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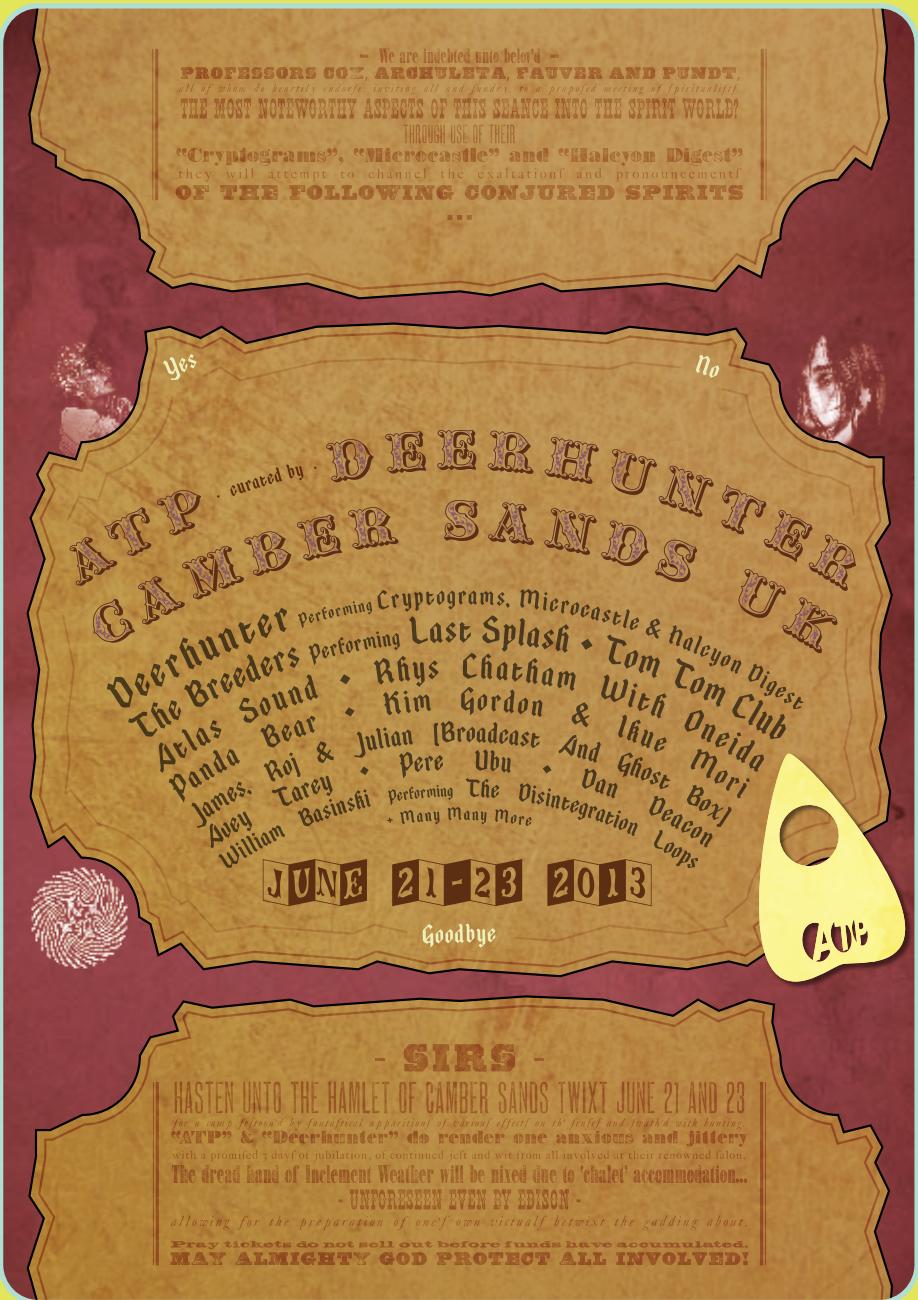
Theo Parrish | Darkstar | Dam Mantle

Pissed Jeans | Mr Bingo

DAUGHTER

Art. Music. Fam.

27



EAT YOUR OWN EARS PRESENTS

DUOLOGUE

SPECIAL GUESTS

HOXTON BAR & KITCHEN

Wednesday 13 February

ESBEN & THE WITCH

PLANNINGTOROCK (DJ SET)

SCALA Tuesday 26 February

CHARLIE BOYER & THE VOYEURS

SPECIAL GUESTS

HOXTON BAR & KITCHEN

Monday 4 March

EGYPTIAN HIP HOP

SPECIAL GUESTS

XOYO Monday 4 March

THE SEA AND CAKE

SPECIAL GUESTS

SCALA Wednesday 6 March

BROLIN

SPECIAL GUESTS

ELECTROWERKZ Wednesday 6 March

SEAMS

SPECIAL GUESTS

ELECTROWERKZ Thursday 21 March

SINKANE

SPECIAL GUESTS

HOXTON BAR & KITCHEN

Wednesday 3 April

RACHEL ZEFFIRA

SPECIAL GUESTS

UNION CHAPEL Tuesday 9 April

A HAWK AND A HACKSAW

SPECIAL GUESTS

THE LEXINGTON Wednesday 17 April

BRASSTRONAUT

SPECIAL GUESTS

THE LEXINGTON Wednesday 24 April

CHILLY GONZALES

CADOGAN HALL Wednesday 1 May

FUCKED UP TITUS ANDRONICUS

METZ

ELECTRIC BALLROOM

Thursday 30 May

THE XX —NIGHT AND DAY

OSTERLEY PARK

Sunday 23 June

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last.fm

ANIMAL COLLECTIVE
BAT FOR LASHES
AMATEUR BEST
CHARLIE BOYER
& THE VOYEURS
CHVRCHES
CONNAN MOCKASIN
DAPHNI
DARK DARK DARK
DAUGHTER
DISCLOSURE
DJANGO DJANGO
DO MAKE SAY THINK
EGYPTIAN HIP HOP
EMERALDS
EVERYTHING
EVERYTHING

VICTORIA PARK LONDON
SATURDAY 25TH MAY

FOUR TET
FRANCOIS & THE
ATLAS MOUNTAINS
FUCKED UP
GINGER BAKER
JAZZ CONFUSION
HESSLE AUDIO DJS:
BEN UFO
PANGAEA
PEARSON SOUND
HOW TO DRESS WELL
JACQUES GREENE live
JAMES YORKSTON
JOHN COOPER
CLARKE
JULIO BASHMORE
KAREN

FIELD DAY

KURT VILE
MOUNT KIMBIE
MULATU ASTATKE
PALMA VIOLETS
SAVAGES
SETH TROXLER
SHED
SOLANGE
SPLASHH
STUBBORN HEART
THOMAS MAPFUMO
TIM BURGESS
TNGHT
VIRALS
VONDELPARK
WILD NOTHING

The coarse
quality newspaper
ROUCH TRADE FACT PIA THE GUIDE OF
BEST FIT DUMMY car steel sharon QUIETUS last.fm
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EASTERNELECTRICS.COM

2–4 August 2013

Eastern Electrics

Festival

Âme
Anja Schneider
Ata
Ben UFO
Blawan
Cassy
Catz N Dogz
Chris Liebing
Claude VonStroke
Climbers
Clockwork
Damian Lazarus
Dixon
DJ Sneak
DJ Tennis
Droog
Dyed Soundorom
Eats Everything
Ellen Allien
Francesca Lombardo
Gavin Herlihy
Geddes
Guy Gerber
Heidi
Joy Orbison
Justin Martin
Krankbrothers
Levon Vincent
Magda
Maurice Fulton
Maxxi Soundsystem
Michael Mayer
No Artificial Colours
Pan-Pot
PBR Streetgang

Prosumer
Richy Ahmed
Roman Flügel
Seth Troxler
Subb-an
Theo Parrish
**& 60 More Acts
+ Some Of Our
Biggest Headliners
Still To Come**

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including some of
our biggest headliners
announced Tuesday
5th February**

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electronic music
With Arenas from
Eastern Electrics plus...**



FUTUREBOOGIE
SECONDHAND

JUNK
DEPARTMENT

♠ JUST JACK

krankbrother



CLR

mulletover.

secretsundaze

SATURDAY 25TH MAY



LOVE SAVES THE DAY

CASTLE PARK BRISTOL BS1 3XD

“FEAT BONOBO LIVE”

4OURS / ALUNAGEORGE LIVE / ÂME / APEX / APPLEBOTTOM / BABY MALC / BICEP / BONDAX / BREAKAGE / BROMLEY
CHRISTOPHE & LUKAS / CRAZY P LIVE / CRAZYLEGS / CRUMP & KEADY / DEETRON / DIGITAL SOUND BOY
DISMANTLE / DUBIOUS & A.QUAKE / DUSKY / EATS EVERYTHING / ETON MESSY / FEEL THE REAL / FUTUREBOOGIE
HALF NAKED / JACKMASTER / JAY-L / JOY ORBISON / JUS NOW / JUST JACK / MARCO BERNARDI / MAXXI
SOUNDSYSTEM / MICKEY PEARCE / MONKI / MR SCRUFF / OUTBOXX / PALEMAN / PARDON MY FRENCH / ROSES
GABOR / RUDIMENTAL LIVE / SETH TROXLER / SHAMBARBER / SHANTI CELESTE / SHAPES / SHY FX / SLY-ONE / THE
DANCE OFF / THE HOUSE OF BOO-DIOR / THE OTHER TRIBE LIVE / TOM RIO & DAN WILD / WAIFS & STRAYS

••• WWW.LOVESAVESTHEDAY.ORG •••

2nd

ROOM ONE

THE NOTHING

SPECIAL

CRAIG RICHARDS

SCUBA

DENSE & PIKA (LIVE)

ROOM TWO

TERRY FRANCIS

BLAWAN

BARKER & BAUMECKER
(LIVE)

ROOM THREE

TSUBA RECORDS

KEVIN GRIFFITHS

SPENCER PARKER

MATTHEW STYLES

9th

ROOM ONE

CRAIG RICHARDS

LIL'LOUIS

WBEEZA (LIVE)

GEORGE FITZGERALD

ROOM TWO

WIGGLE

TERRY FRANCIS

NATHAN COLES

EDDIE RICHARDS

TIGERSKIN (LIVE)

ROOM THREE

OSTGUT TON

STEFFI

VIRGINIA

fabric FEBRUARY 2013

77a Charterhouse Street, London EC1.

Opening times: 11pm - 8am. Check www.fabriclondon.com for advance tickets, prices and further info.

fabric operates a 24HR drinking license.

A selection of recordings from these events will be available to hear again on www.fabriclondon.com/fabricfirst

fabric 67: Zip - Out Now.

fabric 68: Petre Inspirescu - 18th February.

fabric 69: Sandwell District - 15th April.

Art Direction and Design by plusyes.

16th

ROOM ONE

MANTASY

MICHAEL MAYER

CRAIG RICHARDS

JOHN HECKLE (LIVE)

ROOM TWO

TERRY FRANCIS

BEN KLOCK

STEVE RACHMAD

ROOM THREE

FUTUREBOOGIE

PBR STREETGANG

WAIFS & STRAYS

FUTUREBOOGIE DJ'S

23rd

ROOM ONE

APOLLONIA:

DAN GHENACIA,

DYED SOUNDOROM,

& SHONKY.

GUILHEM MONIN &

STEPHANE GHENACIA

ROOM TWO

AUS MUSIC

WILL SAUL

FRED P

CLOSE (A/V LIVE)

OCTOBER

ROOM THREE

WOLF MUSIC

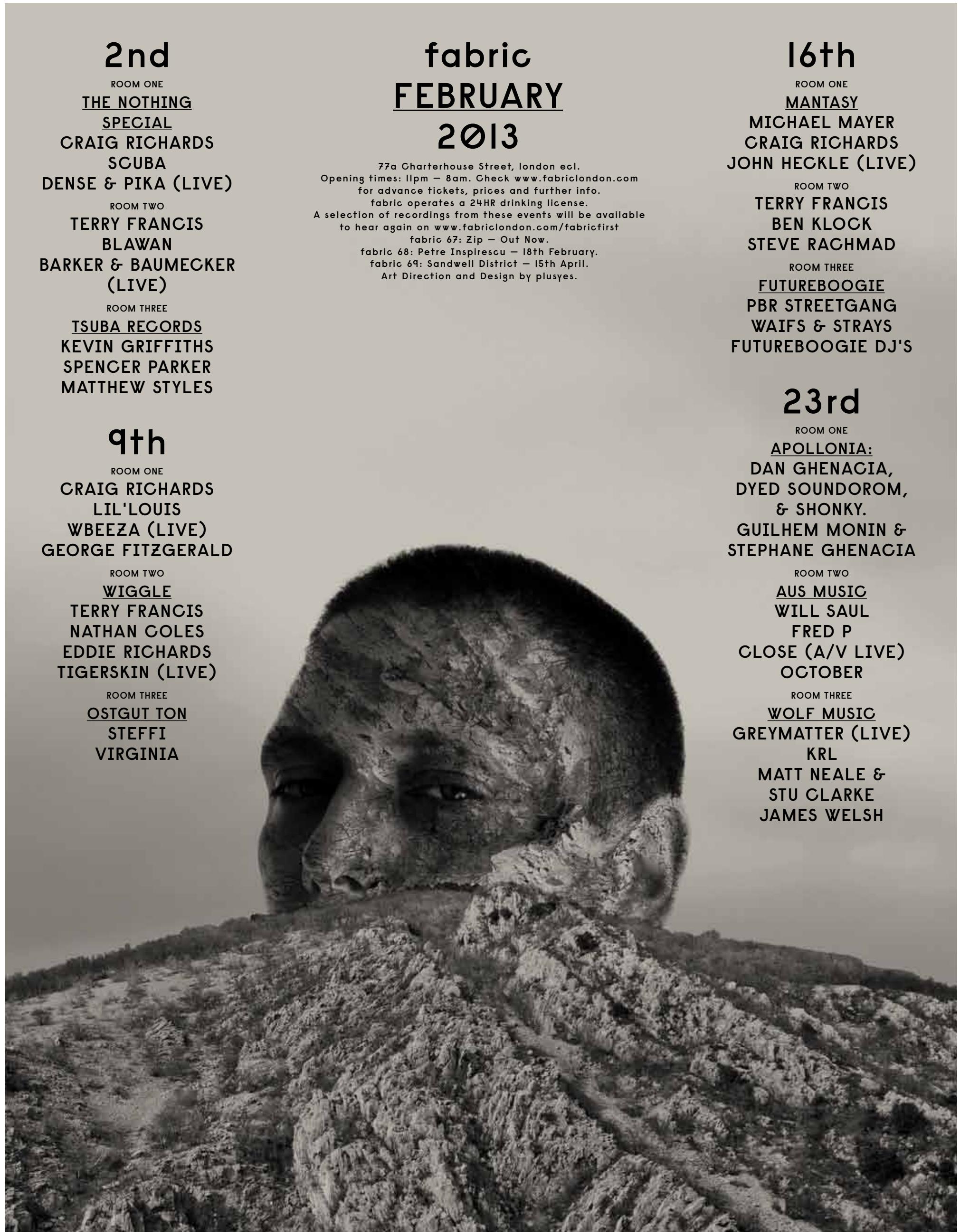
GREY MATTER (LIVE)

KRL

MATT NEALE &

STU CLARKE

JAMES WELSH





| S U E 2 7

Photographer: Alexander Jordan
alexanderjordan.co.uk
Styling: Sarah Barlow
Hair and Make up: Claire Carter
Featuring: Elena Tonra // Daughter
Elena wears: Shirt | CORPUS
 Necklace | Urban Outfitters

For those who are cracked let the light in:

Respect

Diggy
 Kendrick Lamar
 Freya van Lessen
 Carol Black
 Alex Hall
 James Balmont
 Kyle Parsley
 Emma Piercy
 James Ratcliffe
 Chris Greenwood
 Matt Aitken

Executive Editors

Thomas Frost
tom@crackmagazine.net

Jake Applebee
jake@crackmagazine.net

Editor
 Geraint Davies
geraint@crackmagazine.net

Marketing / Events Manager
 Luke Sutton
luke@crackmagazine.net

Art Direction & Design
 Jake Applebee

Staff Writers
 David Reed
 Lucie Grace

Fashion
 Sarah Marie Collins
 Andres De Lara
 Eisaku
 Lesley Vye
Akira Yamada

Contributors
 Christopher Goodfellow
 Mystic Greg
 Tim Oxley Smith
 James T. Balmont
 Josh Baines
 Tom Howells
 Robert Bates
 Adam Corner
 T. C. Flanagan
 Duncan Harrison
 Billy Black
 Alex Hall
 Jack Clemoes
 Thomas Painter
 Emilee Jane Tombs
 Matt Riches

Illustrations
 Lee Nutland
 Tom Mead
 James Wilson

Crack Magazine
 Office 1
 Studio 31
 Berkeley Square
 Clifton
 Bristol
 BS8 1HP
 0117 2391219

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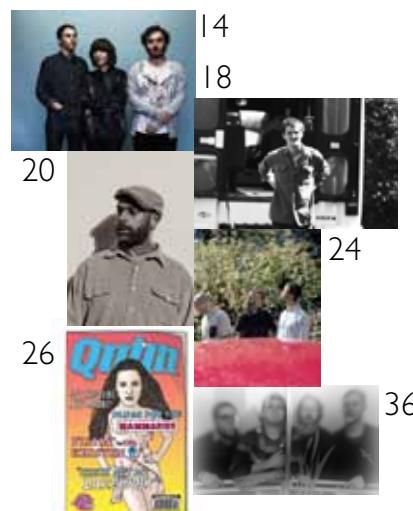
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C R A C K

presents: SIXTY-FOUR pages. ELEVEN album reviews. FIVE (and a bit) INTERVIEWS. TWO staples, ONE front cover and NO MCs!!!

We've got ourselves an addiction. It's not Wispas, or poppers, or pricedrop.tv (although that has turned into a worrying late-night viewing habit). It's nothing too debilitating, or time and money consuming, but it is reaching alarming proportions. Hello, our name is Crack, and we're addicted to the UK jump-up drum 'n' bass scene.

It started innocently, as these things so often do. A flyer, picked up from the corner shop. We grinned, scrolling through the line-ups, reciting these wonderful, unforgettable names. We were charmed as they labelled what we knew were tiny backrooms in grotty clubs to be one of their 'SEVEN ARENAS'. It was simple, innocuous fun.

Then we began to discover their Facebook accounts. It's a well-known trait of jump-up DJs to make personal pages and add as many people as possible. But as the maximum number of 'friends' any individual allows is 5,000 (sounds a lot, right?), these characters have a series of pages. The first will be called, for example, Johnny Droppz (all names have been changed to protect the individuals' identities). This page will become full, only to be changed to 'Johnny Droppz Pagefull'. Another will soon follow. It will be called 'Johnny Droppz Overload.' As another 5,000 pilgrims join the ranks, a third: 'Johnny Droppz Blapblap'. And so on until numbers reach awe-inspiring levels.

If you finally manage to find a page that isn't full to bursting, only then can you become fully immersed in their world. Afterparties, birthday parties, birthday afterparties, pool parties, radio shows, mixes, more images of gurned up chops than would dare dream exist and ... flyers. So, so many flyers. Weekenders at Butlins and charity fundraisers, and Jagerbomb offers to make your eyes water.

So this issue goes out to MC Eksman. 15 and a bit years in the game and still going strong. It's people like you who make it worth going to bed in the morning. Blap.

Geraint Davies

CRACK HAS BEEN CREATED USING:

Neil Young - Driftin' Back
Ruff Sqwad - Good Old Days
Kiss - I Was Made For Lovin' You
Arthur 2 Stroke - Heart of Stone
Gunplay - Guillotine Swordz
Modest Mouse - Heart Cooks Brain
Chief Keef - Hate Bein' Sober
Justice - Phantom Pt.2 (Soulwax remix)
The Weeknd - The Morning
Superchunk - Precision Auto
Modeseletkor - The Black Block
Grimes - Skin (Four Tet version)
Dr Octagon - Blue Flowers
Sparklehorse - Happy Man
Lapalux - Guuurl
Petre Inspirescu - Anima
Hot Chip - Flutes (Sasha Remix)
Shadow Child - So High (Hot Since 82 remix)
Zomby - Digital Fauna
Roxy Music - Same Old Scene
Joy O - BRTHDJT

Holy Ghost! - It Gets Dark
Raudive - Obsession
Shuggie Otis - Strawberry Letter
Midnight Touch - Midas Touch
Thought Forms - Ghost Mountain You and Me
Dense And Pika - Crispy Duck
ASAP Rocky feat. Skrillex - Wild For The Night
The Asphodels - Lost Cities
The Knife - Full Of Fire
Mr G - One Year Later
Arctic Monkeys - Fake Tales Of San Francisco
Nina Kraviz - Ghetto Kraviz
Moderat - A New Error
UNKLE - Hold My Hand
The History of Apple Pie - You're So Cool
Shit Robot - Chasm
Jay Shepheard - Zippin'
Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds - Jubilee Street
Artifact - The Way It Do
Typesun - The PL
Outboxx - Sunshine Mills

Prince - I Would Die 4 U
K-X-P - Easy (Infinity Waits)
The Men - Bird Song
Benjamin Damage - End Days
Puresque - 001a
X-Ray Spex - Bondage Up Yours
Super Furry Animals - Slow Life
Johannes Heil - True Love
Marilyn Manson - Tourniquet
Flipper - Hash Pipe
Melt Banana - Loop Nebula
The Drones - Motherless Children
Squeeze - Cool For Cats
The Royal Teens - Short Shorts
Barker and Baumecker - Schlang Bang
Mathematiques Modernes - Disco Rough
Pete Swanson - Life Ends at 30
The Seeds - Pushin' Too Hard
The Thermals - Our Trip
Sinkane - Runnin'
The National - Mistaken For Strangers

ALFRESCO DISCO PRESENTS



ALPFRESCO



21-24
MARCH 2013
SÖLL, AUSTRIA

This spring, share a
magical alpine experience
with Alfresco Disco.

Nestled at the foot of a mountain in the Austrian Alps, the picturesque village of Söll is the setting for Alpfresco: a long weekend of fun, adventure and cutting edge electronic music.

Enjoy a surprise international line-up featuring some of the most exciting artists in our scene, set across multiple intimate venues.

Great music, open air mountain dancefloors, skiing & snowboarding, tobogganning, traditional Austrian food, breathtaking scenery, apres-ski antics and more await you at Alpfresco.

Spaces are limited. Book now to avoid disappointment.



ALPFRESCO | WWW.ALPFRESCO.COM

CRACKMAGAZINE.NET

THE BEST OF OUR WEBSITE THIS MONTH



DAUGHTER VIDEO INTERVIEW //

You see the incredible act adorning our front cover. The one that's going to be absolutely massive? We had a little chat with the charming trio and committed it to reel. Then we went to their equally incredible gig and recorded a bit there. Then we edited it neatly together in a package for our Crack TV series. Keep an eye out, it'll be at your disposal soon.



SANKEYS COMPETITION //

Crack is giving you the chance to go clubbing with all your mates on the house. Result. We've got four tickets to offer for two separate nights at Manchester's clubbing epicentre, Sankeys. Friday night sees **MJ Cole** line up alongside **Mosca** and **Loefah**, while Saturday welcomes some more techno orientated goings on with **Cosmin TRG**, **Marc Houle** and **Ripperton**. To reiterate, free entry for you and three mates. It could be that messy double date you always dreamed about. Just send your answer to the following question marked SANKEYS COMP to competitions@crackmagazine.net.

Which of the following artists is a proud Mancunian?

- a) Ian Brown
- b) Damon Albarn
- c) Jamie Jones

Send all entries to competitions@crackmagazine.net



CRACKCASTS: ARTIFACT + DAM MANTLE //

Children's TV personality Dave Benson-Phillips once compared our mix series to a spice rack. Good analogy, Dave. We've got bare seasoning and bare choice. This month is no exception. Despite being the first Crackcast of the new year, Bristol techno newbie Artifact has already won this office over with the 'most plays in one week' award for any mix we've hosted. Equally impressive is a mix we've acquired from this issue's feature star Dam Mantle. It's an addictive and heady take on 4/4 promisingly titled *Late Night Body Music*. Check it out when it goes live on February 6th.



BEN HOWARD INTERVIEW //

There is unlikely a bigger musical success story to come out of the UK in the last 12 months than Ben Howard. The Devon born singer/songwriter has managed to break through the musical walls and in the process garner a colossal array of fans with his beautiful debut record *Every Kingdom*. Luckily, he's still the grounded guy that one member of Crack lost quite badly to at Pro-Evo after we put him on at Start The Bus in Bristol two years ago. That's right, Ben Howard at Start The Bus!! Don't ever say we didn't tell you first. Read Ben's rare and exclusive interview with Crack online.

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- Theo declined to offer Three Records.

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- Dense and Pika**
- Crispy Duck
- Blawan**
- Why They Hide Their Bodies
- Under My Garage

L O N D O N

CRACK'S GUIDE TO UPCOMING EVENTS IN YOUR CITY

Indians
Lexington
February 1st

Actress
Corsica Studios
February 2nd

Unknown Mortal Orchestra
Cargo
February 5th

XIU XIU
Cafe Oto
February 6th

A Guy Called Gerald
Basing House
February 9th

Fear Of Men
Sebright Arms
February 11th



Alpfresco

Söll Skiing Resort, Austria
March 21st - 24th
80 Euros (Not incl. accommodation and ski pass)

It's been a month since Alfresco's House of Curiosity event. Those who missed out are still nursing a pang of regret, and everyone who attended still seems to be banging on about how it was the best NYE they've ever had. Luckily, it's not so long to wait for some more Alfresco action, and this time they're applying their magic touch to the immensely fun snow festival format. That means an opportunity to combine a skiing holiday in the picturesque Austrian town of Söll with the Alfresco team's eye for party perfection and some mountain raving catered for by a cluster of 4/4 experts. Our team booked flights weeks ago.



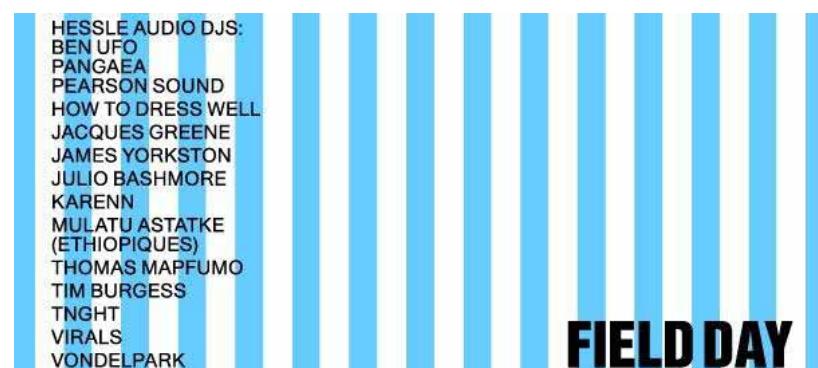
CRACK Presents

Move D, Rudi Zygadlo and Pardon My French
The Nest, Dalston
February 22nd

After a brief break following the banger that was our Horse Meat Disco-headlined Xmas party, we're back to curating nights at Dalston haunt The Nest, and this time we've booked Move D for a 4 hour headline set. Move D had his first wave of hype in the mid 90s, and is now experiencing a massive renaissance among a new generation of house heads, so we know we're in capable hands. There'll also be live action from Planet Mu signed Scotsman Rudi Zygadlo, who morphed his way out of a background in bass this year to create *Tragicomedies*, a weird and exciting album which features twisted threads of RnB and 80s funk. Last but not least, these acts will sandwich a set from the Kiss FM endorsed disco/house tag team Pardon My French.



JETS
XOYO
February 8th



Field Day

Animal Collective, TNGHT, Julio Bashmore, Karen, Kurt Vile, Mount Kimbie, Shed Victoria Park, London
May 25th
£50

Field Day have a knack of pulling together a line-up which exclusively consists of some of the most relevant and exciting artists around. With expectations extremely high, the 2013 line-up doesn't disappoint. The first wave of acts was pretty much immaculate, with the likes of **Daphni**, **Jacques Greene**, **Disclosure**, **Julio Bashmore** plus Hudmo and Lunice's adrenaline fuelling future-trap outfit **TNGHT** booked in. And for those concerned about the precarious future of ambitious Toronto punks **Fucked Up**'s touring career, the confirmation of their appearance came as soothing news. It's not like many people needed their arms twisted, but regardless Field Day thought it only right to throw in an extra cluster of acts that includes **Kurt Vile**, **Mount Kimbie**, **Savages**, **Shed**, **Wild Nothing** and **Solange Knowles**.

Once Upon A Time In Japan

ICA
February 1st-7th
£7-£12

Now in its tenth year, The Japan Foundation Touring Film Programme brings a wealth of wonderfully distinctive cinema from the world's most consistently creative and forward-thinking nation. With this year's programme entitled *Reinventing the Past through the Eyes of Japanese Contemporary Filmmakers*, a hugely varied range of work is tied together through a common thread: of reappropriating and reliving the past. For example, the UK premier of *Ninja Kids!!!* is a remake of a 90s TV anime series from one of Japanese cinema's most renowned (and notorious) individuals, Takashi Miike, who so enthralled and appalled us with the likes of *Ichi the Killer* and *Audition*. Meanwhile Issin Inudo, director of *Zero Focus*, will be present at two screenings of the film on the 3rd and 5th. Essential.



ATP Presents... Villagers

Village Underground

February 20th

£14

Conor O'Brien and his band are hitting the road to air their new album *{Awayland}*, the follow up to 2010's Mercury nominated *Becoming a Jackal*. Villagers' electronica dabbling alt-folk seems to conjure up comparisons to Elliott Smith, Tindersticks and Mark Linkous's Sparklehorse. But if these influences make you expect O'Brien to be a fey, sheepish performer, then you'll be surprised, as reviews of their live gigs have reported the Irishman delivering his cultivated lyrics in an intense and confrontational manner. Plus watching Villagers in the Village should add its own special sense of magic, ya' get me?



Ducktails

The Lexington

£9

February 25th

Ducktails is the not so side-project of Matthew Mondanile of Real Estate. Wearing poppy structures and pleasant melodies like a timely grown beard in the middle of winter, there's no pretense to the good vibrations present in his music, never more exemplified than in new album *The Flower Lane*. Far from being a saccharine delve into pop pastiche, there are plenty enough sonics in here to make you feel this isn't piss poor Radio 1 fodder. Go get the lowdown at The Lexy, before Real Estate get going again.



Maria Minerva

The Shackwell Arms

£8adv/£9

February 7th

We here at Crack have a ludicrous amount of time for 100% Silk. One of their leading lights is Maria Minerva and it's her ambient, washed out textures that form some of the label's most tangible and immediate output. Her unconventionally sexy performance style, teamed with a sound that appears to have been solely constructed from primitive equipment in her bedroom makes Minerva a pin-up for those East Londoners who like their culture a little less polished. In the intimate settings of The Shackwell, we're wholly down with this one.

Pantha Du Prince
Southbank Centre
February 15th

The History Of Apple Pie
Old Blue Last
February 19th

Richard Hawley
Troy
February 23rd



Killer Mike

Birthdays

February 13th



Savages

Electric Ballroom

February 21st



Darkstar

XOYO

February 25th

£9.50

Darkstar are an act who have consciously and effortlessly put up a guard against the groundswell of pigeon-holders that sought to lump them within some kind of muddled bass-music category, and to be honest, good on 'em. Latest album *News From Nowhere* is a further leap towards somewhere Crack isn't entirely familiar with, but it's a lot more interesting than most of the re-hashed shit out there. This makes their £9.50 XOYO gig something of a snip in our eyes. There's absolutely no way we can predict how the new material will translate live as they've changed their set-up completely, but for that price just call us Barry Bargain.

Darkstar
XOYO
February 25th

Iceage
Electrowerkz
February 28th

The Playground presents Kavinsky: Album Release Party

Kavinsky + Special Guests

Secret Warehouse Location

March 2nd

£20

The Playground returns with Kavinsky, who you'll know from absolutely re-arranging our sonic impulses with his work on the *Drive* soundtrack. And if that was anything to go by, this party to celebrate the launch of his latest album should be an omen of exceptionally good things. The fact the line-up and the venue is also secret adds to this already impressive party plan. Expect electro and emotion.



Fabric

Michael Mayer, Ben Klock, Waifs and Strays, Futureboogie...

February 16th

£19/£20

Sometimes we at Crack look at a line-up and go "he's been in the mag, he's been in the mag...". Well, Fabric have obviously done the very same thing, and though we'd never be so egotistical as to suggest the good people of Charterhouse Street would ever construct a line-up around the merits of our magazine, they've accidentally given it a bloody good go on the 16th. Step up German label masters Michael Mayer of Kompakt and Ben Klock of Klockworks, pushing their drastically different strands of techno in room one and two respectively. Add to the mix the boys next door, hosting their very own Futureboogie Records party in room three with Waifs And Strays, and this is an utterly essential evening of contrasting styles and electronic textures.



We Fear Silence present Blueprint w/ Speedy J

Cable

February 16th

£11-16



Joy Division

Oval Space

February 23rd

Melody's Echo Chamber
Scala
March 5th

Blueprint and We Fear Silence are on a roll. With sets from Jeff Mills and Robert Hood still rattling in our ribs, Dutch techno royalty Speedy J is in town. A fixture on the scene since his '92 EP *Pullover*, he has overseen the sound's various peaks and troughs in terms of relevance, popularity and wider recognition. With the tough-stuff's latest renaissance and subsequent influx of young pretenders, the chance to catch a truly seminal figure in the flesh is invaluable. And with support from UK hero Regis as well as Bluenote boss James Rustin and Mute Records chief Daniel Miller, this is a bill with serious credentials.

Maps & Atlases
Dingwalls
March 6th



Warp Records 2013

Autechre

Exai

New album on double CD / quadruple vinyl / digital

Out 4th March



Broadcast

Berberian Sound Studio

"Wonderfully deep and vivid" ★★★★ Mojo

★★★★ Guardian

9/10 Uncut

9/10 Clash



Darkstar

News From Nowhere

Includes 'Timeaway' and 'Amplified Ease'

Out now



Jamie Lidell

Jamie Lidell

"A prince among men" 8/10 Mixmag

Out 18th February



All four albums will be available online at Bleep.com/warp2013

Bleep.com

1-4 AUGUST 2013
THE GARDEN, TISNO, CROATIA



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SUB CLUB, ORLANDO BOOM, LOVE FEVER, CRACK, FACT**

+ MORE TO BE REVEALED

CRACK



FACT

NEW MUSIC



Joey Fourr

It was a sad day for Tubelord's cultish fanbase when the Kingston-based screechy math rockers announced they were calling it quits. But according to frontman Joe Prendergast, the band had gone off the boil some time before. "We played our farewell show on New Year's Eve. But Tubelord, to me anyway, had been long dead before that gig", he admits. The good news is that Prendergast's new project is awesome. Under the Joey Fourr pseudonym, he's making mushy but insanely catchy drum machine-powered indie pop, perfectly reflected in the wacky visuals of his low-res, technicolour videos. Merging aesthetics and sound is a key aspect of the project. "I released the first two Joey Fourr EPs as a zine with a download code scrawled on the back page" he tells us. And what artistic influences is he vibing off right now? "At the minute I'm really inspired by this ghetto-shimmer rap duo from London I saw the other week. They were wearing colourful weaves and had no shirts on, but they haven't got a name yet". With Joey Fourr now Prendergast's chief priority, there's intrigue around a full live realisation. "I've asked two friends who play in a band called Playlounge to play bass and drums. They're probably the kindest people I've ever met and they can turn everything into thrash magic." Joey Fourr has also provided our middle page poster for this issue.

joeyfourr.co.uk

Tune: Cross+Dresser

File Next To: Blank Dogs | Gross Magic



Go Dreamer

As one third of Atlanta based rap production unit The Flush, Go Dreamer has a good chance of reaching stratospheric heights this year. After blagging a space at Stankonia studios, the trio ended up producing two of the singles from Big Boi's *Vicious Lies & Dangerous Rumours*. Go Dreamer is a proponent of the 'New Atlanta' slogan, which represents a revived scene of new artists who are natural heirs to Outkast's eccentric mentality towards hip-hop. Recent single *Outta Here* is a squelchy, space-themed slice of party trap that promises a lot for Dreamer's new "concept project", which should be dropping any time now.

@GoDreamer

Tune: Outta Here

File Next To: Trinidad James | Spree Wilson



Falling Stacks

For around 18 months Falling Stacks have been delivering their Shellac/Fugazi/Jesus Lizard-indebted noise-alt-punk racket to the eager folk of Bristol. A fixture in the stable of DIY enthusiasts Howling Owl, their malevolent undertones, rolling bass, taut rhythms and guitars which alternate between disdainful thrashing and roving single notes saw their micro-released first EP sell out rapidly last February. The forthcoming three-track follow-up is surely set for the same fate, especially if the increased assurance of first glimpse *White Wild Hare* is anything to go by. Describing themselves as "moderately hard-working and extremely punctual", they'll never win any awards for the world's best self-promoters, but catch their February mini-tour – including dates in Bath, Bristol, Brighton, Exeter and an auspicious support slot with The History of Apple Pie in Cardiff – to get their confrontational sound all up in yer grill.

facebook.com/fallingstacks

Tune: White Wild Hare

File Next To: Mcclusky | Flipper



MANS

MANS popped up out of nowhere recently to deliver an enchanting piece of chill-funk in the form of *Strict Face*, a limited edition single available through the newly revived Teeth Records. As a 70s-inspired nugget mixing classic R&B with commercial indie-pop, it stands out from the prophesised guitar revival of 2013 for having a far more glamorous aesthetic and a bodacious vocal style whilst remaining restrained and collected enough to get away with a few Prince nuances. There's a sweetness underpinning it all though, and whether it's an honest, heartfelt ode to romance or merely a nostalgic throwback, the music here has a rare and sentimental quality. They've taken some impressive first steps; don't be surprised if they've got a pack of aces up their sleeves.

soundcloud.com/thisismans

Tune: Mellow Magic Marker

File Next To: Prince | MGMT



Chain of Flowers

Chain of Flowers are a new band fronted by Welsh hardcore heroes Crossbreaker's singer Joshua Smith. It's unlikely that every fan of Crossbreaker's furious, sludgy breakdowns are going to support Smith's transition to this grungy variation of shoegaze, but there's no denying COF are perfectly executing the formula they've created for themselves. The band's debut single, which was released as a limited edition batch of cassette tapes, contains two emotionally charged indie songs that are smothered with layers of fizzy distortion. It's a sound that's simultaneously pretty and aggressive, plus we've heard they're awesome live.

flowersinchains.com

Tune: Spit

File Next To: Jesus and Mary Chain | Archers of Loaf



4bel

Reading-based musician and visual artist 4bel (pronounced 'Abel') is a man of broad tastes and talents. His electronic productions are informed by a background in acoustic performance, which means his live sets display a sense of musicianship rare amongst his peers. Forthcoming single *Fake Plasters* (March 1st, Get That Records) is grounded in atmospheric beats and morphed vocal samples which place him somewhere between the post-dubstep and future garage camps, darkly emotive yet with clips, snaps and impetus-building hi-hats forming an almost sensual groove.

facebook.com/whois4bel

Tune: Fake Plasters

File Next To: James Blake | Girl Unit



WORDS
Geraint Davies

PHOTO
Alexander Jordan

SITE
ohdaughter.com

TUNE
Tomorrow

STYLING
Sarah Barlow

HAIR & MAKE UP
Claire Carter

DAUGHTER

RELUCTANT STARDOM BECKONS FOR THE STUNNINGLY TALENTED TRIO

It's late November, a weekday afternoon. Crack and the three members of Daughter, along with a small entourage of management and acquaintances, are standing in the turgid rain at the heart of an alarmingly grey Bethnal Green.

We've recently finished a photo shoot, and we're desperately formulating a plan to conduct our interview. We dip in and out of a scruffy boozer playing skiffle music. No chance. The band seem thankfully, charmingly relaxed, but as our mob takes shelter under a bridge, we're beginning to lose the will, bags and guitars weighing heavy. From the grim distance, one of our party appears. "I've found the place", he says, breathlessly. "You won't believe it. It's warm. It's candle lit. They're playing Bon Iver." We reluctantly re-emerge into the mercy of nature. And then we see the establishment in question. Its name: The Sun.

It doesn't take long once we've entered this utopia for everyone to relax, coats discarded and drinks ordered. Elena Tonra, Igor Haefeli and Remi Aguilera are a relaxed and amiable bunch, bouncing off each other with an air of genuine closeness. Natural and unforced throughout, Igor is the most vocal at first, the reticent and self-deprecating Elena gradually growing into the conversation, Remi relaxed and unhurried, chipping in from time to time.

The trio first met at music college and made acquaintance. Igor had moved to London from Switzerland and met Elena on a songwriting course ("although I'm not really sure how you can be taught songwriting", he notes), Remi from France to study drums. There was immediate mutual musical admiration. Elena had impressed Igor with her innate sense for songcraft, and he her for his technical accomplishment. The duo had only one person in mind for a percussive role. On those early collaborations Igor acted as a guidance, a catalyst for Elena's instinctive talent. Her early songs formed the basis for 2011's self-released effort, *His Young Heart*. Elena's ear for melody and a sense of sonic ambition pushed the songs beyond the more traditional acoustic veneer on the EP's surface. A follow-up, *The Wild Youth*, emerged later that year on Communion Records. Though barely seven months had passed, the difference in sound, texture and craftsmanship was remarkable. Songs like *Love* and *Youth* justified the sweeping boldness of their titles, and the requisite parts of each piece was allowed to flourish by a more defined, confident backing.

Unsurprisingly, things began to gather pace, Tonra's elfin, demure image becoming a far more widespread sight. As their renown grew, so did their confidence, reaching a zenith in 2012 when Daughter became the latest feather in 4AD's already embarrassingly feathery cap, joining the ranks of such contemporary success stories as Grimes and Purity Ring, and hugely established artists as Bon Iver and The National. Their first release with the imprint was the expansive and luxuriously produced *Smother*, this very publication declaring it the fourth finest song of the year.

The band swiftly found an affinity with the US. The somewhat unexpected, hugely auspicious honour of an appearance on the *Late Show with David Letterman* followed. For the band, it all felt rather sudden, but it was clear it would herald a sudden surge in their rise to prominence.

Daughter's first full-length album *If You Leave*, has been confirmed for release this coming March. Without doubt one of the most assured British debuts of recent years, it sees each aspect of Daughter's promise unfolding in breathtaking fashion.

Opening track *Winter* is an immediate illustration of the band's growth. Multitracked vocals and glacially creaking tones melt into subtle, impetus-building percussion, dragging the track into a double-time stomp we've never heard from Daughter before. *Smother*'s delicate

"THERE WAS ALWAYS A DESIRE TO MAKE SOMETHING EXPANSIVE IN SOUND, AND THAT'S WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO DO NOW: TO THINK A LITTLE MORE CINEMATICALLY."

brilliance we know, while *Youth* is plucked from *The Wild Youth*. When there's a song of such prodigious quality lurking in your catalogue, you don't leave it off your debut album. Here its widescreen shimmer is broadened further into a grand but embittered statement of loss. *Still* introduces programmed beats, yet it's not as surprising an intrusion as one might suspect. It feels natural, effortless. Its function is in the name of complimenting melodic nuances, in tandem with those rich and soaring atmospherics and Tonra's introverted poetry. *Tomorrow* may just be the best of the lot, glazed with reverb and awash with glittering guitars, an impassioned, distant call contained at its heart. *Shallows* is an ethereal, engrossing close.

The sound of *If You Leave* is impossible to label. The purity of the songcraft is rendered grandiose and romantic; engrossing, compressed epics defined by build-and-release crescendos. It has immediate melodies, it feels young yet indebted to something deep and timeless.

And back to The Sun. The lovely Sun, our shelter. The band seem relaxed with pints and gin and tonics occupying respective hands, but there's a contagious sense of excitement in their words and actions. And that's because very soon, a very important album will be released, and it will have their name on the cover.

When you three first came together at college, had Elena already been making music for some time?

Elena: I'd been doing solo stuff, just me and a guitar, but it was pretty rubbish. I met Igor on the course, but it wasn't until it had finished that we started playing together. At first it was just a case of wanting someone to play guitar with me, but as time went on it started to become more of a complete thing.

Igor: We'd just finished our course and I was looking for a job and a place to live. It was really difficult, and I had a lot of time on my hands. So I took Elena's demos on CD and just tried to see what I could add to them.

And at what point did Remi come into the equation?

Remi: A few months later. I really liked Elena's songwriting, and I remember when she asked if I would like to play for her, it took me about two seconds to say 'yes!' It was the easiest decision of my life. I guess I got lucky.

E: Don't say that! We knew Remi from college and always knew he was an incredibly talented drummer. But in a way which was completely different to any other drummers I'd come across, much more rounded and percussive.

Do you think the fact you're from somewhat different backgrounds affects the group dynamic?

E: I think so.

I: I find these clashes of culture fascinating on a personal level. Musically too, myself and Remi's mother tongue is French, and we both grew up listening to both English and French bands. It's so different, because you bring all of your history with you from your home country. I really like the fact that we're a multicultural band.

Where was the first EP recorded?

I: I lived in a warehouse for a while. I'd been staying at Elena's, and I thought if we wanted to take this forward, why not move into a place where we can make loads of noise and not bother anyone? It was also a really easy, although slightly illegal place to live.

There's more of a conventional folk leaning on that EP.

E: I think a lot of that is down to the limitations of our equipment. It was just what we had, what we could grab or borrow. I suppose it's just us using whatever we could to make music, and as result that EP is quite basic, very acoustic sounding.

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© Alexander Jordan

Having been labelled with the 'folk' tag initially, is it something you've found difficult to get away from?

I: Not really. I mean, it's easy to pigeon-hole the girl with an acoustic guitar as a folk singer. And we do have a very strong focus on the song itself and lyrics, and I think folk music has that. But I think folk is something by definition which is very traditional.

E: When I was younger, around the first EP and before that, I went to folk nights. I'm very good friends with Communion, the label which we were releasing on, and they started out very much championing young folk artists at that time. It was something that I was around, so obviously it will have influenced some of my earlier writing.

I: I don't think Elena was ever really a folk artist, and we never thought of her in that way.

E: Of course, it's very hard for us to talk about what exactly it is we're making at the moment, but there was always a desire to make something expansive in sound, and that's what we're trying to do now: to think a little more cinematically.

You often play shows in churches and beautiful concert halls – how important is the choice of venue to you?

I: Very. You know, there are some bands, proper rock and roll bands, who can just play anywhere and put on a show. We'd love to be like that, but we're so, so picky when it comes to sound. We have to be somewhere where the sound works for us, as well as the visual aspect of the setting. We're happy to play any venue, we really are, but given the choice we'll

Why do you think you've been so well received in the US?

I: I can't say we've really rationalised it. Our first record deal was with Glassnote in the US. The label liked our music, we liked their ethos, and they asked us to go and play these gigs.

R: And even though I felt really scared about doing *Letterman* – because, y'know, it's David Letterman! It actually felt really right in the moment. We were about to do our first headline tour in the US, so it was a big introduction.

Who was on the same show as you?

I: Lucy Liu and Rob Corddry. Remi was like Rob Corddry's councillor, reassuring him that his clothes looked good and he'd do a great job.

R: Yeah, I've got a ticket to Hollywood now.

You played *Youth*, which has been around a year or so. *Smother* might have been a more obvious choice.

E: Well, when we first got asked if we wanted to do *Letterman*, we weren't completely sure ...

I: It wasn't just 'yes!', it was ... 'fuck!'

**"BECAUSE [4AD] HAVE THIS AMAZING
ARRAY OF ARTISTS ASSOCIATED WITH THEM,
YOU FEEL THIS ... NOT PRESSURE, BUT
ALMOST AN INSTINCT TO BETTER THINGS
AND TO PROGRESS"**

always go for somewhere that resonates with our music. The way the sound reflects off every wall and the way your music feels within that room ... the more immersed we can be, the better.

E: Churches have such an atmosphere about them, as soon as you step in ... well, I suppose it depends what your views on religion are, but you can be daunted or scared, or just awestruck ... every time we've played in a church there's been this atmosphere ... I can't even describe it, just this vibe about the room that feels unlike anything else.



© Alexander Jordan

E: It was just a case of asking ourselves if we were really ready. And when we decided we were, we decided that, considering it was such a strange environment for us, to play something that we're really comfortable with. *Smother* had just come out, but it was more of a nerves thing. We were still working out how to get that song just perfect live.

How exactly did your relationship with 4AD come about?

I: We played a Christmas show in 2011 and some people from 4AD came. They liked it, and we just started talking. It was great, because it wasn't just some 'snap-your-fingers' signing straight away. It took a while to get to know each other, it felt healthy and there was nothing pushy, we didn't feel like we were just signed off the back of one show. It felt like they knew what we were about before they decided they wanted to work with us.

How tangible has the difference been since then?

E: I think we feel the difference almost subconsciously. Because they have this amazing array of artists associated with them, you feel this ... not pressure, but almost an instinct to better things and to progress. That's what people like Grimes and Purity Ring are doing, they're pushing the boundaries of their music and their genres.

And presumably 4AD heard the potential within you to push things in a similar way?

E: I hope so. Exploring both electronic and acoustic elements is definitely something we've worked with on the album and something we're looking to progress into: this particular balance of sound. Essentially, what we want to express as a band, and what I hope 4AD saw, was that we don't

feel limited in any sound or genre, and we're eager to move in directions people wouldn't expect.

R: Everything we've added was definitely our decision and part of how we saw our band developing. We never looked to become anything specific.

Daughter songs are given these bold, all-encompassing names: Love, Youth, Tomorrow. What's the thinking behind that?

I: There's definitely something about one word, which is simple and easy, but can also best represent the song, and be so much more suggestive and ...

(At this point Remi almost knocks his drink off the table and mutters "shit")

I: Yeah, *Shit* is a new song [laughs]. But one word just leaves so much more room for interpretation. So many people ask Elena 'what are these lyrics about', and I totally understand why she doesn't like to explain these things. Because a) it's very personal, and b) it takes away that interpretative meaning for each individual. All three of us agree that we like the mystery of a song. It's this idea of projection: it's seeing something in a piece of art which isn't really there, of putting your own experience into how you see or hear something.

So Elena, is that the only reason you don't like to elaborate on your lyrics, or is it more a reluctance to reveal such intimate details?

E: The things I write can sometimes be personal and difficult to explain.

But the first thing I hear in a song is the lyrics, and when I listen to a song that I love, I really like to make my own decision about what everything might mean. I never know, and I never want to know. I want to listen to a song, decide what it's about and think that until the day I die. A girl once spoke to me at a show about the song *Medicine* and what it meant to her. It nearly made me cry. I didn't want to tell her what it was actually about, because the way she relates to it is all that matters. It gives the song its own life.

If You Leave is released on March 18th via 4AD.

DATE

February 25th | XOYO | London
May 25th | Field Day



WORDS
Thomas Frost

PHOTO
Simon Worthington

SITE
dammantle.com

TUNE
Brothers Fowl

D A M M A N T L E

AN EAR FOR THE AVANT GARDE SETS THIS GLASGOW PRODUCER APART FROM THE PACK

Rewind two years and Crack is having a party in Bristol. Top billed guests for the evening are some of our closest musical compadres from Canterbury, and at the head of that particular collective is one Kent native Tom Marshallsay, aka Dam Mantle, whose jittery off-kilter beats are causing a multitude of patterns on the floor.

Earmarked from day one as an electronic artist whose love of the avant-garde placed him to the left of the majority, his recent album *Brothers Fowl* has landed as a final confirmation of his talents, and much like the aforementioned DJ set, it demonstrates his ability to shape shift between styles with consummate ease. *Brothers Fowl* draws on jazz, house, two-step and even classical music in a melee which might have sounded confusing, but due to lovingly thought-out arrangements, made complete sense.

“Instrumental music and jazz have always been in my palette and have always been things I’ve listened to”, offers Marshallsay. “Coupled with that I’m just tracing more music and buying more records. I’m also more comfortable and free with what I want to do, and I’m feeling like it’s fine to push into other places. I got into doing this project because I was sick of guitar-centric music. But then I did a couple of EPs and I got bored with synthesis in electronic and computer music. I felt like I’d got myself into a dead end, which is what I was trying to escape from in the first place. So I guess I was feeling more comfortable and I started letting these kinds of influences come through. It’s also my first full-length album, so I felt it might be one of the only times I would be able to go off and do different things.”

It’s a testament to the care and effort behind *Brothers Fowl* that many of the tracks carry a depth of production that give the air of live performance. Certainly parts of the opening double-header titled *Canterbury Pt.1* and *Canterbury Pt.2* and the juddering jazz-step of *Ish* give off the aural quality of live jazz more akin to an act like Portico Quartet.

It’s something Marshallsay is happy to hear. “It’s really nice you perceive it that way”, he replies. “I guess that’s what I was trying to achieve; to create some kind of dislocated band feel, where you aren’t quite certain how the music was made or if was performed by a group of people. In terms of playing it live, I’ve definitely thought about doing it, but just to conceive it would be a total nightmare and might stunt my creativity in making other things. I’m currently doing another project that’s a lot more band sounding and takes more of these jazz and instrumental roots and brings them to their conclusion.”

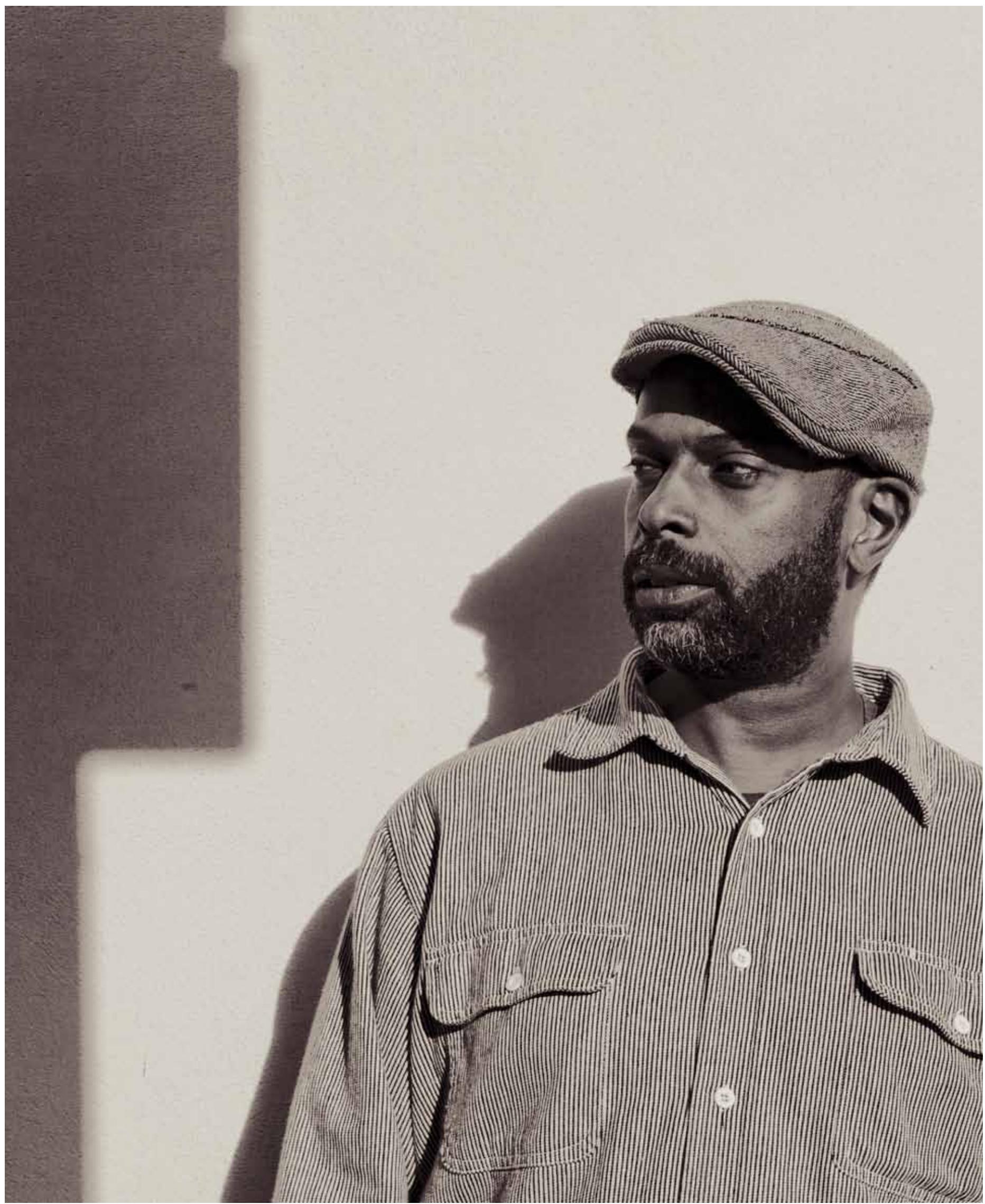
After relocating to Glasgow to attend art school, here he truly found his path. Marshallsay found himself immersed in perhaps Britain’s most fertile hotbed of electronic music creativity. With the likes of Rustie, Koreless, Hudson Mohawke, the Numbers record label and a hugely significant arts scene in the city, Glasgow could make a serious claim to being the most important city in the UK for electronic music. It’s a credit to Marshallsay that his music stands out so voraciously among this wealth of talent, and as far as Glasgow’s scene is concerned he has nothing but praise.

“It doesn’t really feel like there are any hierarchies or anything”, he tells us. “I always end up trying to compare it to London – and I don’t hate London at all – but it’s so media-centric there, with a lot of advertising, and a lot of these relationships get tied up with the music. In Glasgow it doesn’t really feel like there are these kinds of relationships. People are more welcoming and they are happy to do their own shit. For example, up here you go and see an artist and they might be playing to five people, but no one really cares. Then they might just be spinning records in a bar something. Maybe there is a more casual attitude up here. Music is treated as less of a spectacle.”

His humble attitude and thoughtful demeanour reflects a personality that is more concerned with his art form than any radical aspirations to be on the cover of *Mixmag*. It’s an approach which is reflected in his attitude towards DJing. “When I play out, I tend to play out my own shit. I feel a lot more liberated and free about what I can do. I’ve always been very eclectic in my record buying and bought a lot of different stuff. I’ve actually started recording some podcasts in the last few days, so I might start doing a little podcast series or something. One episode might be my favourite re-issue stuff, and another might be a techno mix. A lot of my favourite producers duck into all music. It doesn’t matter if it’s an afrobeat track or a Chicago house track.”

As Crack’s conversation with Dam Mantle edges towards its conclusion, we’re less than surprised the majority of his record buying of late has consisted of re-issues rather than contemporary releases. If ever there was a producer who has benefited from an open ear to everything, past, present and future, this is a prime example.

Brothers Fowl is available now via Notown Recordings.



© Violette Esmerald

WORDS

Robert Bates

PHOTO

Violette Esmerald

TUNE

Music

DATES

The Garden Festival | Croatia | July 2nd-10th
 Eastern Electrics Festival | Knebworth | August 2nd-4th
 Dimensions Festival | Croatia | September 5th-9th

THEO PARRISH

NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH FROM THE DETROIT ICON

Theo Parrish is a music producer and selector based in Detroit.

Were you looking for Crack Magazine's Big Thoughts On Theo? Tough. Such thoughts as there are might only reinforce the preconceptions you might have; and the last thing he wants is a(nother) music journalist describing his music as 'raw'. Read his comments below, listen to his music, and go to his shows – then you'll see why he's one of the most widely-respected artists out there.

We thought we'd start by talking about how where you grew up affects the music you make.

For me it's really elementary. Any person is going to be influenced by where they came from and the trajectory of their experience here on planet Earth. It's an always-shifting thing. I wouldn't say mine is very remarkable. Pretty average life for a black guy coming up in the '80s; except that, in the States, any African American dude who isn't hooked on drugs or in jail or is taking care of his kids was like an ... ancient relic [laughs]. So that's the 'remarkable' part – everything else was pretty standard.

You attended Kansas City Art Institute. How has that experience affected your music?

Well I look at it all as the same thing. When you do anything creative, you hone in on what those [products] particular properties are. Other than the materials you use and the mastery of specific materials, you're essentially talking about very similar things. When you're dealing with 3D work, you're dealing with volume, height and density. With sound, you're dealing with almost the same things except you're dealing with a time element too.

That might lead us onto how the music press often like to describe your 'sound'...

The music press ... I'm going to be very candid here. Aside from four or five places, I'd say the music press is suffering; it almost doesn't exist. And I think that largely comes down to there being an assault on the creative gifts, writing being one of them.

Now, here's my bug with that: with the advent of technology, everyone has the 'right' to have a blog. That's effectively cheapened writing in and of itself, across the board. So you'll have a situation where there'll be a popular perception about an artist, or subject or something, and as opposed to asking that artist about something directly, there'll be a referential point offered based on that popular perception, and then all the answers the artist could give will be framed in the question; they'd have to refer to the journalist's point of view. That typical stance is something that needs to dissipate, and I think that the mere fact that this is appearing in print really says a lot [laughs].

I'm very, very hard on anyone claiming to be a music journalist. One of the cardinal sins of interviews is when they start the statement

with "you". That puts a guy like me in a place where I'm gonna doubt the beginning of each of those statements, because I don't believe, or rather, I don't have proof that their point of view is the 'ultimate' point of view. So the best thing to do is throw out a subject, and I could go in. But you were saying: "with music journalists, you're often referred to as ..."?

... having a 'raw sound'.

Right, I've heard that over and over again. I could cite a bunch of songs where I'm not raw, a bunch where I am raw. Music moves in such a way you can't really talk about an artist using one set of adjectives, because that would mean you've listened to all of their works; that would mean you'd come to a consensus about what that artist's work does. But the whole point of an artist is that they are who they are, and that's separate from their body of work; their body of work is transcendent and speaks to each individual a little bit differently.

So I would challenge that tendency. Although "Theo Parrish has a raw sound" may be said, I don't think that describes me — or anyone else — very accurately. If they have a limited scope then I'm sure they could come up with that, but I've been called 'raw', I've been called 'complex', I've been called 'mean', I've been called 'nice', y'know ... I think this labelling happens because everyone and their mama has access to a million and one adjectives.

You're booked to play a few dates in the UK, including Eastern Electrics. How do you find the transition of going from smaller venues to bigger ones like EE?

It really doesn't work in terms of 'the venue'; there's about six or seven different elements that depend on whether there's a 'shift'. The biggest thing is the sound, the attention to detail. The second biggest is the attitude of the people: whether or not they're there to 'show up'; to have a party; to see a show; what percentage [of each] that is; what time of night it is; how much they paid to get in; was it difficult to get in; was there rain; was there something going in the political structure of things; how's the economy ... all these different things play into how a crowd behaves and how I react to the crowd, but all of it's intuitive. All of it has to do with the moment.

Do you have anywhere in London where you like to buy vinyl while you're on tour?

Ah man, yes. There's no favourite, I try to go to as many and as often as possible. I go anywhere from Honest Jons, to If Music, Phonica, Souljazz to Black Market ... any place they sell records I'll pop my head. HMV even — if I can't find what I'm looking for on vinyl, I'll go search it out on CD if it's something that cold ...

Did you know HMV's going into administration? They might shut down.

What?! Oh. Hey man, they should have never fucked with iTunes! [laughs]

That's what happens! I think that's the biggest thing that's under assault right now, the fact that people, young people — not all young people, but, like, 12 year olds — have abandoned the idea of collecting anything. Everything's transient. The only thing that's valuable is their collection of files. I'm of the generation where if you had something you took care of it. There was responsibility. And responsibility informed your collection, and your collecting of things, and those things would inform your life and give you definition. There's a whole mentality change going on that I think is more significant than the whole 'digital vs analogue' thing; it's really about the mentality of it.

Vinyl sales have been increasing for the past few years or so. Do you think that people are valuing or appreciating music more these days? Or is it just a trend?

I don't know what it means for the people at home, but I do know that there seems to be more of an appreciation for it than, let's say, over the past five years than ten years ago, when people were saying "oh, vinyl's dead, blah blah blah", wearing t-shirts and all that bullshit. But people come back to the centre. I don't know how many DJs out there are mad they let go of their records because they thought they'd show up and not be able to play gigs any more. And then I don't know how many DJs there are right now who won't bring their records out because they're feeling like they're too fucking precious. Are you selector or a collector?

I think it's more to do with how people are experiencing the music. Are they really sitting down and listening to it, I mean, *really* listening to it? Are they demanding that when they go hear an artist, or a DJ, or a musician, that they do more than just the average? What makes them unique? What makes them worth your time – not your money – but worth your time to go check out? Are they really bringing more than what you could experience on iTunes?

The music is telling a story. Those pieces of vinyl, they signify effort. And the same with the written word. Art. All arts. If it's existing in the physical universe, it seems as if you care. That used to not be the case. I remember that if you did something in the physical universe, that wasn't enough to validate it being 'art'. It had to meet a qualitative standard. But now, now that technology has cheapened the creative gifts that mankind has been endowed with, we have to give it value just because it exists in the three-dimensional world. And that's a very strange place to be. That kind of dumbs down things. It's like, "Okay, he put it on record" — "Well, at least he put it on record". At a certain point, just because you put it on record didn't mean shit. It had to be good. Now if it's just on record it at least makes it from a 'D' to a 'C' [laughs].

About that 'collector vs selector' comment: physical copies of your music can fetch extremely high prices on the second hand market, and it seems like some people buy your music only to sell it on.

It's starting to become like comic book collecting or something. The point is being totally missed. Yeah, OK, I like the idea that something's rare and 'unobtainable', and that's all fine and good and all that shit. But I'm not

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making this music for the records to sit on the shelf; they're meant to be heard and shared with other people, they're meant to be danced to, to be played so much they get worn out and you gotta buy another copy; that's why I re-press! [laughs]

I'm hoping people will be saying, "Alright, that's enough, mine is all beat up, I gotta get another", or they give it to somebody cause they know they will appreciate it. It needs to be in currency, it need to be in motion. And that's independent music. We know what commercial music is; we know what three note ringtone music is. Haven't we done enough damage to our ears with that stuff? I've had enough of it. I'm ready to start hearing new sounds. I'm ready to hear an emotional investment in music – and that's all musics.

That's the problem with dance music. It's become so easy to make that it's become cool to make something that has no soul in it. No soul. And I don't mean a vocal. I don't mean 'soul' in terms of the genrefied idea of what 'soul' is supposed to be; what I mean is someone caring about what they're putting down. Be it instrumental, ambient, whatever – it should be an honest reflection of the human condition. But there's a tendency to make everything slick and pristine and take our human part out of it. That's because dance music has been put in places that it really didn't start from.

This was rebel music to begin with. It's gone from basements in the South Side [of Chicago], full of struggle, with gunshots outside, to ... Starbucks! [laughs] That means that somewhere along the way the message got missed, it got co-opted. But that's part of the beauty of it — it's the most recognisable sound out there. Anyone on the planet can relate to it. The problem is that not everyone knows where it came from – or cares. And being a person that cares, I have to accept that there's plenty of people

that just don't care; they getting in and they getting on it. And I'm upset. But if someone comes tapping on my shoulder after an endorsement for something that's half-baked they're gonna get an honest opinion. They may not like it, because that's something that's also scary today: everybody's scared to critique everybody's shit. I love it. Tell me my shit is garbage, I'll go back and do it again and do something better.

It's a weird time for artists because everybody's afraid to offend one another. No. We can't be afraid. We gotta be stronger than that, and realise the art itself is bigger than the egos that make it. Never mind my personality; it's not that interesting. What I'm hoping is the most interesting thing is what's being recorded and what's being played.

Last May you played on London-based radio station NTS. Your name started trending on Twitter, so people who might've never heard you saw your name pop up on their computer screens. How do you feel about the way we're engaging with social media?

I can't give technology that much credit. It's based on the music. It's based on the decision for NTS to exist; the decision for people to find that avenue that they're presenting relevant. What they do afterwards, how they communicate about it, is different. The point is that all those people checked it out at that moment. Now if, after checking it out, they then told other people to check it out, that's cool, but that's still a little bit artificial. The technology that man is gonna be armed with to communicate with other men is always gonna amplify and circulate and make things happen a lot quicker.

I would say that it still comes down to the individuals who know what's there, and care about it enough to listen. Social media and technology is rarely the problem with man. It's the laziness of the men, and the women;

it's us, mankind, what we do. How we deal with what we're given and what we create and how we (supposedly) make our lives easier, and then it ends up biting us in the ass because ... well, social media may be great, but I can't stand it when I'm playing a set and somebody wants to hold up their phone to try to communicate with me – that's the other side of social media. There's something about instantaneous communication that means we're missing out on our lives.

I dare everyone, for a whole week, to turn their phone off. I dare them. I doubt anyone could do that. And that's where social media makes you addicted to the devices. You're not addicted to going out and hanging with your friends anymore, you're addicted to the information you get from hanging out with them. What happens is you miss the whole experience of your life. Pretty soon, humans are just gonna be two big-ass thumbs and a brain.

What about people who use it for professional reasons, music journalists for example?

Even for professional reasons ... who's out of a job now? PR people. It used to be somebody's job, who knew who to talk to, and why, and you could pay them to do so, and you could get tangible results. Social media just cut out the middle man. It made everyone a PR person and now it's just a sea of mess. But you know, these are the signs of the times. This is something we have to live through, and we'll see more benefits from it, we'll see more crazy shit ... who knows what's gonna happen.

Theo Parrish appears at Eastern Electrics Festival (August 2nd-4th) and Dimensions Festival (September 5th-9th).

CHANGES OF LOCATION AND PERSONNEL HAVE INFORMED DARKSTAR'S INTOXICATING JOURNEY IN SOUND

D A R K A S T R

/ /



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WORDS

Adam Corner

TUNE

Amplified Ease

SITE

warp.net/records/darkstar

DATE

February 25th | XOYO | London

Space – not the final frontier variety, but the mundane physicality of the place where you are – matters a massive amount in music, whether created or consumed. But increasingly (and we blame The Internet), scenes have lost their locality. People are still from somewhere, they still live, work and breathe in a particular town or city. But for every blunted beatsmith who is physically a part of the LA scene, there are a hundred who make similar sounds from the other side of the world. Dubstep may have begun its life in Croydon, but where does it live now? Everywhere, or nowhere?

If you believe everything Nicolas Jaar says (and why shouldn't we?), space is only noise anyway. And the relationship between space and noise – between sound and place, between creating sounds and being somewhere – is critical for understanding not only where Darkstar currently are, but where they've come from.

Darkstar started their life as a production duo, house sharing in North London, studying at University and hanging out at FWD>>, the seminal Plastic People club night generally credited with being a key ingredient in dubstep's primordial soup, asifyoudontknowalready. It's impossible to say, in retrospect, just how important their proximity to the FWD>> melting pot was for the genesis of Darkstar. But before long, Aiden Whalley and James Young (the group's two founding members) were passing beats back and forth, and releasing tracks on their own fledgling label, named 2010.

These first releases were enough to attract the ear of Hyperdub label boss Kode 9 – no mean feat considering the tsunami of electronic production talent that was emerging circa 2008, with James Blake, Joy Orbison, and the Hessle Audio stable all breaking through around that point. Two Hyperdub 12s followed, one of which (the digital lullaby *Aidy's Girl Is A Computer*) topped dozens of 2009 end of year charts. A cover of Radiohead's *Videotape* for a Mary Anne Hobbes compilation then marked the debut of a third Darkstar member, vocalist James Butterly.

Their first album, *North*, was perplexing in the best possible way, eschewing the fidgety two-step of their previous singles for a gloomy but glorious synth-led set, including a version of the Human League's *You Remind Me of Gold*. While touring *North*, the band switched – as you do – from Hyperdub to Warp, signing a four album deal in the process. Their new album *News From Nowhere* is yet another nimble change in direction, underlining the fact that they are an endearingly difficult act to pin down. When Crack caught up with all three Darkstar members they were in a rehearsal studio in Leeds, refining their live sound for dates around Europe, and reflecting on the impact that a change of scene (physically, as well as musically) has had on their music.

"We moved to West Yorkshire to write the second album, and the three of us wrote it", says James Young. "We had a year recording – just as the riots started in August 2011 we were moving up. It was quite an intense year and we didn't really have a break from it. It dawns on you quite quickly in West Yorkshire that you haven't really got a social life, and then you start to really wonder: what the fuck are you going to do for the next year?!"

"We stopped touring as well, we just wanted to get the album done. James and Aiden would have maybe a top line, just a set of chords or a bass line or something, and then they'd pass it to me and I'd mess about with it and give it back. Then if we liked it, we'd keep passing it back and forth and see what stuck."

Listening to *News From Nowhere* in this context makes complete sense. A great deal of the album's melodies sound as if they could have sprung from a half-finished guitar line. But if some of the tracks on the album

began life on six strings, the bold, concrete features of the guitar lines have been eviscerated by Young's otherworldly production, lending the whole album an eerie but gentle aesthetic. The fact that Darkstar now craft their songs not from a killer beat but from a shattered, splintered melody speaks volumes about their progression and willingness to explore new ground.

"I think [the new album] is very different", continues James. "I mean, we set out to capture something that represented the time and space we spent up in West Yorkshire. I think being in that environment for a year, you notice big changes in your everyday life, subtle changes in the studio, the space outside just sort of seeps into the way you record and your creativity."

One of the things that seeped into the record was the influence – musical but also personal – of producer Richard Formby, with whom *News From Nowhere* was recorded.

"In all honesty, it wasn't like we were attracted to the idea of working with him, because we didn't know him. But we'd given up getting a producer because we'd met a few and for one reason or another it had fallen through. We were going to work with Tim Goldsworthy in the Massive Attack studio in Bristol, but that didn't happen. When that fell through, we were pretty low because we loved that studio. So we were like – alright, let's get on with it ourselves."

"But then Richard phoned us and asked if he could come over to the house and chat. He made a real effort – like he was going for a job interview or something. He was very courteous and he obviously knew his shit."

From the outside looking in, it's difficult to believe that Darkstar's journey has been anything other than one juicy opportunity after another. Kode9 comes knocking, then Warp swoop in for the kill, while the musical output stays several steps ahead of the curve. But the gestation process for their first album *North*, while hardly the new *Chinese Democracy*, involved taking several steps backwards before moving fully forward. And finding a producer who could turn up on time and keep their promises for their second album wasn't straightforward either.

"I think that we're choosing people on a character basis. We make sure we know someone before we go forward with them. Richard's approach is quite unorthodox. He's an interesting guy, very talented and very different I imagine to most producers."

"He took mushrooms quite a lot" chimes in Aiden, "... but not when we were working in the studio ..."

"... Once Richard got hold of it he'd just give it another dimension, more definition, you know what I mean?" Young adds. "Because of the shift in surroundings we were never going to go and write a continuation of *North*. We wanted to progress as musicians. I was reading quite a bit of stuff by [noted and notorious Victorian art critic] John Ruskin when we were writing the album: He observed the craftsmanship in art, from paintings to architecture, the way that people worked hard when they were proud of what they were making. We wanted to push ourselves, and write something musically that was more advanced than *North*. And I think we did that."

"I think a lot of the lyrics are a bit more self-assured" says Butterly, "whereas on *North* they centred around a type of relationship with someone else. There's a couple of tunes that reference someone else, but it's more about a headspace that we were in up there. There's not as much room for doubt, I think, in these songs, although listening back there is still quite a bit of reflection in the lyrics. It's almost like a stream of consciousness."

In Darkstar's early days, there was not only a more easily definable musical scene – one with names and labels that could be relied on to produce recognisable styles of music – but a physical scene too. Artists actually congregated together at places like FWD>>. It existed in a geographical location as well as conceptually. But cooped up in a house in Yorkshire, these supports – or perhaps constraints – are whipped away.

One interesting consequence of refusing to make the same record more than once is that it's now difficult to know where – if anywhere – Darkstar fit in. Crack saw their live show (or, at least its incarnation circa-North) at the Green Man festival in 2011, hardly the epicentre of electronic music. Their FX-heavy, back-lit, heads-down performance felt like the right set at the wrong time, an assessment with which the band seem to agree:

"It felt a bit weird ... it was more of a performance thing that night, I don't think we quite did what we were capable of. We had a few issues with sound and we played after Squarepusher which wasn't easy, so it wasn't one of the most enjoyable festival experiences I can remember from that period. I think we got banned from that festival as well. Aiden stole a golf buggy, one of those ones that security roll around in!"

"It was a slow-speed chase with the security guards", says Aiden. "We had about 15 or 20 people hanging off it."

"But I think as references go, and where we fit in", says James Young, "we're really trying not to think too much about it at the moment. And we didn't think about live shows that much while making this record and I like that approach because you don't limit yourselves. So what will be will be."

And, excitingly, Darkstar are only just getting going.

"I think we're only just about to get into our stride in terms of recording", says Young. "We've got some pretty clear ideas about where we can go, what we're capable of, so that's what I'm looking forward to. It's a weird one as well, you know, of having a home for the tunes all that time ago in London, it's something that I do miss in a way. But I'm not sure that place exists now, even. If we were making those tunes today, and going in that way, I'm not sure there'd be room for them, or the patience to see it grow."

"We'll stay with Warp for the next three albums after this, so it'll be the best part of a decade if all goes well. The only thing is getting used to having a routine, it's something we have struggled with in the past, I mean, how do you go about having a normal life when you've got to invest so much of yourself in recording an album? We're all getting a little bit older, we need to find a balance. But I feel like working with Warp has been eye-opening. The amount of possibilities that opened and the number of people we met who we could work with after making *News From Nowhere* is astonishing."

Darkstar have refused to sit still. As a consequence, they don't easily slot in anywhere. But their nomadic approach has opened pathways that too many bands prematurely close off. Coming from nowhere, anywhere is possible.

News From Nowhere is released on February 3rd/4th via Warp Records.

MR BINGO

GETTING TOLD TO FUCK OFF NEVER FELT SO GOOD

WORDS

Geraint Davies

SITE

mrbingo.org.uk



A piece of art which makes you laugh is a truly rare thing.

It's a kind of laugh only rivalled by one that comes from a book. When you're suddenly transformed from just another body worming in their cramped seat in a stale, ominously quiet train carriage, to a heartily giggling fool. It's a very special and specific feeling, one that is both intimate and mischievous.

Mr. Bingo is a master of drawing things that make you laugh. He obtained his pseudonym due to a £141 haul at Gala Bingo in Maidstone, Kent in 1998, and the journey of this name reaching wider renown has been one constantly laced with comedy. Early experience included work for *Monkey Dust*, the deliciously grim BBC Three animation which changed a generation of viewers' perceptions on cola cubes, space hoppers, and just how fucked up a cartoon could be. He's since produced illustrations for books from *QI*, Jimmy Carr, and found kindred spirits in fellow surreal humourists The Mighty Boosh, Noel Fielding proudly comparing him to "a labrador doing stand-up."

A series of *Hair Portraits*, which take renowned or simply extravagant

hairstyles and separate them from their corresponding faces, adds to his portfolio, while his distinctive style continues to find its way into a wide range of hugely respected publications.

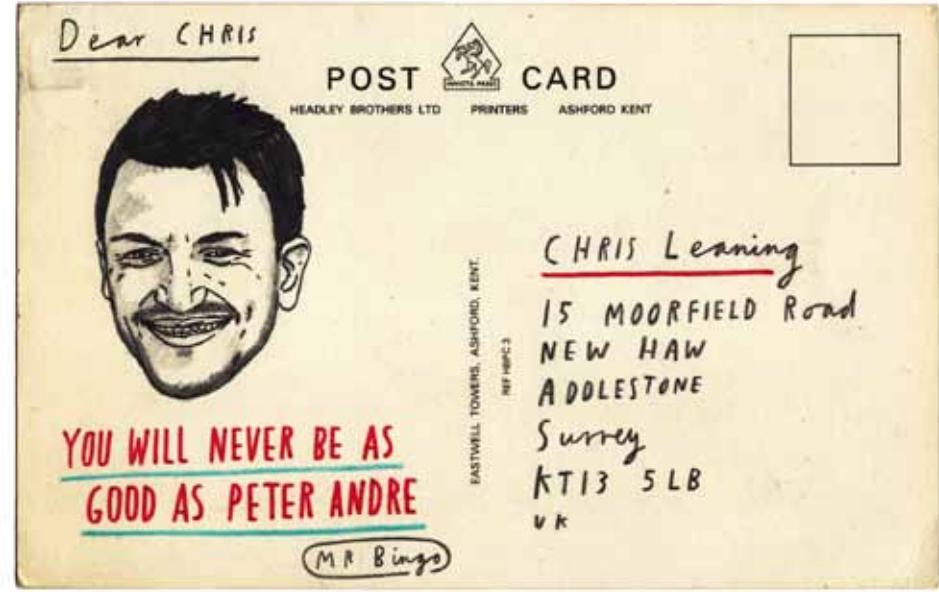
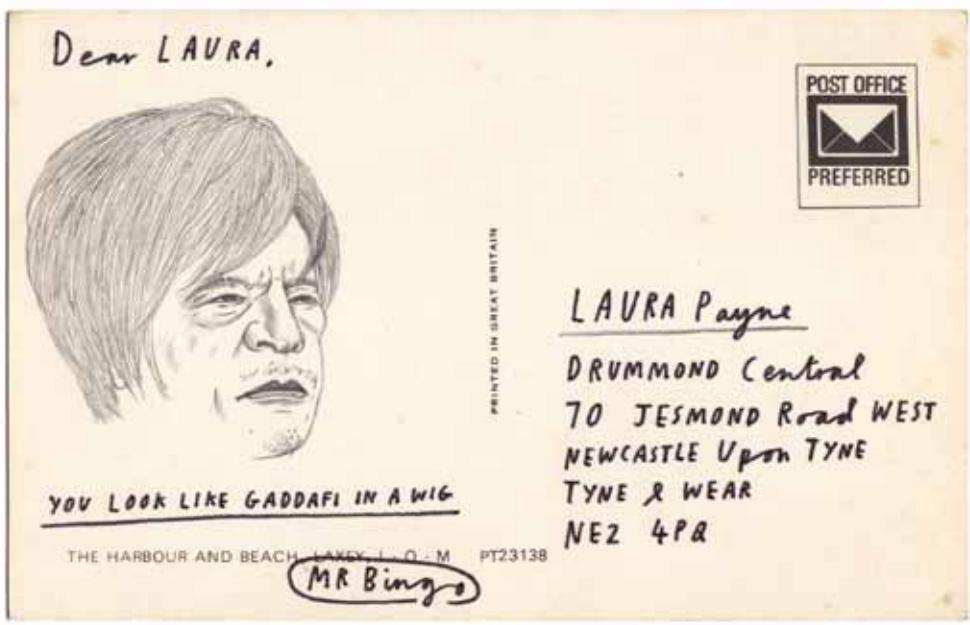
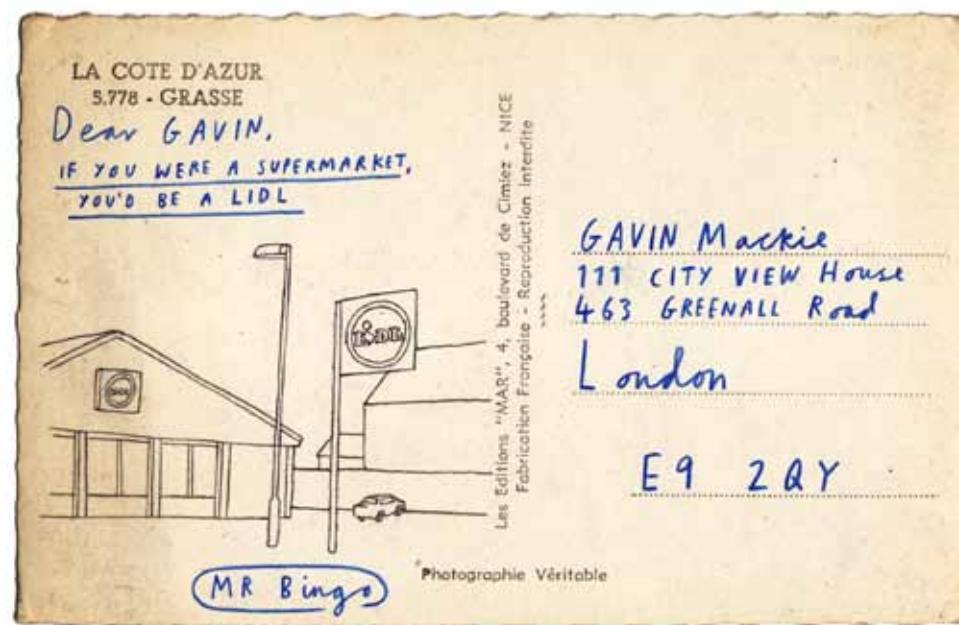
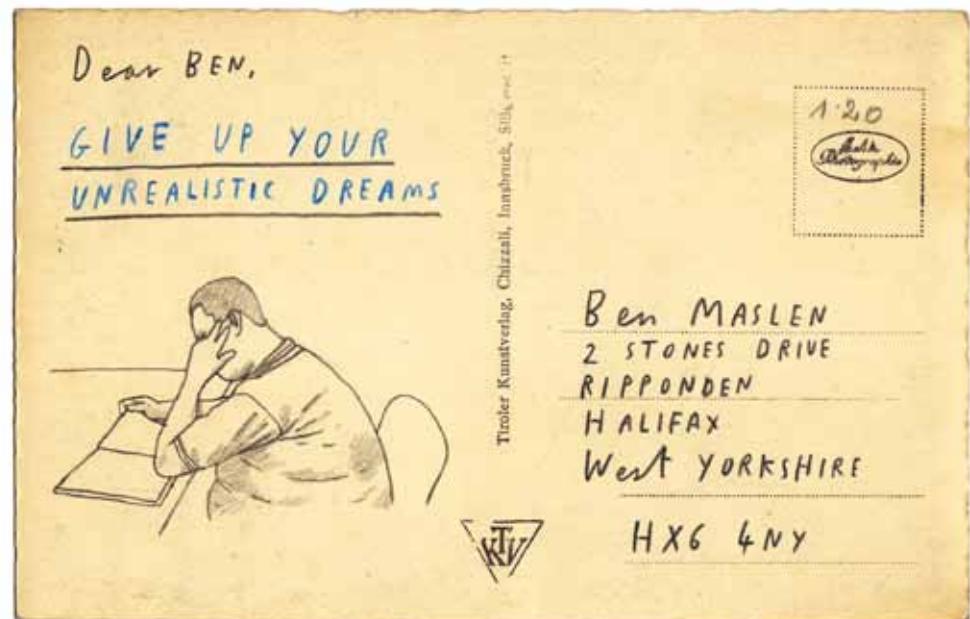
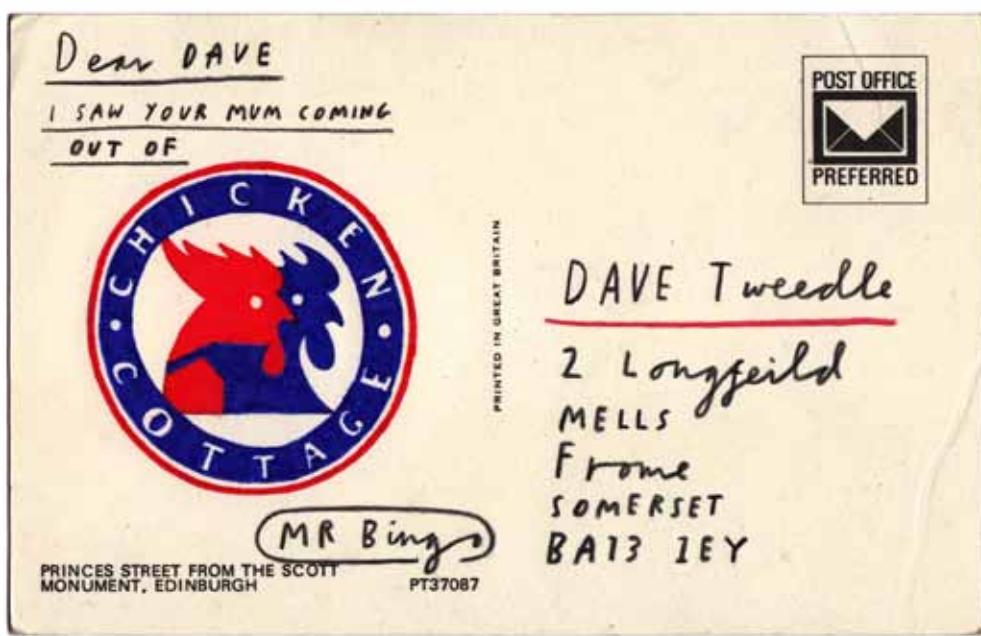
His latest, and most celebrated, project came in the form of *Hate Mail*, a slice of unadulterated ingenuity to rival the Pet Rock. Utilising his knack for an absurd turn of phrase and bold, idiosyncratic drawing style, *Hate Mail* – born from a couple of beers too many and a collective of enthusiastic Twitter followers – involves the exchange of a few quid and an address and results in a lovingly illustrated insult popping through your letterbox. It's become a resounding success. *Hate Mail* is fleeting, accessible and imbued with a nostalgic appeal, thanks to the artist's use of vintage postcards. And, most importantly, it's fucking funny.

So funny, in fact, that Penguin came knocking to discuss the possibility of publishing these insults as a collection. It was a meeting of huge significance for Mr. Bingo, potentially life-changing, and one which he chose to follow by sending postcards to the three individuals whom he met. They read:

"93% of Penguin staff think you're a twat"
"Meeting you = waste of time"
"Your crisps were insulting"

He sent a further one, addressed generally to the company staff. It was a drawing of a beheaded penguin, and it said "Penguin Books. Go fuck yourselves."

And so the book was made. Echoes of David Shrigley's work abound, the biggest compliment you could pay to an individual who merges comedy and art (though Mr Bingo might argue that highest compliment he ever received was when a fly became hopelessly attracted to his painting of a shit). The insults he directs at his public range from the sublimely ridiculous ("You look like Gaddafi in a wig", "You're an idiot and you were born in a skip" and "I saw your mum coming out of Chicken Cottage") to bordering worryingly close to the bone ("Cardiff is a shit hole", "You really need to take a long hard look at your life", and Ben Maslen, in the book's closing entry, is quite simply instructed to "Give up on your unrealistic dreams"). But this is all reflective of a mutual understanding between the artist and the subject, the sender and the



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receiver. A willingness to suspend normal social rules, sit back and revel in being thoroughly, brazenly showered in abuse.

So buy *Hate Mail*. Read it on the train and laugh. You'll relish seeing other people getting deeply, brutally insulted. And you'll feel a peculiar pang of jealousy that it's not you being called a massive twat.

Do you see Mr Bingo as a character, a role that you play, or is it simply you?

That's a very good question. I would like to think that it's simply me, but I had a therapist a couple of years ago and she always used to ask who the real me was. It was confusing. It is pretty much me, I think. It makes sense to be yourself at work, because then you don't have to pretend or do anything you don't want to do.

Your *Hate Mail* project stemmed, in part, from a worry about traditional, fun post. Are you quite a traditional person in some ways? Is there therefore a certain irony that this project came about via Twitter?

I have quite a traditional face. An old-fashioned face. Sorry, that isn't answering the question ... Yes, there's an irony that the project only exists because of the internet. People only know about it because of the internet and Twitter. I do like traditional, old things though. I've got really used to modern stuff and spending far too long on my iPhone so it's probably a

reaction to that too. I've also been making digitally finished illustrations using Photoshop for a decade, so going back to proper drawing with pencil crayons and making marks with paint on postcards and having real physical bits of art is really, really lovely.

Is there a genuinely resonant point within *Hate Mail* about art as a powerful mode of communication, and of interaction with the viewer?

To be honest, I just think it's funny. I think it's funny that people are paying for me to tell them to fuck off. I'm not really very good at talking about my work as 'art'.

Do you like swearing? Do you think swearing is big and/or clever?

Only when it's necessary. It can be big and clever if it's used in the right way. In my opinion, if you call someone a 'fat handed cunt', it's infinitely funnier than 'fat handed wally'. I don't really know why, I just think it is, and I'd like to think I have a fairly good measure of what is funny and what isn't. My mum said to me, "d'ya think the book could be just as funny without all the swear words?" I disagreed. I think they make a lot of the pieces just right. It's swearing in the right place, not just swearing for the sake of it or to be juvenile.

Has there been a situation where you've actually been concerned

about offending someone? Is it very important that you have a real connection and shared sense of humour with your audience?

Not really. I think if someone is actually offended by one of them, then they haven't understood the project, so it wouldn't really be of any concern to me. I definitely like the connection with the audience; it's great to see that people like them. That's the only reason I make anything really.

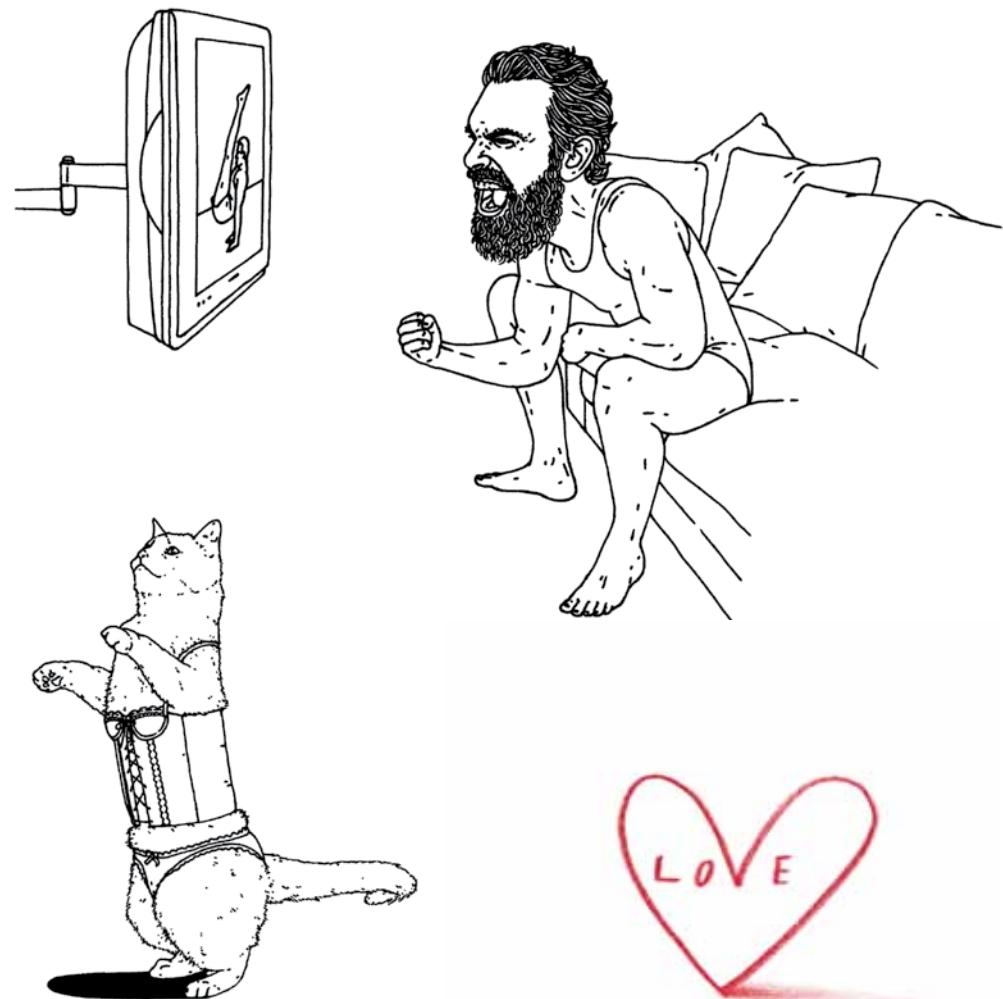
Do you see yourself as having a very British sense of humour? How does your work translate overseas, having done work for *New York Magazine* and *TIME*?

Yes, I think I do. Although it doesn't always translate perfectly overseas, a lot of the American magazines are really into using me because the people that commission the work really appreciate the sense of humour. It can be tricky though; sometimes a lot of ideas that you think are great don't get through over there.

Are you a fairly prolific worker? Do you really 'fuck about for a living', as you've been known to claim?

I have been a very prolific worker. I've worked very hard (maybe a bit too hard at times) for 10 years or so. Recently I've decided to spend a bit more time in life doing other 'non-work' things. I was worried that just before I died, I'd look back on my life and go "oh fuck, I just drew

"I have quite a traditional
face. An old-fashioned
face. Sorry, that isn't
answering the question..."



20,000 things and then died". I'd love to be Hate Mailing all day, but I spend most of my time doing commercial illustration jobs for proper clients. I do often feel like I fuck about for a living though, especially in comparison to 'normal' jobs where people sit in offices and do pointless things all day. I do pointless things all day, but I enjoy most of them.

The project also incorporates the found element of the postcards themselves. How important is this to you? Is rummaging around second hand stores and car boot sales a big hobby of yours?

Yes, I love old postcards. I'll buy them whenever I get the chance. It's especially exciting when you visit a new town and find a funny little shop with postcard treasures. When I choose postcards for *Hate Mail*, I always choose ones with nice or funny pictures on the front and nice designs on the backs. It's funny when you buy one from a collectors shop and the sweet person – they're always sweet – behind the till looks really pleased with your purchase, but you secretly know that it's potentially going to end up with a really detailed rendering of a penis on the back.

The fact that people began to send hate mail back to you has reaffirmed our faith in humanity. Did you eat the Swiss roll with 'fucker' written on it in icing?

No, I just took a photo of it, then put it in a bin.

Did Alexa Chung actually ask you to insult her?

Yes. She was meant to give me one of her drawings in return. Alexa, if you're reading this – which is unlikely – where's my drawing, you bitch?

You seem to have found a real affinity with the guys from The Mighty Boosh?

I really like The Mighty Boosh. The original reason I got to work with them is because I'm mates with Dave Brown who plays the character Bollo. We share a studio together now. There's definitely an affinity with them though, I like what they do, and they like what I do, so we all get along and make nice things together. Generally that's how The Boosh do things, they only work with friends and people they like. It's a nice gang to be involved in.

You seem to relish giving talks and presentations. Is performance an important element of what you do? Are you, in some ways, a frustrated stand-up?

[laughs] No, definitely not a frustrated stand-up! I like giving talks and if I can shoehorn a few jokes in then that makes it more fun. I like to challenge what is expected of a talk by an illustrator discussing their practice. I guess I think most talks that 'creative professionals' give can be fairly dull, so I started talking about other things that have nothing to do with illustration. But I don't think I could do stand up, it's too terrifying.

Talking as an 'illustrator' is perfect, because there are no expectations.

You also find accidental art in nature and from the mundanity of everyday life. Is your function as an artist as much about pinpointing, isolating and exaggerating the absurdity of the world around you as creating things?

I don't know really. I like observational comedy, so I suppose I want my illustrations to be a bit like observational comedy at times. People always ask "what/who inspires you?" I say everything does, the whole of life is inspiring. I do like taking photos of silly things I see in life and then sharing them with strangers on the internet, it's a nice process.

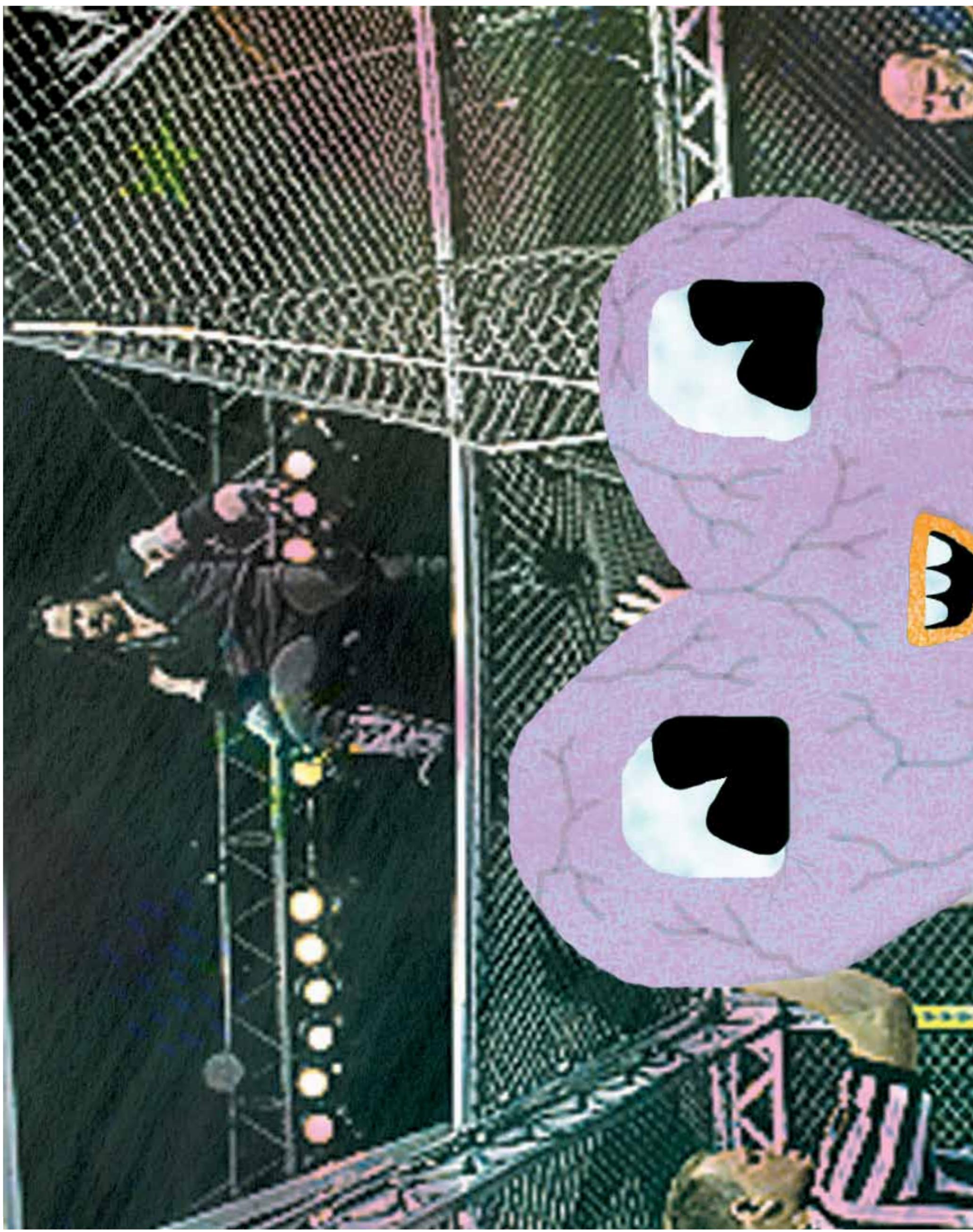
You gathered considerable attention for your 'hair portraits'. Who has been your favourite one to draw?

I really enjoyed drawing the 80s pornstar ones, they have the best hair.

Finally – you know what's coming – would you be so kind as to insult us?

I only insult people via post.





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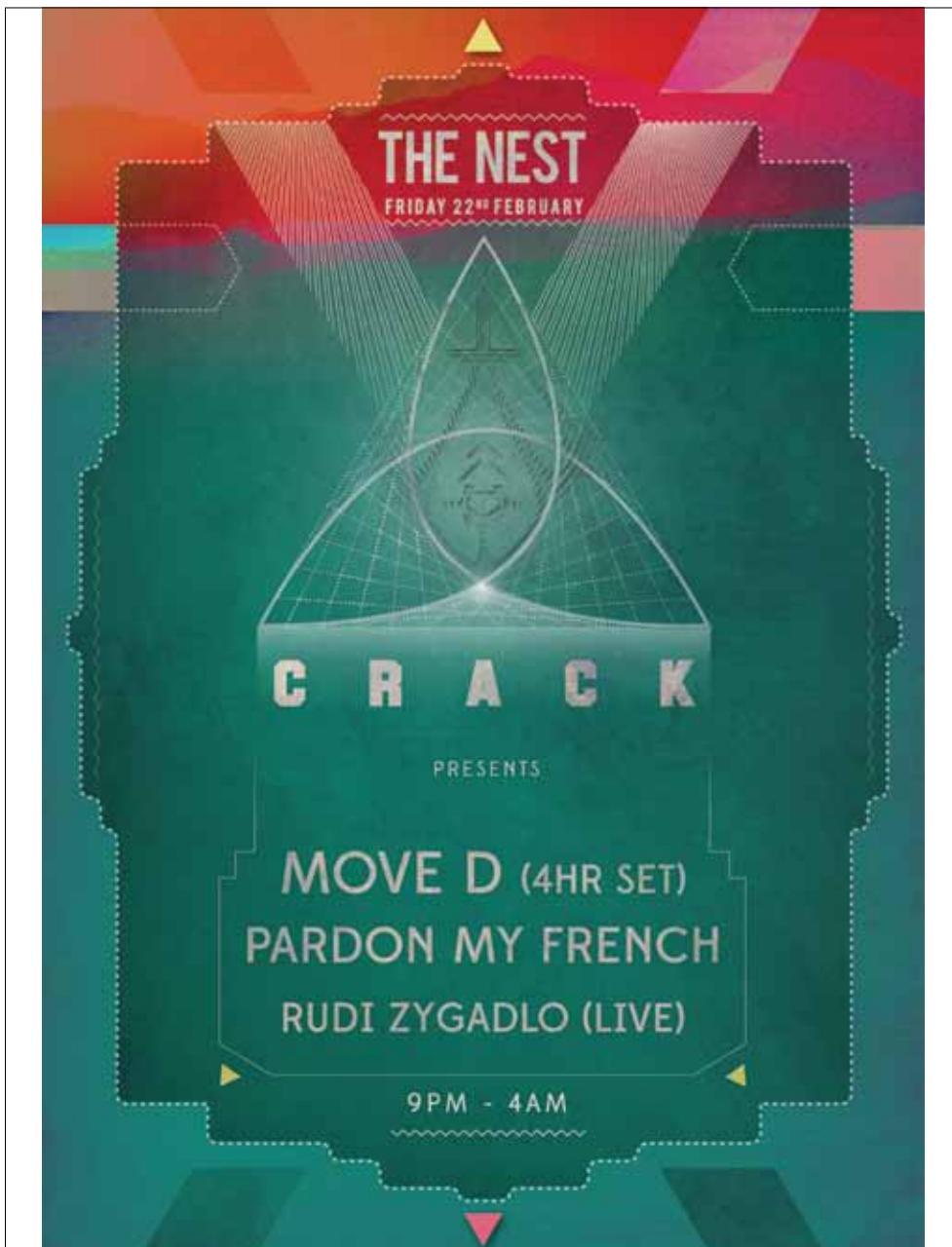


GIGS PATRICK WOLF

Saturday 6 April

Wolf celebrates 10 years of making music with his latest record *Sundark & Riverlight*. Tonight, Patrick performs acoustic and stripped back versions of his songs, accompanied by piano, strings and harp.

Queen Elizabeth Hall



BETH ORTON

Wednesday 17 April

The award-winning and double Mercury Prize-nominated British singer-songwriter performs tracks from her new album *Sugaring Season*.

Royal Festival Hall



Tuesday 30 April

Having collaborated on 2012 electronic ambient record *Instrumental Tourist*, Tim Hecker and Daniel Lopatin (Oneohtrix Point Never) perform the tracks live.

Queen Elizabeth Hall

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LADY CAMARILLO



A malevolent seductress, Lady Camarillo stalks the halls of mental asylums, flaunting her lithe physique and uttering raunchy whispers. The hopeless inmates find themselves resigned to her worldly charms, their already troubled brains degenerating into an erotic mush. - Mr. Mead

mrmead.co.uk

P / S S E
J E D A N

WORDS
David Reed

PHOTO
Brad Fry

TUNE
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SITE
subpop.com/artists/pissed_jeans

A PIERCING REPOSTE TO THE MUNDANITY OF DAY-TO-DAY LIFE

It's been nearly four years – too long – since Pennsylvanian nu-pigfuck proponents Pissed Jeans unleashed a full-length album of grotty punk bangers. Now they're back with *Honeys* and you know what? It's their finest work since their impressively nasty 2005 debut *Shallow*.

It's not like Pissed Jeans have ever tried to mature or develop their sound. But *Honeys* sees the band pulling out their best moves. They tread in puddles of dissonant noise, stall the tempo into deep, greasy grooves and bust out violently visceral party spoilers that are indebted to America's most marginal hardcore bands. And then there's the lyrics. Frontman Matt Korvette gets his kicks from unleashing the deranged scraps that float around the gutter of his psyche, alternating between corrosive screams and threatening coos that recall a particularly strung-out Nick Cave. He paints portraits of the everyday loser trying to muster up enough rage to resist the crushing apathy brought on by a life of parking tickets, microwavable meals and mortgages. Across Pissed Jeans' discography, Korvette has found himself yelling about receding hairlines, ice cream and pet-related allergic reactions. As the band's discarded former name Unrequited Hard-On would suggest, Pissed Jeans have always been obsessed with sexual depression, self-pity and disgust.

Bathroom Laughter, the contemptuous, scuzzed-up cut that opens *Honeys* was shared recently to celebrate the Jeans' big return. The semi-intelligible lyrics that sandwich Korvette's berserk yelps report scenes of screaming in hallways and crying in kitchens. So what's on his mind this time? "It's kind of about being the older guy at a party", he tells us. "It's written from the standpoint of me just being stood there while there's all these people having fun around me and I'm just thinking 'have fun now, while you can, because this is going to end in tears'. So I guess it's kind of a negative take on ... umm, y'know ... socialising."

The iconic and enduring Seattle label Sub Pop anointed Pissed Jeans some time during 2006, around the same time that they relocated from their home city Allentown to Philadelphia. But despite all the international festival appearances and widespread coverage, they're financially bound to their day jobs. Korvette still slogs it out 9-5 as an insurance claims adjuster. "Yeah, I tried to get out of it. But you know how it is man, gotta pay the bills", he says with no trace of resentment, demonstrating an almost Zen-like wisdom. So have his work colleagues heard Pissed Jeans yet? Are they aware of classics such as *Caught Licking Leather* or *Ashamed of My Cum*? "Nah, it's a pretty boring office environment I work in. I don't think anyone there has even heard of Nirvana, so I'm pretty safe. I don't have to worry about explaining Pissed Jeans to the co-workers."

But instead of dealing with stress and existential ennui by scoffing Xanax or generally acting like a neurotic, passive-aggressive arsehole, Korvette has an outlet to lose his shit onstage. "It's such a good release", he says. "I'd probably be much more of a dick in real life if I didn't have Pissed Jeans. I'm generally pretty laid back and friendly. When you're frustrated and you've had to deal with people you can't say 'fuck you' to even though you really want to, it's good to let it all out on stage. It's a full-on mental flush".

It's well documented Pissed Jeans are incredible live. Korvette often peels his shirt off, lobs speakers around the stage and busts out rhythmless dance moves. He's got a vicious sneer, and his eyes are either closed while he nods in a trance, or staring into space with a slightly vacant but homicidal gaze. Pissed Jeans have come a long way since cutting their teeth at Allentown's now-closed underground dive Jeff the Pigeon. We detect a sense of pride when Korvette tells us that these days the band play to both gender balanced, leftfield indie crowds as well as sweaty moshpits at hardcore bro-fests. He's not up for dictating the movement of an audience, but he tells us that he'll do anything to jerk them out of a sense of indifference. "We've definitely had some crazy crowds doing all sorts of shit, but we've played to crowds recently that just want to stand there, and that's fine really, as long as people are into it. The worst response for me is when you play to an audience who just don't really care. If that's happening I'm like 'fuck, I'm really losing 'em'. I've got to do something to make them pay attention, even if they're watching and being disgusted. I just want them to have a memory of our show."

For all its drudgery, the music of Pissed Jeans is constantly thrilling. As a band they dive into thick, tarry pits of sludge then leap back out again, landing on their feet. They're able to constantly channel a sense of intensity and this has probably got something to do with the fact they've been making noise since their adolescence. "We've been playing together for a long time", Korvette explains. "The track *Something about Mrs Johnson* on the new album was actually recorded in 1995. We were just digging through old tapes and we found this weird little instrumental track that Randy and Brad had recorded in Brad's parents' basement. It was cool throwing something on the album we recorded as teenagers and for it to fit. Especially since we're at a place where we all feel sort of old now."

Although Pissed Jeans aren't exactly crinkly old-school punk vets, they're no spring chickens these days either. It took them a while to cook up this new record, and Korvette explains that it's because they've been busy having kids and behaving like functional adults. But he's not too horrified by the prospect of middle age appearing on the horizon. "It's not that much of a bad thing. Like, I feel a lot less insecure than when I was 20 or something, and I'm not that old really", he says. "But I kinda miss being younger. I've noticed now when I hear about the stuff that kids are into these days, I feel completely stupefied. Maybe a few years ago I could've understood shopping mall hot topic screamo stuff, even if I wasn't into it, but now it's like there's all these bands who're selling out arenas full of teenagers with weird internet social media apps, and I've never even heard of them."

Although it's difficult to picture Korvette waving an iPhone at a B.o.B. concert, it's not as if he's out of the loop. In fact, he runs White Denim, a label which specialises in vinyl-only, one-pressings of an eclectic range of underground bands and beatmakers. On his website Yellow Green Red (which we definitely recommend checking out) he interviews upcoming punk bands and raves about everyone from intense hardcore acts like Nukkehammer to electronic deconstructionists Emptyset. "I listen to more techno than anything else. My favourite EP which came out last year was *His He She & She* by Blawan, that record is just fucking killer. I'm really drawn to that darker, gothic, dungeon techno. Marcel Fengler is also cool and I really dug a couple of EPs from Shed last year. And Hessele Audio, man I love a lot of that shit. Some of the stuff those guys put out is so bizarre. I feel like people are gonna discover that shit in like 20 years and be like, 'this label was fucking crazy!'

To those only casually familiar with Pissed Jeans and Korvette's outrageous onstage persona, the fact he's a focused label head with impressively diverse and refined taste is probably hugely surprising. But it shouldn't be. Because, actually, it requires genius to be able to sound as dumb and unhinged as Pissed Jeans.

Honeys is released on February 11th via Sub Pop.

CREDITS

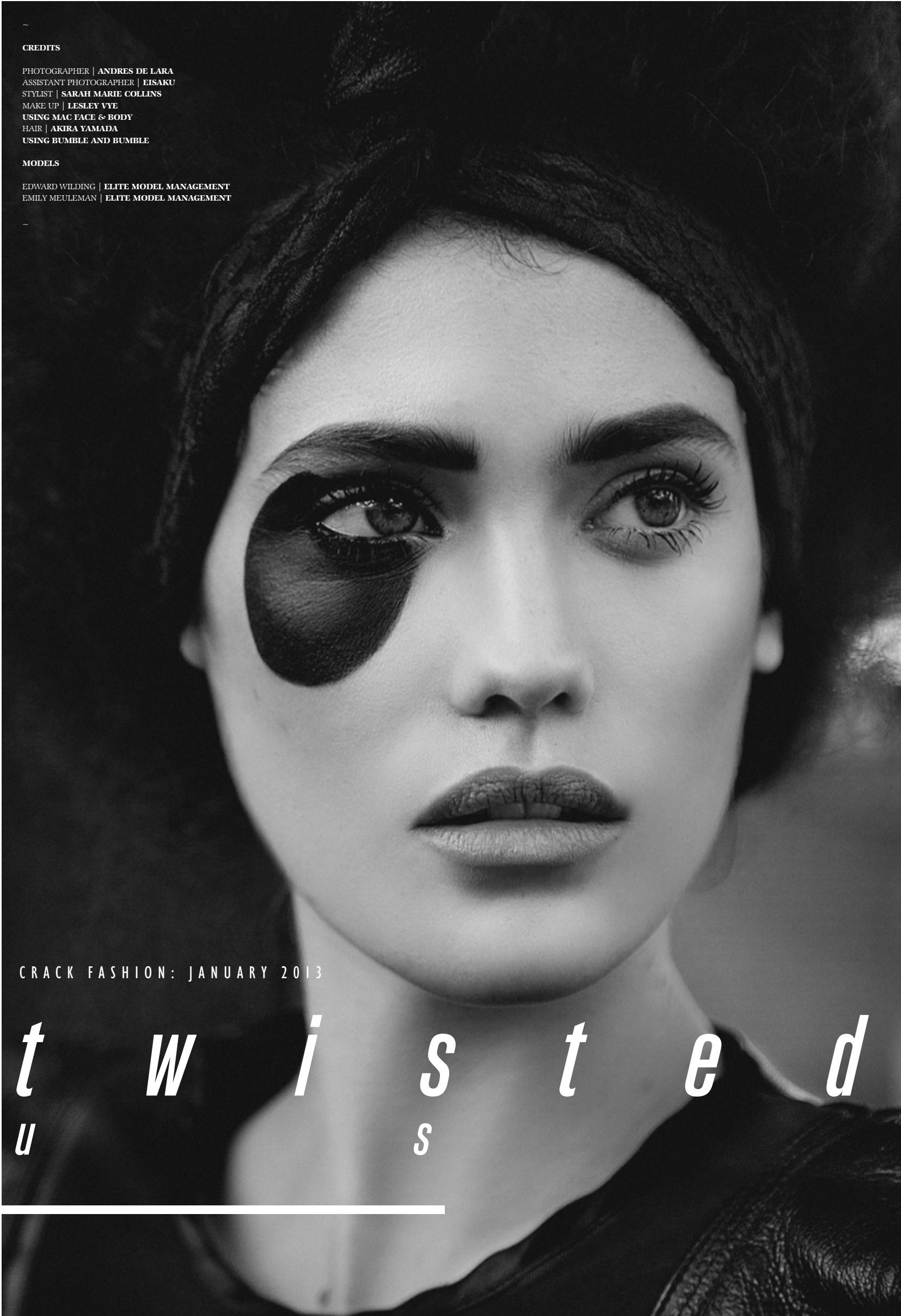
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DRESS | GARY WILSON

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EDWARD WEARS

STUDDED JACKET | SINSTAR
T-SHIRT | SINSTAR



EDWARD WEARS

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BOW TIE | **ASOS WOMEN**
JEANS | **ZARA MAN**



~
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EMILY WEARS

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CHIFFON SLIP | **UKULELE**
LEATHER BODICE/COLLAR | **GARY WILSON**
LEGGINGS | **AMERICAN APPAREL**
PLASTIC TROUSERS | **GARY WILSON**
BOOTS | **TOPSHOP**

EDWARD WEARS

STUDED JACKET | **SINSTAR**
T-SHIRT | **SINSTAR**
JEANS | **ZARA MAN**
TRAINERS | **NIKE5 STREET GATO**

~
RIGHT

EMILY WEARS

DRESS | **GARY WILSON**
HEADBAND | **VINTAGE LACE MADE BY STYLIST**
BOOTS VINTAGE | **CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN**

EDWARD WEARS

SHIRT AND JACKET | **SONS OF HEROES**
BOW TIE | **ASOS WOMEN**
JEANS | **ZARA MAN**
TRAINERS | **NIKE5 STREET GATO**

~
LEFT

EMILY WEARS

STRUCTURED BODY | GARY WILSON
CHIFFON SLIP | UKULELE
LEATHER BODICE/COLLAR | GARY WILSON

RIGHT

EMILY WEARS

DRESS | GARY WILSON
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EDWARD WEARS

BOMBER JACKET | **SONS OF HEROES**
JEANS | **ZARA MAN**
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C R A C K . F A S H I O N

THE BEST BRANDS AND PRODUCTS WE'VE HAD OUR EYE ON THIS MONTH.

**DC - Up in Smoke Jacket****£99**

The Up in Smoke is a new bomber-style jacket from DC. It has poly cire sleeves, a neat metal DC logo tack on the front chest and some old school lettering on the inside detail.

dcsneakers.co.uk
**Sennheiser - Amperior Headphones****From £221**

The Amperior headphones have a sturdy but lightweight feel to them. They offer high attenuation of background noise and perform excellently amongst high levels of sound pressure in clubbing environments. With warm mids and deep bass, the Amperior's sound is also of premium quality.

sennheiser.co.uk
**Rascals - Arabian Nights T Shirt****£39**

This Arabian patterned T shirt drops courtesy of Rascals. The Copenhagen based brand claims 'No History' as their bio, but from what we can tell they specialise in fresh streetwear that's often inspired by the city's prevalent bike culture.

streetcasuals.com
**Bottle of Smoke - 'Freedom From Want'****£20**

This design by New Orleans based cartoonist Otto Splotch is a warped, gross subversion of Norman Rockwell's famous portrait of an American family. The tee is made of grey cotton and the design is printed using black and white waterbased inks.

Cooperative - T Rex Sweater**£45**

Cooperative team up with Urban Outfitters for this exclusive winter warmer. A cosy fair isle knit with a dinosaur on. And we all like dinosaurs here.

urbanoutfitters.co.uk
**DC - Soul Plane Jacket****£75**

Another one of our favourites from DC Clothing's new spring 2013 drop. The Soul Plane is an Indigo rinse denim jacket, a simple, well tailored example of a classic design.

dcsneakers.co.uk
shop.bottleofsmoke.co.uk

February:

Exhibitions

Juergen Teller: Woo!

23 January – 17 March 2013

Events

1 / 8 / 15 Feb
**The Will Gompertz Fringe:
Icons, Colour, Money**

Wed 6 Feb
Guy Bourdin: A Legacy

Thu 7 Feb
Vogue Fabrics presents Icy Gays

Fri 15 Feb
Friday Salon: On Participation

Wed 20 Feb
The Trouble with Censorship

Sat 23 Feb
Ursula Mayer: Gonda

Sat 23 Feb
Nils Bech: Look Inside

Culture Now:
8 Feb – **April de Angelis**
15 Feb – **Peter Golding**

Film

1 – 7 Feb
**Once Upon a Time in Japan
Film Festival**

Tue 12 Feb
**JR and José Parlá in conversa-
tion + The Wrinkles of the City:
Havana**

22 – 28 Feb
The London Turkish Film Festival

Thu 21 Feb
**Woman with Claws: The Peculiar
Photographs of Paul Outer-
bridge + Blue Velvet**

From 1 Feb
**The Punk Syndrome
Bullhead**

From 8 Feb

No

Artists' Film Club:

Tue 5 Feb
Ed Atkins

Sat 9 Feb
**Clemens von Wedemeyer's
Muster**

Wed 13 Feb
Jim Shaw

Thu 14 Feb
Naheed Raza

Wed 27 Feb
Travelling (Part 1)

Touching base with *Denzil Schnifffermann.*



NO SOONER HAD CRACK ADVERTISED FOR A

NEW AGONY PERSON THAN WE RECEIVED A VERY SIGNIFICANT E-MAIL. WHAT WE FOUND WITHIN WERE A COLLECTION OF WORDS WHICH WERE CONFRONTATIONAL, STRAIGHT-TALKING AND DOWNRIGHT INSPIRING, CAPPED OFF WITH THE MOST IMPRESSIVE E-MAIL FOOTER YOU'VE EVER SEEN. SERIOUSLY, IT WAS MASSIVE.

ONE PHONE CALL LATER, AND DENZIL HAD PUT OUR FINANCES IN ORDER, HAD THE WORKFORCE THOUGHT-SHOWERING LIKE LUNATICS, AND WE WERE IN POSSESSION OF ONE MOTHERFUCKER OF A TWO-YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN. WE KNEW WE'D FOUND OUR MAN. DENZIL SCHNIFFERMANN: BUSINESS GURU, MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER, LIFE-COACH,

Dear Denzil

My woman keeps making me do everything. Dishes, nappy-changing, washing, bloody everything. She's also joined a fucking darts team and keeps popping off to the local to practice. She's put on roughly four-stone since we met and taken a penchant for Natch cider. What kind of woman drinks that?

Dave, 32, Kidderminster

Denzil:

Man-to-man, I think you need to pull your turn-ups up. I'm not one to brag, but when my last five or six relationships went into the red, I cashed in on my investment. She sounds like she's well past her maturity date. Get out of there, preferably with the kids and everything she owns. I'll give you a cheeky little Denzil trade secret: this website called eBay. You can sell all her stuff on there and make a pretty penny. Oh, and move up North, they don't even have cider there.

Dear Denzil

I heard you only got this job because the old agony aunt snuffed it. What are your credentials then homeslice?

Tayshaun, 22, Neasden

Denzil:

Hmm, how about a Mini Cooper, a cute little semi, between six and ten suits, a signed Shakin' Stevens 12", six LinkedIn profiles, a rather handsome share portfolio and a little box that lets me pause live TV? I got moves like Jagger and that ain't no lie and if you keep working hard Tayshaun, one day you can give quality advice like this for a living. But until you fix-up Denzil's always gonna be one step ahead of you.

Dear Denzil

What's your gym routine?

Paula, 35, Manchester

Denzil:

I don't have a routine. My woman is my routine. And I'm telling you Paula, that's an arrangement we're both happy with.

Dear Denzil

When will I see you again? It was a lovely evening, but you forgot to pay the bill and cause you gave my phone number, the restaurant keep hounding me with phone calls for payment. Also, who was strange man staring at you from the window? I know it's unprofessional contacting you like this, but I just think these things need to get sorted.

Enid, 46, Luton

Denzil:

I'm sorry Enid. I think you've got the wrong Denzil Schnifffermann.

//
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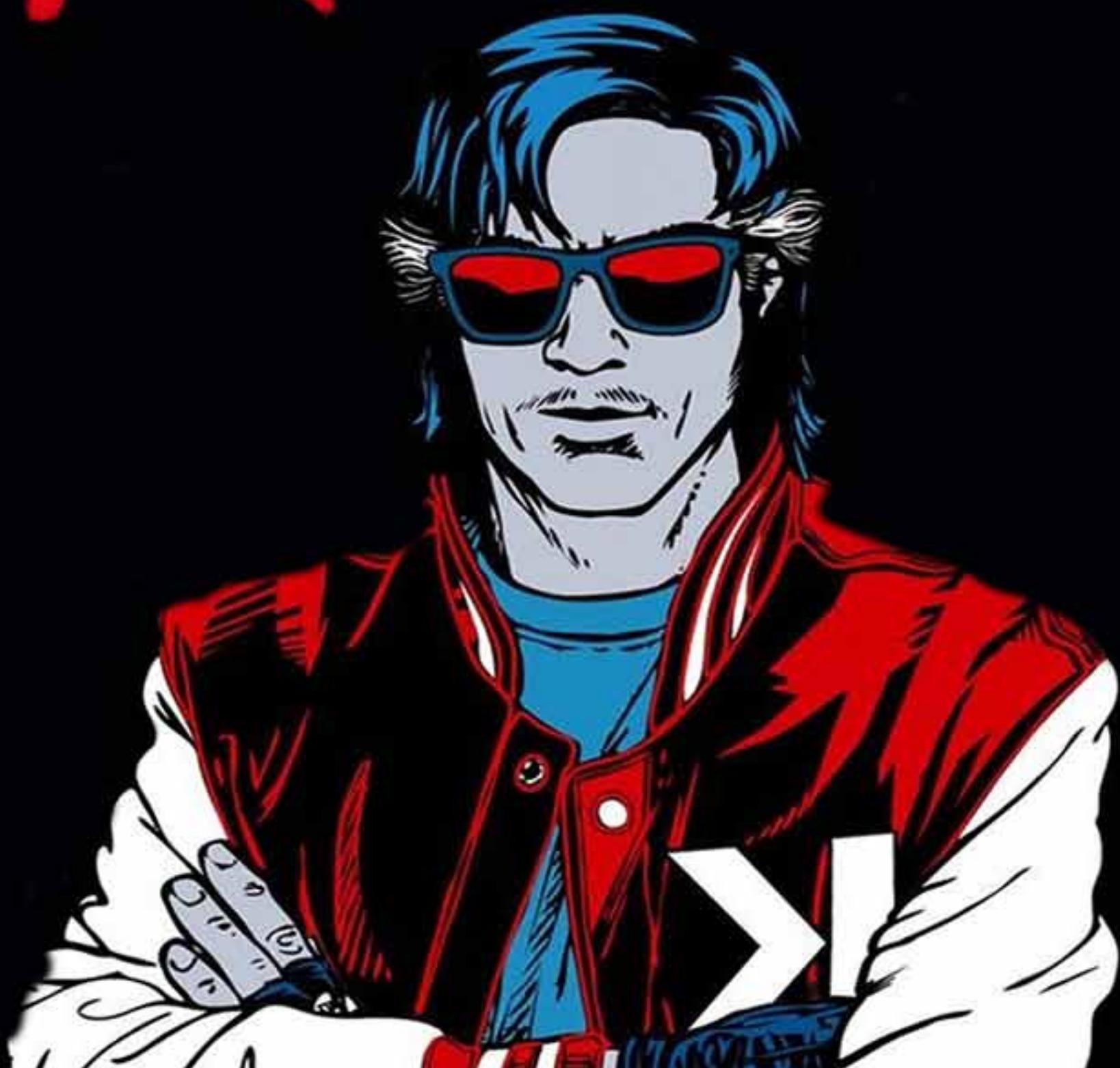
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RAIN ROOM //

In an interview with *The Guardian*, Random International co-founder Florian Ortakrass was asked to define his role. Artist? Designer? Engineer? “I’ll let you decide”, he answered, in an attempt to nimbly sidestep the question. Fortunately, his colleague Stuart Wood was more helpful. “No would-be designer would create something that’s completely pointless ... we’re very much working as artists, because we’ve got our own agenda.”

Random International is a collective comprised of designers and engineers. Their work uses state-of-the-art technology and invites the audience to contemplate the way they interact with space. The *Rain Room*, currently occupying the Barbican’s notoriously tricky Curve space, is possibly their grandest project to date. It’s a large, starkly lit area of pouring rain that the audience can actually, physically step into. Using a complex system of 3D cameras connected to valves in the sprinkler system, the installation is able to track the audience members brave enough to participate and, provided that they proceed tentatively, stop the rain in their immediate area.

Entering the Barbican Centre the first real *Rain Room* related thing to strike you is the queue. The installation has proved wildly popular, and at peak times you can be expected to wait for as long as three hours to experience the exhibit. Visiting on a Tuesday afternoon, our wait was a paltry hour and twenty.

When you finally make it to the front you’re ushered through by the staff (a very few at a time – drip by drip), and the space you enter is deeply, profoundly tranquil. The only real light source offered lies at the far end, cut off by the long, slow curve of the wall of the space. You’re assailed by the sound of falling water and a strangely soothing smell, more like that of a waterfall than of rain. Cool and clean, but not necessarily fresh, an atmosphere develops.

The Barbican’s Curve is terribly alluring, and it works best with noise. The sound tantalises and invites – the work is tucked away at the far end of the gallery, around the corner and out of sight.

The visual power is also very striking. The harsh backlighting casts audience members’ shadows onto the wall. You see these first, then as you round the corner, more comes into view – the shadows face a wall of pouring water, the volume intensifies, you begin to notice people within the installation and the negative space they leave in the water as they walk through it. The effect is impressive, tense and atmospheric, but a kind of blockbuster atmosphere. Subtle, this is not.

Walking into the pouring water requires a slight effort of will, it’s deeply counter intuitive. It’s scary in the same way that *Mother*s by Martin Creed was scary (Google it – it’s well worth it). There’s an acute awareness of a power above you. It feels oppressive, like the rain, but once you begin to trust the technology behind it, you feel liberated. There’s something a bit Canute-ey about walking around in a downpour without getting wet, and it’s easy to enjoy.

The experience of the *Rain Room* is also starkly physical. Other than a sense of awe related to the spectacle and novelty, the expected emotional impact fails to materialise. This is a sensory experience, rather than a cerebral one.

Looking back through the water at the audience looking in, your sense of participant rather than audience member is heightened. It could be argued there is an interesting reversal of traditional audience/performer roles; after all, the piece is very much like a set, but it is those looking on who are illuminated – as though the lights on a stage swiveled and focused on the audience – but as you reaches the other side any conceptual merit the piece had seems to dissipate.

The backlighting doesn’t work when you’re standing at the same edge of it, either. The magnificence, melodrama and minimalist-sublime (oxymoronic, yes, but it’s there) of the work are exploded. Its visual power is revealed to be two-dimensional.

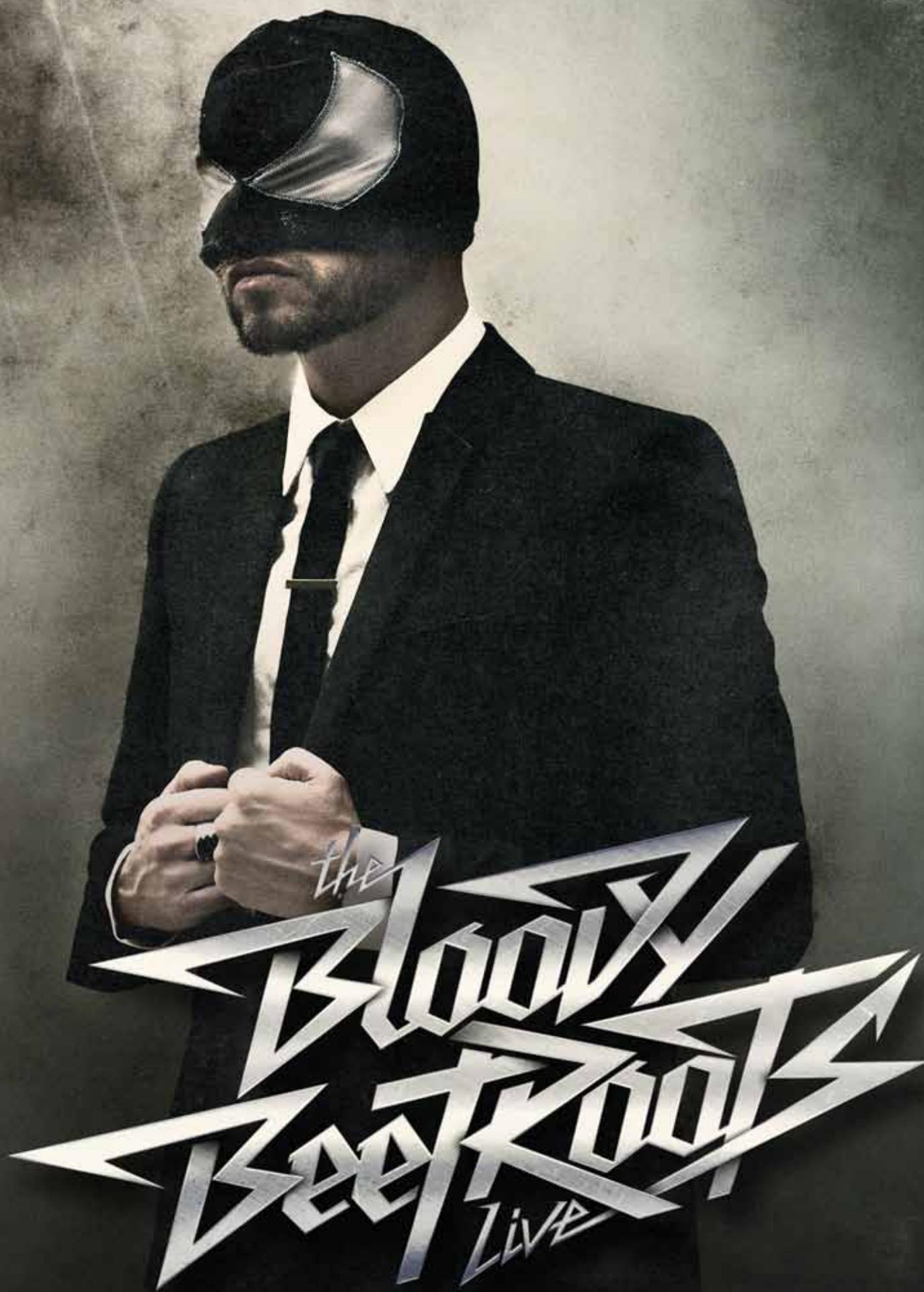
Walking back, towards illuminated faces, we begin to wonder about the mechanics of the piece. How much water is involved? (2,500 litres, it turns out) Is it recycled? (Apparently, yes.) Is the water treated? (No, we decide, there’s no smell of chlorine). These are the questions that linger after we leave.

It seems as though as a piece of art, this installation, sculpture, whatever, is incomplete. It may even be ill conceived; certainly it cannot bear the weight of its own sensory impact. People queue for this in the same way as people might have queued to witness Tesla demonstrating electrical current in the late 19th century, but with the bonus of a distinct and totally unique physical experience.

The fact is no one would argue that *Oblivion*, at Alton Towers, is an artwork. But you’d still happily queue for two hours to ride it. If you approach *Rain Room* with this at the back of your mind, you won’t be disappointed.

Random International’s Rain Room runs at the Barbican until March 3rd.

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WORDS:
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American Mary

Dir. Jen Soska & Sylvia Soska
Starring: Katherine Isabelle

12/20

Revenge, the primal urge to get even, is one of the most popularly recurring motifs in the horror genre. But the prospect of a woman seeking her revenge has always stimulated a lot of discussion among critics. Take the 1978 original *I Spit on Your Grave*, shattering the expected role of women in a horror narrative with the simple act of empowerment. Yet for a long time it seemed that in order to exact their revenge, a female would first have to face a barrage of moral and physical torment, only to eventually achieve balance through mimicking the brutality of their defilers.

American Mary, an indie picture which has now been picked up by mainstream horror powerhouse Universal for a nice big DVD release, looks at female revenge as a new beginning rather than an end. The directors, sisters Jen & Sylvia Soska, take us through the Canadian body modification underbelly. We follow Mary (Katherine Isabelle) as she pursues The American Dream (hence the name) as an ‘alternative’ surgeon.

In backstreet basements and on veterinary tables, the aspirational medical student Mary discovers a knack for nip-tuck of a stranger orientation. As the cash begins to flow, so too does an array of clients, loudly and literally parading the Soska sisters’ vision. Strong as these themes may claim to be, the story’s engine (of the American Dream) is clunky and frustrating. The bod-mod admiration feels contrived, dull and ends up making us feel like a teenager in a Papa Roach video.

But where the film is undoubtedly successful is in its portrayal of Mary herself. Katherine Isabelle is excellent as a lovable, ditzy girl with a blood fetish. The dashes of vulnerability against her gory skill-set creates a distinctive character, essential in any cult horror film.

There’s plenty of fat that could have been trimmed, maybe even a couple of limbs severed entirely, and despite a few squeamish incisions the violence seemed disappointingly pacified for an independent gore flick. Sit tight for *Antiviral* hitting cinemas this month, which should cover similar territory, but much more effectively.



Django Unchained

Dir. Quentin Tarantino
Starring: Jamie Foxx, Christoph Waltz, Leonardo DiCaprio

18/20

After fucking up the Nazis in *Inglourious Basterds*, Tarantino takes on another monumental subject in the form of slavery. These two great big topics may be sensitive, but they also happen to be violent as hell, and what better man to dish out a dose of ideological revenge than Quentin Tarantino.

Django Unchained sets out to bring elements of the blaxploitation genre and the story of slavery together. It’s a brilliant concept and, like *Basterds*, Tarantino’s unique application of iconography and genre allows him to discuss this grim period of not-so-distant history in a way never before considered.

Unsurprisingly, a superb cast has been rounded up, with the effortlessly cool Jamie Foxx as Django and Christoph Waltz bringing his bureaucratic Euro-smarts to the bounty hunter Dr Schultz. Despite a rare misjudgment from Di Caprio, (his portrayal of a psychotic plantation owner appeared far more exciting in the trailers than it actually was), the acting is great. So, so great. This undoubtedly owes a considerable debt to yet another of Quentin’s scripts, which masterfully balances his treatment of slavery with humour, depth with violence.

Once accused of implementing a certain ‘senseless’ violence into his films, nothing could be further from the truth now. In his last two films at least, Tarantino offers sociological catharsis through the violence on show, and this meeting of wordplay and gunplay heralds yet another addition to one of cinema’s great canons.



The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey

Dir. Peter Jackson
Starring: Martin Freeman, Ian McKellen, Richard Armitage

12/20

“That’s a goblin, not an orc, you tit” said the nerd to the hipster.

Having watched the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy to ease us through countless comedowns over the past ten years, we welcomed this timely invitation back to Peter Jackson’s Middle Earth. Those award-winning fantasy epics are undoubtedly modern classics, successfully translating Tolkien’s deep, lucid world into a Hollywood blockbuster. With *An Unexpected Journey*, we find out how Bilbo came about the ring of power while on a quest with some slightly annoying singing dwarves.

During the lead-up to this film, we frequently found ourselves wondering “how the Brandybuck is Jackson going to make a trilogy of three feature-length movies out of a roughly 300 page book?” Having seen the film, we had the answer: by making it drag. This is naughtily done by adding and expanding characters and occurrences which Tolkien only briefly mentions in the original book, like adding the arch nemesis Azog just for the sake of action, and Sebastian the Hedgehog for the sake of ... actually, we have no idea.

It’s understandable, to an extent. After all, Jackson is making a big movie, trying to appeal to a broader audience as he did so well with *LOTR*. But at points the filler on show is just shameful. His tampering with the original story ends up being counter-productive and frustrating, going beyond the minor disappointments expected from a book to film adaptation. That said, Jackson’s love for the story is unquestionable, even if the decision to make the one book into three movies (as opposed to the two he originally set out to do) has squandered some of that Middle Earth magic.

All in all, it feels like *The Hobbit*’s journey has gotten off on the wrong hairy foot, but Jackson’s ability to entertain just about gets him through. With the two remaining, considerably juicier installments of *The Hobbit* trilogy yet to come, Crack isn’t too pissed off about the shitty money grabbing decision of splitting up the films. But it would have been better as two films, and Jackson, you know it mate.

MYSTIC GREG



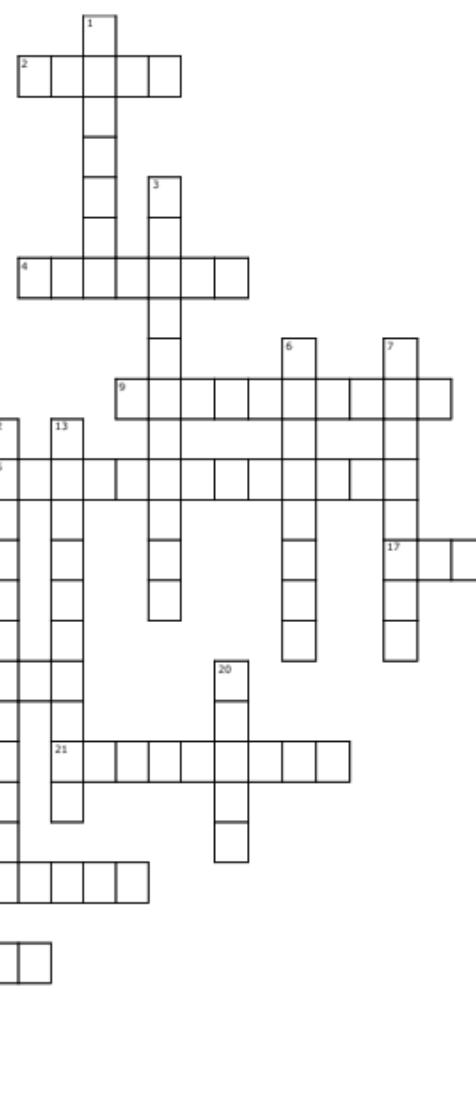
Ever wonder why DEFRA keep suspending that badger cull? Ever wonder why David Cameron seems so intent on fucking the majority of the country over? Had you ever considered the colossal beef between foxes and people?

Why does David Cameron want us out of Europe?

Why does Cameron look like he would melt in the right conditions?

Well the truth is, he would.

David Cameron is not a person, he is in fact a fox, the king of the foxes, and he has created a wax humanoid exoskeleton in which he now lives and breathes. He/they/the foxes want us to pay for all of our crimes against the fox and badger community, and under the perfect guise: one of the very people that actually hunts them. David 'Fox' Cameron is gunning for the British public.



CRACK CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 2. Atoms for ___ Thom Yorke-led supergroup (5)
- 4. State capital of Michigan (7)
- 8. Great Catalan architect (5)
- 9. Numbers' Glaswegian mainman and Radio One's latest poster boy (10)
- 14. Trash on the pavement (6)
- 15. The sofa's on fire, how you gonna get outside? (9,4)
- 16. Korean martial art (9)
- 17. Pens and razors, you're sorted (3)
- 18. Decorative light fixture (10)
- 21. Louis, jazz trumpeter also known as Satchmo (9)
- 22. A word that means the same as another word (7)
- 23. The temporary missing link between cassette and CD (8)
- 24. Larry, the brains behind *Curb Your Enthusiasm* and *Seinfeld* (5)

DOWN

- 1. He can make you a Millionaire (7)
- 3. Happening out of nowhere (11)
- 5. Write on it with pens, rub it off. Easy. (10)
- 6. It's cold, innit. Pop some of this on your lips (8)
- 7. Breakfast biscuits (8)
- 10. Home of the tiny little horses (8)
- 11. A subgenre of American folk music (9)
- 12. A certain unplaceable something (2,2,4,4)
- 13. Legendary British men's casualwear company (3,7)
- 19. He'll put your shelves up and change your fuses (8)
- 20. Behaving in an animalistic fashion (5))
- 23. The psychic is not too big, not too small (6)
- 19. The nasty tasting outside bit of an orange (4)

SOLUTIONS TO LAST ISSUE'S CROSSWORD:

ACROSS: 2. SKANK 6 EMPLOY. 7. MISO 10. STAR WARS 11. ALFRESCO 15. PESCATARIAN 17. METEORITE 18. PROCHET 20. MOWGLI

DOWN: 1. WANDER 3. SLAYER 4. FORTY WINKS 5. ROUGH TRADE 8. COPELAND 9. WAINWRIGHT 10. STROGANOFF 12. SLIPPERY 13. CANBERRA 14. FIDDLE 15. PANDEMONIUM 16. CAN OF WORMS 19. PITH

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© Alfresco Disco

Alfresco Disco New Year's Eve Tower House | Almondsbury

Tip of the top hat to you, **Alfresco Disco**. In amongst all the hyperbole, the rush for tickets and the ‘Where is? What is it? Who’s going?’ pre-party piffle, the bare facts remain after our heads have cleared. This was the best party Crack has ever had the pleasure of attending. That’s not hyperbole, that’s fucking fact.

Post-party, Crack did some homework. The hero that opened his house to roughly 700 people dressed in Victorian regalia was one Graham Pendrill, a 64-year-old millionaire antiques dealer. As we arrived at Tower House, one of the first faces we saw was Mr Pendrill himself readying bacon sandwiches for his guests’ departure at least seven hours later. Wonderful British eccentricity personified.

First up, a gripe with NYE music. Mentioning no names, we’ve witnessed DJs mess up the midnight tune time and time again. It’s New Year, no one wants to hear the latest on-trend house release as they eat the face off their missus. That didn’t happen tonight. 5,4,3,2,1, Bang! *I Would Die For You* by Prince, spun by Pardon My French. It left the upstairs master bedroom/drawing room/whatever room we were dancing in going utterly batshit.

As we found our way into the upper reaches of Tower House, we got the mischievous buzz of a bunch of meddling kids. Had Mr P forgotten to lock his upstairs? Oh well, as Crack settled down on the bed with some excellent company, we felt quite privileged to be where we were. Later in the night, as we meandered between various rooms, soaking up music provided by the cream of Bristol’s selectors, we honestly discovered a secret door disguised as a bookcase. Honestly.

Alfresco Disco, we didn’t think it could get any better. It did. We should never have doubted you.

Words: Thomas Frost

Toro y Moi Village Underground | London January 22nd

Toro Y Moi’s latest album *Anything In Return* was a sugarcoated dose of Carolina synth pop lacquered with high school melodies and bouncy, floor-ready production. This sold-out show was the ideal setting for this ultra-modish producer.

From the second Chaz Bundick took the stage to *Say That*, the silhouette of him tapping away at the keyboard was blasted onto exposed brickwork. There’s something intrinsically fun about watching Toro live, and the material from *Anything In Return* brought that to the fore more than ever, tracks like *So Many Details* and *Rose Quartz* possessing a carefree disco warmth. While Bundick’s older material was met with affection, one of the obvious highlights being the unmistakable *New Beat*, Chaz’s pride in the new LP was reflected in him bounding around the stage, exchanged glances of shared glee with his bandmates.

Toro Y Moi occupies a peculiar place in the landscape of music in 2013. Remixes for Tyler the Creator and constant kudos sent his way by hip-hop stars makes Chaz less of a musician in his own right than a tumblr poster boy, a fitting mascot for the West Coast. If this show proved anything, it’s that below that veneer is an artist who is rightfully established and undeniably talented.

The Lovely Wars Buffalo | Cardiff January 16th

The top floor of Buffalo welcomed the gutsy-but-melodic, satirical-but-cute sound of local lot **The Lovely Wars**, a project from former Pipettes singer Ani Saunders.

The Lovely Wars’ material sounds beautiful, despite Saunders’ profession that her songs come from a relatively un-lovely place. These tunes are poppy with a dose of cynicism, a combination Ani orchestrates flawlessly with her whispery soprano notes, contrasted in richer country and western warblings. This lead brings character to the band’s wistful, retro-styled love songs. There are 60s Supremes-style harmonies from her accompanying keyboard and bass playing femmes, pit against a solid beat with 80s synth, all staged in front of a backdrop of war footage, always hinting at that slightly murkier edge.

On songs like *I Keep Smiling*, the spoken segments of the songs are meshed with Disney Princess style ahhhhh-ing to captivating effect. Yet another example of how The Lovely Wars can be genuinely intriguing, while putting the audience in an utterly positive frame of mind. Deeply promising signs from this fresh five-piece.

Words: Emilee Jane Tombs

Words: Duncan Harrison

Kendrick Lamar O2 Academy | Bristol January 19th

To be honest, we’re prepared for disappointment. Even the smartest MCs are prone to live hip-hop hazards: abandoning tracks after one verse, churning out other rappers’ hits and inviting a nephew or a miscellaneous homie onstage for a cameo freestyle. But Kendrick Lamar is victim to no such pitfalls.

He arrives alone. There’s no entourage of hype men, just Kendrick, owning the stage and looking sharp in a maroon coach jacket, grey tee and white hi-tops. Though he comes across straight-faced during interviews, onstage he’s a cocky but likeable showman who rinses rowdy hecklers and seems genuinely flattered that people bought tickets to his show.

The set’s first half is mainly based around 2011’s solid *Section.80*, and the massively quotable older tune *P&P* is a natural crowd-pleaser. *Money Trees* signifies it’s time for some *good kid, m.A.A.d city* material and everyone goes nuts. The buttery *Bitch, Don’t Kill My Vibe* gets the warmest reception and the lyrics of post-ironic alpha male fantasy *Backseat Freestyle* are belted out by both genders. This guy’s just dropped a certified gold album that outsold Rihanna in the US, and if he’s the man elected as this era’s definitive rapper, then we’ve made a pretty good choice.

Words: David Reed

Pete Swanson Arnolfini | Bristol January 11th

Arnolfini played host to a night of noise headlined by Pete Swanson, with the intimate venue providing an opportunity to get up close and personal with his confrontational sound and performance.

Although Swanson’s most recent material such as *Man With Potential* and *Pro Style* has synthesised power electronics and techno, he insists that it’s not dance music. While his music transcends the pure functionality of most modern techno, it wasn’t long before the room was bobbing in time to Swanson’s industrial stomp. The tension mounted, pulling the room further into the uncompromising performance, until the table holding all his equipment collapsed.

Thankfully the machines were left intact and pounding away, Swanson simply knelt down, and continued to carve out a saturated groove as the excitement in the room reached a new level. Closing with a laugh and a smile, the room erupted into well-deserved applause, Swanson greeting the cheers with awkward handshakes but genuine gratitude. A potent reminder of why he remains a trailblazing figurehead of modern noise music.

Words: Thomas Painter



© Bugged Out



© Bugged Out

Bugged Out Weekender

Butlins | Bognor Regis
January 18th-20th

The ‘cutting-edge electronic music weekender at a holiday camp’ format is still haunted by the ghost of Bloc. Their series of events gathered pace and reputation exponentially, peaking at the stunning 2011 installment, only to implode in a blaze of ... what’s the opposite of glory? ... at last year’s ill-fated London uber-bash.

With such a hefty wake to step into, only one of Europe’s most respected and reliable party brands stood a chance. Luckily, Bugged Out! were on hand. Last year’s inaugural event drew the revelers to Butlins in droves, and this year promised bigger things still.

Employing the help of some of the UK’s most innovative and prolific party throwers, the guys at Bugged Out! had forged a line-up that stretched from the deepest depths of UK bass to the most intense flavours of house and techno, with a host of hard hitting headliners and perennial warehouse favourites. In short, it was always going to bust through the red plastic seal of Bognor Regis. So when this individual got stuck in the West Country snow – presumably one of many – on a night when the likes of Disclosure, Huxley and Skream were set to open proceedings, to say we were gutted would be a bit of an understatement. Snow is rubbish.

But we won’t dwell on that. Let’s move on to our more successful Saturday.

Crack wasted no time in jumping in at the Reds Arena for some squeaky-clean house-shaped goodness courtesy of the infamous **Krankbrothers**. So as we caught up on last night’s events, the London-based party heads delved into knee-deep cuts by the likes of Rodriguez Jr. and Waifs & Strays, laying down solid 4/4 foundations for the acts to come. The first of these, **Ben UFO**, arrived en masse with the faithful in tow. To

be honest, jumping from the velvet bass grooves of *Ocean Drive* to a whirlwind of disparate dancefloor flavours was a little hard to swallow, but this is doubtless a selector that deserves the upmost respect. And seamlessly pulling together both angular classics from the likes of Circuit Breaker and superlative cuts from Hessle Audio, it’s easy to see why Ben has joined Fabric’s hall of fame. However, despite what the guy in the Digital Mystikz tee at the front might have been arguing, tonight even Ben’s spotlight was overshadowed by the impending presence of none other than the **Chemical Brothers** ...

While you can count on one hand the number of appearances that Ed and Tom have made over the last year, there’s no way to measure the impact the Mancunian duo have had on modern electronic music. So while the significance of their presence might have been lost on a few of the dickheads wandering around in giraffe onesies, for most, this was Bugged Out Weekender’s jewel in the crown. The two-hour set which followed was a whirlwind of beer, sweat and tears spilled in a slew of jaw-clenching brilliance and kaleidoscopic, main-room madness. For one of the crowd, the tail end of *Swoon* was enough to reduce them to a sobbing heap at the bar, for another, the repeating sample of *Ecstasy* simply sent them spiraling into multicoloured insanity. Obviously, it was time to calm things down. So having caught the tail-end of **Catz ‘N Dogz**, Crack simmered with the deep-set grooves of **Maceo Plex** and **Heidi**, rounding the evening off with a nostalgia-fest courtesy of **Erol Alkan**. Saturdays don’t get much better.

Waking up to the news that both **Dave Clarke** and **Joy Orbison** had cancelled due to snow (see, not just us) took a slight shine off our Sunday morning. However, there was no time to lament and we got ourselves straight over to the Bristol takeover on the main stage.

With his name still a dominant fixture on the house music horizon, you might think there’s a chance people may have gotten over **Eats Everything** by now. You’d be wrong. Jolting Bugged back into action on the Just Jack Stage in a hefty dose of boisterous elastic bass and kick-hi drive, ‘Britain’s Best’ ripped the crowd into a frenzy with his rough ‘n ready edits and massive 4/4 jams. The same goes for his West country counterpart **Julio Bashmore**, who effortlessly got the crowd on his side by playing cuts like the battle cry of *Au Seve* and the rip-roar of Joy O’s *Big Room Tech House*... Opting out of **Boddika** downstairs, Crack stayed with the hot ‘n heavy in the main room, digging on **Maya Jane Coles**’s deep-house delight and getting ready to receive the godfather of house himself, **Frankie Knuckles**.

This was it. Arriving like a Messiah at the altar, Frank kicked things off with *Your Love* (what else), eventually launching into cuts such as *Strings of Life* by Soul Central and his own *Tears*. If ever Butlins has been transformed into a New York warehouse, as confetti filled the neon soaked air, this was it. Pure escapism.

Words: Matt Riches

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Saturday 30 March
TEEN





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The BPM Festival

Playa del Carmen | QR | Mexico
January 4th - 13th

Playa del Carmen is a pertinent host for the beach party maelstrom that is The BPM Festival. On the cusp of megasprawl, the once paradisal beaches welcome the crème de la crème of dance music's jet-setting fraternity, and the city reverberates for 10 solid days to booms of the 4/4 sonic variety.

This 6th annual edition brought a wildly expansive roster of over 250 artists embracing the bulk of the house music spectrum, with the extensive programming attracting an array of crowds and creating a range of atmospheres that reflected Playa's typically hip, glossy and beautiful image. Crack's arrival on the first Sunday meant we missed the opening two days, along with squandering the chance to witness the likes of **Ben Klock** and **Richie Hawtin** introduce a tinge of techno to the musical proceedings.

Our inaugural dance took place as we dipped our toes in at the tail-end of a 4hr set by **Art Department**, whose faces seemed ever-present throughout the 10-day duration, at No.19's Social Experiment showcase at Mamita's. The No.19 collective continued to demonstrate their slick repertoire at our first night outing at the Coco Maya club, one of the three main night venues, this one located in a mingle of open-air platforms and covered terraces temptingly situated directly adjacent to 'la playa'.

Thankfully, Monday's late night antics cleansed Crack's palate, with a stonking double header of Cocoon Heroes' **Sven Väth** and **Cassy** entertaining the Blue Parrot, whilst next door in Coco Maya the mayhem was being mobilised in the form of a majestic Circo Loco lineup. **Ellen Allien** was heating up the ramjammed crowd with her sultry blend of techno, before **Maceo Plex** took the helm to shake up the still crammed dancefloor. The searing sunrise slot was then presided over by a cool, calm and collected back-to-back between the fledgling and fervent **The Martinez Brothers** and the ever-charismatic **Seth Troxler**, with the triplicate's facial hair as exuberantly pruned and polished as their tunes.

On Tuesday, Supplement Facts' shindig with **Guy Gerber** and Heidi at La Santanera, the third official nightspot that boasted a delightfully decorated upper terrace overlooking the hullabaloo of Playa del

Carmen's main drag of noisy bars and trashy clubs and an exquisitely mirrored basement room, was idiosyncratic, subtly toned and meticulously handcrafted.

By far the best party of the week was Dirtybird and Pets Recordings' bash down at the splendid Canibal Royal club. Located further away from the hectic hustle of the town's main seafront, this proper beachside venue sparked into life thanks to a giant disco ball hovering midair between the swaying palm trees and curvaceous triple terraces. **Eats Everything's** refreshing afternoon broadcast was the talk of many a punter that appreciated his jolly sly nods to the strains of underground bass music that rarely got a look in at BPM. **Catz 'N Dogz** and special guest **Danny Daze** kept things ticking along nicely, before main man **Justin Martin** offered the closing array of auditory delights.

With a much-needed disco nap back in our hostel under our belts, Hot Creations' Paradise party at Coco Maya came a-calling. **Benoit & Sergio** were up, animating the intimate stage upon Crack's arrival, followed by the strident **Lee Foss** contorting the masses in a woozy, housey haze. The verdant and velvety melodies continued with **Cajmere**, then master crowd-pleaser **Jamie Jones**, briefly wielding a sparkly sombrero, assuredly navigated the laid-back housekeeping through some off-kilter classics to a dawn-drenched close.

The onslaught of four full days of gently shifting sand on Playa's dancefloors left most of the Crack crew in need of some suspension in BPM activity, so it was with mixed emotions that we received news that Thursday's RA boat party had been cancelled due to the pesky winds curving up the cloud-covered coastline. Despite missing the opportunity to be up on deck with Art Department, Ben Klock and Justin Martin, the respite stood us in good stead for a tasty dash of disco from the Sarcastic supremo **DJ Harvey**, who was spinning at length in the bouncy basement for the Smoke'n'Mirrors event at La Santanera.

Our dancing maintained a subterranean flavour as we moved next to the Cave Party at the Alux restaurant-cum-club where the surprising lack of attendees meant that after **The Junkies** and **Halo** had rumbled

the soundsystems into action, **Subb-an** and **Hector** joined forces in the main cavern to shake the stalactites'n'mites with their chunky and deep swinging rhythms.

A recharge of the batteries was completed by a night in and early rise for a spellbinding dip and snorkel in one of the many crystal clear cenotes (naturally sunken lagoons complete with schools of tropical fish) that dot the region.

Freshly invigorated by some of Mexico's natural splendour, the Crack team were suitably rejuvenated for a small dose of the Akbal Music event at the Canibal Royal club, where **DJ T** stoked our Saturday night into action and lubricated our ears with some otherworldly soundscapes, before we set off out of town to the only gathering away from Playa del Carmen in the uber-exotic ambiance of the remote Blue Venado beachclub – Crosstown Rebels' Rebel Rave. By the time lynch-pin **Damian Lazarus** had found his groove, the thatched longhouse was oscillating mildly to the entrancing, crisp, deep house filtering through the speakers, and the music seemingly coalesced with the bright Sunday morning sunshine into one shimmering body of warm sandy saltwater.

Official closing party boogies regrettably never materialised, as we were but a shadow of our former selves come Sunday evening. But a final wind-down dance did occur however a couple of days later during our spell of recovery further down the coast in Tulum. Whilst soothing our ears, feet and minds on the tranquil white beaches, we got word of a free 72-hour, non-stop BPM afterparty in the environs of a neat little beach club nearby. So it was down to the likes of **jozif**, **Ricky Ahmed**, **Russ Yallop**, **Wildkats** and **Holosound** to the soundtrack the closing credits to a walloping week and weekend of relentless electronic pulsations.

Words: Jack Clemoes



© Valentina Abalzati



© Vincent Thiempont

Day Zero

Playa del Carmen | QR | Mexico
December 20th-21st

As D:Ream keyboardist Professor Brian Cox points out in one of his colourful tirades against pseudoscientific drivel, the counting system used to determine the recent end-date of the 5,125-year-long cycle in the Mesoamerican Long Count calendar is based on the number of fingers and toes we humans happen to have: $5+5+5+5 = \text{'base 20'}$... “How can that have cosmic significance?” he asks, “it just depends entirely on how many dextroce protrusions the organism that invented the civilisation has got!”

Cox has no qualms with the Maya and their “beautiful civilisation”, recognising that they lived in an age where it was believed that “people were actually required to keep time passing”. While naysayers forecast widespread catastrophe, more positive-minded individuals took heed of the more accepted interpretation that last December 21st simply marked the beginning of a new era. Damian Lazarus, ringleader of the dance music label/platform Crosstown Rebels, was one such broad-minded character. He set about tailoring a party worthy of such sweeping significance and era-defining proportions, calling it Day Zero.

Located in the rapidly urbanising jungle on the outskirts of Playa del Carmen on the Yucatán Peninsula in southeastern Mexico, and conceived as a “once in a lifetime event that will bring together party people for 24 hours to celebrate the most powerful and momentous moment of our generation, ending at the exact moment the Mayans decreed as the end of this world cycle”, Day Zero certainly held grand ambitions.

In the depths of the main pyramid, shortly after proceedings were ignited by Sidartha Siliceo’s sitar and Mexico’s Metrika soundtracking a set of tribal dances on the site’s decorated central circular-plinth, Crack spoke to Lazarus, clad in long shimmering silver-thread tunic and mini-turban.

“I’ve lived in LA for the last four years,” Crosstown Rebels’ head honcho tells us. “I love it there, it’s a very, very cool place to live ... but I’ve been coming to this part of the world for about seven or eight years, and I’ve really enjoyed returning here as a place to recharge my batteries. I’ve been checking out the ruins and travelling to and from here for many

years, and have got a lot of friends and a really strong fanbase all around Mexico, so it just felt like a great opportunity to bring these people together and make something fresh.”

The never-opened but nearly-decaying contemporary ruins were a particularly fitting site for the merrymakers to contemplate the passing of time and the impermanent nature of life. Lazarus and his co-production team (**Sacbe**, a Mexican collective that operate a nearby eco community, and **Secret Productions**, the team behind Secret Garden Party) collaborated to concoct a spellbinding stage set for the musical maestros to work their magic, with vocal sculptress **Francesca Lombardo** following the aforementioned inaugural performers with a pulsating set that joined the melodic dots between house and electronica. The dark psychedelic synths of Venezuelan duo **Fur Coat** and the subtle, sophisticated grooves of Berlin’s **Maayan Nidam** filled the next slots on the chock-a-block line-up, before the idiosyncratic **Matias Aguayo**, resplendent in one of his insurmountable shirts, donned the top steps of the pyramid for his bewildering live/DJ showcase.

The second Mayan ritual of the evening set ablaze the pivotal plinth at the stroke of midnight, just as **3D** (Massive Attack) and **James Lavelle** (UNKLE) took charge of the decks at the apex. The top-billing duo’s initially cool start soon sparked into life with their melodic/melancholic tech blend winding its way deeper into the sounds for which these two made their name. The ‘vs’ element to the pairing soon petered out though, with Lavelle left to marshal the dynamic transitions towards a swaggering climax of Sasha’s understated rework of Hot Chip’s *Flutes*.

Crack’s choice set of the night went to wonderboy **Subb-an**, who delivered an assured selection of taut and tasty techno-leaning house, with his rather dench remix of Tiga’s *Pleasure From The Bass* particularly pleasing. The Birmingham-based producer’s dark, driving rhythms were perfectly matched by minimal lighting and a coruscation of fire-dancers setting the pyramidal backdrop aglow. **Totally Enormous Extinct Dinosaurs**’ bright and brash live show and **Jamie Jones**’s highest order machine-funk brought the darkness to a close ahead of the dawn chorus

provided by **Trentemøller**’s seriously special sunrise set, where the great Dane’s audio offerings ran the crowd’s emotions ragged.

At this point in proceedings, Crack felt compelled to find a quiet nook among the surrounding undergrowth for a quick 40 winks. With our bleary eyes cleared by the sight of birds swooping about the soundscape of Iranian/Canadian **Amirali**’s live show, we were fully re-charged to trip the light fantastic upon the colourful centre circle to a raw, mind-bending sonic assortment from **Art Department**.

With the final dust settling and dusk setting, and everyone’s sensory receptors in hyperdrive, it was time for señor Lazarus to take the helm. After fulfilling his promise in the programme “to deliver the best music possible to soundtrack these days and to create an opportunity to dance and play under the sun and stars with like-minded souls”, and presiding over a virgin event that was incredibly smooth and sleek in both production and operation, the moment (and soundsystem, replete with shimmering bass) was primed for the tour-de-force which Lazarus duly delivered. Jamie Woon’s *Night Air* and Holden/Fake’s *The Sky Was Pink* caught the mood particularly poignantly before the curveball closer of Phil Collins’s *In The Air Tonight* drew the curtain on a sublime 24 hours.

Damian Lazarus appears at Eastern Electrics Festival (August 2nd-4th)

Words: Jack Clemoes

Photos: Valentina Abalzati and Vincent Thiempont



cable

FRIDAYS→FEBRUARY

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KANKA - LIVE
KENNY KEN
KILLAWATT
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SATURDAYS→FEBRUARY

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CHRIS RENEGADE B2B MEMTRIX
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DUCKTAILS
THE FLOWER LANE
Domino

12/20

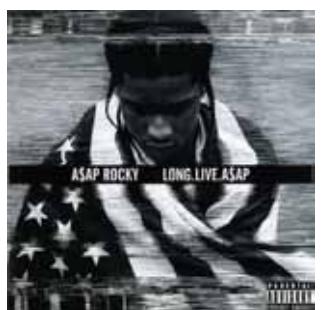
By way of his woozy, horizontal pop project Ducktails, Real Estate's Matthew Mondanile has been so pointedly consistent for the past few years that it comes as some surprise that *The Flower Lane* feels like a slightly strained exercise in genre-digging. The album starts promisingly enough; *Ivy Covered House* is a familiar example of the hazy yearning that Mondanile has done so well in the past, all shimmering treble and laconic vocals, though the lead guitar motif does act as a subtle indicator as to the album's direction, old tropes quickly giving way to ersatz light funk and platitudinous soft-rock sonority. That's not to say that all is lost. A cover of Peter Gutteridge's *Planet Phrom* is slight but lovely, the Daniel Lopatin/Jessa Farkas/Ian Drennan collaboration *Letter of Intent* is a faultless slice of Air France-recalling psych pop, and *Academy Avenue* is a nicely understated resolution. It's just a shame that much of the album marks something of a loss of prior artistic identity, and nothing here is as satisfying or emotionally resonant as the lo-fi warmth of tracks like *Roses* and *Mirror Image*, or even the cumulative jangle of *Killing the Vibe* and Mondanile's other more conventional forays into guitar pop. **TH**



THE HISTORY OF APPLE PIE
OUT OF VIEW
Marshall Teller Records

16/20

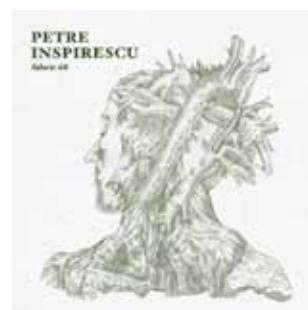
Crack would officially like to pledge our allegiance to the latest East London '90s are back' flex. In fact, we're so all over it we're just gonna say straight up that The History of Apple Pie are giving us a tingle in our ripped 501s and sending vibrations through our semi-ironic Aaron Carter curtains. The scene they've created along with Yuck, Parakeet and all their mates is so full of love and adoration, it's hard to tell whether you can take it seriously without encroaching on their cool thing. *Out of View* is both utterly twee and incredibly serious, a record that glimmers and shimmers and reeks of rainbows and break-ups. Tracks like the downtempo slice of dream pop *You're So Cool* and the effects-laden *The Warrior* showcase a band not just emulating but worshipping bands like Cranes and Slowdive. It's this obvious passion and respect that makes HOAP so much more than a tribute to the mythical, golden place that was Camden circa-1992. If it all goes to plan, things can only get brighter for this bunch of pretty young things. British guitar music? Not dead, not even dying, coming back louder and cuter than ever before. **BB**



A\$AP ROCKY
LONGLIVEA\$AP
Polo Grounds/RCA

16/20

A\$AP Rocky was a readymade star the moment he appeared from thin air in 2011. But although the image of this syrup slurpin' post-Lil B weirdo with a street hustler's mentality and a penchant for high fashion was a good sell, under closer inspection he seemed like a manufactured hip-hop Frankenstein. So why was his 2011 mixtape *LongLiveA\$AP* so incredibly alluring? It was probably because Rocky's success is very much real, and his feeling of elation poured into your headphones. Musically, Rocky will forever be indebted to Clams Casino, whose style of emotive ambience is the perfect counterbalance to Rocky's Houston influenced flow. The first half of *LongLiveA\$AP* effectively magnifies his appeal and now the mixtape sounds like a rough draft. But admittedly, some duds crop up. *Fashion Killa* doesn't even bother trying to disguise itself as filler, lead single *Fuckin' Problems* feels strangely cheap, and good luck dropping your preconceptions about the garish, Zane Lowe-friendly Skrillex collab *Wild For The Night*. But for all its flaws, this is an aurally pleasing and addictive record. And if Rocky's aesthetic is a collage, that's no longer a problem. Because with *LongLiveA\$AP*, he's officially claimed it as a signature style. **DR**



PETRE INSPIRESCU
FABRIC 68
Fabric

17/20

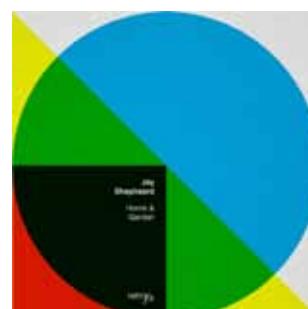
It's becoming quite the fashion to use the Fabric series as a chance to showcase 16 or so of your own productions in what is essentially an 'album' as opposed to a mix CD. Step forward Romanian techno upstart Petre Inspirescu, also known as Pedro. Making up one-third of the RPR (or a:rpia:r) collective with his fellow label mates Rhadoo and Raresh, these three young'unz of techno have been electrifying audiences with their loopy, Villalobos-inspired take on the genre. This mix CD sees the canon pushed hard, with a CD rich in the variables that make the aforementioned mentor and the particular strand of the sound he pushes as a whole so rich. Hypnotic minimalism runs alongside indecipherable effects alongside pulses, alongside – rather uniquely for a CD of this ilk – a hoard of instrumentation from the classical music section. Piano, lute, operatic notes, and violin form a tapestry far richer than your traditional minimal click and bleep palette. If the beat perhaps lingers for too long in certain sections, there's something being constructed around that is genuinely very special indeed. **TF**



FIDLAR
FIDLAR
Wichita

4/20

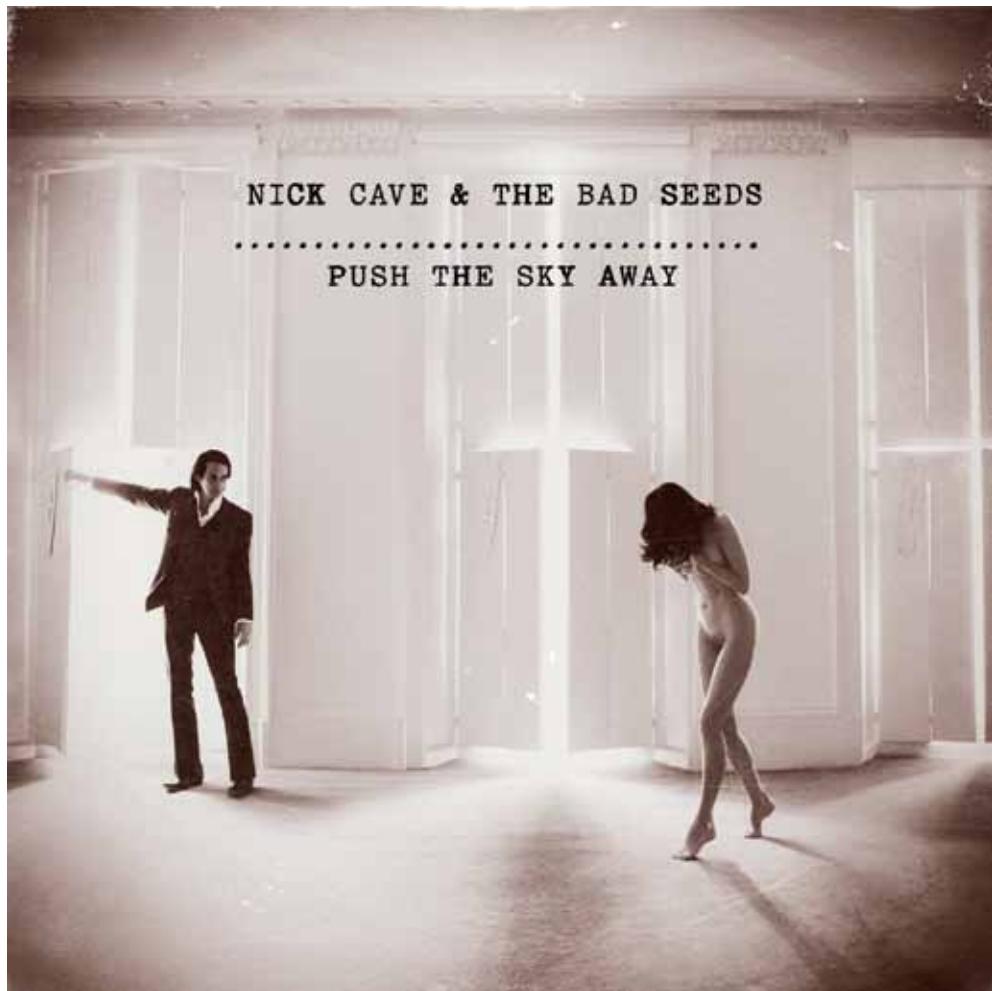
There's that guy who says words like 'stoked', he brags about owning a *Beavis and Butthead* VHS and having a 'beer bong' in his 'trunk'. He's in denial about the fact it's 2013, can't skate, has a business studies degree and lives in Basingstoke. He's been looking forward to this record for ages. LA cartoon slacker-punks FIDLAR have kindly included breakthrough track *Wake Bake Skate* here, and it's as naff as anything Sum 41 ever recorded. 'Just to hang out with my best friends and drink a lot of beer/I'm so fucking cheap and I'm so fucking broke/I don't have a job and I don't have a home/Don't have a life and I'm always stoned', they screech, epitomising this album's desperate, insecure attempt sound as dumb as possible. Bands like Black Lips, Waves and the late Jay Reatard have embraced a snotty, adolescent vibe with their scuzzy garage-punk to brilliant effect. But when FIDLAR chant 'I drink cheap beer, so what, fuck you', it's chillingly reminiscent of when The View boasted unremarkably about not washing their jeans. Did that reference just make you cringe? Sorry, but this is a cringe-inducing situation. This is FIDLAR's debut album. **DR**



JAY SHEPHEARD
HOME AND GARDEN
Retrofit

17/20

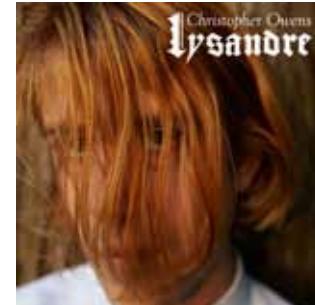
In a genre where cohesive, solid artist albums are like an endangered species, house music aficionados everywhere have been gagging for this one. Jay Shepheard hinted that he's a capable sort with a very accomplished RA Podcast this time last year, and he's obviously spent the intervening time exceptionally well by crafting *Home & Garden*, a piece of future house that doesn't have a single track that makes us wince. Free of happy-clappy house cliché, *Home and Garden* is remarkably dance-floor accessible and has many tracks distinguished by its difference to the last. *Orbis Tertius* is loaded with soft synth and emotion, *Here Comes* is slo-mo house with an innate sense of cool, *Signs* is an upbeat astro-disco hip-mover and album closer *Two Much Love* polishes off the record on a beautifully euphoric note. Finally, a benchmark standard of house music album has been established. **TF**


NICK CAVE & THE BAD SEEDS
PUSH THE SKY AWAY
NICK CAVE AND THE BAD SEEDS
PUSH THE SKY AWAY
Bad Seed Ltd.
18/20

Given the ranting and seething which defined Nick Cave's previous three offerings – a mid-life return to the garage spread across two Grinderman records and the Bad Seeds' remarkable *Dig, Lazarus, Dig!!!* – *Push The Sky Away* might be best summarised by a sense of restraint. True, there is a clenched, tense anticipation beneath much of this album, but rather than straining guitar (and Mandocaster) strings to their very limits, here they are caressed in eeked out memories of notes. See the offbeat, slapped drum-fills of *Water's Edge* – just one example in an overall masterclass of percussive subtlety from Jim Sclavunos – the underlying malevolence of opener *We Know Who U R*, or the slithering, brooding *We Real Cool*, imbued with a tension which could explode at any moment. Release pours out in rare, satisfying bursts: the orchestral, all-encompassing crescendo of the simply incredible *Jubilee Street* – a song of such slow-burning, unfurling majesty that it will surely take its place among the canon of Cave's greats – *Higgs Boson Blues* growing around a premise so simple it's hard to believe it can be as effective as it is, complete with the curled-lip utterance of "if I die tonight / bury me in my favourite yellow patent leather shoes". The clubbing bass which accented recent material is exchanged for tickles of piano and aching strings, and there's a reassuring, palpable care taken over each composition which gives Cave's unrivalled musings on sex, death, loss and humanity the space they deserve. As the album's closing title-track creaks and swoons towards its close, Cave's vocals mingle with a youthful female voice, and he has seldom sounded so profoundly, evocatively laid bare. **GHD**


FALTY DL
HARDCOURAGE
Ninja Tune
18/20

As one of the most confident and assured albums to emerge from the Ninja Tune stable in several years, *Hardcourage* offers a masterclass in electronic music that is sophisticated without being serious, slick without being smooth, and eclectic without seeming disparate. Opener *Stay I'm Changed* sets the tone with bass stabs and cascading synths, before the softly spoken *She Sleeps* (featuring Friendly Fires' Ed Macfarlane) gives way to the looping grooves and shimmying vocal samples of first single *Straight and Arrow*. There's a self-confidence and sophistication in the production that could stand against the likes of Tevo Howard, but if that end of the house spectrum can tend towards seriousness, there's a willingness to explore more emotive avenues on *Hardcourage*. Falty DL uses jazz dynamics in much the same way that Dam Mantle did on his equally impressive debut album last year – shuffling synths, pads and brass are deployed throughout. But it's tracks like *For Karme* and *Korben Dallas* that really impress, sounding like lost treasure from Kuedo's 2011 masterpiece, *Severant*. Closing track *Bells* is a lilting glance back over the shoulder, smouldering with unrequited love and perfectly wrapping up a consistently brilliant album. **AC**


CHRISTOPHER OWENS
LYSANDRE
13/20
Fat Possum

Girls never made the classic record they wanted to, but if you merged the finest moments from their final album and paired it with their criminally overlooked *Broken Dreams Club* EP, you'd be close to perfection. Now that Owens has completely escaped the slackerish, contrived lo-fidelity of the US indie scene which spawned Girls, the results are mixed. *Lysandre* is a concept album which features the prominent, almost audacious use of flutes and saxophones. When Owen's delicate, honey-coloured voice is set to finger-picked acoustic chords on *Here We Go* and *A Broken Heart*, the results are gorgeous, and the latter song is one of the best he's ever written. However, the reoccurring musical motif which neatly ties things together thematically has an unappealing medieval feel that matches the album cover's unfortunate typography. The title track was once a soulful and sunny Girls song, but it's now had a makeover which is so twee you're never going to be able to play it in front of your smartarse friends without them sniggering. Owens is still one of the most courageously sincere songwriters around and we're lucky to have him. Even if we want to have a fucking flute on his new record. **DR**


ICEAGE
YOU'RE NOTHING
Matador
17/20

Iceage released their virtually flawless debut full length *New Brigade* while consumed in sometimes overwhelming darkness, controversy and hype. It's rare to emerge from such circumstances without kicking and screaming. Luckily for Iceage, kicking and screaming is second nature. *You're Nothing* is a hurricane of youthful arrogance and personal turmoil, each track more bitter and resentful than the last. With no regard for past hype, the band has charged into an album which is not only as good as *New Brigade*, but evolves their sound. Opener *Ecstasy* is layered with industrial mourning and vocals that teeter on the edge of despair, with Elias Bender intoning the word "pressure". *Morals* is yet another new direction, quiet keys and the band's trademark bass open the track before the vocal hits, making something which sits between Death in June and Eric Carmen. Really. This is a cacophonous, rampant record that sets a new bar for a band who now have no choice but to keep producing music that reeks of reality, youth and desperation. If proof was needed that punk lives, look no further; *You're Nothing* sounds like it's snuffed more glue than G.G Allin had Swastika-vomit-urine parties. **BB**


PANTHA DU PRINCE & THE BELL LABORATORY
ELEMENTS OF LIGHT
Rough Trade
15/20

With 2007's *This Bliss*, Henrik Weber presented his vision of the dance full-length, consisting of a gorgeously realised world of shimmer and haze, mesmeric melodic miasma set to the lulling pulse of Kompakt style minimal. He returned in 2010 with the similarly coherent, pastoral melancholic *Black Noise*. The thing that set Weber apart from his tech-house-minimal-ballbearings-in-a-washing-machine bedfellows was simple: bells. Those glorious chimes. That Weber sticks to this bells'n'hushed-thuds formula on *Elements of Light* should come as no surprise, nor should it fill the potential listener with inertia. Why? Because the formula still works. From the languorous peals of opener *Wave* through to the sumptuous pointillist-ambient of closer *Quantum*, we're offered a further glimpse into his soundworld; a place where muffled kicks and faltering hi-hats mingle with minutely-differentiated bell tones, summoning the endless iced-out landscapes of Caspar David Friedrich's *The Wanderer*. Yet the lengthy *Particle* turns into a weirdly-robust heads-down percussive workout, the even lengthier *Spectral Split* embodies its title: a barely-there sparseness melts into a full field of competing melodic fragments, leaving the listener saturated in Weber's deep-blue tones. **JB**

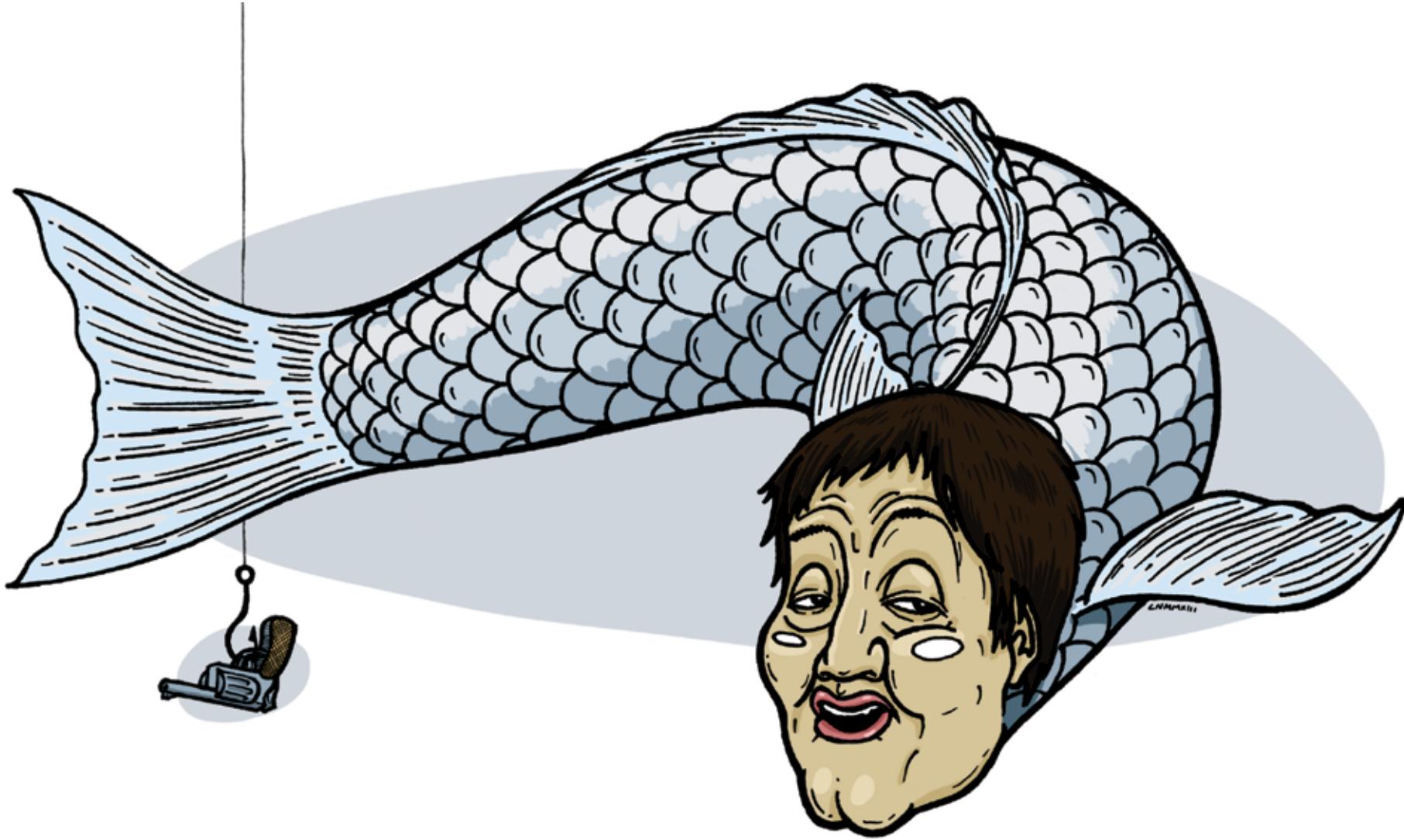
I'm shutting your butt down.

Illustration: Lee Nutland //// www.leenutland.com

What if Quentin Tarantino had taken the bait and discussed the link between movie and real life violence in *Django Unchained*, rather than shutting Krishnan Guru-Murthy's butt down? In the wake of the Newtown massacre, a wrong-footed remark on violence is akin to lowering the spring of a thunder drum toward a squawking nest of seagulls. It's not just about whether or not he's going to waste time reiterating his views, hopefully Tarantino's trying to avoid having the wrong debate about gun violence.

But Guru-Murphy, a man we respect greatly, unfortunately found himself repeatedly baiting a cheap angle: "But why are you so sure that there's no link between enjoying movie violence and enjoying real violence?" Is there a link between enjoying *Super Sunday* and enjoying playing football, between enjoying porn and enjoying sex? Probably. But the cause of acts which demonstrate this magnitude of brutality can't be put down to something as simple as whether or not shops stock *Grand Theft Auto*.

Tarantino, who is two years away from starring as

Worzel Gummidge in his own 2023 gore-fest remake of *Dark Night of the Scarecrow*, did bring up a much more interesting point in the interview, pointing out that he's attempting to create a black hero in an era whitewashed by Hollywood. To raise a discussion about the "Auschwitz-ian" element of the slave trade that has been left unsaid.

Instead of picking up on that relatively controversial point, the aggregators created a buzz feed of freeze frames and video clips, B-list Hollywood stars spiked him for disrespecting their ancestors, and then the C-list American politicians who spend their days scanning the information superhighway for suitable 'Oh, the horror!' bandwagons began to appear on the horizon. Pretty soon the interview was running ad nauseum on the news and the print press weighed in calling the interview a "rant", "furious rant" or a "clash" that was "yelled".

This all happened, even though he didn't give an answer, because he's made a violent movie at a time when the US is experiencing violence at its own hands. Not the first time, not even the first time in recent memory, just a more extreme case than we've heard of in the last few years. And, after waiting

the respectable time, the collective consciousness of America, the very humanity of America, began searching around for commentary and coverage that would fit their worldview about violence, about its causes and why.

Alex Jones is on CNN literally screaming "mass-murder pills". The National Rifle Association, whose army of lobbyist were on lockdown for the first 30 days after Newtown happened, headed back to Washington. And, as Obama makes the biggest gun-control push in decades, they called him an "elitist hypocrite" because his children receive protection from Secret Service agents when there aren't armed guards on the gates of every school in the country.

We've slipped back into that horrible feedback-loop where guns are used to commit violent acts, and then they want more guns. The Mayans didn't predict the end of the world in 2012; they predicted the end of the science of reason.

Obama wants to lift the ban on federal research into gun violence, implement an assault weapons ban and background checks for all gun buyers, among other things, but the debate-shaping gun lobby and pro-

gun activists will protest that what we need are more guns. It's the video games, they say. And, no matter the level of horror experienced by the families, friends and loved ones through all of this, the Republicans will probably put a stop on any assault weapons ban when it reaches the House of Representatives.

Christopher Goodfellow

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Akkord	dBridge	Gusto	LTJ Bukem	Thinking
Alborosie &	Danman	Hackman	LX One	Throwing Snow
Shengen Clan Live	Danny T & Tradesman	Halogenix	Machinedrum	Toast
Alexander Nut	David Rodigan MBE	High Focus Records	Mala in Cuba	Todd Edwards
Alix Perez	DBX	Icicle	Marcus Visionary	Tonn Piper
Alpha Steppa	Decibel	Ikonika	Maribou State	Topcat
Amit	Digital Mystikz	Iration Steppas	Marvellous Cain	Ulterior Motive
Andy C	—Mala & Coki	J Rocc	MC AD	Vibronics
Ant TC1	Distance	J Robinson	MC DRS	Vital Techniques
Arp 101	DJ Die	Jack Sparrow	MC GQ	Vivek
Artificial Intelligence	DJ Earthpipe	Jackmaster	Mefjus	Walton
Author	DJ EZ	Jay Electronica	Mella Dee	Wilkinson
B.Traits	DLR	JC	Mikal	Xtrah
Beneath	Dorian Concept	Jeanville	Moony	Youngsta
Benji B	Dub Conductor	Joe Nice	Moxie	Zed Bias
Benny Page	Dub Phizix	Joe Rolet	Mr Scruff	
Biome	Dub Smugglers	Joey Bada\$\$	Mr Williamz	
Boddika	Dubkasm	Jubei	Mungo's HiFi	
Break	Earl Gateshead	Kahn	Newham Generals	
Breakage	Eglo Live Band Feat.	Kaska	Northern Lights	
Broke'N'English	Fatima & Olivier Daysoul	Killawatt	O.B.F	
Calyx & Teebee	Elijah & Skilliam	Kode 9	Onset	
Cern	Eliphino	Koreless	Ossie	
CFSN DJ's	Enei	Kryptic Minds	Paleman	
Champion	Eniz	LeFtO	Pariah	
Channel One	Faze Miyake	Legal Shot HiFi	Pean	
Chimpo	Foreign Concept	Lenzman	Phace	
Chunky	General Levy & Joe Ariwa	Loefah	Phaeleh	
Cooly G	Goldie		Pharoah Monch	

Plus many more, see site for full line-up

Dual weekend tickets available for Outlook & Dimensions festivals

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