to keep us engaged for an hour, even if it does err slightly too much toward the genteel, while **JOHANNA BURNHEART**'s looped and treated violin set is relaxingly hypnotic in a Laurie Anderson-does-Grimes kind of way and reminds us at times of

one-time local cult hero Ed Alleyne-Johnson. **MARGAMOO**L, meanwhile occasionally promise to wander into Everything But The Girl territory but are far too tasteful (imagine!) and end up closer to 80s one-hit wonders Swing Out Sister.

The first act we catch over the weekend are the wonderful **PALE BLUE EYES** on the Heavenly stage, their airy motorik pop a perfect introduction to a weekend that mostly basks in sunshine. Their songs are linear, warmly seductive and slightly keening, building to a hypnotic krautrock plateau towards the end. Even groovier are Amsterdam's **MAUSKOVI DANCE BAND**, who mix cumbia and Afro-groove elements into their heady psychedelia. Some passages are loose jamming, others tightly focused and motorik. Even the usually grumpy, leaden-footed *Nightshift* is dancing by the end.

Saturday begins gently with **MIDORI JAEGER**'s plucked cello, sounding more like a double bass than anything, but the nuance and complexity in her music is slightly drowned out by a group on the next table talking about London property prices, and anyway we're already a tad frazzled by a question from the kiddie crowd at the Surprisingly Silly History performance: what's the oldest thing in history? Greg Jenner talks about a two million year old knife but we reckon it's more likely Keith Richards.

**CANDI STATON** is currently on her retirement tour and we have to say, legend she might be, and still a commanding stage presence, her voice struggles to hit all the right notes.

By contract **ALISON GOLDFRAPP** put in a great performance of her recent solo debut but the real treat is a closing brace of 'Ride A White Horse' and 'Strict Machine'.

Saturday's main stage headliners **HOT CHIP** too stick to more recent material with only the odd older banger alongside numbers from 'Freakout/Release'; still, it's a fine closing set for the day and we like to imagine it's the same people bouncing enthusiastically about down the front who were earlier nodding appreciatively to **ALASTAIR CAMPBELL**. We also wonder how and when the hell **JOHN MAJOR** became some kind of voice of reason in an increasingly bonkers political world.

As Sunday comes round and temperatures tip into the 30s, it's fun to see contingents of Suede fans arriving on site, all head to toe in black and surely suffering. Their reward will come later, but after we've all had a good soaking and an electrical storm that throws things into chaos somewhat.

**THE PRETENDERS** have pretty much finished before the downpour and are reliably entertaining and big on hits but **MADMADMAD** have only just set up when lightning hit and they have to pack up again, while **JUNODEF** suffer a similar fate on the Skylark stage

It also means **DECIUS** are forced to play a truncated set. They're the bloke in a nappy and we mentioned earlier. Of course, said bloke is Lias from Fat White Family, who we've previously seen perform completely naked and also wrapped in bread and clingfilm, so a nappy is nothing unusual. The band are though. In fact, for 20 minutes they're simply wonderful, contenders for set of the weekend, as they mix dirty house music with the nastier side of Soft Cell and even some Moroder pulse; it's hardly techno as polite society might imagine it but it is magnificent.

We'd been looking forward to seeing **BAXTER DURY** for a long while but a combination of the storm and his lack of engagement earlier on in the set mean he's only really just getting going before we can hear **SUEDE** kicking off on the main stage.

Now this is how you headline a festival. Seasoned fans know that Suede never do anything by halves and this is rock and roll theatre fit to close any festival. Brett Anderson is in full rock god mode, spending as much time in the crowd as he does onstage and the set is classic, followed by hit, followed by absolute banger; from an early triple whammy of 'Trash', 'Animal Nitrate' and 'The Drowners' through an acoustic 'She's In Fashion', to 'Metal Mickey' and 'Beautiful Ones' this is a bravura performance from a band who might be heading into their fourth decade but still have the energy and fire of young punks. Simply brilliant. And neither a pair of utterly sodden Converse, nor the thought that we just shared a tent (a very large one it must be said) earlier in the weekend with **MICHAEL GOVE** can take that wave of euphoria from us. Tories might take much from us – not least our freedom – but they can never take our music.

**Dale Kattack**

## SPARKS

### The New Theatre

Now in their 70s, you'd forgive brothers Ron and Russell Mael for resting on their laurels; however, right now they're going through one of the most prolific and varied periods of their career. Coming off the back of three critically-acclaimed albums, writing the musical *Annette* and the delightful *The Sparks Brothers* documentary film, they've never been as celebrated.

Tonight is Sparks' first appearance in Oxford since triumphantly owning Common People in 2018. In the intervening years their fanbase has swelled, with a new generation hopping on board for a journey into their surreal vignettes.

Released through Island Records, they've come full circle with album number 26, the same label who unleashed the classic 'Kimono My House' to an unsuspecting public in 1974. With the new LP not yet out and this being the first show of a world tour, Oxford has the honour of being the first to hear new cuts. Opening with 'So May We Start' from *Annette*, swiftly followed by the new album's title track 'The Girl Is Crying In Her Latte', the Mael brothers' intent is as always set to the present, with seven of tonight's offerings lifted from it.

Since Ron perplexed viewers on *TOTP* with *that* moustache and mischievously sinister glare, Sparks have thrown curveballs aplenty and pioneered their way through the decades. With the Giorgio

Moroder-produced 'Number One In Heaven' album they went onto influence numerous synth-pop bands and in turn have crossed many genres. Tonight, we find them in the very form we expect: the unexpected. With a captivating light show and the rest of the band positioned on a raised platform behind Ron and Russell, what's obvious is that everything has been covered to make this live experience as impactful as possible. However, being seated does dull the atmosphere somewhat while taking nothing away from the superlative performance. The only other negative is the lack of material from recent back-to-back masterworks, 'Hippopotamus' and 'A Steady Drip, Drip, Drip'. Saying that, Sparks are always a kinetic live experience with Russell's boundless energy ever-present even after all these years. They could have gone for a hits-packed set but, in keeping with their challenging provocative ways, we get plenty of rarities and oddball choices. Bums are off seats for the magnificent finale 'All That' and a heartfelt speech from Russell.

On the ascent, Sparks fly onto two nights at The Royal Albert Hall, then a Park Stage performance at Glastonbury. Forever inventive, always intriguing, with lyrics ripe for analysis, they're the thinking person's band. Long may they continue to plough their own furrow.  
**Gary Davidson**

## SAM SWEENEY BAND

### Holywell Music Room

Ever since a young Sam Sweeney walked out of his degree course in folk music and straight into the mighty Bellowhead big band that arguably dominated folk music for ten years, the fiddle player has been on the rise.

Now one of instrumental folk super group Leveret and so in demand from the genre's leading lights it's said there might be no English folk musician with more than two degrees of separation from him, he's building a growing reputation as an impressive performer and band leader under his own name.

Tonight is the first gig of a tour and the genial Sweeney's delighted to be here in front of a nearly full house, reminding us this show was scheduled for 2019. It's an entirely instrumental gig, which can challenge our attention span but not tonight. Sweeney starts each half playing solo, a lockdown EP having added to his reputation, and the way his instrument rings makes us strain to see if his fiddle has resonating strings. It hasn't, it's just his skill.

His playing prioritises clarity of melody over excessive ornamentation and grandstanding, and has both an elegance and rawness which can mesmerise. The tune's the thing but while he treats tunes with respect; he opens them up for his band to come in with riffs and Louis Campbell's

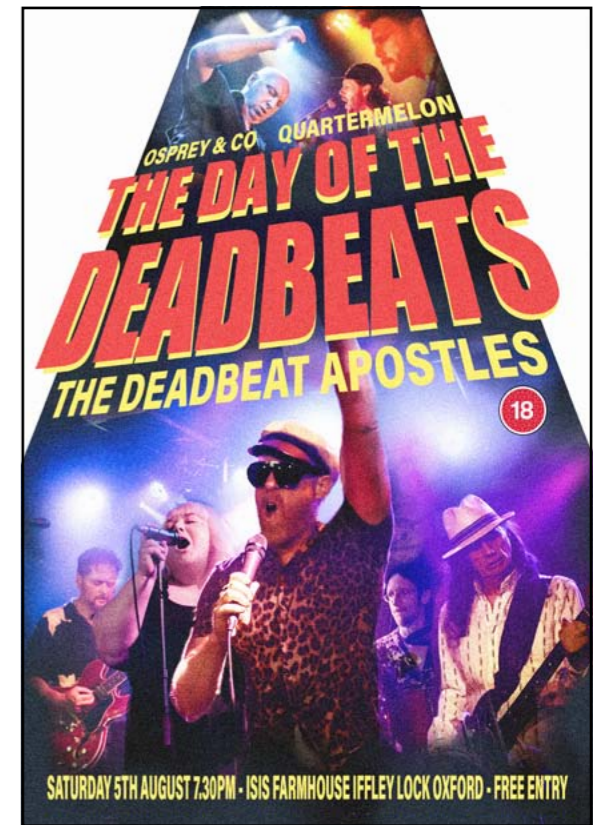
electric guitar effects that often sound borrowed from the best contemporary pop and indie. For a couple of numbers Sweeney and Jack Rutter's acoustic guitar duke it out rock style, face-to-face centre stage, and collectively the band can make a satisfyingly big sound.

If there's a thread running through the gig then it's English dance tunes: morris, hornpipes, and waltzes, some old, some written by Sweeney. One, which he wrote when working night shifts in Slough, not strictly a dance tune, is one of his best, combining an earworm melody, a killer double bass line from Ben Nicholls and wah wah electric guitar.

When it comes to older tunes, Sweeney often finds an unusual version, as with 'Cuckoo's Nest,' while 'Old Tom of Oxford' is all about the raw beauty of his playing. He says one tune he learnt from Dr Andy Letcher, once of this parish and of the much-missed local gothic folk band 'Telling the Bees'. Given this it's no surprise that though going from melancholy to jolly, 'Steppy Downs Road' never entirely escapes the dark side.

The night ends with Sweeney and the band smiling broadly and most of the audience out of their seats applauding and stamping their feet. That says it all.

**Colin May**





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## WOOD FESTIVAL

### Braziers Park

WOOD has long been a leader when it comes to sustainable festivals, but another reason to celebrate this year is that the number of female artists leading or playing in bands is more than fifty percent of those on stage. We are also impressed by several artists movingly celebrating their fathers and/or their mothers in song or by name checking them: Hannah Scott, George Borowski, Hannah White and Jali Fily Cissokho being among them.

The music on the main open air WOOD stage and on the stage inside the Treebadour tent of course is *Nightshift*'s main focus but also we enjoy hanging out at the night-time fire and dipping into the massive range of day-time workshops and talks. We learn, among other things, how to make Ukrainian borscht, and the Sunday morning a capella workshop, superbly led as always, by **KATY ROSE BENNETT**, who gets 100 festival goers singing in harmony in the enclosed space of Braziers barn; the result is a sound that's as stunning as anything that happens on the music stages.

There are many shades of Americana on show and **MINISERIES**' is mixed with plentiful guitar

heft. Their songwriting is a strength and takes us from "finding out you lied to me" and a feeling that "sharks swim in my stomach", via 'Road' to a better place where there's a Crosby, Stills & Nash-style groove and a vocal line, "May you always be alright."

**ORA COGAN** has "sold my soul to the devil." We think that's how she got her stunning voice. Her band are excellent too and together they play alt-folk with a psych edge and rock sensibility. Her falsetto voice over a bass guitar riff is a goosebumps moment. We love her.

Friday headliners **THE HANGING STARS**' Americana is mixed with California sounds and psychedelia, with a streak of Englishness running through it; their 'Black Night Light' ventures to the dark side, predicting "trouble up ahead." Fortunately, instead, we get some tasty lap steel guitar.

On the Treebadour stage there's a foot-stomping finale courtesy of the exuberant **BONFIRE RADICALS** who draw on folk and roots tunes from the UK to the Balkans and beyond. Their all-female front line of clarinet, recorders, viola and vocals is backed by a driving rhythm section; the band aim to entertain, and do. A great way to end Friday.

Early on Saturday we discover **HANNAH SCOTT** has a fine voice and phrasing influenced by Joni Mitchell, writes fine songs, plus possesses a wry sense of humour. If there was a surprise hit of the weekend award he'd get it.

**THE INDEGAL TRIO** are a tabla and a sitar player, both from India, with WOOD regular **JALI FILY CISSOKHO**, from Senegal, on kora. It's a polished performance for a first gig, even though the two traditions aren't fully integrated, and it's a promising new departure for Jali Fily.

**MATT OWENS & THE DELUSIONAL VANITY** hit the WOOD stage with a burst of energy. The band have a big sound that tends towards the rock end of the Americana spectrum. In complete contrast **KATHERINE PRIDDY**, supported by **GEORGE BOOMSMA**, are two pure voices whose harmonising is absolutely beautiful. Katherine's song about the island of Eigg has us thinking, we must go there. Appropriately her set ends with a duet they've written together.

Blues comes into the mix on Saturday night. First with **SIMEON HAMMOND DALLAS**' soulful voice and then with **IDA MAE**, who put on a proper Saturday night headliner show with their blues-rock-infused Americana, featuring some powerful steel guitar riffage.

The fine voices of Festival co founder **ROBIN BENNETT** and **DANNY WILSON** close out Saturday with songs they've recorded with Tony Poole, and we catch ourselves humming the catchy 'Wilson's General Store' as we head for bed satiated with good music.

**JALI FILY CISSOKHO** is back on Sunday and has the audience dancing to his kora before an equally enjoyable set from **GEORGE BOROWSKI & MORA**. Their rock and blues is to be savoured as with George moving to France it's uncertain when they'll be back at WOOD.

The ten-strong **PETE GOW & THE SIREN SOUL ORCHESTRA** somehow squeeze onto the main stage. They're different to all that's gone before with a string section adding well-crafted textures and two brass players punching above their weight. It's a big sound impressively arranged, and Gow himself is in fine voice.

Back at Treebadour, **ANGELINE MORRISON** is magnificent. She accompanies herself on mbira, shruti box or zither when not singing a capella, and the sparse accompaniment heightens the emotional impact of her songs based on Black British experience. It's a deeply moving set that ends with everyone singing the chorus of the optimistic 'Slave No More'.

On the main stage **JOSIENNE CLARK** has us thinking pithy songs with strong melodic hooks, and here's another great female voice on what's a weekend of great female voices. We especially like her songs about songwriting and about gigging.

**THE RAMSHACKLE CEILIDH BAND**, who aren't ramshackle, are the last act on this stage. It's inspired programming. They organise a mass ceilidh which is spectacular to look at and uproarious to take part in.

That's not the end of the dancing though. As those that are able to stay on celebrate what has been one of the best ever WOOD festivals, with **THE DREAMING SPIRES**, the band of festival founders Robin and Joe Bennett. Let's do it all again next year please.

Colin May

## TOM WEBBER / SADIE

### The Jericho Tavern

Sadie Wooster first caught our ears back in 2021 when the then 17-year old's debut EP 'Loveless Loser' was noted for its title track's sophisticated lyrical cadence reminiscent of The Sundays.

Since that interesting start, the young Abingdonian, who hails from a musical family, has confidently picked up streaming clicks with a variety of honest, self-produced tracks which tonight she commits to stage with a short acoustic set that is tentative yet strong in its showcasing of her deeper thinking on teenage relationships in songs like 'Foolish' and 'Golden Pedestal'. They marry the inspiration of Dodie Clark to the haunting tone of Tina Dico and on this evidence, away from Tik Tok, she is worth following in real time.

Those heartening green shoots from provincial Oxfordshire are further added to by Didcot's Tom Webber, his travelling fans bringing a full and convivial atmosphere to the whole evening.

Tom is tall and whip slim to the crown of his swept back dark hair, which has a hint of a Mallen streak to go with the twinkle in his eyes. Like his frame there is not an ounce of flab in his 50s-influenced set,

with crisp, embraceable singles like 'Stop & Think About It' and 'Friends' gunning for us from the off.

Key to this r'n'b locomotion is the slick rhythm section of Ed Hampson on bass and Nick Lowe's son Roy, who sweeps the percussion along with his elegant shuffle beats. But Tom is keen to show that he is no easy-to-pigeon-hole Danny Zuko auditionee when he flexes the mood with soulful songs like 'I Am What I Am', in which he pointedly sings "There's one of me and 7.3 billion of you", demonstrating that once someone decides to be themselves, they can offer something no one else can give. He follows this up with his stone cold classic 'Martha', which is as irresistible as his pet dog it was written for, and then with a shape-shifting party he has the whole crowd panting and singing the chorus to 'I'm Yours', capped off with a cover of Elvis Presley's 'Guitar Man'.

Potential is a loaded word, and demands a lot of its owner. Tonight's show is rock solid enough for potential to clamber on, all the way to the top.  
*Paul Carrera*

## IN-FLIGHT MOVIE / JUNIPER NIGHTS / TIGER MENDOZA

### The Port Mahon

Ian De Quadros has his finger in so many pies Environmental Health probably keep a dossier on him. He's worked with such a roster of people, as collaborator or remixer, that no two Tiger Mendoza gigs are the same, in terms of either line-up or style. Tonight, Ian is joined in person by Dan Clear on guitar – chunky chords, delicate picking, or righteous shredding – and virtually by the fantastic vocals of Emma Hunter and Mike Ginger from The Deadbeat Apostles (whose chunk-hop soul-revue guest spot 'Easy Tiger' is equal parts Propellerheads, Gomez, and Blues Brothers). 'Green Machine' gets a more organic reading than usual with hints of Mike Oldfield, as well as reminding this old Oxford electronica head of The Evenings' version of the Channel 4 News theme. You truly never know what you'll get from a Tiger Mendoza gig... unless you count quality. Juniper Nights also raise eyebrows slightly, their latest incarnation having ditched most of the Radiohead moves for a blurry psych-indie sound that threatens to go stratospheric but never quite does, which we christen faux-gaze.

This is not a criticism, though, and their way with a fuzzy groove is pleasing. 'Stop Motion' is the set highlight, a bonsai Foals tune anchored by bass which is somehow elastic and staccato at the same time. Pairing synths with live drums works so well, it's a wonder it doesn't happen more often. In-Flight Movie are an object lesson, melding the propulsive neon sheen of 80s Tangerine Dream to the long-fuse explosions of 65daysofstatic. They have a track about the flight patterns of red kites, which is about the most perfect concept for Oxfordshire post-rock anyone could ever dream up. Immersive yet often slyly funky, this set is excellent. Perhaps the slow and overly reverbed vocals could be improved, their dour goth tempo often pulling against the John Carpenter purity of the sparse passages and the hyperactive percussive climaxes, but this is a minor quibble. In-Flight Movie are such a strong addition to Oxford's scene that it's surely only a matter of time before someone suggests they work with Tiger Mendoza. Oh, we just did.

*David Murphy*

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<p><b>ANOJNI &amp; THE JOHNSONS</b> MY BACK WAS A BRIDGE FOR YOU TO CROSS</p>	<p><b>JULIE BYRNE</b> THE GREATER WINGS</p>	<p><b>DEXYS</b> THE FEMININE DIVINE</p>
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# WHAT'S MY LINE?

A monthly look at jobs in local music.

This month it's **TRUCK's MATT HARRAP** and he's **A FESTIVAL DIRECTOR.**

**How long have you worked in this job?**

"10 years now... Christ."

**What is one thing you have to do as part of your job that the average person might not know?**

"I know an awful lot about different types of fencing. As you can imagine I'm a real laugh on a night out."

**What's been the single biggest highlight of your career so far?**

"Returning triumphantly in 2022 from our Covid enforced two-year break. Seeing everyone's happy faces as they came back to Hill Farm was so rewarding."

**And the lowlight?**

"The Lockdown years for sure... So, so bleak."

**How much and how did Covid affect your job?**

"Yeah it was really shit. Everyone was on furlough but it just felt so aimless at the time. Not being able to see your mates from work was a real blow."

**Who's your favourite ever Oxford musical artist?**

"Where do I start... Foals were massive for me growing up as a teenager; I even ended up on the stage in the Barn when watching them at Truck way back when; there's some awful



footage on Youtube somewhere. I was brought up on Radiohead, Ride and Supergrass but I'm currently really excited by Low Island; I loved the album they put out last year. I'm also really looking forward to seeing what Glass Animals do next; I saw them last year and their whole show is just absolutely brilliant live."

**What's the single most important piece of advice you'd give to someone wanting to do your job?**

"Good socks: you do a lot of walking. To be honest I think having good socks should be something everyone should invest in, full stop."

**Who's the most awkward person you've ever had to deal with in your job?**

"I'm not sure I can say, unfortunately."

**When was the last time you heard genius?**

"To be honest I saw Beyonce last night and it was probably the best show I've ever seen to date."

**Have you ever compromised your integrity in the course of your work?**

"All the time – I'm a total sell out."

**Would you swap your job for any other and if so, what?**

"Truthfully I've always wanted to have a go at driving one of those ice road trucks just for one trip; it looks amazing. But I'd never swap this job. Ever."

**Are you rich?**

"Ha ha."

**Do you consider your job glamorous?**

"Maybe not glamorous, but it's an extremely fun job and I'm so incredibly lucky that I get to do it."

**What's your favourite thing about Oxford's music scene?**

"Growing up I've always thought it was so creative and effortlessly different from what was going on at the time. Names like Foals, TEED, Fixers, Pet Moon, Chad Valley, Trophy Wife all brought something incredibly exciting to what was quite a bland scene across the rest of the UK at the time."

## INTRODUCING....

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

# Killer Kowalski

**Who are they?**

Killer Kowalski are a three piece indie/post-punk band from the Oxford area, active since February made up of Tom Hadfield (*vocals/guitar*), Alfie Weston (*bass*) and Simon Calver (*drums*). "We mucked about for several months prior to that with lots of name changes, throwaway tunes and a merry-go round of members, but this year has given us a rocket up the proverbial, and now we're keen to make up for lost time." So far, the trio have recorded an EP, the lead track from which, 'Heroes In Disgrace', was *Nightshift's* Top Track in June.

**What do they sound like?**

Cynical and militant but simultaneously humorous punk and post-punk-influenced rock with a strong rhythmic drive, led by some great, hectoring vocals that saw them described as "obstinately unfunky post-punk funk crunk with wiry Mark E Smith-like urchin sneering and snarling."

**What inspires them?**

"Lots of movements in the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> Century, from 1960s mod to 70s punk, 80s indie and ska, 2000s garage rock and spoken word. Hopefully this mish-mash of influences results in something enjoyable to listen to."

**Their career highlight so far is:**

"It isn't related to the band at all, but I had a delightful jolloff rice, stewed lamb and a bottle of Guinness at an African restaurant before this gig we did in New Cross. Yeah, that was pretty special."

**And the lowlight:**

"Arriving at the aforementioned New Cross gig and finding that we're the only band playing as the others have dropped out and that it's very expensive on the door. We played to an empty room with the exception of three bemused Colombian tourists, feeling a bit like David Brent and Foregone Conclusion. Still, it's all part of a band's narrative arc, right? Maybe it'll be portrayed in a low budget biopic one day."



**Their favourite other Oxfordshire act is:**

"Young Knives; they are definitely an influence on the band because of their eccentricity, humour and Mark Corrigan-having-a-seizure vibes."

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

"The Kinks' 'Village Green Preservation Society' would be up there. It critiques and satirises the idealism around suburban British life, but also has moments of real tenderness and nostalgia. Ray Davis was a genius lyricist."

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

"Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> July at The Port Mahon for Gappy Tooth Industries. We always give it our all and we try to involve the audience as much as possible with a bit of relatable patter."

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

"Truck has always been a great asset to the local scene; two of us have had the pleasure of playing the festival a couple of times and always have a great time. It's nice to have a mooch around the record shop as well, I've been eyeing up a first edition copy of Iggy Pop's 'The Idiot' in there recently. Least favourite is it's a very small network and it's inevitable you're going to end up having an awkward soundcheck chat with an ex bandmate, or worse, partner!"

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

The Fall; Squid; The Sex Pistols; Devo; The B52s; Sleaford Mods.

**Hear them here:**

killerkowalski1.bandcamp.com

## HARCOURT ARMS

JULY

SAT 1ST JULY

NO HORSES

THURS 6TH JULY

STEPH PIRRIE JAZZ

SAT 8TH JULY

THE SHAKES +

BANKSIDE BLUES BAND

SAT 15TH JULY

NINA WHITEFIELD

SAT 22ND JULY

OSMOSIS

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## Dr SHOTOVER: The Thicker Man

Ah, Young Jackfruit. Welcome to the East Indies Club bar. We were just discussing the festival season, and I was reminiscing about all the ones I have managed to dodge – Platitude, TV in the Dark, Quornbury, Wildebeeste, Worstival. Plus a few I allegedly did attend in the 70s – Grotty Bikers, Deeply Stoned, Windsor Mudslide, Patched Denim, Toilet Fields. (All freebies, of course, and all featuring interminable jamming sets by the Pink Fairies and/or Edgar Broughton, only made bearable by industrial strength mandies washed down with Watney's Party Sevens). Now, however, a festival is on the horizon which even I am looking forward to. [*Recorder fanfare*]... Ladies and gentlemen, the WICKER WITCH HUNT! Think of a poor innocent victim of cruel hounding by The Woke Establishment (let us call him Sergeant Boris) whose selfless sacrifice would make the pagan gods smile on us and our crops again. Yes, that's right – the plan is to lure said blameless character from his home in modest rural Brightwell-cum-Sotwell to lovely Summertown Isle, in search of a fictitious missing schoolgirl (let us call her Nadine). I don't want to give too much away, but the EIC technical crew are currently working on crafting an XXXL wicker effigy, and we're all gathering bundles of dried grass and rowan branches and charging up our Zippo lighters... Cheers! To the Landlord's Daughter!

Next month: *Midsommar Murders*



'Now that's what I CALL a festival'

## ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

### 20 YEARS AGO

**Psychid** appeared on the cover of July 2003's *Nightshift*, their faces obscured by bird and animal masks as they prepared to release their eponymous debut album on db Records. In typical music industry fashion, the label had just been cast adrift by its parent company BMG, leaving the band – at the time one of the most exciting young prospects to emerge from Oxford since Radiohead – financially compromised and the world at large unable to experience their particular pleasures.

Also out this month was **Dive Dive's** 'Good Show' single, the band having, since their time as Dustball, becoming figureheads for a whole new wave of local bands. In more recent times three-quarters of the band played as part of **Frank Turner's** band, including, famously at the 2012 Olympic opening ceremony.

Elsewhere this month we looked forward to **Truck Festival**, with a line-up that boasted **Electric Soft Parade**; **Mark Gardener**; **British Sea Power** and **Youthmovie Soundtrack Strategies**. A bunch of youngsters called **The Edmund Fitzgerald** were also on the line-up; the band would later mutate and expand into **Foals** and headline the whole affair as well as many other festivals around the globe.

**Sunnyvale Noise Sub-Element** were Demo of the Month for their "confusing patterns of electronic pulses, chitter-chatter rhythms and angular, misshapen guitar lines that sound like the engine of some huge starship being overhauled,"

and a marked improvement on their previously Demo Dumped offering.

### 10 YEARS AGO

As has now become traditional round these parts, July is all about festivals and in July 2013 we had **Truck, Cornbury and Riverside** laid before us like a musical smorgasbord. **Spiritualized** and **The Horrors** headlined Truck, at the time still a two-day affair. They were joined by **Ash**, **The Joy Formidable**, **The Subways**, **Gaz Coombes**, **Ultrasound**, **Dry the River**, **Toy** and **Public Service Broadcasting**, while the local contingent included **Gunning For Tamar**, **Wild Swim**, **Beta Blocker** & **the Body Clock**, **Ags Connolly**, **Von Braun** and **Jordan O'Shea**.

Cornbury, meanwhile, featured headline sets from **Squeeze**, **Keane** and **Van Morrison**, although the star turns over the weekend came from **Seth Lakeman**, **Bellowhead**, **Echo & the Bunnymen**, **Hugh Cornwell** and the irrepressible **Wilko Johnson**.

The locally sourced Riverside saw sets from Mick Quinn's **DB Band**, alongside **The Original Rabbit Foot Spasm Band**, **Death of Hi-Fi**, **The Brickwork Lizards**, **The Epstein**, **Tamara & the Martyrs** and **Million Faces**. Tamara now fronts **Death of the Maiden** while previous Demo Dumper fodder Million Faces reinvented themselves rather splendidly as **Leader**.

And a glance at the demo pages this issue saw newcomers **Little Brother Eli** in the Dumpster; they've since been on the front cover twice. See

### THIS MONTH IN OXFORD MUSIC HISTORY

kids, even the best bands start out with a kicking. It's character-building, yeah.

### 5 YEARS AGO

No-one so far as we know ever gave **MSRY** a kicking but they did enough self-inflicted damage that they had the bruises and bandages to show for it. The band raged out of the front cover of July 2018's *Nightshift* with singer and one-man hand grenade Kial Churcher declaring "when you feel down, pick up a guitar, turn your thoughts into lyrics, turn your negativity into something worthwhile, otherwise you'll waste your life," while also adding "hardcore and metal should be about creating positivity in a negative space."

Sadly the band have since split but back then two local favourites were reforming: **Goldrush** were back in action for the first time since their final album 'The Heart Is The Place', playing at **Truck**, the festival they founded in 1998, while **Wonderland** has regrouped for their first shows since their split in 1999, the band also playing at Truck as well as **Charlbury Riverside**.

For its part, Truck hosted **Friendly Fires**; **George Ezra**; **The Courteeners**; **De La Soul**, and **Jake Bugg** alongside **Editors**; **Everything Everything**; **Circa Waves**, and **Peace**, while over **Cornbury** way we saw headline sets from **Alanis Morissette**, **UB40** and **Squeeze** (again). Showing other festivals how it should be done, Cornbury's Saturday line-up was entirely female, with **Mavis Staples**, **Nina Nesbitt**, **Pixie Lott**, **Grainne Duffy** and **PP Arnold** among the stars.

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# TRACKS

## Yin & Yang Audio

Top track of the Month wins a free mix/master from Yin & Yang Audio, courtesy of Umair Chaudhry. Visit [www.yinandyangaudio.co.uk/nightshift](http://www.yinandyangaudio.co.uk/nightshift)

## TOP TRACK

### THE FOAM HEADS

Time was, if you wanted fully apocalyptic headlines you'd pop to Hyde Park Corner to listen to actual manic street preachers. These days The End of the World is Nigh is a mainstream media concern and the average George Monbiot column makes the late, great Cormac McCarthy read like a jolly Enid Blyton romp. *Nightshift*, meanwhile, has even given up chucking ice cubes into the sea to help the polar bears (spot the local music reference, trivia fans!) and is feeling a sense of creeping guilt about turning on the tiny electric desk fan that serves as our office air-con as we sit down to decide which aspiring young musician we're going to make into a global pop icon on a planet that might well be a desert by the time they put their debut album out. Oh well, no music on a dead planet and all that but a planet without music is dead to us anyway so here goes... The Foam Heads have shown their eco credentials previously with their debut single 'Waste Of The World' and this new track, 'New Desire' was, apparently, inspired by David Attenborough's COP26 address, though on the face of it it's less explicitly political. What it is, though, is funky. And a bit anthemic. The band have always had a big sound and here they marry those spangled guitar chords with a 70s funk-rock vibe, which makes the song sound a bit like early U2 jamming with Funkadelic at their rockiest. It's a bit bombastic for sure but when your chorus consists of a repeated "Go now go, go, go, I said go, go, go" then sensitive understatement is never going to work. Actually, the more we listen to it, the more 'New Desire' reminds us of Happy Mondays, again at their rockiest. Hey, if we can't have justice or save the planet, we might as well have a bloody good dance as we slide towards the abyss, right kids?

### STEADY HABITS

Steady Habits is the new(ish) project of Sean Duggan who local Americana fans might remember from his time in the

excellent Loud Mountains with his brother Kevin a few years back. As Steady Habits he retains the rootsy vibe but goes more fully into blues rocking, while aiming for a more intimate sound. The result isn't a million miles from Tom Petty or Ryan Adams at times; it lacks some of the punch and soul of his old band but it's well orchestrated and sounds like a decent soundtrack to drinking in a Mid-West blues bar. The song title too, 'I'd Rather Be Alone', is something *Nightshift* can get on board with. Well not completely alone obviously. A couple of bottles of decent red wine wouldn't go amiss. And some crisps. And a litter of kittens to play with. There we go: perfect night in.

### PET TWIN

After his slight but promising debut offering 'Float Along', reviewed in April's issue, Pet Twin – who also plays in local electro-indie rockers Juniper Nights – returns with a more fulsome song, this one titled 'Cabrini Green', inspired, he tells us, by the *Candyman* films. Not that it's a vicious slasher goth-rock track, but it does have a bit of a dark-hearted broodiness about it with dappled guitars and yearning husky-dusky vocals that hint at midnight surf shack soul-bearing open mic sessions. The *Candyman* reference is appropriate given the rich, honeyed vocals here, which really lift the song while simultaneously taking it deeper and darker. Not that it's a gothic dirge – it's surprisingly light on its pins – but you could imagine this turning up in a more introspective moment in an old David Lynch movie, and that's pretty high praise, right there.

### TOM COOPER

Tom Cooper is a student on a year in industry in Oxford who's just discovered *Nightshift* and encourages us to keep up the good work while hoping he doesn't end up in the Toilet Track. A newcomer to both town and the magazine, poor Tom doubtless hasn't learned through cruel experience just what bastards we are (only because it annoys the whiney "Be kind" emo wimps in Internetland, not because we mean it or anything). If he had, he might be more reticent to submit this particular track for our especial attention. It's called '15', which we can only surmise is because it was Melody Demonstration Button 15 he pressed on his new keyboard to create it. Because it doesn't sound like there was a huge amount of human input into this generic lounge-level instrumental jazz-funk that sounds like it might have slipped out of an imagined 1990s Acid Jazz label easy listening compilation, doubtless subtitled "For dinner parties with groove". It's all very tasteful, but also bereft of

funk or soul. And then it hits us: this, not malignant cyber warfare or killer cyborgs, is what the AI apocalypse will look like. Not for us the blissful oblivion of instantaneous thermonuclear death; the computers are going to numb us with anodyne lounge jazz so we can all be turned into batteries to fuel their post-apocalyptic world. Still, you avoided the Toilet Track Tom; seems there are worse things out there than complete human extinction, as we'll discover.

### JORANIUM

Now this is rather more like the soundtrack to the-end-of-it-all we all generally imagine. Joranium's name makes them sound like the sort of miracle element that turns up in sci-fi stories and is the subject of vast, planet-destroying wars for ownership of its space-folding/life-extending/erection-enhancing (delete as applicable/decent) properties. Heck, the project is the work of Joram van Rheede, which sounds like an intergalactic mercenary, who plays in local rockers Thvnderhead (oh come on, this just gets better and better – surely a type of star-tripping assault ship, right?). The instrumental track here is titled 'Uranium/ Geranium' and is mainly based on deep synthetic drones layered with urgent, coruscating electronic melody lines that try and mostly succeed in evoking chases across vast sand dunes or ruined cityscapes on far-away worlds. That it all sounds like it was made in the depths of the 1980s only enhances the feeling we should be munching popcorn and watching Snake Plissken or Paul Atreides do heroic, violent stuff to bad guys.

### PORT IN A STORM

Port In A Storm's last offering was titled 'State of the World' and this new one is called 'Technology', so we're guessing they've been watching the same news features as us, but this, musically at least, feels pretty optimistic, a shimmering, synthy slice of prog-pop, almost like Styx had emerged as an 80s Europop band. It's certainly got a hefty side order of cheese about it (notably the synthesised vocals) and the technology they're singing about and using suggests the future as imagined by 1950s sci-fi writers, heady on possibilities rather than terrified of what might come to pass. All in all, a rather jolly diversion from grim reality and a shard of light in the bunker of doom here at *Nightshift* HQ. Heck, some ungainly robot dancing might even have broken out.

### AAGENTISTO

Aegentisto is the solo project of Alex Watt, a musician from New Zealand

Send tracks, downloads or streaming links for review to [editor@nightshiftmag.co.uk](mailto:editor@nightshiftmag.co.uk). If you can't handle criticism, please don't send us your music. Same goes for your stupid, over-sensitive mates. New Kinder World rules do not apply here, you bunch of sanctimonious hippies.

living in Oxford, he tells us in a rare moment of cohesion. Because his one track here, 'Tangerine Glow', is a sliver of soporific shoe-gaze that seems to exist with no discernible form. It's as if Slowdive lost the power of speech and chord structure and simply splurged a slime mould of spangly, strummy, mumbly stuff all over the floor. In slow motion, obviously. Just over halfway through it fades out to be replaced by someone randomly talking about nature and flowers and trees expressing themselves, and then wobbles back in again. An 'Afterglow' remix initially appears to be exactly the same track but even more slowed down, even though it's exactly the same length. Closer listening suggests it's rather more cohesive even as it's even more drifty. There's even a hint of My Bloody Valentine in the subtle note bending. Now, Slowdive and My Bloody Valentine are – you'll be shocked to learn, no doubt – huge favourites of ours here at *Nightshift* but this, while ambiently inoffensive, seems to take a detractor's opinion of those bands as its influences rather than their actual music, so we get a foggy drift of random guitar effects and sighing instead of the sonic exploration we crave.

## TOILET TRACK

### MORNING'S THIEF

At this stage we're guessing there's a misprinted *Shoegaze For Dummies* manual out there that too many musicians have picked up in a bargain bookshop and followed to the letter since Morning's Thief, who we seem to remember being a decent enough indie project previously, have gone down a very similar path to Aegentisto, glooping out some basic, slow-motion guitar spangle that sounds about as ready to riot as the exhumed corpse of a long since expired arthropod. Talking of which, this song – we say 'song', though 'sound of a small dog suffering in the next room' might be a more accurate description – is called 'Bug Song' and is about hoovering up a spider in the bath. So we get lyrics like "Tiny spider in the bath tub, eight legs cannot outrun the life you ought to have / I guess I could fish you out but I've made other plans" sung in a lethargic, keening whine that sounds like the musical incarnation of a paper cut. We're really not sure which is worse – cruelty to our tiny invertebrate friends or inflicting this musical cruelty on us. And at a time when we're all meant to be encouraging biodiversity. A plague of killer bees upon your house, Morning's Thief, for stealing ten minutes of our precious time.

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JUL FRI 07

THE BULLINGDON

**JEALOUS NOSTRIL**

PROJECT OF JOHNNY BORRELL (RAZORLIGHT)

+DANNY MELLIN

OCT TUE 10

JERICHO TAVERN

**HONEYBLOOD**

INDIE GARAGE ROCK

OCT TUE 24

THE BULLINGDON

**TIGERCUB**

EXPERIMENTAL GROOVE-LADEN ROCK

JUL SAT 15

O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY2

**BLACK PARADE**

00'S EMO ANTHEMS

OCT WED 11

THE BULLINGDON

**TRAMPOLINE**

WELSH ALTERNATIVE ROCK

OCT SAT 28

O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY2

**ANDY BELL'S GLOK**

ELECTRONIC AND PSYCH

JUL SAT 29

THE RUSTY BICYCLE

**STREET PARTY**

BEAR JAMS, FROZEMODE, HOT SAUCE RHYTHM AND BRASS  
NICK COPE & MORE

OCT THU 12

THE BULLINGDON

**BARE JAMS**

MIX OF OF REGGAE, DUB, SOUL,  
POP, INDIE AND SKA

NOV WED 01

THE BULLINGDON

**FUTURE UTOPIA**

COLLABORATIVE PRODUCER WORKING WITH  
ARLO PARKS, DAVE, KAE TEMPEST

SEP SUN 17

O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY2

**RIOT JAZZ BRASS BAND**

RIOT JAZZ MAKES PEOPLE HAPPY

OCT FRI 13

O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY

**DUTTY MOONSHINE  
BIG BAND**

"VILLAIN" ALBUM LAUNCH EVENT

NOV SAT 04

O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY

**THE DUALERS**

UPBEAT REGGAE & SKA  
+ ZAIA, TONY NANTON

SEP SAT 23

O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY2

**THE JOY FORMIDABLE**

RIFF SPLITNERED ALT-ROCK

OCT WED 18

O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY

**BOMBAY  
BICYCLE CLUB**

ALBUM LAUNCH EVENT

NOV SAT 11

O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY2

**THE 900**

TONY HAWKS PRO SKATER COVER BAND

OCT SUN 08

THE BULLINGDON

**COACH PARTY**

EXPERIMENTAL INDIE ROCK QUARTET

+GIRL SCOUT

OCT FRI 20

THE BULLINGDON

**CUT CAPERS**

9-PIECE BRASS, FUNK, DANCE AND HIP-HOP

NOV MON 13

THE BULLINGDON

**PALE BLUE EYES**

POP HOOKS AND PSYCH-ROCK SOPHISTICATION

+CIEL

OCT SUN 08

JERICHO TAVERN

**SNAYX**

FEROCIOUS PUNK ROCK  
+SHELF LIVES, MONAKIS

OCT FRI 20

JERICHO TAVERN

**RUSTY SHACKLE**

SOUTH WALES FOLK-ROCK

NOV FRI 17

THE BULLINGDON

**TOM MCGUIRE  
& THE BRASSHOLES**

FUNK SOUL ENSEMBLE