

# NIGHTSHIFT

## Oxford's Music Magazine

Free every month.  
Issue 158  
September 2008



*Argonauta argo*



*Trivium nontruncata*



*Pleuronectes platessa*



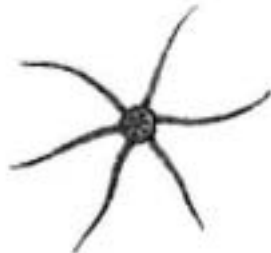
*Halicium beani*



*Sepietta oweniana*



*Cyclopterus lumpus*



*Ophiura ophiura*



*Rhizostoma octopus*



*Pulsatilla vulgaris*

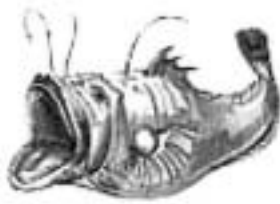


*Pilumnus hirtellus*

# Stornoway



*Sula bassana*



*Lophius piscatorius*



*Glans aculeata*



*Turritella communis*



*Equus medicus*



*Rhodini loveni*



*Cladocera caspitosa*



*Luidia sarsi*



*Viola odorata*



*Tonna galea*



*Lepidochitona cinerea*



*Permatoschistus friesii*



*Amphiuma chiajei*



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**T H E**  
**R E G A L**

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**WED  
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**BRITISH SEA POWER**

**TUE  
28 OCT**

**DVES IT offend you YEAH?**

**SUN  
7 DEC**

**NOUVELLE VAGUE**

**FRI 25 JULY**

**TIME MACHINE - I LOVE 80S £5/7 9:30 till late**

**SAT 26 JUL**

**COME £8/10 9:30 till late**

**SAT 2 AUG**

**DJ LUCK & MC NEAT £5/7 9:30 till late**

**THU 14 AUG**

**A LEVEL RESULTS PARTY**

**SAT 23 AUG**

**MINISTRY OF SOUND ANTHEMS TOUR £5/7 9:30 till late**

**SUN 24 AUG**

**SIZZLING PRESENTS ... GARAGE NATION**

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# NEWS

**Nightshift: PO Box 312, Kidlington, OX5 1ZU**  
**Phone: 01865 372255 email: nightshift@oxfordmusic.net**  
**Online: nightshift.oxfordmusic.net**

**THE MAGIC NUMBERS** are set to headline Harvest, the latest mini-festival from the organisers of Truck and Wood Festivals. Harvest takes place at the Isis Tavern, on the Thames, between Iffley Lock and Donnington Bridge, over the weekend of 13<sup>th</sup> / 14<sup>th</sup> September.

The festival also features Danny & The Champions of the World, Hot Club Of Cowtown, Coute Diomboulu, featuring renowned kora player Jali Fily Cissokho, Coley Park, Piney Gir & The Age Of Reason, plus more acts to be announced. There will also be talks and workshops as well as nature walks around the river.

The Isis pub has recently been taken over by new management, who have revamped the picturesque pub. Tickets for the weekend are £30, or £20 per day with under-14s free. Tickets are available from Videosyncratic on Cowley Road, Mostly Books in Abingdon and online from [www.thisistruck.com](http://www.thisistruck.com). Music runs from 1pm each day. Access to The Isis is by foot, bike or boat only.

**NIGHTSHIFT** teams up with TCT Music in November to present a month of gigs showcasing the best up and coming acts in Oxford. The five gigs, entitled On A Saturday, take place at the Academy every Saturday through November and will feature The Winchell Riots, Elapse-O, The Keyboard Choir, Stormoway, Space Heroes Of The People, Raggasaurus, Motion In Colour, Tristan & The Troubadours, Alphabet Backwards, The Half Rabbits and more. Exact dates and line-ups will be announced soon – visit [www.tctmusic.co.uk](http://www.tctmusic.co.uk) for details as soon as they are finalised. Tickets for all shows will on sale now from [wegottickets.com](http://wegottickets.com) or from the Zodiac box office as soon as they are confirmed.

**A SILENT FILM** release their debut album, 'The City That Never Sleeps', on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> October on Xtra Mile Records. The album is preceded by a new single, 'Thirteen Times The Strength' on 22<sup>nd</sup> September. The album was produced



by Supergrass producer and former-Mystics frontman Sam Williams and features eleven tracks, including recent singles 'Lamplight' and 'Sleeping Pills'. The band head off on a national tour this month, including dates with labelmates Lights. Action! who feature former-Days Of Grace frontman Patrick Currier. The tour starts on 7<sup>th</sup> September in Glasgow and visits the Oxford Academy on 11<sup>th</sup> September.

**This Town Needs Guns**, meanwhile release their debut album on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> October. The local rockers headline the Oxford Academy on Saturday October 11<sup>th</sup> with Jonquil.

**BIG VILLAGE** promote their last season of concerts this autumn, having failed to secure the necessary funding from the Arts Council. Over the last few years Big Village, led by artistic director and local musician Matt Sage, has hosted a wide range of world music artists to Oxfordshire, introducing local audiences to acts they might not otherwise ever get a chance to experience, often in exotic or unusual local venues.

While it is uncertain that Big Village will continue in the future, anyone interested in helping out financially with sponsorship can contact them via [www.bigvillage.org](http://www.bigvillage.org). Alternatively, music fans can email [Penny.king@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:Penny.king@artscouncil.org.uk) to stress the importance of promoters like Big Village.

For now, though, the final three Big Village events are Hindustani classical singer Neela Bhagwah at the North Wall Arts Centre on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> October; Meta Meta and the Afropean Choir at St Barnabas Church on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct, and Tango Siempre at the Wesley Memorial Chapel on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> October.

**THE REGAL** hosts the Sound Is Music all-day festival on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> September, a benefit event for Action Aid's Making A Noise About Poverty campaign. The event, which runs from 12.30 though to 11pm features over a dozen local bands, including Ivy's Itch, The Drug Squad, The Colins Of Paradise, Red valve, Domes Of Silence, Sidwinders and Hangman's Joe. More acts are due to be confirmed. Tickets for the fundraiser are £12, with the first 150 on sale for £10, from [wegottickets.com](http://wegottickets.com). Full updated line-up details can be found at



**FOALS** play a hometown show at the Academy on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December. The band, who have spent the summer playing at festivals around the world, including Japan's Fuji Festival, release a new single, 'Olympic Airlines', from their Top 5 debut album 'Antidotes', this month. Tickets for the show are on sale now, priced £13.50 from [wegottickets.com](http://wegottickets.com) or from the Academy box office.

[www.myspace.com/soundmusicfestival](http://www.myspace.com/soundmusicfestival), which also features MP3s of the acts playing.

**JONQUIL**, Sunnyvale Noise Sub-Element, Hreda and Cogwheel Dogs are amongst the acts included on 'Première Évasion', a new compilation album on French record label Rabeat's Cage. The label aims to give greater exposure to acts that are "experimental but pleasurable". Other acts featured include Eberg, Azad, Neor and Tam Rush. Visit [www.myspace.com/rabeatscagerecords](http://www.myspace.com/rabeatscagerecords) for more details on how to buy the album.

**THE BULLINGDON** is looking for new midweek gig and club promoters. Anyone interested should call Arron on 01865 244516.

**QUEER IS FOLK** is a one-off live music event taking place on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October at the Brewery Gate Tavern in Oxford with the intention of dispelling "the stereotyped notions that all homosexuals like and perform crap music". Starting at 6pm the event will include bands, open-mic slots, film, comedy and art, featuring both gay and straight artists. Anyone interested in finding out more or getting involved should email Mike Lowe at [helianthus71@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:helianthus71@hotmail.co.uk).

**THE COURTYARD** Youth Arts Centre in Bicester is now offering slots at its newly-refurbished rehearsal room, complete with Pearl Export drumkit, from only £5 per hour, Monday-Thursday 6-9pm. Call Jane on 01869 602555 or email [jane.dyson@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:jane.dyson@oxfordshire.gov.uk).

**OXFORD INDIE GODFATHERS** Here Comes Everybody reconvene

for a special gig on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October. The band, who famously inspired Ride's Andy Bell to play the guitar, were leading lights of the Oxford scene in the early 1980s and featured Peter Momtchiloff, who went on to form Talulah Gosh and Heavenly; Richard Ramage, who later fronted The Anyways and The Relationships; Angus Stevenson, who formed The Razorcuts and The Relationships; Pete Lock, who was in The Anyways before forming Blue Kite and most recently Moiety, plus Valerie Howell, who fronted The Lionhearts. Members of these later bands also went on to form the likes of Les Clochards and Borgnine. The gig is in aid of former-Anyways guitarist Mark Price's birthday and features all the original Here Comes Everybody members playing in different bands with hopefully a full band reunion. A special 18-track compilation CD will be cut to mark the event, featuring a veritable history of Oxford's indie stars through the years.



**AS EVER** don't forget to tune into BBC Oxford Introducing every Saturday evening between 6-7pm on 95.2fm. The dedicated local music show plays the best new Oxford releases as well as featuring interviews with local and touring acts, news, demo reviews and a gig and clubbing guide. The show is available to listen to online all week at [bbc.co.uk/oxford](http://bbc.co.uk/oxford).

# Stornoway

**IF YOU'RE AUTISTICALLY** planning on ordering your local CD collection thematically, then alongside The Epstein, Family Machine and Witches you can comfortably file Stornoway. Their melodies soar, tug at your heartstrings like a lifeboat pulling your broken vessel ashore, all shattered romance, regret and longing and then, without warning, their violinist Rahul will take the stage dressed as a banana and they'll sing a song about haircuts.

**THIS DISPARATE HOPPING** from the sublime to the ridiculous has frustrated the critics: this very magazine described their song 'The Good Fish Guide' (which lists all the fish you can ethically eat, then lists all the fish you should not – all to a jaunty little hybrid of 'What A Day for a Daydream' and Divine Comedy's 'Something for the Weekend') as making the reviewer feel he had "died and woken up in Purgatory with only Chas 'n' Dave for company". Similarly, Oxfordbands.com said it had "the stagnant air of a failed 5<sup>th</sup> form revue". Audiences, on the other hand, seem to find it witty, catchy and danceable. As many rock historians have noted, it's the bands that get the pretty girls dancing that make good in the end.

**WITH ALL THIS IN MIND, I** don't quite know what to expect when I arrive at the leafy terraced home of Brian and Jon, Stornoway's respective singer and multi-instrumentalist. A Monkees-style madcap house of larks, or a crumbling Victorian living room where each member silently cries into their mugs of herbal tea? As it turns out, all four of the band are mid-way through recording 'Mullet' – that song about the haircut, due to appear on their forthcoming album. No sooner have I removed my coat than they have placed a microphone in front of me and asked me to sing backing vocals. I am a shameful failure, and the impromptu guest appearance with which I could regale my future grandchildren is swiftly abandoned. The song itself sounds great – sinister, ever-so-slightly jazzy chord progressions are punctuated by flurries of discordant trumpet, coming to the boil with a massive multi-part vocal harmony. I ask how important



this DIY process is to the band. "No-one else has the patience to work with us, so we've found it better to do it ourselves," says Brian, tactful to the last. Delays on their last record, 'On The Rocks', were apparently partly due to the original producers having a very clear idea of what it should sound like, which differed from the band's own vision – a vision which they clearly protect with passion. "Instead of drums we've used chopping boards, footsteps, carrots, because on the first EP we didn't have a drummer...I remember one trip with Jon to Age Concern where we bought all their crockery and got our housemates to smash it in the kitchen for one song." Definitely not something you could do as easily when you're paying by the hour in a sweaty little studio.

**ASKED ABOUT THE CRITICAL** reception to 'The Good Fish Guide', Jon mimes shooting himself in the head. It seems that defending this song had become something of a *bête noire* for them. "It does have a very serious message," says drummer Rob, "though I can understand how it could be construed as comedy." He makes a good point – as throwaway as it might initially seem, proceeds from the sale of the song have been going to the Marine Conservation Society and, on paper at least, the lyrics are straightforwardly pedagogical. In fact, there's a scientific, educational message that pervades the world of Stornoway – 'Mysteries Are Good For You', from their first EP, usefully points out that "a spider's web is strong when you consider what it

weighs". Early gigs were notable for Brian's deadpan delivery of animal-based facts from the back pages of *New Scientist*. Not that you'd expect anything less from the band *The Independent* described as "officially the brainiest group ever". "It's probably not too far from the truth really," says Brian, "my brother's just qualified as a doctor as well". So that ups the PhD count in the band to what? "Four. It's ridiculous."

When I ask the inevitable "how did the band get together" question, Brian produces at least thirty sheets of A4 lined paper, inscribed with small, neat writing from top to bottom. "I'm more qualified to deal with band history questions," he explains, and I don't doubt it for a second. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, the group was conceived within the hallowed walls of Oxford University.

"I met Jon in Wolfson College when I was starting my PhD and Jon was starting his masters. We used to play in the dining hall, a beautiful old wooden building with a grand piano in it," says Brian. "We enjoyed it, so we decided to play some of the college music events. We won a bowl of fruit in a talent contest and it sort of went to our heads..."

Honing their art as a two-piece on the student open-mic circuit, the decision was made to expand into a full band. Bassist Ollie replied to their advert with an email along the lines of, "Dear Sir, I would very much like to be considered for the position of bassist...". One imagines that such good manners must have gone down well with Brian and Jon. Ollie, on the other hand, didn't quite know what he

was letting himself in for. "I knew the guys were a bit older," says Ollie, barely into his twenties, "so as I was leaving the house I thought, what if this is a scam to attract vulnerable musicians and do away with them? So in my bag was a very sharp screwdriver..." The very idea of Dr Brian Briggs attacking any living thing is absurd, but I suppose it's best to be prepared under such circumstances.

**INSTEAD OF A MONSTROUS** criminal underworld, Oli found himself immersed in the beautiful, insular world of the Oxford student – something which may well have informed the sweeping architecture of their more grandiose pieces. Put another way, there's no room for gritty urbanity here. Forthcoming single 'We Are The Battery Human' reads like a determined effort to block out the realities of city life: from being trapped under "a pile of A4 snowflakes", the natural conclusion is reached that we are like chickens in a battery farm, though "we were born to be free range". Similarly, when they reference the Cowley Road on the song 'Zorbing', they do so by conjuring up the image of Brian bouncing round the streets in a large inflatable ball, rather than getting verbally abused by a toga-clad rugby team or stabbed by a crack addict.

It was fitting, then, that their first proper gig was at the home of Oxford's other pastoral fantasists, the folk-ridden Catweasel Club. "We spent ten minutes setting up," explains Brian, "which was the length of time we had to play, because we had this monstrous technical hitch which we've since become famous for. Ollie's bass fell apart and we had to ask the audience for a Philips screwdriver." So was disaster averted? "Luckily someone in the audience did have one. The funny thing was that later there was a Hurdy Gurdy player who had a problem with their Hurdy Gurdy, and had to demand a replacement from the crowd, which they also managed to do. That says something about the Cowley Road." Ollie's brother Rob then joined on drums, after an unusually pragmatic audition process. "We'd had seven different drummers who'd come along for auditions," recalls Brian, "One seemed to be on Class A drugs; one

brought a load of African drums and said he didn't like structure. Anyway, Rob came along and he brought a heater, which was great because the garage was absolutely freezing. That sold it for us."

Things have moved pretty quickly since. Playing seven gigs in a fortnight in Oxford alone, getting Brian's brother to dress up as a horse and play the trumpet, adding two violinists shortly before headlining the Oxford Academy; Stornoway are nothing if not busy. Brian reckons their success is at least partly down to one hairy man's patronage: "The last gig in that two week session was the first time Tim Bearder from BBC Oxford came to see us - it was just him and two of our die-hard fans... I was mortified, as I was desperately trying to impress him! It turned out he didn't mind anyway, as he then did something called "Stornoway Hour" on the Breakfast Show - devoting an hour to our songs and interviews and stuff, and straight away he got suspended."

"He put his job on the line!" cries Jon, somewhat incredulously, "For us!" While Mr Bearder's fandom might be career-cripplingly obsessive, Brian thinks it's "mainly thanks to friends and fans that we've started to get heard. When we first got played by Colin Murray on Radio 1 that was due to a fan sending in a link to our songs, and the same with Tom Robinson on BBC 6 Music - it's been really great."

**SO HOW HAVE STORNOWAY** found the Oxford music scene? Do they feel part of it; are they close to any bands in particular?

"It's been really good to us." Rob enthuses, "When you have someone really different playing with you, you get different ideas and can implement them - it's a great source of ideas."

Brian is similarly complementary, but seeks to distance himself a bit: "I know there are groups of bands that do knit together a bit more within the Oxford music scene, but I feel we're a more independent entity."

You've become darlings of the Truck organisation though; what's your involvement with them?

"Just as friends now, really. 'On the Rocks' was due to be released on the Truck label, and then just before the release date the label had to fold for various legal and financial reasons."

"It's a bit awkward really - we just ended up doing it ourselves, like all the other ones. Still, what they have done has been a massive help just by allowing us to play the last two festivals."

Perhaps most bands tend to think of themselves as outsiders, but Stornoway seem especially eager to separate themselves from everyone else. When I ask who they'd ideally like to support - anyone, living or dead - I get some odd responses.

"Duffy?" offers Rob. "Cos we've already done the Sugababes. And the Wombats."

"I find it difficult," ponders Oli, "Because we don't sound similar to another band I can think of. Maybe the Epstein..."

Momentarily disturbed that they can't imagine scaling heights any higher than supporting the Epstein, I offer the idea that they sound a teensy bit like Gorky's Zygotic Mynci, and Brian begins to talk with great enthusiasm about them. Similarly, Rob's eyes light up as he discusses the drum pattern on Guillemots' 'Trains to Brazil' - another band to which they bear a passing resemblance.

**STORNOWAY ARE A BAND THAT** know their place in the world, where they've come from and what they bring to the table, yet there's a palpable sense that they're striving to create a world of their own, as isolated and remote as the Hebridean town from which they derive their name, and as distant too, perhaps. Brian is a sailor and a doctor of ornithology as well as Stornoway's principal writer - I ask him how he finds the time to have the calamitous relationships that inspire his music? He stares at his lap.

"Yes, it's a busy life," he murmurs.

The subject is swiftly dropped in favour of a discussion of how their lyrics are very often misheard.

"Someone misheard the lyrics of 'The Good Fish Guide' as 'The Good Fish Died', remembers Oli. "Someone else read some covert sexual reference in the lyric, 'the hooded snake controls your mind'," adds Jon. I suggest that it barely seems like a subtext, but in fact sounds pretty filthy to me.

"I never thought about it before, maybe it's a really steamy song!" They fall about laughing, and the change in mood seems symbolic of the band's output in general.

On the surface of things, Stornoway appear to be a band in conflict: capable of genuinely moving an audience, but more than willing to play the part of the sideshow entertainers to win over a crowd. Yet instead of devaluing their more emotive work, this variety is, more often than not, what makes them special: after all, life itself is a cocktail of joy, disappointment, love and loneliness. One day you're dumped, the next day your mate gets a hilariously terrible haircut; such is life. One thing's for sure: Stornoway are so committed to being Stornoway, so wrapped up in their own way of doing things, so immersed in their own aesthetics and ideologies - as all great bands should be - that the chances of them changing any time soon seem Hebrideanly remote.

*'On The Rocks' is out now*



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4<sup>th</sup> **MOSHKA** presents **THOMAS TRUAX / BLACK HATS / COGWHEEL DOGS**

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13<sup>th</sup> **HI-FI HAND-GRENADES / DEADBEAT CAVALIER / ANTI-VIGILANTE**

20<sup>th</sup> **OX4** - *Drum'n'bass*

27<sup>th</sup> **MOSHKA** presents **EASY TIGER** - album launch party. Plus **LISA FITZGIBBON**

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# RELEASED

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## **RICHARD WALTERS**

### **'Brittle Bones'**

*(Kartel)*

Nightshift's love for Richard Walters is such that we spend the entirety of our first listen to

this new single forgetting to blink or breath, merely gazing out of the window at the reflection of sunlight on a nearby parked car wondering what it would be like to live under the sea. Shouldn't more music make you feel like that?

If we had to describe 'Brittle Bones' in a single word it would probably be weightless. Or perhaps simply faultless. It is awash with a yearning, dreamlike sadness, so ephemeral that you worry if you press eject on the stereo the CD will simply dissipate to dust. Richard's slight, limpid voice is a genuine wonder – a gift that no other Oxford singer has been blessed with. The closest comparison would be Purescence's James Mudriczki, another voice with the ability to makes your heart stop in simple wonder.

So far simple bad luck has stopped Richard Walters achieving the sort of international recognition his talent deserves. If he remains our secret treasure, it makes him no less precious.

*Dale Kattack*

## **SIMON DAVIES**

### **'For Utter Beauty's Sake'**

*(Own Label)*

If anyone knows a good tune it's a postman. Partway through listening to Simon Davies' self-released album, our postie popped in to deliver another batch of corpulent major-label releases. "Blimey, what's this crap?" he proffered, "I'm glad I don't have your job".

So, you see, it's not just us who are complete bastards when it comes to hounding hapless musicians, and at least we made the effort to listen to this album all the way through twice before coming to the same conclusion as Royal Mail's finest. Sorry, but by God this is boring. Simon Davies quotes Robert Wyatt as an influence and you can understand that with his reedy, cracked voice, but that's where the similarity ends. Wyatt's genius has always been in taking the road less well travelled: confronting expectation, sometimes deliberately messing his songs about and finding beauty in the most unusual places. Davies simply whines for fifty minutes without respite, like an errant mosquito in your bedroom at night. In this he's aided by ubiquitous local folk talents Colin Fletcher and Jane Griffiths, but even they can't inject any variety into staid acoustic trundles that increasingly feel like a suffocating blanket of navel-gazing tedium slowly cutting off circulation to your brain.

Only the relatively jaunty, string-led 'Fly Little Blue Bird' offers any kind of respite, but that's

track two and thereafter it's an endless dirge that the odd moments of acoustic guitar tickling can't brighten. 'For Utter Beauty's Sake'? More like Oh For Fuck's Sake. We're off to become postmen.

*Dale Kattack*

## **ALLY CRAIG**

### **'Get What You Pays For'**

*(Own Label)*

A 7" vinyl single with a photo of a slumbering cat on the sleeve. A half-buried croak of a voice. A disjointed saxophone squall that flattens anything in its path, even the reined-in sheet metal guitar chug. Ally Craig is a singer-songwriter, sometimes an acoustic singer-songwriter, but he has as much in common with the bleeding heart whinge'n'whine brigade who stifle local open mic sessions as a B52 bomber has with a piece of stilton.

In fact, despite the fact in the past Ally has been compared to the likes of Jeff Buckley and Robert Wyatt, this single would sit more comfortably around a table with the likes of The Very Things or Stump, lopsided, belligerent noisemakers who couldn't walk past a pretty tune without taking a claw hammer to its skull. Which means he's unlikely to end up supporting the likes of Damien Rice or Joseph Arthur anytime soon. But if there's any justice, a Thurston Moore collaboration shouldn't be that far off.

*Dale Kattack*

## **AGENTS OF JANE**

### **'Karaoke Boy'**

*(Gold Filling)*

Summer might not even have got going this year but in Agents Of Jane's world it's already autumn. Such is the melancholic mood hanging over this debut album, the local folk-pop outfit seemingly most at home when casting wistful glances back down long, dusty roads.

The largest cloud that looms over these eleven tracks is, unsurprisingly, Nick Drake, Agents Of Jane's male lead Chris capturing some of that poetic reflectiveness on tracks like 'Petticoat', while the sombre strings that add colour (mostly darker hues) to the song also recall the pastoral loneliness of Drake.

Agents Of Jane do, however, attempt to spread their net wider, from the country-ish porch croon of 'Lay Down' to the more rhythmic 'Shetland Brae'. But it's when they keep it simple, sweet and mournful that they work best, as on the album's opening song, 'Harbour', Chris's voice intertwining well with Jules' soft backing vocals on a folksy lament that's leavened slightly by a carefree Californian breeziness.

Occasionally adventurous use of strings brings out the best of tracks like 'Elsebeth', where squabbling violin and cello climax an otherwise slender ballad, and the album's title track, which scrabbles itself together after ambling amiably but with little apparent sense of direction.

Perhaps the band stretch their material too thin over a full album, slipping too easily into MOR fluff on tracks like 'Twelve' and sounding positively weary by closing number 'Last Goodbye', but at their best they're a gently downbeat passing pleasure.

*Ian Chesterton*



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 10<sup>th</sup> Oxford Improvisers presents Tim Hodgkinson  
 12<sup>th</sup> Fall + South Central Heroes + Cali Collect + Dial F For Frankenstein  
 14<sup>th</sup> Off-Field 6 with Baby Gravy + Cenote + Frogspawn + Grundon + The Willow + Eva C  
 18<sup>th</sup> Garry Curan + Yo Sushi + Dan & James McKean + The Whiskey Singers - Hank's Whiskey Night  
 19<sup>th</sup> Introverse + support  
 20<sup>th</sup> Monkey Puzzle  
 21<sup>st</sup> Lonely Joe Parker + Money Tree  
 27<sup>th</sup> Permanent Vacation presents Tall Fies + Lovers + Alastair Brown

82 St Clements, Oxford. Tel: 01865 202067

# The Wheatsheaf

Live Music September 08

- Thu 4 **NOT TOO SHABBY**  
THE EAVESDROPPERS + DRUNKENSTEIN Apr / 08
- Sat 6 **LAKES CARETAKER**  
THE YOUNGS PLAN Apr / 08
- Sun 7 **VIAROSA** + TBC Apr / 08
- Fri 12 **THE DELTA FREQUENCY**  
EUREKA MACHINES + VIXENS + SONIC BOB Apr / 08
- Sat 13 **BEELEZOZO**  
INCARNA + TBC Apr / 08
- Fri 19 **THE WOULD BE GOODS**  
SPARKY'S MAGIC PIANO + THE LOVELY EGGS Apr / 08
- Sat 27 **ROPETRICK**  
JAKE MORLEY + MOME RATHS Apr / 08

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Sun 12 Oct **ANDY YORKE** + *Ruarri Joseph*

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Sat 13 Sept **HIFI HANDGRENADES** + Deadbeat Cavalier + Anti-Vigilante

Sun 14 Sept **MODEY LEMON** + ★ **sennen** + 50ft Panda + Pistol Kixx

Thu 18 Sept **j u b i l e e** The new band from Aaros North of NH and The Icarus Line fame + Les Gars + The Dresdens

Wed 24 Sept **BEGGARS** + Vixens

Sun 28 Sept **THE SPINTO BAND**

Wed 15 Oct **CHEEKY CHEEKY & THE NOSEBLEEDS** + The Elrics

Sun 26 Oct **THE RESEARCH** + Piney Gir + Ginger Tom

Fri 21 Nov **James Yorkston** + Pictish Trail + Rozi Plain

WED 15 OCTOBER



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# GIG GUIDE

## MONDAY 1<sup>st</sup>

**THE KYLA BROX BAND: The Bullingdon** – Daughter of British blues legend Victor Brox, Kyla has shared a stage with her father many times, matching his powerful voice easily and on course to become the UK's premier female blues singer, mixing up classic r'n'b, blues, funk and soul.

## TUESDAY 2<sup>nd</sup>

**JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon** – Free weekly live jazz club, tonight with regular guests The Howard Peacock Quintet.

*Friday 5<sup>th</sup>*

## SUMMER

### SLAUGHTER TOUR: The Academy

Reckon you're tough, eh? Right, stick around for the duration of tonight's six-band package tour without bleeding brain matter through your nose or running weeping from the venue and we'll give you a medal to prove as much. Following on from the regular US Summer Slaughter tours, this inaugural UK outing showcases half a dozen of the best up and coming extreme metal bands around, four from the States, one Australian and one home-grown. Headliners **Suicide Silence**, from California, are as unsunny as that State can create, currently on tour with Slipknot and Disturbed following on from the release of their album, 'The Cleansing', mixing death, grind and hardcore into a guttural frenzy of technical riffing and downright brutality. Joining them are similarly blunt thrashcore merchants **As Blood Runs Black**; ultra-fast scream-core devils **Abigail Williams** (whose name sounds like they should be an *X-Factor*-endorsed r'n'b puppy but have a bassist called Plaguehammer, so perhaps not); Chicago's more traditional prog-tinged thrash crew **Born Of Osiris**; the UK's own **Annotations Of An Autopsy**, with their dark, suffocating low-end death metal, plus a long-overdue Oxford debut for Australia's magnificent merchants of malignant, murderous mayhem, **The Berserker**. An unrelenting night of blastbeats, breakdowns and bludgeoning riffage, it'll sort the men from the boys and the more gore left on the dancefloor the better.



## SEPTEMBER

### WEDNESDAY 3<sup>rd</sup>

**TRIBUTE TO MARILYN MANSON: The Bullingdon** – The electro-goth scourge of Christian parenting groups gets made over.  
**ECLECTRICITY: The Cellar** – Weekly mix of house and electro.  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Temple**

### THURSDAY 4<sup>th</sup>

**THOMAS TRUAX + BLACK HATS + COGWHEEL DOGS: The Bullingdon** – Inventive, quirky and poetic mechanical pop from Mr Truax and his menagerie of self-made instruments at tonight's Moshka club night. Upbeat indie rocking from Black Hats and off-kilter folk noise from Cogwheel Dogs in support.  
**COWBOY KILLERS + THE RRRs + JESSICA GOYDER: The Jericho Tavern** – Gloriously grizzled, whisky-soaked blues and country from New York's Cowboy Killers, recalling the low-down drawl of Howlin' Wolf and Tom Waits. Leamington's joyful 50s and 60s bubblegum pop outfit The Rrrs and local acoustic singer-songwriter Jessica Goyder support.  
**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre**  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon**  
**SMASH DISCO: The Academy**  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon**

### FRIDAY 5<sup>th</sup>

**SUMMER SLAUGHTER: The Academy** – Extreme metal touring package hits the UK with maximum force – *see main preview*  
**KLUB KAKOFANNEY with NOT TOO SHABBY + EAVESDROPPERS + DRUNKENSTEIN: The Wheatsheaf** – Reliably mixed bag of off-the-wall sounds at Klub Kak, featuring bluesy rockers Not Too Shabby and funky post-punk heavyweights Drunkenstein.  
**DRUM&BASS NIGHT: The Regal** – With DJ Basher and Swaaarm.  
**RELIK + TARGET NINE + CHALK + MOMERATHS: The Jericho Tavern** – New local bands night at the Tavern with Manics-styled anthemic rockers Relik, plus emo-tinged types Target Nine and quirky lo-fi noisemakers Momeraths.  
**BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon** – Classic soul, funk and disco.  
**SHAKE: The Academy** – Funk, reggae, soul, rock'n'roll and jazz from Skylarkin and crew.  
**GET DOWN: The Brickworks** – Disco, Latin and funk DJ session.

### SATURDAY 6<sup>th</sup>

**LAKES + CARETAKER + THE YOUNGS PLAN: The Wheatsheaf** – One-off gig from Hampshire's elusive noiseniks, Caretaker, mixing up post-rock, languid, spacious soundscaping and

ferocious, angular post-hardcore to hypnotic effect. Canterbury's Lakes offer post-punk funk, mixed up with Slint and Sonic Youth-inspired guitar noise.

**20/20 VISION + DESERT STORM + BEELZEBOZO: The Port Mahon** – Local metal and hardcore triple bill.  
**MELTING POT with SLASHED SEAT AFFAIR + THE BRENTFLOOD + CENSORED: The Jericho Tavern** – Radio-friendly grunge-pop leaning towards the No Doubt and Avril Lavigne scheme of things from Slashed Seat Affair at tonight's Melting Pot, alongside London's Smiths-inspired indie types The Brentflood.  
**TRANSFORMATION / TRASHY / ROOM 101: The Academy** – Three clubs in one with classic and contemporary indie at Transformation; glam-rock, 80s and trash-pop at Trashy, plus hardcore, metal and alternative noise at Room 101.  
**ROLLERDISCO: The Regal** – Rollerdisco extravaganza in aid of Helen & Douglas House Hospice with Tony 'Naked' Nanton and Street Level's Timmy Johns playing r'n'b, soul, disco and house.  
**LEE DAVIES & FRIENDS: The Temple**  
**SIMPLE: The Bullingdon** – Funky house club night with Wahalla, James Weston and Si Yeates.  
**BASSMENTALITY: The Cellar** – Funk, soul and hip hop club night with a live set from Loose Grip.

### SUNDAY 7<sup>th</sup>

**SOUND IS MUSIC FESTIVAL: The Regal** – All day mini-festival in aid of Bollocks To Poverty with an extensive cast of local bands including Red Valve, Colins Of Paradise, Ivy's Itch, Sidewinders, Domes Of Silence, Speed Of A Puma, Hangman's Joe, Rodeo Beat Machine, Motion Sleep, Drug Squad and Apologies, I Have None.  
**DEATHFEST: The Cellar** – A night of extreme and death metal with sets from Porkfest, Mindless Torture, Necrospawn, Sky Burial and The Kooks. Sorry, got a bit carried away there.  
**VIAROSA + SMITH & BROWN: The Wheatsheaf** – Dark, wistful alt.country and folk-noir reveries, somewhere between Nick Cave, Tindersticks and Low, from the rather great Viarosa, who were handpicked to support REM last year. Joining them are local folk and bluegrass duo Smith & Brown.  
**ACOUSTIC OPEN MIC NIGHT: The Red Lion, Kidlington** – New weekly open mic session.

### MONDAY 8<sup>th</sup>

**ANGELA BROWN & THE MIGHTY 45s: The Bullingdon** – Blues, gospel, soul and jazz from the acclaimed singer, compared favourably to Etta James and Koko Taylor.  
**THE ELIZA CARTHY BAND: Nettlebed Folk Club** – Another chance to catch the acclaimed singer and fiddler from the first family of English folk, out on the road in support of her new self-



penned album, 'Dreams Of Breathing Underwater', following on from two previous Mercury-nominated albums and a string of Radio 2 Folk Awards titles.

## TUESDAY 9<sup>th</sup>

**JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon** – With live sounds from The Howard Peacock Quintet.  
**INTRUSION: The Cellar** – Goth, industrial, darkwave and 80s club night.

## WEDNESDAY 10<sup>th</sup>

**TIM HODGKINSON: The Port Mahon** – Oxford Improvisers host a special gig with clarinetist, lap steel guitar player and composer Tim Hodgkinson, best known for his work with experimental innovators Henry Cow. Tonight he's joined by Chris Cundy on bass clarinet and Dominic Lash on double bass.  
**GEMMA HAYES: The Jericho Tavern** – The previously Mercury-nominated Irish singer-songwriter continues her slow and steady rise back towards the top after a self-imposed two-year exile following her debut album, 'Night On My Side'. Folky prettiness meets bitter-sweet rocking on her new 'The Hollow Of Morning' outing.  
**ECLECTRICITY: The Cellar**  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Temple**

## THURSDAY 11<sup>th</sup>

**CLARE & THE REASONS + BRENDAN CAMPBELL: The Bullingdon** – Twee orchestral jazz and folk-inclined pop from Brooklyn's Clare Muldaur Manchon, angelically-voiced chum of Sufjan Stevens, with whom she collaborated on recent album, 'The Movie'.

Glaswegian folk-pop newcomer Brendan Campbell supports.

**LIGHTS ACTION + A SILENT FILM + SAID MIKE: The Academy** – Joint headline tour featuring London's delicately anthemic rockers Lights Action, fronted by erstwhile Oxford boy Patrick Currier (former frontman with local favourites and Nightshift cover stars Days Of Grace), and now signed to Xtra Mile alongside rising Oxford stars A Silent Film, all set to release their debut album later this autumn.

**DOVES: The Academy** – One-off show from Manchester's alternately euphoric and mournful anti-rock rock heroes, still exploring the outer reaches of shoegazing soundscaping and hopefully set to release the follow-up to 'Some Cities' soon.

**VON BRAUN + THE WAR YEARS: The Cellar** – Leftfield rocking at tonight's Big Hair club.

**MANACLES OF ACID: The Jericho Tavern** – Vintage analogue synth wobbliness with an admirable acid fixation from the local newcomers.

**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford**

**Community Centre**

**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon**

**SMASH DISCO: The Academy**

**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon**

## FRIDAY 12<sup>th</sup>

**CALEXICO: The Academy** – Musical melting pot roots rockers – see main preview

**SPEAR OF DESTINY: The Academy** – Vocal pocket battleship Kirk Brandon resurrects his 80s punk-tinged power rockers for a hits tour, featuring 'Never Take Me Alive' among their cult classics.

**STREET LEVEL DRUM&BASS: The Regal** –

With sets from DJs Bryan Gee, Brykie, Tax Man, Eks Man, Gomez, Gohne Bravo, Mikee Hussla, Kem DMA and Easty.

**DELTA FREQUENCY**

**+ EUREKA**

**MACHINES +**

**VIXENS + SONIC**

**BOB: The**

**Wheatshaf** – Return of electro-glam heavy rockers Delta

Frequency at tonight's Quickfix session, plus support from Leeds'

grungy, epic rockers Eureka Machines and spiky indie fuzz from Vixens.

**BOSSAPHONIK:**

**The Cellar** – Live jazz dance.

**THE MIGHTY**

**REDOX + THE PETE FRYER BAND + FILM**

**NOIR + ANTONIA:**

**The Magdalen**

**ORIGINAL RABBIT**

**FOOT SPASM BAND**

**+ INIGO JONES**

**BAND +**

**SCARAMOOSE: The**

**Jericho Tavern**

**WITNEY MUSIC**

**FESTIVAL:**

**Cokethorpe School** – First day of a three-day



Friday 12<sup>th</sup>

## CALEXICO:

### The Academy

Formed by duo Joey Burns and John Convertino while they were playing with Giant Sand, Calexico are the sound of the desert. Named after a Californian border town and based in Arizona, the desert is in their blood. In fact the pair's debut album was a concept album based on the Arizona desert. Calexico's trademark is to take down-home country rock and introduce it to other, more exotic cultures. From Morricone to Mariachi, via French folk, jazz and bossa nova, their sound is dramatic, expansive and sophisticated while always remaining warm and accessible. After earning their dues, and an increasingly fanatical fanbase, on tours with Pavement and Lambchop, Calexico have released half a dozen studio albums and countless other live CDs as well as various collaborative efforts. Their latest album, 'Carried To Dust' follows on from 2006's 'Garden Ruin' which found them ditching the horns and strings in favour of more traditional country rock electric guitars and pedal steel, revealing the strong, old-fashioned songwriting behind their cultural explorations.

live music festival in the picturesque grounds of Cokethorpe School. Today is rock day with a selection of bands with connections to the school performing.

**BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon**

**SHAKE: The Academy**

**GET DOWN: The Brickworks**

## SATURDAY 13<sup>th</sup>

**HARVEST FESTIVAL: Isis Tavern (11am)** – First day of Truck's latest mini-festival, featuring country swingers Hot Club Of Cowtown, plus Jali Fily Cissokho, Piney Gir and many more.

**DELICIOUS MUSIC FESTIVAL: The White Horse, Headington (10am)** – Full day of live music over two stages from Delicious Music. On the main stage there is Nine Stone Cowboy, Nable, Law Abiding Citizens, Moocher, Desert Storm, Hangman's Joe, The Unknown and more, while over on the Key 17 Records Stage Ady Davey, Tamara Parsons-Baker, Mike Davies, Martha Roswell, Superloose and others will be keeping it acoustic. Visit [www.myspace.com/deliciousmusicpro](http://www.myspace.com/deliciousmusicpro) for full line-up and ticket details.

**DODOS + EUROS CHILDS: The Academy** – San Francisco's psychedelic folk duo Dodos plug their new album, 'The Visitor', their sound dominated by percussionist Logan Kroeber, mixing up rock and West African rhythms around singer Maric Long's light, airy acoustic songs.

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## MUSIC FESTIVAL

**SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 13<sup>th</sup> 2008**

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30+ ACTS / INDOOR & OUTDOOR STAGES / JAM STAGE  
 STALLS / FOOD / BEERS / ALES

### DELICIOUS MAIN STAGE:

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 DESERT STORM INVISIBLE VEGAS / HANGMAN'S JOE / THE UNKNOWN /  
 CRUSADER / KIM CHI / SHAKER THE STIFF LIPS / NICKY 3DEE / K-LACURA /  
 APERTURE / TARQUIN / CHRIS MARTIN & NONSENSE / BABY JOHN  
 CROSS-HEADS

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205 Headley Way, Headington / Oxford OX3 7SU

Funds are available for charity / Stalls £30 / £20 Students

Family Ticket £25 / Children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

Tickets are non-refundable. Gates open 10am close midnight

FESTIVAL ENQUIRIES: 07717585335 / 07703246913

FOR FULL LINE UP, MORE INFORMATION AND TICKETS GO TO: [www.myspace.com/deliciousmusicpro](http://www.myspace.com/deliciousmusicpro)

The festival organizers reserve the right to make alterations to the advertised featured acts & arrangement.

Sponsored by: The Whitehorse Pub Headington / Delicious Entertainment / Key 17 Records / Saree Clothes / A/C Disco Light & PA Hire  
 Diddot Rocks! / Red Hot Blues Club / Oxford Rocks! & more to be announced!



*Saturday 13<sup>th</sup>*

## MANATEES:

### The Port Mahon

Rising like an imperious black mountain out of Carlisle, Manatees are the sort of band who can flatten puny pub venues with a single, well-aimed riff. The band's last showing in Oxford – a Vacuous Pop gig at the Wheatsheaf – was one of the gigs of last year; certainly the loudest, and the even more intimate setting tonight should make for an even more extreme encounter. Manatee's stock in trade is vast, doom-laden drone-core, ambitious but monumentally heavy, taking inspiration from daddies of sludgy noise like Isis, Neurosis and Swans, but equally ambitious, with nods to King Crimson's adventurous squall and God Machine's melodic portent. Anyway, what you really need to know is that it's UNRELENTING. Not to mention ALL-CONSUMING. Like the soundtrack to an Extreme Demolition Jobs DVD turned up full in the middle of a thunderstorm. The band have just signed to Eyes Of Sound and a second album is on its way. In the meantime, lose your hearing, your mind and possibly control of your bowels to their malevolently brooding low-end bass attack. Support at today's Permanent Vacation Winkstock mini-festival are London organ-and-loops duo Gentle Friendly, whose feedback and atmospheric noise comes in somewhere between Animal Collective and Fuck Buttons; Leeds' Chops who mix up fidgety synth-core with dissonant squall; local experimental noise starlets Elapse-O; Joey Chainsaw's dissonant chaos; You're Smiling Now But We'll All Turn Into Demons' psychedelic stomp; Clara Kindle's atmospheric spoken word and American Gods' Liars-inspired noise. The fun starts at 4pm.

Gorkys chap Euros Child brings his own idiosyncratic twist on folk-pop along in support.

**HI-FI HAND GRENADES: The Bullingdon** – Melodic punk-pop from Detroit's Hi-Fi Hand Grenades, keeping the spirits of The Replacements and Descendents alive and kicking.

**WINKSTOCK with MANATEES + GENTLE FRIENDLY + CHOPS + ELAPSE-O: The Port Mahon (4pm)** – Monolithic narcotic stoner rocking from Manatees – *see main preview*

**LONG INSIDERS: The Jericho Tavern** – Cinematic pop shimmer, torch songs and showtunes from the elegantly-proportioned

Long Insiders, leaning toward the Julee Cruise and Chris Isaac school of dreaminess.

**BEELZEBOZO + INCARNA: The Wheatsheaf** – Local metal double bill.  
**TRANSFORMATION / TRASHY / ROOM 101: The Academy**  
**WITNEY MUSIC FESTIVAL: Cokethorpe School** – Jazz day at the music festival.

## SUNDAY 14<sup>th</sup>

**HARVEST FESTIVAL: Isis Tavern (11am)** – Magic Numbers headline the second day of Truck's mini-festival; joining them are Danny & The Champions Of The World, Coley Park and more.

**THE MODEY LEMON + SENNEN + 50ft PANDA: The Bullingdon** – Demonic garage-synth-core noisemakers return to Blighty – *see main preview*

**OFF-FIELD 6: The Port Mahon** – Experimental music day with punk, pop and electro from Baby Gravy, sound explorations from Cenote, improv noise from Frogspawn, metal from Grundon, folk from The Willow and electronics and sax-based noisemaking from Eva C.

**SHEARWATER + LITTLE FISH + MORRISON STEAM FAYRE: The Academy** – Sparse, doomladen folk, strident country and proggy melodrama from Austin's Shearwater, over in the UK to promote fifth album, 'Rooks', having originally started out as an Okkervil River side project. Top-notch support comes from rising local stars Little Fish, soon to head Stateside to record their debut album for Linda Perry's Custard label, plus folk, skiffle and rockabilly outfit MSF.

**QUICKFIX JUMBLE SALE: The X, Cowley (4-11pm)** – Return of Quickfix's jumble sale gig, featuring a full day of live music, from the likes of Black Hats, Maria Ilett, Mark Bosley, Tristan and the Troubadours, Phantom Theory and more, plus a chance to sell your unwanted odds, ends, middle-eights, dodgy records, yesterday's fashions or home-made sock puppets, or have a good old rummage through your local fave rock stars' tat.

**WITNEY MUSIC FESTIVAL: Cokethorpe School** – Classical day.

**ACOUSTIC OPEN MIC NIGHT: The Red Lion, Kidlington**

## MONDAY 15<sup>th</sup>

**THE OLI BROWN BAND: The Bullingdon** – Norfolk's rising blues singer and guitarist, recently signed to Ruf Records and displaying a musical debt to Stevie Ray Vaughan and Eric Clapton.

**MODERN CLICHÉS + GOODBYE STEREO + I CALL SHOTGUN: The Academy** – Unsigned bands showcase.

**CHERISH THE LADIES: Nettlebed Folk Club** – All-female Irish-American folkies led by flautist and tin whistle player Joanie Madden.

**PETER & THE WOLF: The Jericho Tavern**

## TUESDAY 16<sup>th</sup>

**Y&T: The Academy** – San Francisco metal veterans still out on the road having formed in 1974 and helped inspire Metallica and Mötley Crüe along the way; over the years they've toured with Ozzy Osbourne, Aerosmith and AC/DC.

**JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon** – With guest singer Alison Bentley.

## WEDNESDAY 17<sup>th</sup>

**HAMFATTER: The Academy** – Oh Christ. Proof positive that capitalism is, if not utterly evil, completely devoid of taste. Cambridge rockers of little discernible character decide to go on *Dragon's Den* and ask for cash to finance their new album. Peter Jones promptly stumps up £75,000 and Steve Wright plays their new single every day for a month, idiotic bilge-drinking dumpling that he is. Musically somewhere between Badly Drawn Boy's clumsy kid brother and the least interesting bits of The Hoosiers' whimsical laddishness. Nightshift says, Here's sixpence, now fuck off!

**IVYRISE + PAPER HEROES + ALISTAIR GRIFFIN: The Jericho Tavern** – Keane-lite piano pop from Ivyrise, plus annoyingly chirpy jangle-rock from Paper Heroes.

**ECLECTRICITY: The Cellar**  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Temple**

## THURSDAY 18<sup>th</sup>

**JUBILEE + LES GARS + THE DRESDENS: The Bullingdon** – Aaron North from Nine Inch Nails and Icarus Line teams up with QOTSA's Michael Shuman in Jubilee, mixing up grungy heavyweight rock in the vein of their collective former bands and 60 pop melodicism. Ferocious garage-metal rocking from The Dresdens in support.

**BORDERVILLE + FOXES!: The Cellar** – Theatrical vaudevillian rocking from Borderville, plus jangly cute-core from Foxes!  
**BLUE JUNK + BAXTER + JAY ALICE: The Jericho Tavern** – Prog-funk from Abingdon's Blue Funk, plus indie-rock from London's Baxter.

**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre**  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon**  
**SMASH DISCO: The Academy**  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon**

## FRIDAY 19<sup>th</sup>

**THE WOULD BE GOODS + SPARKY'S MAGIC PIANO + THE LOVELY EGGS: The Wheatsheaf** – Rare, one-off live show from Jessica Griffin's indie cult stars The Would Be Goods, the singer previously backed by The Monochrome Set but now featuring Talulah Gosh and Heavenly guitarist Peter Momtchiloff, Thee Headcoatees' Deborah Green and one-time Adam & The Ants bassist Andy Warren. Together their quintessentially English indie sound harks back to a time when that word actually meant something, recalling the pure pop sounds of Young Marble Giants and their ilk. Tonight's Swiss Concrete gig also features sweet, summery electro-pop duo Sparky's Magic Piano and Lancaster's alternately twee and brattish lo-fi garage-popstrels Lovely Eggs. A great chance to wallow in the true spirit of classic indie music.

**THE ACADEMY IS + WE THE KINGS + THE MAINE: The Academy** – Depressingly generic punk-pop from Chicago's Fueled By Ramen-signed The Academy Is, back in the UK to promote new album 'Fast Times At Barrington High'. Support comes from Florida's We The Kings, a band so polished they make Good Charlotte sound like Discharge.

**TOUPE: The Bullingdon** – Inventively madcap funkery from Southampton's Toupé.

**KING FURNACE + INTRAVERSE + I AM THIEVES: The Port Mahon** – Showy rocking out from the increasingly great King Furnace.

**ANDENSUM + IONNIX + SEROTONIN + A SWEETER OUTPUT: Court yard Youth Centre, Bicester** – Bicester young bands night with heavyweight noise from headliners Andensum.

**THE BABY JOHN BLUES BAND: Didcot Labour Club** – Live blues at Didcot's monthly Red Hot Blues club.

**TRIPWIRES + ECHO BOOMER + MESH 29: The Jericho Tavern** – Fidgety alt.rock from Reading's Tripwire, leaning towards the Youthmovies school of mathsy emo rocking. Delicately powerful emotive rocking from local boys Echo Boomer in support.

**THE MIGHTY REDOX + THE PETE FRYER BAND: The Chester Arms**

**BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon SHAKE: The Academy**

**GET DOWN: The Brickworks**

**FRESH OUT OF THE BOX: The Cellar** – House, breaks and techno.

### SATURDAY 20<sup>th</sup>

**S.C.U.M: The Cellar** – Electro-goth noise from S.C.U.M coming on like Suicide invading The Batcave back in 1980.

### Sunday 14<sup>th</sup>

## **THE MODEY LEMON / SENNEN / 50ft PANDA: The Bullingdon**

Back at the turn of the decade, when the garage rock revival provided some of the best thrills in town, Pittsbugh's Modey Lemon were demons among boys. The trio's synth-heavy metallic crunch was a terrifying joy to behold as they blew the likes of The Von Bondies offstage. After the release of relatively mellow third album, 'The Curious City', back in 2005 they seemed to disappear, at least as far as the UK was concerned but with a new album due they're undertaking an extensive European tour. Somewhere between The Sonics, Suicide, Stooges and Scientists, The Modey Lemon manage that elusive mix of guitar and electronic noise, the synths often threatening to eat the guitars halfway through one of the band's extended psychedelic wigouts. If they're on form, there are few more fearsome spectacles. Norwich's Sennen, meanwhile, might have named themselves after a Ride song but their narcotic take on shoegazing takes few prisoners, relying on the power of hypnotic persuasion to suck you into its fug of heavily flanged guitar noise which subsumes the introverted melodies and backseat vocals. A more considered, but equally powerful storm to the headline.



**GYM CLASS HEROES: The Academy** – New York hip hoppers signed to Fueled By Ramen, mixing crudely witty lyrics with laid-back beats, somewhere between Outkast and Bloodhound Gang.

**TRANSFORMATION / TRASHY / ROOM 101: The Academy**

**MINISTRY OF SOUND ELECTRO HOUSE SESSIONS: The Regal** – DJs from the mega club franchise play electro and house tunes.

**1877: The Jericho Tavern** – Hardcore-tinged new wavers.

**OX4: The Bullingdon** – Drum&bass club night.

**SOULJACKER: The Temple**

### SUNDAY 21<sup>st</sup>

**ACOUSTIC OPEN MIC NIGHT: The Red Lion, Kidlington**

### MONDAY 22<sup>nd</sup>

**ROBERT FORSTER: The Academy** – Former-Go-Betweens songwriting hero plugs his new solo album – *see main preview*

**RIETTA AUSTIN BAND: The Bullingdon** – New Zealand-born, London-based singer with a four octave range belting out the blues, r'n'b, soul, jazz and old-fashioned rock in gutsy style, having previously sung backing vocals for the likes of Shirley Bassey and members of INXS. More recently she's supported Bryan Adams and Joe Cocker, while her new album, 'Cut Me Loose', was produced by Mark Stevens who has previously worked with Sugababes and Gabrielle.

**SPIERS & BODEN: Nettlebed Folk Club** – The English folk revivalists continue to give traditional songs their energetic workover.

### TUESDAY 23<sup>rd</sup>

**FIGHTING WITH WIRE: The Academy** – Return to town for Derry's Foo Fighters-styled grunge-pop hopefuls, formed by ex-Jetplane Landing guitarist Cahir O'Doherty. After playing at Radio 1's One Big Weekend and Download this summer they head off on tour in support of debut album, 'Man Vs Monster'.

**JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon** – The Howard Peacock Quintet perform live at the free weekly jazz club.

### WEDNESDAY 24<sup>th</sup>

**BEGGARS: The Bullingdon** – Harmony-heavy, 60s-styled rocking from Reading's rising hopefuls, hinting at The Coral and Charlatans along the way.

**THE JOHN YOUNG BAND: The Jericho Tavern** – Terrifyingly mature classic and soft rock from the long-maned Aylesbury guitarist.

**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Temple**

**FREE RANGE: The Cellar** – Dubstep and drum&bass club night.

### THURSDAY 25<sup>th</sup>

**DRAGONFORCE + TURISAS: The Academy** – Metal as it used to be forged. By Vikings – *see main preview*

**THE DIRTY ROYALS + COLOURS: The Jericho Tavern** – Ebullient punk-tinged harmony-heavy pop from The Dirty Royals, plus epic stadium-pop from Reading's Colours.

**BIG HAIR: The Cellar** – bands to be confirmed.

**CATWEAZLE CLUB: East Oxford Community Centre**

**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon**



### Monday 22<sup>nd</sup>

## **ROBERT FORSTER: The Academy**

Along with the late, great Grant McLennan, Robert Forster was the songwriting axis of Brisbane's brilliantly timeless Go-Betweens, the band the pair formed while at college after discovering a mutual love for literature, films, Bob Dylan and American punk. All the while that band were on the go the pair were creating their own solo albums, although while they rarely actually collaborated on Go-Betweens material the competition between two such talented songwriters raised both games. 2005's 'Oceans Apart' was The Go-Betweens final album, and arguably their finest, but McLennan's death spelled the end for the band and Forster is now out on tour in support of his first solo album in twelve years, 'The Evangelist', an often mournful but beautiful album that pays due respect to his old friend. Three of the songs on it were co-written with McLennan. Always the more detached foil to McLennan's wistful dreamer, Forster shared a similar fascination for romance, his songs emotional and heartfelt, the man himself fearsomely fey. If The Go-Betweens were always more of a cult concern than a commercial success, and Forster's solo work is of even more specialist interest, the songs themselves deserve far greater exposure – pure, shimmering pop that's inspired more other bands than most people would ever realise. So, a night to see the master in action.



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**SMASH DISCO: The Academy**  
**OPEN MIC SESSION: The Half Moon**

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

**THE SHAKER HEIGHTS + SOIREE FOR THE BUSKERS + MEAN POPPA LEAN + THE LATE GREATS: The Jericho Tavern** – Melodic roots rocking and Americana from Shaker Heights, plus 60s-style rock and r'n'b from Soiree For the Buskers.

**FLARE: The Regal** – Mystery Jets play a special guest DJ set.

**BACKROOM BOOGIE: The Bullingdon**

**SHAKE: The Academy**

**HQ: The Cellar** – Drum&bass with guest Alix Perez.

**GET DOWN: The Brickworks**

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

**EASY TIGER + LISA FITZGIBBON: The Bullingdon** – Album launch party for the local melodic rockers pitched somewhere between The Eagles and Supertramp.

**MANYEUNG + HARRY ANGEL +**

**NAILBOMB CULTS: The Jericho Tavern** – Ten-year-anniversary reformation for Witney's Manyeung, the band who went on to spawn the

### *Thursday 25<sup>th</sup>*

## **DRAGONFORCE /**

## **TURISAS:**

## **The Academy**

Heavy metal has expanded and mutated into so many sub-genres over the past 25 years it's hard to know what's what sometimes, so maybe Dragonforce are exactly what the world needs – a proper old-fashioned heavy metal band. A heavy metal band who not only have proper old-fashioned heavy metal hair but actually have special fans put on stage to blow that hair in proper old-fashioned windswept style while they indulge in proper old-fashioned axe solos. Possibly with their feet up on the monitors. The English metallers are on an unstoppable rise at the moment with new album 'Ultra Beatdown' set to keep up the momentum of critically-acclaimed predecessor 'Inhuman Rampage'. Their speed-heavy brand of power-metal seems to owe as much to Kiss and Europe as it does Iron Maiden and Metallica, but at its heart it is music from another time. And the only thing more metal than that is a band from Finland who dress as Vikings and play songs about, well, being Vikings. That's what Turisas do and their folky brand of symphonic battle metal is so stirring you almost expect Kirk Douglas to leap out of a passing longship during the chorus. It's all very Spinal Tap, but more importantly, it's immense fun.



likes of The Rock Of Travolta, Scribble and Soulcraft. Fuzzcore demons Harry Angel support, plus mash-up fiend Nailbomb Cults.

**TALL FIRS + LOVVERS + ALASTAIR**

**BROWN: The Port Mahon** – Gently lysergic slow-core rocking and a neatly rustic take on post-hardcore wandering from Brooklyn's Tall Firs, over in the UK to promote new album 'Too Old To Die Young', taking cues from acts as diverse as Neil Young, Sonic Youth, Galaxie 500 and Codeine. Lo-fi punk brats Lovvers return to town in support after their showing at Truck Festival.

**XMAS LIGHTS + SHIELD YOUR EYES + EDUARD SOUNDINGBLOCK +**

**NITKOWSKI: The Cellar** – Awesome extreme metal, industrial soundscaping and doomy ambience from the mighty Xmas Lights, now back at full strength with the return of guitarist James Gray-King. Prog-core hairies Eduard Soundingblock lead the supporting cast.

**GAPPY TOOTH INDUSTRIES: The Wheatsheaf** – Mixed bag of goodies from the GTI crew. Bands to be confirmed.

**NEARLY DAN: The Academy** – Tribute to Steely Dan, celebrating the band's 30 years in music.

**TRANSFORMATION / TRASHY / ROOM 101: The Academy**

**BEHAVEYA: The Temple**

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

**THE AUTOMATIC + DINOSAUR PILE-UP + OPERAHOUSE: The Academy** – What's that coming over the hill? Why, it's the new-look Automatic. Gone is screechy keyboard monkey Alex Pennie, in comes former-Yourcodenameis:milo guitarist Paul Mullen. Not surprisingly the band's new album, 'This Is A Fix', is more diverse and aggressive than their debut and a new lease of life may yet be theirs for the taking. Dinosaur Pile-Up bring their scratchy lo-fi noise pop along in support.

**THE SPINTO BAND: The Bullingdon** – Sweetly geeky college rocking from Delaware's Spinto Band.

**ACOUSTIC OPEN MIC NIGHT: The Red Lion, Kidlington**

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

**THE HAMSTERS: The Bullingdon** – Enduringly likeable Southend r'n'b and blues-rock trio The Hamsters, 20 years out on the road now and still knocking out their Hendrix and ZZ Top-inspired racket with trademark gusto. One of those bands you really ought to see at least once before you die. So why not this time round?

**THE HOLD STEADY: The Academy** – Standard-bearing blue-collar rock romantics – see main preview

**BROMHEADS JACKET: The Academy** – Surf-inflected old school punk rocking from Sheffield's documenters of all things humdrum



### *Monday 29<sup>th</sup>*

## **THE HOLD STEADY: The Academy**

Brooklyn's The Hold Steady might just be the epitome of conservative bloke-rock. With the band's members all now in their mid-to-late-thirties, they've worked their way up from nothing to the point where they're opening for The Rolling Stones through sheer grit and hard work. Last year alone they played over 200 shows. They tend to get rave reviews from critics in the broadsheets and more mature music monthlies and it's impossible not to listen to them without the words Bruce and Springsteen popping into your head at least a dozen times. But that aside, The Hold Steady are great; just great. Because in frontman Craig Finn they've got an everyman storyteller *par excellence*, recounting tales of lives crashing and burning to drugs and drink or lost to age, and about people's struggles to escape in whichever way they can, through sex, religion or whatever. The stories are delivered in Finn's gruff, bluesy drawl while behind him deft use of mandolin, harpsichord or horns add colour to the plaid backdrop of traditional bar-room rock and roll which never sounds old or tired, recalling moments of Husker Du, The Replacements and Buffalo Tom. The band's new album, 'Stay Positive', is aptly titled, reflecting the attitude which has got them to where they are now. Their steadfast orthodoxy is their greatest strength. When The Ting Tings are a shadow of a fleeting memory, The Hold Steady will still be out on the road telling their timeless tales.

**JOHN McCUSKER, KRIS DREVER, HEIDI TALBOT & BOO HEWERDINE: Nettlebed Folk Club**

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

**JAZZ CLUB: The Bullingdon** – With guests The Howard Peacock Quintet.

*Nightshift listings are free. Deadline for inclusion in the gig guide is the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month - no exceptions. Call 01865 372255 (10am-6pm) or email listings to Nightshift@oxfordmusic.net. All listings are copyright of Nightshift and may not be reproduced without permission*

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# LIVE

## THE GUTTER TWINS / CARINA ROUND

### The Academy

Carina Round seems like an odd choice to support The Gutter Twins. She's a bit too nice and fluffy for starters. And quiet. They can't even turn the venue's air conditioning on lest it drowns her out. Still, it's hard not to warm to her, even if she plays the dippy card a bit too strongly, her odd breathless gasps and knowing PJ Harvey-isms momentarily engaging if instantly forgettable.

She's the light before the darkness, though. For here are Mark Lanegan and Greg Dulli, respectively former frontmen for Screaming Trees and Afghan Whigs, original grunge outsiders. And they're not happy. Not tonight, not ever. Dulli is rounded and genially menacing, like a drinking chum of Tony Soprano. Lanegan is chiselled and statue-esque, his eyes firmly closed for the majority of the gig, a picture of brooding intensity, like a grizzled, sociopathic old ranch-hand who you'd only need to glance at in the wrong way to end up with your intestines wrapped around your throat.

But it's Lanegan's voice that really takes your breath away – a low-slung growl that sounds like it worked its way to the Deep South and started digging. Between them, Dulli and Lanegan's voices are so weather-beaten it could be the sound of rusted corrugated iron singing, and when the rest of the band join in on backing vocals it's like choir practice in Hell. Songs like 'The Stations', from recent album 'Saturnalia', swell with easy portent, while 'Idle Hands', with its scouring synth-strings, is the musical equivalent of staring into the void as it stares right back at you. "We are the Devil's playthings" growl Dulli and Lanegan and you feel that while so many bands will paint themselves up or scream 'til their lungs burst to try and scare folks, this pair could suck out your soul without raising a sweat. It's not some unrelenting gothic thunderstorm, though. The Gutter Twins



Mark Lanegan photo by rphimages

are simultaneously coruscating and claustrophobic: melodies shine through the oppressive gloom like eerie rays of sunlight through black rain clouds and they mine the great traditions of gospel, blues and country, from Muddy Waters to Johnny Cash, while the band are impressively propulsive and orchestral.

The encores pick and mix from Lanegan's solo material ('Hit The City') and Dulli's Twilight Singers project (Bonnie Brae' and 'Number Nine'), but the mood remains characteristically funereal. Occasional piano intros tease the rapt crowd before making way for blacker, bleaker soundtracks and when Lanegan offers a casual wave before striding from the stage it feels as much like a hex as a thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, the darkness has left the building.

**Dale Kattack**

## DR SHOTOVER: Future Daze (Part 2)

For those of you who have never paid a visit here, the East Indies Club is a fine edifice, a combination of crumbling Victorian Gothic and 70s Neo-Brutalist ... a bit like me?... MOST amusing, Nethergrove... don't give up the day job. Where was I? Ah yes, describing my favourite haunts in the Club. They are 1) the bar, 2) the billiard room, and 3) the bar, obviously. We do have a few unexpected surprises here too...what was once an elegant Edwardian ballroom was, in the inter-war period, turned into an opium den... then into a smoky jazz venue... then back into an opium den in 1967. Funny, that. We call it The Growlery, for obvious reasons. (Not to you, Charlesworth? Here's a pair of stick-on whiskers - now go and read "Bleak House", why don't you?). More recently it has served as a sanatorium on occasion - many's the case of brandy-poisoning which has been dealt with in here... and indeed, case of brandy. Ha. Meanwhile plans are afoot for a warm-up for Woodstock-amont, our nasty 70s-themed festival... we intend to use The Growlery, having painted it in horrible day-glo purple swirls and filled it with orange beanbags... Rumour has it that Damo Suzuki will be popping in with his latest back-up band. They are called CAN'T. They feature the pick of local old-timers from the heyday of Oxford's pub-rock scene, and the event promises to be a "stone groove" (as we used to say). We literally CAN'T wait.

**Next month: Neil Young's Hey Hey My MySpace Site**



"Hot brandy - lots of it!" - Dr S visited by his personal physician in The Growlery

## WHITE NOISE SOUND / SPIRAL 25

### The Cellar

Tonight's drug of choice is acid and the flange pedal is king. Both bands are well named, each hinting at the journey they're set upon.

Spiral 25 are making their first live outing tonight, formed by various members of the much-missed Factory and tonight intent on digging a deep, dark hole of slow-motion narcotic groove rock. They're hairy and blissed-out, spaced-out vocals riding the heavily opiated guitars, often recalling Loop's more dark-minded take on psychedelia. The highlight of their set comes near the close when, just as you've got their spiralling mantra nailed the guitarist picks up a harmonica and they hit an even more claustrophobic groove. Barring another implosion, Spiral 25 will be one of the local bands to lose your mind to in the coming months.

Swansea's White Noise Sound, initially at least, might as well be Spacemen 3, such is the debt they pay to the gods of lysergic drone-rock. Hell, their guitarist even sports the same haircut as Sonic Boom, while the band occasionally have a similarly frustrating way of spending

an age between songs faffing about or tuning up. Their sound is a trancy, tripped-out splendour, burning with an intense but distracted psychedelic frenzy, or shifting like the eternal sands of time, three guitars and keyboards sometimes interweaving or leaving space for each other, or simply piling on top of each other to increase the pressure cooker feel of the more single-minded tracks. With White Noise Sound we feel we might finally have discovered a band who could emulate Spacemen 3's savage elegance, but there is a frustrating tendency towards brevity about them that stops them making the break into real greatness. Oceanic mini odysseys swell up and promise starship voyages only to peter out or stop dead when your every synapse demands another ten, twenty minutes of heavenly escapism. Either they're deliberately tantalising us or White Noise Sound simply haven't discovered the confidence yet to take it to the next level. Either way, if they can really cut loose, the universe is theirs for the taking.

**Dale Kattack**

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**Sunday 14th September**

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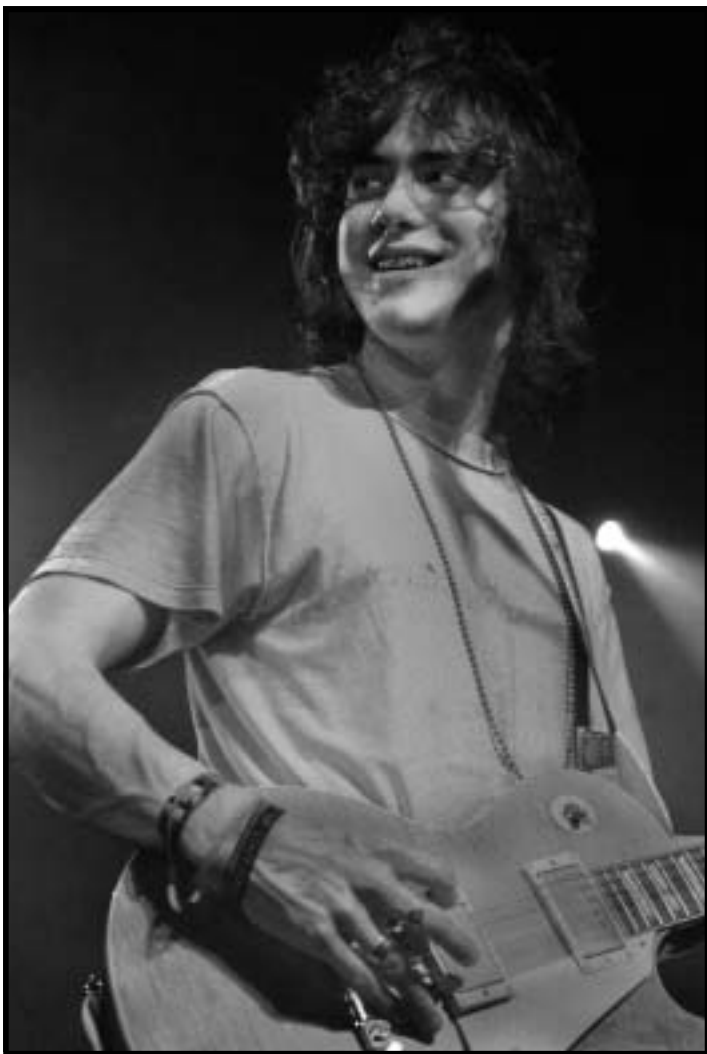
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## MGMT

### The Academy

Young, arty and American, we can probably forgive New York duo MGMT some of their indulgences. Like the fact that they – tonight augmented by a four-piece band – look worryingly like a dodgy 80s soft rock band. Even the fact that they occasionally *sound* like a dodgy 80s soft rock band. We forgive them because in ‘Oracular Spectacular’ Andrew Van Wyngarden and Ben Goldwasser have released one of the most eclectic and downright fun albums of the year, and in ‘Time To Pretend’, they’ve written easily the best song of 2008.

Tonight’s gig is a one-off festival warm-up and the Academy is predictably rammed, enthusiasm tempered by expectation. ‘Pieces Of What’ is a gentle but powerful opening gambit, displaying MGMT’s rootsier side, the ethereal whimsy of Galaxie 500 filtered through Crosby, Still and Nash’s country rocking. The set is littered with euphoric electro-pop and space-rock gems, from ‘Weekend Wars’ to ‘The Youth’, but the succinct album versions are often expanded and jammed out, sometimes effectively, as on the darker, denser almost krautrock passages, or frustratingly, when they threaten to turn into Toto or Journey. It’s this tendency towards self-indulgence that

stops tonight’s gig becoming the absolute triumph it could be.

But that’s not to say much of the gig isn’t simply brilliant – when ponderous psychedelia blossoms into joyous power pop as on ‘Electric Feel’, you feel that within the confines of electro-rock and prog-tinged pop, they are unrestrained. So much so that this review could easily turn into a simple list of references points, whether they’re mixing up Granddaddy with Gary Numan or resurrecting The Cars.

The gleaming synth intro to ‘Time To Pretend’ gets a rapturous reception, it’s sheer power and untainted sense of joy making it an irresistible moment of pop brilliance that’s only slightly tainted by the pointless, elongated jam that follows, finishing the set.

An encore sees them bring support band The Television Personalities on stage for a dire, directionless dirge, Dan Treacy seemingly unfit to be on a stage or even out in public, but they redeem themselves at the finish with the wondrous ‘Kids’, as perfect a summation of what MGMT do best as you could hope for. Perhaps one day they’ll realise themselves what they do best. But until then, we’ll indulge their indulgences.

**Ian Chesterton**

## OWEN TROMANS/BLACK HATS/THE DEPUTEES

### The Exeter Hall

I’ve had my qualms about gigs at the Exeter Hall in the past, mainly because it’s seemed less of a venue and more of a pub that happens to have a corner where bands can play. Promoters Back & To The Left took a simple step tonight that makes me realise what had been wrong before – they decided to turn off the main lights. Instant switch: pub becomes venue. Who’d have thought it. Genius.

Anyway. The Deputees seem slightly nervous during their performance. Whilst their keyboard-led melodic, gentle style hints at something that could easily become interesting, it’s not quite

there just yet – apart from one song, which sees the band draft in more backing vocalists for some fantastic harmonies over a lilting Crosby, Stills & Nash-tinged tune.

Proof (if it were necessary) of the worth of that missing spark of tight musicianship is quickly ushered in by Black Hats, who are taut, tight and super-sharp this evening. They excel in pounding out song after song, with little slack and next to no wastage: the energy and frenetic pace of The Jam filtered through the off-kilter arrangement skills of the Young Knives. They’re a three-piece because they don’t need any other

elements; it’s all in there – manic pop thrills with an undercurrent of noise. Top stuff.

This kind of focus and style is not apparent enough during Owen Tromans’ set, mainly because of his refusal to stick to a particular style. Eclecticism is great, but here it makes for an uneven set of songs, which lurch awkwardly from sweet acoustic balladry to epic sweeps of guitar and atmosphere that recall Tromans’ previous band, San Lorenzo. When he hits the spot it sounds great, but it feels a little as if he’s still working out how to do it on purpose. Still, he has a great voice – sonorous and knowing – and as soon as it’s tied to some killer songs, something special will happen. Or perhaps he just plays better with the lights turned on.

**Simon Minter**

## THE LONG INSIDERS

13 SEP 2008, THE JERICHO TAVERN WALTON STREET, OXFORD

“Subtle but well placed whammy dives, rock and western riffage with crystal and melancholic notes from Sarah, complimenting the rough edge”

<http://livemusic.fm>

“The Long Insiders nod to the cavernous works of Nick Cave and Tom Waits and never-was 60s troubadours-- but rarely sound traditional or conservative”

Jonathan Garrett - Pitchfork

“The cherry on the cake, however, is the passionate wail of singer Sarah Dodd, who is the single most glamorous individual to grace an Oxfordstage in living memory.”

Nightshift April 2008

<http://livemusic.fm/artists/the-long-insiders>

[www.pitchfork.com/longinsiders](http://www.pitchfork.com/longinsiders)





## **BORDERVILLE / THE FAMILY MACHINE / SMILEX / 20/20 VISION**

### **The Wheatsheaf**

As expected tonight's first band blow all comers clean off the Wheatsheaf's tiny stage. Recently reformed local rockers 20/20 Vision threaten to be a poor man's Rage Against The Machine, but once they hit their stride they're an unstoppable juggernaut of 60s garage rock with a contemporary metal twist and two throaty vocalists. They should throw out their Metallica albums because they're better viewed as a reincarnation of The MC5 (and they come from a motor city). By the end of the set the heads are down and they're working perfectly as a tight fireball of energy, and any rough edges only add to their appeal.

Smilex's Lee Christian responds to the challenge of following this by hauling himself around the ceiling, hanging off the air conditioning. Yet back on his feet Smilex come across as somehow politer than usual tonight. Despite the angry nature of their lyrics they're actually more thoughtful and sophisticated than first impressions suggest. The contrary thing about them is that despite their reputation for being visually arresting they're best enjoyed on a hi-fi at home.

The Family Machine are another local band who can't quite make the transition

from good to great. The tunes are charming and beautifully played but they never quite deliver the killer punch that could launch them into the big league. Still, songs like 'Ko Tao' serve as a good example of how they're tantalisingly close to coming up with a true classic, and I hope one day they do.

Borderville are nothing if not ambitious; probably not for instant chart success but citing Gershwin, Brel, Brecht and Weill as influences suggests artistic aspirations that reach beyond that of most young bands. Like frontman Joe Swarbrick's previous outfit, Sexy Breakfast, you never know how you're going to find them, or if the particular magic they try so hard to weave is going to work. Sharing a theatrical, acoustic leaning with bands like Jonquil, the songs are intricate, complex and narrative-laden, making significant demands of the listener. This is a good thing but the Wheatsheaf probably isn't the place for such a grand scheme to be played out. The finale, a cover of 'Purple Rain', seals the impression of over-ambition, like a Karaoke singer doing 'Angels', and that their masterplan needs a little more work.

*Art Lagun*

## **LAST SHADOW PUPPETS**

### **The New Theatre**

Thirty years ago Sheffield was a musical city of the future. Nowadays it prefers to hark back to a golden age of radio. In the late 70s The Human League and Cabaret Voltaire offered synthetic sci-fi surrealism; today Richard Hawley explores vintage rock'n'roll and lounge pop while with Last Shadow Puppets Sheffield's brightest young hero, Alex Turner, is resurrecting classic orchestral pop of a kind rarely heard since the heady days of the The Walker Brothers and *Saturday Night With Lulu*.

Teaming up with Rascals frontman Miles Kane, Turner has left the raucous indie flurry of Arctic Monkeys far behind, his glorious south Yorkshire vowels and a hefty smattering of Monkeys fans in tonight's crowd the only reminders of his more lucrative day job. But the scope and ambition of Last Shadow Puppets is so much greater: from the sixteen-piece string section assembled behind the band, to the ease with which Turner and Kane tackle obscure Bowie gem 'In The Heat Of The Morning' and pay respectful tribute to Lee Hazelwood in such accomplished style. Skinny of jean and feathery of haircut they may be but they're wasted on songs about bus stops and burger joints.

Sweeping into their set, string section in full flow, they're soon galloping through 'The Age Of The Understatement', like The Everly Brothers born and raised on a

northern council estate, moving deftly through shimmering surf pop to emerge later in the set as keepers of Love's elegant pop flame. Even during a mid-set slump where they lose the strings and rock out, occasionally clumsily, they hold on to their charm. And when they kick back into top gear with 'Standing Next to Me', the crowd, roused to their feet by Turner after a lone dancing fan is warned by security, couldn't care less about the polite surroundings.

Last Shadow Puppets are masters of mood and capable of producing music that's as epic and ambitious as anything Muse might conjure, but condensed into three-minute mini-epics, and when they announce the last song as 'In My Room' we're slightly disappointed it's not a cover of Jacques Brel's haunting homage to lost love – it really isn't beyond Turner's abilities to tackle that mountain.

Frustratingly, but not unpredictably the band don't return for an encore after a galloping hour-long set. Amid the elegance, the attitude is still there. And witnessing tonight's show, you think that this is what Oasis could, and should, have become after 'Definitely Maybe', instead of rehashing the same tired formula for another decade. So maybe Last Shadow Puppets do offer a glimpse of a future, albeit one that never came to be.

*Sue Foreman*

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# DEMOS

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## DEMO OF THE MONTH

### ELAPSE-O

Very occasionally the first demo we listen to makes us feel like chucking the rest of the pile in the bin because we just know nothing is going to come close, never mind top it. So it is with this four-track offering from local experimental noise duo Elapse-O, who have been beguiling and alienating audiences around town for a while now. Futuristic factory rhythms, heavily-treated guitar drones, electronic bleeps and shimmers and panicked, disembodied vocals mix and curdle together to form a dense, hypnotic tapestry of sounds that hiss, click, clatter and grind their way with grim, steely determination to their finales without ever casting sideways glances. At six minutes long, opening number 'Sonny Lister' could be a tedious trawl of self-consciously confrontational dissonance but instead is hypnotic and almost graceful in its brutality, David Roe and Toby Nevitt sustaining the pressure with an iron fist until it becomes a hypnotic mantra that is impossible to snap yourself away from. On 'Golden Ships' hollowed-out beats, sluggish, churning guitar and sustained glissando underpin the Alan Vega-like voice, while 'Island' is a more abstract clatter of metallic textures. Seemingly inspired by the likes of Liars, Suicide and Cabaret Voltaire, Elapse-O have created a beast of a demo that stands up well against the very best experimental music around at the moment. A wider audience is unlikely ever to be theirs, but it bloody well should be. Fantastic.

### PHANTOM THEORY

Another two-piece and another band whose musical ambition shames those around them, this three-song demo recorded for the princely sum of £22.50, apparently. Money well spent by the sounds of it with the pair, Aaron and Steve, first off thrashing out a muscular, riff-heavy garage thrash that seems to be constructed from two parts energy to one part belligerence, a no-frills, all-thrills hit and run rumble with a passing nod to Black Flag. But instead of simply rehashing this pleasing formula they display other strings to their bow, the 12-bar blues of 'Ichiban'

developing an almost anthemic feel while retaining its rough, bass-heavy underbelly, while 'Ratmosphere' is big and spacious, like a gothic power-pop stomp and hints of U2's early sky-scraping. A very new band in town but obviously one with a whole skipload of talent and potential. And a timely lesson that expensive studio bills are no indicator of real musical class.

### THE DACOITS

Now, this is well produced (by Chris Sheldon, who has worked with Foo Fighters and Oceansize previously) but thankfully hasn't had its character polished away like some. The Dacoits are a Faringdon-based band fronted by the not inconsiderable vocal talents of Carrie Rositer and who, initially, seem to be coming from that PJ Harvey school of husky, dark-minded garage-pop, the guitars for the most part nimble and atmospheric, only occasionally getting all histrionic and overpowering the vocals when a more understated approach might have worked better. Thereafter it's a softer, more soulful trip: on 'Dumbstruck' Carrie comes on like a rocked-up Sade or kd lang, although 'Loser Now' finds them rocking back into punchier territory. They've got obvious commercial appeal, although you feel they need stronger songs to make better use of the vocals. Work on that and the stadium-sized grunge-pop fame and fortune they seem to be aiming for may yet be within their reach.

### MEET ME AT MIDNIGHT

Someone who phoned up while we were listening to this misheard us and thought the band was called Eat Me At Midnight, which would be a better band name really since this here is yer actual HEAVY METAL music, and heavy metal bands do indeed eat folks, especially if they're from Norway. This lot are from Kennington but one of the vocalists does sound like he might be a Norwegian cannibal troll, being as what he's all gnarly and gruff and bellows like an extremely vexed water buffalo over big, rolling thrash chords, nods offered to both Metallica and Iron Maiden along the way. The other singing chap is slightly incongruous, being as what he sounds uncannily like Jamie Stuart from Dive Dive, which in itself is no bad thing but doesn't quite sit right with the

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metalcore scheme of things. Still, minor criticism. Heavy metal, when done right is a big dumb simple pleasure – just thrash it out and then laugh and laugh as it squashes the ninnies and girlyboys with their satchels full of angst sandwiches.

## GILLESPIE

Gillespie is an Abingdon-based rapper who we've reviewed here before and here he offers up a mini-album's worth of rhymes with a collective title of 'The Drunk Soul Lover'. Over half an hour it can feel like being forced to sit and listen to someone detailing all their minor irritations in life while stuck beside them on a long bus ride. The main problem is that without exception each rap is pedestrian paced with an off the peg back-up that ranges from tinkling lounge jazz piano to smooth soul-lite. It's like he's never been exposed to any hip hop beyond The Streets (and by God aren't we all bored senseless by Mike Skinner by now?). But listen to the lyrics and sometimes Gillespie's got something to say, whether it's about homeless kids or male insecurity and he generally rhymes convincingly, with a smooth, languid flow. Then again, it's never nice to hear girls referred to as sluts and trollops or the details of teenage boys' sexual awakenings, never mind the more intimate details of someone's mother's nether regions. Anyway, having picked that to pieces – unlike a metal singer, a rapper rarely has a wall of sound to hide behind – a steer towards the political and away from the personal, avoiding his crasser lyrical side and some serious work on musical variety and Gillespie perhaps has the potential to make us want to listen a bit more closely in future.

## LAURA CRIGHTON

We knew we should have followed our gut instinct and chucked the rest of the pile in the bin since this demo is all the evidence anyone could need that the corporations have won and music's soul has been sucked out and replaced with a giant, carefully polished dollar sign. With her Disney High School girlie vocals and chugging FM rock guitars Laura Crighton aims to be nothing more or less than Hannah Montana, or perhaps Avril Lavigne's even less rebellious kid sister, and it makes us want to weep. Really. Weep tears of abject despair and defeat. We lost; the bad guys won. Music is dead. The Christian right has won. Disney has won. Now shut up and consume.

## TEASING G

Fronted by a woman with the sort of slightly bluesy soul voice you only seem to get in stage schools or TV talent shows where anything more leftfield than pure, unrefined vapidity gets shown the door, Teasing G come from that musical world where technical accomplishment is held in higher regard than real soul or imagination. And so they go about lulling us into a soporific torpor with muted, inconsequential songs that for all the world sound like discarded b-sides from any under-achieving *X-Factor* runner-up or major label tax loss act. There's soul-lite, jazz-lite, reggae-lite, even lite-lite, the singer, Giovanna, not sure if she wants to be Ms Dynamite or Billie Holiday but never in danger of being either. It's like listening to the musical equivalent of extra low fat mayonnaise. And like that noxious food stuff, hold it up to light and it quickly collapses into a watery puddle. Still, amongst the fascinating facts about the band members in the press pack we learn that the bassist once dyed her hair to match her instrument and that the drummer likes forests and mountains. Crazy people, crazy music.

## THE DEMO DUMPER

### BITUNE

Incredibly in this modern age of laser-guided warfare and electronic music there still seems to be plenty of room for overcooked, cocksure, histrionic soft rock of the sort that we really, really hoped we'd killed off sometime around 1985. Bitune are a bit like something that might have fallen out of Bon Jovi's backside during one particularly constipated toilet visit. The excitement just never ends on songs like 'After The Fire', which is so strained it might well be retitled 'Testicles In The Fire', while on 'Stay', some lucky lady is informed she lights the singer's fire and takes him higher. And being helpful sorts perhaps we too could take him higher. To the top of Carfax Tower maybe. And then give him a good, hard shove and cheer as he lands on the pavement below with a splat that would be far more satisfying than any sound on this risible, landfill-bothering dungheap of a demo. Bitune would doubtless describe their music as heroic. Herpes would be nearer the mark.

Send demos for review to: *Nightshift*, PO Box 312, Kidlington, Oxford, OX5 1ZU. Or email *MySpace* link to [nightshift@oxfordmusic.net](mailto:nightshift@oxfordmusic.net), clearly marked Demo for review.

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