

zero core

music, design, photography

spring 2013_free



ESBEN AND THE WITCH



WASH THE SINS NOT ONLY THE FACE

★★★★★ THE FLY

★★★★★ MOJO

9/10 - LOUD & QUIET



YOLA TENGO FADE



GUARDIAN ★★★★

THE TIMES ★★★★

MOJO ★★★★

THE SUN ★★★★

MAIL ON SUNDAY ★★★★

DAILY TELEGRAPH ALBUM OF THE WEEK ★★★★

THE MIRROR ALBUM OF THE WEEK ★★★★



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Hello

Happy 2013, and welcome to Issue 5 of Zero Core. We are half a decade old, sort of. Maybe we'll develop some kind of mid-life crisis, all go out and buy a Segway, and the next issue will be entirely dedicated to the many collaborations of David Guetta, but probably not.

This issue is actually very exciting as we wrote about our cover stars, Daughter, in our very first zine back in October 2011, over the page in the new bands section. Their debut record is out next month and it's such a stunning example of bleakly honest, totally gutting songwriting that we're honoured to have them grace our pages.

But enough of the sucking up; there are loads more bands, artists, and photographers in these pages for us to be thankful for. From our new bands section, all of whom we'd one day like to see on the covers of real magazines, to Mr Bella Union himself, Simon Raymonde on our guest writer page. It's all here because we love it, and want you to feel the same. And if you'd like to get involved, just drop us a note.

Now make like Drake and take care. We'll see you in the summer sun.

The Editors x

Made by

Jen Long, Adam Chard and Marc Thomas.

Contributors in order of appearance

Lucy Johnston, Andrew Backhouse, Sébastien Dehesdin, George O'Brien, George Morton, Lauren Down, Nat Davies, Hannah Nicklin, Chris Chadwick, Louise Mason, Sam Lee, Francine Gorman, Al Horner, Dan Tyte, Heather Steele, Chris Chadwick, Howard Melnyczuk, Simon Raymonde, Jake May, Anika Mottershaw.

Thank you

Annette LOL FACE Lee, Nat Judge, Jo Morris, Dan Monsell, Charlie Hearn, Will Lawrence, Matthew Maxy, Leah Wilson, Rich Onslow, John Rostron, Adam Whitmore, Rich Walker, Michael and Rachel Moshi, Rachel Silver, Hayley Codd, Emma Van Duyts, Leah Ellis, Seb Burford, Nita at Goldstar, Sarah Richardson, Jack Clothier, Matt P-Copley, Simon Raymonde, Anika Mottershaw, Jack Hudson, Matt and Isaac at Barely Regal, Tom, Jack and Lucy EYOE, Nathan Warren and Tim, Toby, Lilas, Stephen and Mike at the sexy Transgressive.

This issue of Zero Core was created in London and Cardiff in the middle of a blizzard. All rights reserved and stuff like that. Don't rip us off. Enjoy.

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Issue six due June 2013.

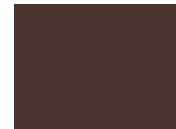
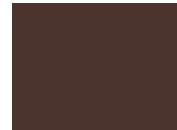
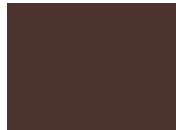
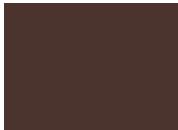
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IN ISSUE

5



New Bands

1.



2.



3.



1. Thumpers

We're big fans of nostalgia here at Zero Core. I mean, for starters we're a printed zine that you are currently holding in your hands (unless you're reading us on Issuu, you big cheats). We like to remember the days when to share an album was to copy it to cassette, when a Soda Stream was futuristic, and everything just seemed a little brighter. And we love Thumpers.

A duo from London, they have a glorious gift of creating warmth for the past deep in our hearts, all while sounding intensely current. Debut single 'Dancing's Done' is an explosion of colourful chorus, an unashamedly joyful pop refrain that will make you do nothing but want to celebrate, even without reason.

And it's not just in the music that's captured our imagination; it's in everything from their artwork to their releases.

The single is out now as a split between Kissability and ParadYse, as cassette and 7" respectively, but each with different b-sides. Then when both are pieced together, the tape sits perfectly on the vinyl to create a 3D vision of the cover image; an image that shows two kids playing outdoors, and looks like something ripped straight from the family photo album. It's safe to say that Thumpers' imagination makes us feel like those kids - young, naïve and happy.

But having been in bands before, Marcus and Jack are not naïve to the way music in 2013 works, yet maybe that's why their approach is so DIY and retro. Instead of using pricey studios, they've recorded in the houses they grew up in. And instead of forking out for session musicians, siblings supplied the additional sounds.

Live, their setup is still evolving, with new members added and subtracted depending on availability. But there's an ever-present feeling at Thumpers shows that exudes from the band and spills over the audience. It's one of excitement and discovery, and a dawning realisation that soon the sounds will overtake the logistics, and we'll all be witnessing this party on a far bigger stage.

Welcome to the world of Thumpers. It's a pretty timeless place.

thumpers.co

2. Woman's Hour

There's something about London based group Woman's Hour that has us utterly obsessed. As soon as first single 'Our Love Has No Rhythm' hit our eardrums it's not been out of them for too long. A rich and captivating ride of echoing guitar riff, a beat that seems to defy gravity, and a vocal line that's more exhaled than sung. It's an instant addiction for anyone with a soul and brain. Although physical release details still seem a little unclear at time of printing, you can download the track for free. We won't tell you where; you know how to use Google.

In fact, at this time 'Our Love...' is the only example you can find online of the band's heartbreaking wonder, but they do promise that more is to come very soon.

We were lucky enough to have a sneaky listen to a few newer demos and can confirm that the future is bleakly beautiful, for our headphones will be playing home to Woman's Hour for a good amount of time over the next few months.

But, until more is shared the best you can do is search out their striking clip for the aforementioned track, feel unsettled by its intimate brilliance, and prepare yourself for more audible delicacies from our new obsession.

[facebook.com/womanshourband](https://www.facebook.com/womanshourband)

3. Mozart's Sister

Canadians seem to be everywhere right now. It feels like you can't click on a webpage or open a magazine without being greeted by the all too cool stare of some new North American wonder ready to steal your heart and your merch money. Not that we're complaining though; acts like Blue Hawaii, Metz, and Born Gold are making our ears very pleased at the moment. Well, here's another future love for that list: meet Mozart's Sister.

Based in Montreal and formed in 2011, the solo project of Caila Thompson-Hannant twists a certain Cyndi Lauper charm with all the weirdness that you'd expect to find in a Kate Bush epic.

We didn't want to say Kate Bush, everyone references Kate Bush, but she really does have that slightly skewed sense of lyricism that could be kindled in a distant forest somewhere, albeit in the rural expanse of Quebec. If they still made movies like *Romy and Michelle*, Mozart's Sister would rule the soundtrack.

With a forthcoming release through the respected Merok label, and a few UK shows lined up around work on future material, hopefully it won't be long before it's this lady's face we're seeing adorn every site and publication we can lay our eyes on.

www.facebook.com/mozartsssister

Young Fathers



*Words: Andrew Backhouse
Photo: Sébastien Dehesdin
sebastiendehesdin.com*

facebook.com/youngfathers

We all know who's the Next Big Thing of 2013. Now you want something new.

Well you've come to the right place – but first, to look into the future, we must look to the past. Rewind back to 2008 – you may remember a group of Scottish rappers called Young Fathers. After putting some ace tunes up online, the buzz snowballed. But with the launch of new record *Tape One*, the Young Fathers party has only just begun.

It was really intense... All the other stuff was just us finding our feet

'Deadline' leads the charge on *Tape One*, and the track's title couldn't be more apt in proclaiming what the record is all about. In writing and recording mix-downs for the twelve tracks (eight making the release), you'd think working in the winter of Edinburgh and fighting against the deadline of seven days a recipe for disaster. Well that's exactly what Young Fathers did. Not only that, but multi-tasking their recording schedule with nine-to-fives.

"It was really intense," explains Alloysious Massaquoi, who believes it's amidst the DIY rawness of *Tape One* that it really started for Young Fathers.

"All the other stuff before this was just us finding our feet with different sounds. With *Tape One* everything just came together because of the intensity of working the day-job hours. We only had a couple of hours to do it in – it really pushed us!"

Tape One is an all-out party record, but don't mistake Young Fathers for not taking themselves seriously.

"*Tape One* is darker. The album we did before has a mixture of that, but we're in a different place." Having met as "young laddies" at an under-18s hip-hop night at Edinburgh's Bongo Club, the three made music together for years – so, when starting out under the name Young Fathers, it's only natural they should want to strive towards that big benchmark and make an album for album's sake.

"It was just us trying this new style and freedom. It felt like we had so much time – all the time in the world to do what we wanted," Ally continues. "But you get older in life and think, 'we've been doing this all our life and yet nobody's heard our music', and you just want to get out there as much as possible. It was a really frustrating thing!"

One thing's for certain – thanks to *Tape One*, 2013 will see a change of fortune for Young Fathers. American label Anticon, synonymous with underground hip-hop across the globe, has reissued the record. Surely this is a sign of things to come.

"I don't think any of us knew anything about them, but then we did some research, listened to their music and found out what they were all about. It just seemed perfect for us to join them for what we're trying to do. They're on a world stage, they've been around for a long time and they're established. It will get our music out there to the masses."

2013 get ready – Young Fathers have arrived.

Foxygen



Words: George O'Brien
Illustration: George Morton
gmortonillustration.
blogspot.co.uk

foxygen.bandcamp.com

"I was in a plane when the world was supposed to be ending - we landed and it was still there!" Jonathan laughs as we chat about the ancient prophecy which failed to play out.

This image of serenely flying above the fire and smoke of devastating catastrophes can actually be aptly linked to *We Are the 21st Century Ambassadors of Peace & Magic*, Foxygen's debut released 21 January via Jagjaguwar. The record is an assured and joyous psychedelic trip with nods to a former musical outing for Jonathan; "We were in this other band, a Doors cover band almost, but we weren't really liking where it was going. There was this kid who thought he was Jim Morrison, it was weird, so we replaced him with Sam and started Foxygen."

The Doors inspiration is certainly audible, even though Jonathan admits, "I don't idolise The Doors like I did when I was 13." The band, who met as High School Freshman, take the best bits from the 60s and early 70s and tie-dye it up other to produce a sound with the justified swagger of MGMT and The Flaming Lips, the latter being quoted as the reason Foxygen was born.

"We listen to 60s and 70s music primarily," Jonathan explains, "I think it was the most interesting time for music, the most experimental time for music. People were figuring things out, and this is what we do because we don't really know what we're doing. We're discovering things for the first time."

The half Californian, half New York based duo may well still be discovering things, but the album is an impressively complete first creation, particularly if they didn't know what they were doing – hold your breath for a record produced when they do. It's not just the general hue of their music that lifts up a peace sign to psychedelia however; Sam's lyrics are wonderfully playful, imaginative and honest.

"There's no need to be an asshole, you're not in Brooklyn anymore," he expresses languidly in 'No Destruction'. Talk of rhinoceros-shaped-earings and standing on beds with birds on heads adds depth and fun to their exciting sound, a sound that is beginning to feel comfortable in the UK, with the up-and-coming Temples springing to mind alongside these equally talented Americans.

*There's no need to be an asshole,
you're not in Brooklyn anymore*

"We loved London," says Jonathan as we discuss their recent tour and imminent return, "and I've heard The Lexington is a good one!"

The band play the North London venue in February, in between Paris and Brussels shows.

"Have a nice end of the world!" Jonathan wraps up with a smile and a wave. Our planet is indeed safe and it will be even better off thanks to the brilliantly retro sound of Foxygen.

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SWN is
pronounced 'soon'
and is Welsh for
'sound'

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Daughter



Words: Lauren Down

Photos: Lucy Johnston

lucyjohnston.co.uk

ohdaughter.bandcamp.com

Milk steamers whir against the clattering of cups as we weave our way through the heavily caffeinated air of a crowded Crouch End coffee house to meet Daughter. Situated across from us is the formidable Park Chapel, a statement which may seem irrelevant if it weren't for the fact that this is the very church in which the Elena Tonra, Igor Haefeli and Remi Aguilella recorded *Wild Youth*. The follow up to *His Young Heart*, *Wild Youth* was not their first foray into releasing an EP but it was certainly their finest. In fact it was one of the 2011's finest: the kind of record that tied knots stomachs and involuntarily tightened the trachea. It has been over a year since they worked so concertedly on a record, and in fact almost a year to the day since I first met Elena in a similarly crowded coffee shop. And so it is we once again crowd around the world's smallest table, taking no time to fill it with tea pots, pastries, coffee mugs and eager talk of the year past.

Elena is as charming as ever, Igor is distracted by thoughts of a full English breakfast and Remi is running late. A lot has changed for the three-piece since we last spoke, least of all their move to indie giants 4AD, but as they sit alongside stalwarts like Bon Iver and Grimes their wry sense of humour and quietly driven nature remains. As does the understated chemistry between Elena and Igor, bringing warmth to the conversation and to the crippling heartbreak of their work. You only have to listen to recent album cut 'Smother' for all of 30 seconds to know what I'm talking about, Elena's fragile yet powerful vocals carving out every lyric against the atmospheric back drop as if it were the most poignant thing you ever heard.

We talk about 4AD and how they feel about their new home.

"They came to our show at St. Giles In The Field in December the year before last and we just started talking, it was really natural and easy going," recalls Igor. "It took a while but we got there in the end. We had other offers but we just felt like they were the most appropriate choice for what we wanted to know. Sometimes you just meet people and you get the feeling that they are the right people, you know? They were also more interested in what we wanted to do rather than what we had done."

There's no happy shit on there. No one should expect me to write anything upbeat

Elena grins: "They're just really great, we love them. It is good to work with people you know are like good people. We've been lucky in that respect, or picky maybe ... No bastards allowed!" she laughs as we delve into the details of their first foray into the full length world, slated for release on 18 March.

"There's no happy shit on there," Elena assures me when I ask what we can expect of *If You Leave*. "No one should really ever expect me to write anything upbeat, they're all a bit you know..." She pulls a depressed, slightly awkward face as I reassure her that I know what she means, as will anybody who has paid any attention to their output to date. "We did decide to experiment a bit more though, I suppose. We started using more electronic sounds because we always wanted to see how we could merge those elements our acoustic beginnings. I don't know if I would say it's a richer sound. It's certainly a bigger one but it is still dark."





We talk about how Ken Thomas, Rodaidh McDonald, Geoff Pesche and Jolyon Vaughan Thomas really helped pull things together but Igor of course has had his hand in the production throughout.

“It has been a bit of a puzzle,” explains Igor. “Because we’ve been touring in between recording the process became quite separated. We ended up working in loads of small studios all over London. In one we did nothing but drums and the in another we played with the more atmospheric side of things. More recently we’ve been down in Surrey. It’s quite nice to get out of the city. It has been a long process, I mean we started writing back in January and have only really re-used ‘Youth’.”

“It has definitely been a weird process,” Elena continues. “I mean we’ve only done two EPs so we’re used having only four songs to focus on and shape into a whole. Now we have more than double that we’ve found it quite difficult to get our heads around but it’s been similar in many ways; it’s very much still based on emotional dark rooms. It definitely branches out from our previous stuff but the writing all comes from the same place you know?”

“We’ve been reclusive in most senses. I’ve found inspiration in the same places, the same artists. I think we’ve been quite experimental arrangement-wise though. We’ve really concentrated on the musical side of things, really making them work with the lyrics. We didn’t always start with the lyrics and an acoustic guitar this time around.” Igor nods in agreement: “There were certainly more things that we could explore this time around.”

Remi joins us and we talk about Sigur Ros, Bjork, Sharon Van Etten and how Igor finds movies more inspiring than anything else.

“The more I live my life, the more I find that my memory is much more visual than audio. If I like the sound of something it will immediately translate into an image, if it’s bland to my ear, nothing will happen visually.”

We discuss whether they’d ever consider adding visuals to their live shows and Remi answers, “at some point. I wouldn’t want to rush it but if we knew someone who we instinctually thought could make some amazing visuals that would work with us then I’m definitely up for trying.”

It's good to work with good people. We've been picky maybe... No bastards allowed!

Igor reiterates that “the music will always come first though. In recording the album we’ve had to remain quite conscious that we’ve not played any of the new tracks live yet, so we need to get that right first. Some of the songs have existed as demos for a while, but some are entirely new. It’s strange, you don’t want to compromise the record because you want to present the songs in the best possible way, which means live we may not be able to recreate everything.”

Upon hearing the new record in full that final concern seems irrelevant, if they can recreate but one iota of *If You Leave* live they will have done more than enough to tie knots in stomachs and involuntarily tighten tracheas all over again.

·DAUGHTER·

IF YOU LEAVE

THE DEBUT ALBUM
18TH MARCH



—THUMPERS—
DANCING'S DONE

— THE NEW SINGLE —
OUT NOW ON CASSETTE AND 7"

KISSABILITY

P A R A D I S E



Lucy
Johnston

Words: Nat Davies

lucyjohnston.co.uk

(Main image)

St. Vincent

(over page)

1. Bill Drummond

2. Thomas, Esben and the Witch

3. These New Puritans

4. Dame Judi Dench

The mercurial Bill Drummond reclines in a garden chair with a notebook in his lap. KLF's master strategist is lost in thought – turning his head to reveal a lumpy, cubist profile with shadows where his eyes should be. He looks like a giant - poised, ponderous and incredibly strong. He is completely at ease and oblivious to the camera.

"With certain people they know they are being photographed and they know what to do," says photographer Lucy Johnston, who also shot our cover for this issue. "The best shot I got of Bill was through a window on a little patio bit where he likes to work. I felt it framed him perfectly and he knew I was taking photographs but he was still so relaxed with it, it just seemed to work."

I like to capture people relaxed. You just want to photograph people as they are

Johnston is a self-taught photographer who began her career taking headshots for legal magazines, charming the best out of people who perhaps didn't want their pictures taken and learning how to make them relax in front of the camera. Her approach is friendly and inconspicuous. She says she'd never want anyone to feel uncomfortable, "I want to get a photo that someone likes".

"I just like to capture people relaxed, whether that's flattering or not I don't know. You just want to photograph people as they are," she adds.

Her work was soon spotted by fellow employee Mike Diver, a music writer (and the future editor) of *Drowned in Sound*, who started sending her out to photograph gigs.

Working for respected set-ups like *The Quietus* and WARP Records, she has photographed an enviable list of iconic performers: Karen O, Grace Jones, Sonic Youth, Mudhoney, Shellac and Kraftwerk are among them.

Like her live shots, her portraits tell a certain truth about their subjects, simply framing rather than passing comment. She doesn't pose them or set up elaborate backdrops – hers is the snatched moment when someone forgets they are being looked at, with a light in their eyes and their gaze going beyond the camera to the girl behind it.

"You want there to be a level of trust whether you've got a camera or not – I want them to enjoy it as much as I do," she explains. One of the most enjoyable times, according to Lucy, was photographing Dame Judi Dench at her country home.

"It was all very relaxed – she gave us champagne and made us eggs coquette while we walked around the gardens," she says. "At one point she was talking about this one line that she found really difficult to remember from *The Importance of Being Earnest*. She was sitting in the window seat, when she turned and looked me straight in the eye and said the line. She was just so charismatic, I could have fallen at her feet."

The resulting picture is natural, warm and personal. There is no secret to it, says Lucy, just allow people to be themselves and pay enough attention to capture it, a gift that few people ever really master.

1.



2.



3.



4.



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The debut album from steel-pan maestro Fimber Bravo features **Life After Doomsday** (with Zongamin) and **The Way We Live Today** (feat. Alexis Taylor).

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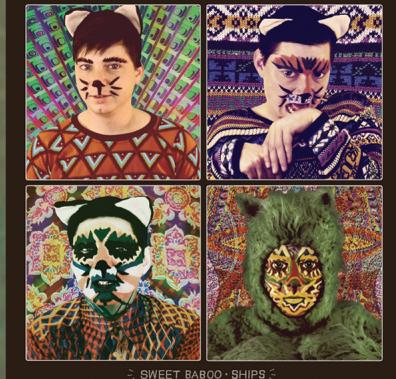
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- Sunday Times Culture

The Moshi Moshi Singles Club is back! Teleman release their debut single **Cristina** on 14th January.

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Sweet Baboo Ships

Sweet Baboo's new album - **Ships** - is out on 22nd April 2013.

Includes **Let's Go Swimming Wild** and **If I Died...**

CD | Limited Edition 12" | DL

London headline show at The Lexington on 23rd April.

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Jack Hudson



Words: Hannah Nicklin

jack-hudson.com

(Main image)
Wired magazine

(over page)
1. Lehigh University (USA)
2. *Draft as a Brush*
3. *Experiments with Interaction*
4. *Space Tourism*
5. *The Moth's Trail*
6. *Preserved*

"There was never a real conscious decision to become an illustrator. It just kind of fell into place and seemed like the best route."

With work that exudes the same crafted ease with which he fell into illustration, Jack Hudson, Bristol-based freelance designer, is certainly one to watch. Hudson has made work for national newspapers, iPad apps, rising indie comics and illustration press *Nobrow*, and notable gig posters and album artwork. His work is rich, DIY-tinged, and vibrant, whilst also maintaining information with a clarity that unites form with function.

*Who knows what the future may hold,
but I'm excited to see where it takes me!*

The work plays with vintage aesthetics, our pop culture heritage – bold in terms of colour choice but preserving a lo-fi screen print feel and often a slightly surrealist touch. Particular influences for him are David Hockney, Charley Harper, Winsow McCay, and in particular Michel Gondry (*The Science Of Sleep, Eternal Sunshine...*)

"His stuff that contains a very lo-fi DIY aesthetic." Indeed, Hudson often lays down torn edges, makes marks like scratching off crayon layered over coloured pencil (remember doing that as a kid?), or riffs on old-style film posters using a hand-drawn replica effect. Film posters also form a key part of his working process: "I've always been really into a lot of 1960's sci-fi and horror posters and I also collect some books that include a back catalogue. I'll usually set my eyes upon these posters before sitting down and working on something new."

In terms of putting work together, Hudson's balance of form and function comes from a mix of instinct and careful planning: a fair bit of planning will go into the composition and ideas, but when it comes to adding texture and colour, this is all very impulsive. Against this lengthy process, he also maintains a level of freshness and playfulness, sometimes even leaving 'hidden details' for people to find.

He explains that while editorial work tends to be within strict briefs and short timescales, "the artwork I've done for bands is usually produced over a longer period of time with a more democratic, easygoing approach. I get a lot of inspiration from the artist's lyrics and the music itself." This longer-term collaboration has produced some of Hudson's strongest work. His deeply intricate, highly structured, and yet playful album artwork for Kaleide (of Leeds-based indie-popsters Sky Larkin), reflects the tight drumming, sprawling guitar work and complex, mischievous lyrics.

So, where next? Hudson explains that while he finds band artwork most rewarding currently, this early on in his career he's just eager to explore.

"I've recently started working with 3D prop maker / set designer duo Lord Whitney. Our aim is to produce 3D versions of my illustrations and try and push my work a little further. Maybe I'll try my hand in music video direction and do some more moving image based work... who knows what the future will hold but I'm excited to see where it takes me!"

We can't wait to see what comes next.

1.



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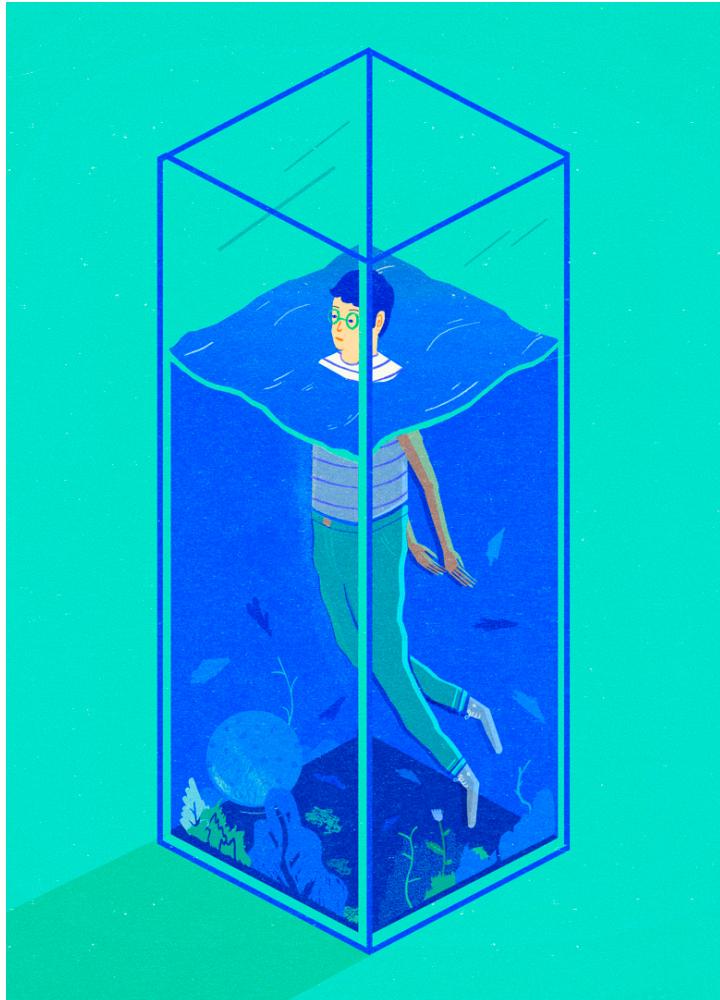


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TTNG



Words: Chris Chadwick
Illustration: Louise Mason
sawn-off.co.uk

thistownneedsguns.com

As bands come, you won't find many as beaten and bruised yet stubbornly resilient as TTNG. Since releasing their debut album *Animals* in January 2009, the band has lost a singer and a bass player, scrapped the best part of an album and gone from a four to a three-piece twice. Having had more than their share of bad luck, 2013 is set to be a good year. The band have a settled line-up for the first time in years, a new album *13.0.0.0* and are currently enjoying a wave of unbridled positivity that they can be forgiven for misplacing during parts of their more tumultuous recent history.

There's been a lot of turmoil but we're all feeling really positive now

It's four years since your debut album *Animals* came out, how are you feeling about releasing some new music?

Chris Collis (Drums); There's been a lot of turmoil and it's taken a while but we're all feeling really positive now. We kind of wasted a year and then when we finally got it all together and recorded the album with Jamie (Cooper, previous bassist) he left. So myself, Henry and Tim had to spend the next sixth months or so just getting sorted out really. We were trying to decide how to move forward.

How has the band developed since Henry (Tremain, vocals) joined?

When he first joined he was just going to sing and play a bit of guitar but when Jamie left, Henry said he wanted to try playing bass and now he's built this half-guitar/half-bass instrument so he's filling two people's roles.

He's done an awesome job of singing songs he hadn't written...but he's also really pushed us forward which is why we're really excited about writing. The songs on *13.0.0.0* are actually quite old for us now and I think we're all really excited to start writing as a trio.

It's true that songs from the latest release have long been ingrained in the live set but on record crowd favourites such as album opener 'Cat Fantastic' and the raucous 'Left Aligned' take on a whole new life. Complex guitar melodies and drum spasms are contrasted by Tremains rich vocals, powerful in places before shrinking to delicate falsetto. The bands newest member manages to make the band his own with vocal hooks that bring a whole new pop sensibility to TTNG.

Have you had time to think about your ambitions for the band now that you've got a stable line-up and the pressure is off to release another album - at least for the immediate future?

We don't really think about it like that, we're just three friends making music and this is what happens when we get together...anything else we've just been really lucky with. We'll play to people if they want to hear us and just carry on writing music that we like.

Despite the jaw-dropping fretboard acrobatics, intricate rhythms and sensationally catchy hooks that infect *13.0.0.0*, there's so much more to be positive about than just the music. Talking to Chris I'm left with the distinct impression that the album is a line drawn under four testing years. It's a new start for Henry, Chris and Tim, and as a starting point it's bewildering and beautiful in equal measure.

Reviews

1. The Bronx

The Bronx (IV)

White Drugs / ATO

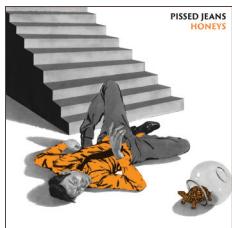
4 February



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Ahh, it's good to have The Bronx back, isn't it? After two albums under the guise of their latin alter-egos Mariachi El Bronx, they appear to have rediscovered their roots with this, their fourth eponymous studio album. But although the charro outfits and guitarróns have been returned to the wardrobe for now, it seems that the LA punk rockers' Mexican vacation might just have had a lasting effect on them.

Not that you'd be able to tell from the opening track 'The Unholy Hand', mind you. Bursting into life with tumultuous, over-compressed drums and vocalist Matt Caughthran's trademark guttural yells, it's raw, visceral and - well, pretty much exactly what you'd expect from The Bronx.

Later on, the intense 'Too Many Devils' is not only a standout moment on this album, but possibly also (ready for this?) one of the strongest tracks of their career.

However, the likes of 'Along For The Ride' and 'Torches' show that The Bronx are maturing, with Caughthran giving his larynx a rare few moments of respite. Meanwhile, the downright downbeat 'Life Less Ordinary' catches them during a rare moment of melancholy as Caughthran laments, "I'm not ashamed to say I've lost my mind."

The Bronx's latest effort may not have the incessant vitriolic grit of their pre-Mariachi albums, but at this stage in their career that's not necessarily a bad thing.

For a band that has been together for over a decade and (technically) released six studio albums, it's testament to this record's strength that it even comes close to the power of their earlier releases. During the chorus of 'Along For The Ride' Caughthran yells, "There was a time when the world was under our control, but that time has died." Sure, they might not be as vital as they once were, but Caughthran and Co.'s time is far from up.

*Words: Sam Lee
thebronxxx.com*

2. Darkstar

News From Nowhere

Warp

4 February

Having to follow up a much admired debut album is an unenviable task, for any artist. Especially when said debut played host to one of 2009's most touted viral tracks, 'Aidy's Girl Is A Computer'. But Darkstar have returned, and we're happy to report that the trio's much anticipated follow-up, *News From Nowhere*, is a spacious, melodramatic, textural delight.

A constant pace and sparse, subtle psychedelic lilts are coupled with hypnotic, looped beats and entrancing textures throughout the course of this album. First track 'Light Body Clock Starter' revels in open space and constrained shifts, providing an elegant opening to an ambitious project.

'Ampilified Ease' takes a different approach, playing host to the kind of rousing rhythms and melting basslines that make up the more driving parts of this record.

Fluidity, mesmerising repetition and escapist ambitions are the backbone of *News From Nowhere*, an album designed to be an experience and created using the tools that the trio harnessed through touring and the rural Yorkshire recording session which created the record. And the most endearing part of it all? It's that this isn't an album which seeks any kind of approval. Instead, it's one which proudly showcases the tilted ideas and quiet confidence of an inspired trio that have finally found their feet.

Words: Francine Gorman
darkstar.ws

3. Pissed Jeans

Honeys

Sub Pop

12 February

"Go ahead, you can use the microwave, it's an excellent kitchen tool," snarls Matt Korvette, frontman to Sub Pop miscreants Pissed Jeans on fourth album *Honeys*. The pace may have slowed on this latest release from the Pennsylvanian thrashers, the frantic punk rush of 2009's *King of Jeans* reduced to a sludgy crawl on songs like 'Chain Worker' and the booming 'Male Gaze', but there's every bit the same momentum, ferocity and vitality behind the band – even when they're singing about their favourite means to nuke a ready meal.

Don't be fooled by their slacker image: Honeys is as sophisticated and nuanced a hardcore album as they come.

With almost a decade as the group's chief screamer behind him, Korvette grapples with topics including sexual frustration, middle age and conformity as the record unfolds, his impassioned wails wreathed in a blitz of Mudhoney-flavoured hardcore. By the time closer 'Teen Adult' arrives, you'll be exasperated and strangely emotional.

Pissed Jeans have always been a thrillingly visceral band, but on *Honeys* they've conjured a profound message on age, agony and arrested development to sit simmering under their pummelling noise assault. And like their most beloved kitchen apparatus, it's an excellent asset.

Words: Al Horner
subpop.com/artists/pissed_jeans

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4. Flume

Flume

Transgressive

18 February

I used to be all for giving human names to non-humans. My silver grey Vauxhall Nova (1994 plates) was Sebastian, never Seb. Rental agreements being what they are, my aspiration of owning a dog called Steve never materialised. The looks I'd get from other walkers when I called his name on frosty mornings and a Labrador cross and not a 40 something man came running were consigned to the dustbin of dreams.

But like that teenage Sonic the Hedgehog tattoo I didn't get, I'm glad there was no Steve. Everyone's got ironic pet names now. It's so passé. Onto the next trend. Jesus, I really need to get over myself.

21 year old Harley Streten (Flume to you) comes from Sydney (the city, not the man). I'm glad he didn't get over himself, otherwise instead of making his debut album he might have gone to South Korea to teach English as a Foreign Language, and there's plenty of other no-hopers who can flip flashcards in a Seoul community centre.

Anyway. What we do have here is a synth-heavy, sample-happy, hip hop indie pop chill wave nu rave hour of lushness. Music you could listen to on a Friday night, a Sunday morning or while brushing your teeth before an important careers adviser interview and feel the better for it.

Words: Dan Tye
facebook.com/flumemusic

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5. Foals

Holy Fire

Transgressive

11 February

Five-piece Foals know how to take their time while crafting their work, but as *Holy Fire*, their long-awaited third album proves, it always pays off. Its first three tracks are a powerful trio, with the instrumental 'Prelude' serving as a rousing introduction.

The record's strengths are embodied and exemplified in first single 'Inhaler', and following release 'My Number', the former's riff-heavy chorus simply colossal and made for the more expansive stages that this album successfully strives towards. 'My Number's upbeat syncopation is pure joy, so much so that you can forgive the U2-worthy vocals on follower 'Bad Habit'.

A more sombre undertone permeates the album, particularly on closing tracks 'Stepson' and 'Moon', but despite the transformation, this is still very much a Foals record; the intricate guitar parts that made them so interesting on their 2008 debut *Antidotes* are very much evident underneath the thick and lush layers of production.

Holy Fire is not completely perfect – there is a slight lull in the middle, but not before the commanding stomp of 'Providence' fires up. Yet for the most part this is a strong and immensely gratifying record, certain to propel Foals further and earn them another Mercury nod.

Words: Heather Steele
foals.co.uk

Live

Dan Croll

Old Blue Last, London, 18 January

2013 is going to be a big year for Dan Croll if we are to believe the hype and, judging by the jostling crowd that fill the room as he takes to the stage for tonight's free show, lots of people do. The bespectacled bard has been kicking up quite a fuss amongst new music nerds since the release of his debut single, 'From Nowhere', through his own label, Racquet Records, in September last year. Despite the fact that his debut single is sadly missing tonight, Croll & Co. are out to prove that they've got a lot more to offer in the year ahead with a set packed with beautifully crafted alt-folk-pop hits-to-be.

Words: Chris Chadwick
Photo: Howard Melnyczuk

dancroll.com



For a solo artist who cut his teeth producing delicate acoustic led ballads with nods to Villagers and Bon Iver, it seems that Dan is now gradually finding his own unique sound nestling somewhere between the expansive instrumentation of Arcade Fire, the lo-fi electro of Metronomy and the harmony led vocals of Beirut.

'Norwegian Woods' is relentless with a driving beat and jangly guitars complimenting Croll's soothing vocals, whilst 'Wanna Know' mixes the lo-fi electro influences of 'From Nowhere' with heart-wrenching falsetto vocals to impressive effect. Elsewhere, 'Always Like This' has the kind of sun-drenched festival feel and lilting beat that provokes maniacal dancing from dusty crowds each summer. It's enough to mesmerise the tightly crammed audience only raising their voices between each track to shout their appreciation.

By the time his band clatter to a close with the raucous vocals of the acoustic led 'Home' there's a shared feeling of excitement amongst the crowd, the privileged thought that perhaps this will be the last time Liverpool's latest export plays in such an intimate space. Having already announced an extensive American tour around SXSW Festival in March and with impressive supports lined up with Darwin Deez, Chvrches and Stornoway, it seems that the critics who wagered on Dan Croll doing big things in the coming year could soon be vindicated.



SIMON RAYMONDE: Tape That

We asked the Cocteau Twin and Bella Union founder why he's still such a fan of cassettes...

In this Spotted world it may seem almost de rigueur to be seen championing an audio format that has been obsolete since the early 90s when the CD player went into mass production, but I would suggest that before you dismiss this out of hand, you consider my thinking.

I am a sprightly 50 years old. I have grown up buying and obsessing about vinyl. My first job was at Beggars Banquet Record shop in Earls Court in 1980. My second job was at an all-reggae Our Price Records stall in Shepherds Bush Market (seriously!) in 1982 and I never had a third job. I joined a band. Yet in my full-time hobby running Bella Union Record label, I listen to internet radio, streaming music, MP3s, downloads, wav files, zipped albums, and demo cds every single day of my life. In search of love. Why? It is a means to an end. The 'end' being me signing a band so that I can manufacture their music onto vinyl.

When I get home in the evening I switch my brain into an analog version of my daytime brain, and I only listen to vinyl and my treasured cassettes, and sometimes the radio. I am an avid collector of vinyl and cassettes, so this isn't some Luddite over-reaction to modern technology destroying our lives, and I just happen to love how cassettes work and how they sound.

Yes I really DO love the sound of analog tape. And don't (tape) hiss at me about the awful sound of cassette tapes when you probably just listened to some crappy lo-fi Garageband recording on MP3 via your laptop speakers!

The cassette is actually a magnificent piece of engineering. It's basically a miniature version of the reel-to-reel tape with two tiny spools of tape. The ingenious bit is how it works! The two stereo pairs of tracks (each side of your album) are played back to you by one pair of stereo tracks playing when the tape moves in one direction and the other when it's moving in the reverse direction. It's quite brilliant isn't it!?

In my kitchen, the most important utensil isn't the Kitchen Aid, it's the Philips Dual Deck Stereo Radio Cassette Recorder. It's loud, with a brilliant 5 band graphic and it's lasted longer than all my iPods put together. I recorded John Peel every night with it. When I couldn't afford to buy a new blank tape, I used to put a little bit of sellotape over the write-protection mechanism so I could record his show on pre-recorded tapes I didn't want anymore. Home Taping Was Killing Music, apparently. Well, when Bow Wow Wow released "C30-C60-C90 Go!" on a one-sided cassette tape with the other side blank just for you to record on, the cat was out the bag. And it's never been back in since. And listen, when I say "I'm going to make you a mixtape", you get a 'mixtape'.

LABEL PROFILE:



Words: Jake May

transgressive.co.uk

Transgressive was set up by friends Tim Dellow and Toby L in London in 2004, originally with the intention of putting out 7" singles. Almost nine years and releases from the likes of Mystery Jets, Foals, and Pulled Apart By Horses later and the little singles label is now a fully-functioning record company with a publishing company and a management arm for artists and producers. We caught up with co-founder Toby.

What inspired you to set up a label and were there any other labels you looked up to?

In all honesty, it was through meeting Tim that inspired the decision. Via my *Rockfeedback* stuff I was already working in music and was always sceptical about entering the label world because it seemed like the imminent transition from physical formats to digital was going to be a strain to say the least. But Tim and I bonded and wanted to anoint the friendship through putting out amazing bands. Other labels-wise, we look up to the ethics set up by the likes of Dischord and Constellations and aspire to emulate Sire in terms of attaining fearless artist diversity yet still reaching as many people as possible.

For some small labels it seems they start with positive intentions but lose that buzz of releasing music after a year or so. What keeps the excitement and desire alive for you?

I guess it's key to emulate what the best, most enduring musicians do – keep reinventing and surprising, and just keep going, even when the odds are stacked against you.

There's no genre policy at Transgressive. We genuinely just release music, artists, talent that captivate us. And we always like to avoid the obvious where possible.

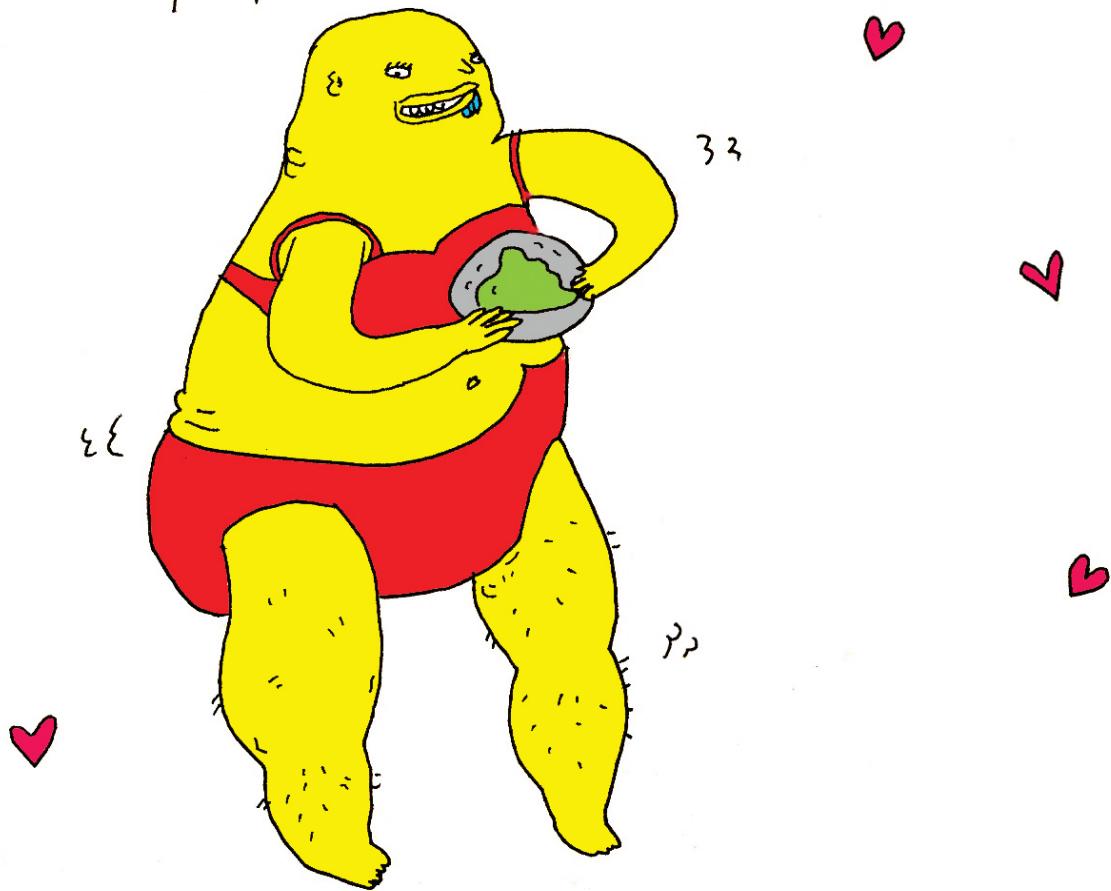
Any great releases that very nearly happened?

It happens; for so many factors, you sadly cannot sign everything you want to. The biggest regret, however, was not putting out *Sensuous* by Cornelius when we had the chance. For good reasons at the time we couldn't serve the release but I do often look back and want to cry when I think that could have been part of our catalogue.

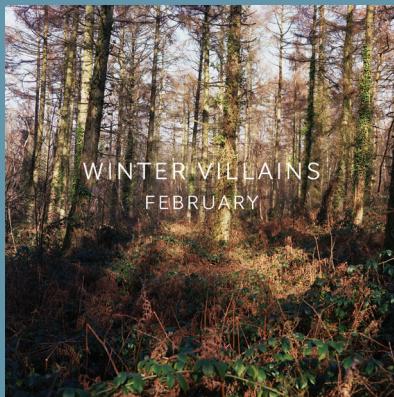
Any Transgressive things to look forward to in 2013 and beyond?

I'm psyched for everyone to hear the incredible new Foals record. The debut from Theme Park is a killer pop album. Johnny Flynn will have his third album after a three-year gap in which he became a Laurence Olivier Award-nominated actor. Our new signing Flume has created an essential dance record that is in equal parts eclectic and addictive. Marika Hackman's made a debut mini-album which is an enchanting piece of art. We also have a hugely influential cult artist that got in touch asking us to reissue some amazing music, which we really cannot believe is happening.

I DONT THINK YA READY
FOR THIS JELLY



NEW FROM BARELY REGAL RECORDS



WINTER VILLAINS — FEBRUARY —

*New album released Spring 2013
on cd / download*

wintervillains.tumblr.com



OLYMPIANS — ADVENTURE GUN —

*New EP released Spring 2013
on cd / download*

onwardolympians.com



THEO — LOOM —

*New album released Summer 2013
on vinyl / cd / download*

loopsofdeath.co.uk

more information at



barelyregalrecords.com

EAT YOUR OWN EARS PRESENTS

DUOLOGUE

SPECIAL GUESTS

HOXTON BAR & KITCHEN

Wednesday 13 February

ROCKET NUMBERNINE

PLANNINGTOROCK (DJ SET)

ELECTROWERKZ Wednesday 20 February

SAVAGES

SPECIAL GUESTS

ELECTRIC BALLROOM

Thursday 21 February

DARKSTAR

SPECIAL GUESTS

XOYO Monday 25 February

ESBEN & THE WITCH

SPECIAL GUESTS

SCALA Tuesday 26 February

EGYPTIAN HIP HOP

SPECIAL GUESTS

XOYO Monday 4 March

FUCKED UP TITUS ANDRONICUS

SPECIAL GUESTS

ELECTRIC BALLROOM Thursday 30 May

THE XX NIGHT AND DAY

OSTERLEY PARK Sunday 23 June
