

# THE CURE RETURN

"WHERE DID THAT OLD WORLD GO?"



*Magazine*

# M

**DIAMOND  
DOG! YOUNG  
AMERICAN!**

**DAVID  
BOWIE  
TRANSFORMS!**

**150  
REVIEWS**  
KIWANUKA, QUEEN  
SPRINGSTEEN  
THE BEATLES  
& MORE

**TOM  
PETTY**  
"THERE WAS  
A LOT OF  
CRUELTY"

**KIM DEAL**  
DIG THE NEW  
BREEDER

**THE CULT**  
"ON FIRE – LIKE  
A BURNING  
UNICORN!"

**EZRA  
COLLECTIVE**  
NEW GIANTS OF JAZZ

**SUPERTRAMP**  
CRIME LORDS

**THE SAINTS**  
PUNK'S CURSED  
PIONEERS

**SMALL FACES!  
FACES! THE WHO!  
AND KENNEY JONES**







Scan To Listen

# CARGO COLLECTIVE



## ROYAL TRUX UNTITLED (REMASTERED) FIRE RECORDS LP

Re-cementing Royal Trux as the progenitors of the lo-fi genre. A breakthrough eight-song opus from 1992. "Royal Trux were nothing if not fearless." Pitchfork. Also available "Hand Of Glory" on LP.



## ELLA RAPHAEL MAD SOMETIMES FIRE RECORDS LP / CD

A rich tapestry of love, longing and fleeting romance. Like The Shirelles fronted by folk icon Karen Dalton on the set of Blue Velvet. "A timeless, Tropicana-tinged day-dream" Gorilla Vs Bear



## GOSPEED YOU! BLACK EMPEROR

"NO TITLE AS OF 13 FEBRUARY 2024  
28,340 DEAD"

CONSTITUTION 2X180GLP / CD  
The post-rock titans return with a searing new double album of instrumental protest music.



## EMMA ANDERSON SPIRALÉE: PEARLIES REARRANGED SONIC CATHEDRAL LP / CD

Rearrangements of all ten tracks from the Lush co-founder's solo debut by Julia Holter, LoneLady, The Orielles, Daniel Hunt (Ladytron), deary, MEMORIALS, Maps, Lorelle Meets The Obsolete, Concretism & Masal.



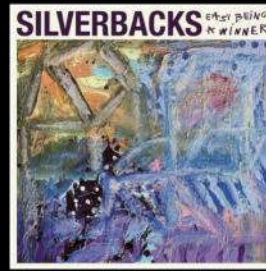
## WARMDUSCHER TOO COLD TO HOLD STRAP ORIGINALS LP / CD

TCTH sees the band stretch out, open up and produce their most dazzlingly album to date. Featuring guest appearances by Irvine Welsh, Janet Planet, Lianne La Havas, Jeshi & CouCou Chloe.



## CHAT PILE COOL WORLD FLENSER LP / CD

Chat Pile's highly anticipated sophomore album "Cool World" delves into global disasters with a unique blend of noise rock, goth, and alt/indie, exploring modern violence through apocalyptic soundscapes.



## SILVERBACKS EASY BEING A WINNER CENTRAL TONES LP / CD

3rd album from Irish indie-rockers. Artful, melodic and razor sharp as usual, this will be a treat for fans of a more slack vein of '90s US rock.



## LONE JUSTICE VIVA LONE JUSTICE AFAR LP / CD

Their first release in almost four decades from the inventors of alt-country. Featuring Maria McKee and the original line up. "I have loved Lone Justice since they started out" Dolly Parton.



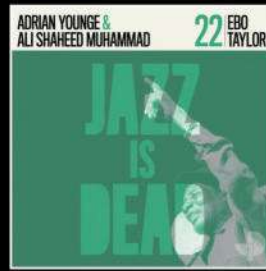
## ANDREW GABBARD RAMBLE & RAVE ON! KARMA CHIEF LP / CD

You'll find Andrew Gabbard (touring & studio musician of The Black Keys) in his creative prime on this power-rock-pop astral road trip aptly titled 'Ramble & Rave On!'



## KELLY FINNIGAN A LOVER WAS BORN COLEMINE RECORDS LP / CD

Quintessential soul music from Monophonics front man Kelly Finnigan. 'A Lover Was Born' roots itself in the best traditions of midwest soul and is a testament to love, hope, and longing.



## EBO TAYLOR, ADRIAN YOUNG, ALI SHAHEED MUHAMMAD EBO TAYLOR JID022 JAZZ IS DEAD LP / CD

The Ghanaian highlife and afrobeat pioneer Ebo Taylor returns with a brand new album recorded with, and released on, Adrian Young's incredible label, Jazz is Dead.



## JENNIFER CASTLE CAMELOT

PARADISE OF BACHELORS LP / CD  
Jennifer Castle's Camelot distills everyday experience into art and art into faith, subliming terrestrial concerns into sublime celestial prayers to Mother Nature, and to perfecting imperfection in one's own nature.



## NAKED ROOMMATE PASS THE LOOFAH TROUBLE IN MIND LP / CD

Naked Roommate's second album retains the wild energy of their debut, but leans into the rhythmic throbs of 80s NYC, but with a decidedly West Coast irreverence & a knack for absurdist exposition.

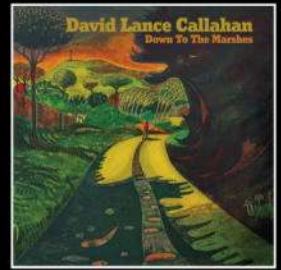


## HOMER ENSATINA BIG CROWN RECORDS LP / CD

Debut solo album from world renown drummer Homer Steinweiss featuring guest appearances by KIRBY, Hether, MINOVA, and more.



KEELEY  
BEAUTIFUL MYSTERIOUS  
TINY GLOBAL PRODUCTIONS LP / CD  
Acclaimed dream-rockers KEELEY's brilliant second album. This set further illustrates a knack for condensing decades of influences into a heady brew of contemporary songcraft. Features the BBC hit, "Trans-Europe 18".



## DAVID LANCE CALLAHAN DOWN TO THE MARSHES TINY GLOBAL PRODUCTIONS LP / CD

From The Wolfhounds to Moonshake, Callahan has been at the forefront of avant-alternative for nearly forty years. "Down To The Marshes" is a work of musical and lyrical magnificence.

AN AMALGAMATION OF RECORD SHOPS AND LABELS DEDICATED TO BRINGING YOU NEW MUSIC  
IRELAND: DUBLIN - SPINDRIZZY / KILKENNY - ROLLER COASTER SCOTLAND: DUNDEE - ASSAI / EDINBURGH - ASSAI / EDINBURGH - THORNE RECORDS / GLASGOW - ASSAI / GLASGOW - LOVE MUSIC / GLASGOW - MONORAIL WALES: ABERYSTWYTH - ANDY'S RECORDS / CARDIFF - SPILLERS / NEWPORT - DIVERSE / SWANSEA - DERRICKS NORTH-WEST LIVERPOOL - 81 RENSRAW LTD / LIVERPOOL - PROBE / LIVERPOOL - ROUGH TRADE / MANCHESTER - PICCADILLY RECORDS / MANTWICH - APPLESTUMP RECORDS LTD / PRESTON - ACTION RECORDS NORTH-EAST: BINGLEY - FIVE RISE / HARROGATE - P & C MUSIC / HEADINGLEY - VINYL WHISTLE / HUDDERSFIELD - VINYL TAP / LEEDS - CRASH LEEDS - JUMBO RECORDS / NEWCASTLE - JCS WINDOWS / NEWCASTLE - BEATDOWN / NEWCASTLE - REFLEX / SHEFFIELD - BEAR TRIC / SHEFFIELD - RECORD COLLECTOR / SHEFFIELD - SPINNING DISCS MIDLANDS: CAMBRIDGE - LOST IN VINYL / CAMBRIDGE - RELEVANT / COVENTRY - JUST DROPPED IN / LEAMINGTON SPA - SEISMIC / LEIGHTON BUZZARD - BLACK CIRCLE / LETCHWORTH - DAVID'S MUSIC / LOUTH - OFF THE BEATEN TRACK / NOTTINGHAM - ROUGH TRADE / OXFORD - TRUCK STORE / OXON - STRUMMER ROOM RECORDS / WITNEY - WITNEY TRUCK SOUTH: BEXHILL ON SEA - MUSIC'S NOT DEAD / BLANDFORD FORUM - REVOLUTION ROCKS / BRIGHTON - RESIDENT / BURY ST.EDMUNDS - VINYL HUNTER / GODALMING - RECORD CORNER / LEIGH-ON-SEA - FIVES / LONDON - BANQUET GRAVITY / LONDON - CASBAH / LONDON - FLASHBACK / LONDON - ROUGH TRADE EAST / LONDON - ROUGH TRADE TALBOT RD / LONDON - SISTER RAY / LONDON - STRANGER THAN PARADISE RECORDS / LUTON - VINYL REVELATIONS / NORWICH - SOUNDCLASH / NORWICH / VENUS VINYL / ROMSEY - HUNDRED / SOUTHSEA - PIE & VINYL / SOUTHWEND ON SEA - SOUTH RECORDS / ST ALBANS - EMPIRE RECORDS / ST LEONARDS - TOUGH LOVE ST LEONARDS / WATFORD - PARADE VIBES / WIMBORNE - SQUARE RECORDS / WHITSTABLE - GATFIELD SOUNDS / WINCHESTER - ELEPHANT RECORDS SOUTH WEST BRISTOL - ROUGH TRADE / CHELTENHAM - BADLANDS / FALMOUTH - JAM FROME - WAVES FROM THE GRAVE / MARLBOROUGH - SOUND KNOWLEDGE / TOTNES - DRIFT MAILORDER AND INTERNET ONLY STORES: BLEEP.COM / BOOMKAT.COM / JUNO / NORMANRECORDS.COM / PEBBLE RECORDS.CO.UK / RECORDSTORE.CO.UK

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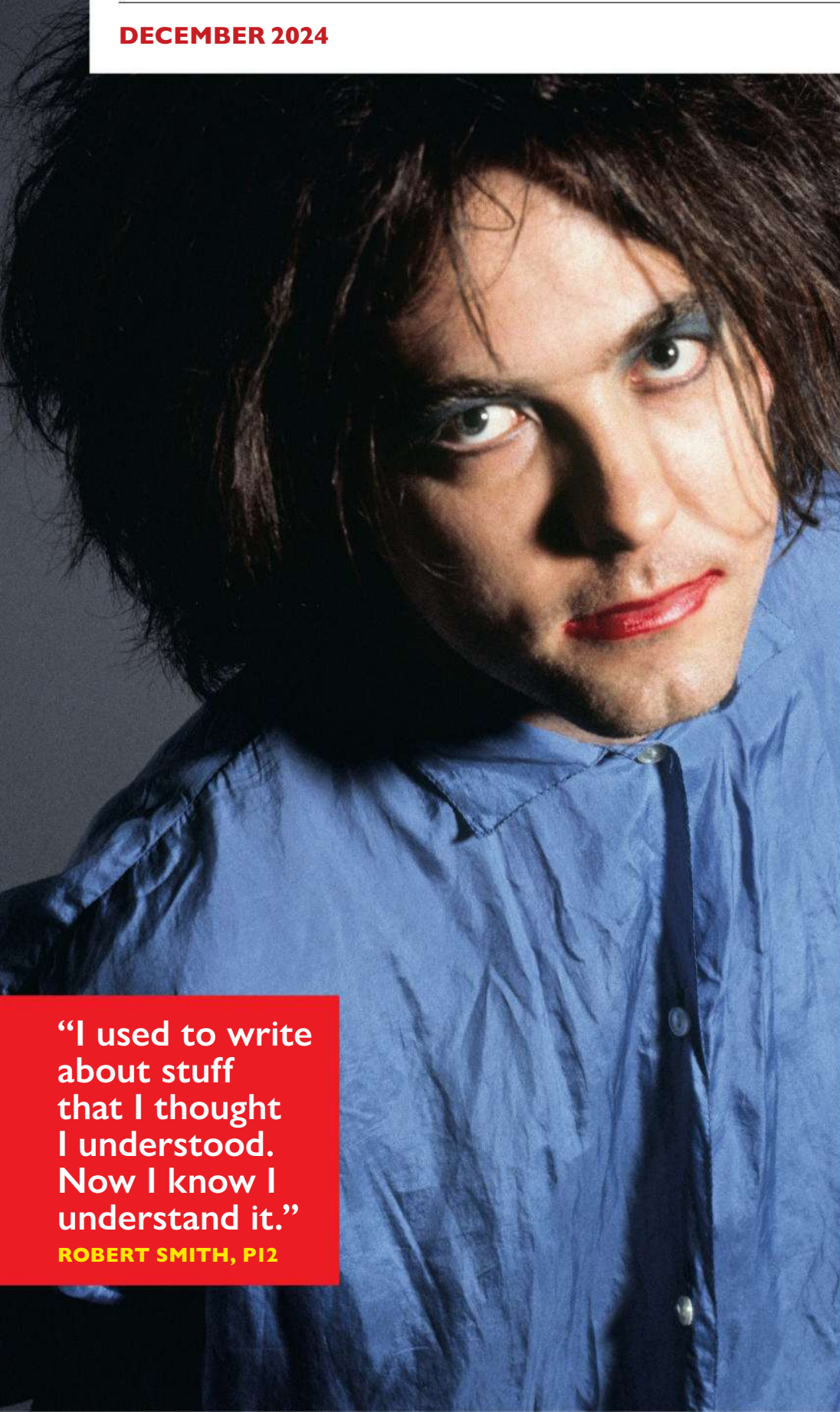


# CONTENTS

LONDON ♦ MEMPHIS ♦ CRAWLEY

DECEMBER 2024

ISSUE 373



“I used to write about stuff that I thought I understood. Now I know I understand it.”

ROBERT SMITH, P12

## FEATURES

### 32 KENNEY JONES

A wise head in Small Faces, Faces and The Who, the polo-playing percussionist looks back. Cue high jinks, sad losses and pissing on a future king's shoes.

**38 THE SAINTS** It crawled from the South(ern hemisphere), a splenetic premonition of punk. Their classic line-up was short-fused but the records and legacy cast long shadows.

**44 SUPERTRAMP** How a yin-and-yang songwriting team from each end of England morphed prog with pop and pulled off the *Crime Of The Century*. Fifty years on, the guilty step forward.

**50 EZRA COLLECTIVE** Taking UK jazz to the next level, the Mercury Prize-winning, Wembley Arena-filling quintet who integrate Afrobeat and dub and get chin-strokers shaking a leg.

**54 TOM PETTY** A reissue of *Long After Dark* and an unearthed doc by Cameron Crowe throw light on Petty's struggles with fame. Heartbreakers and indie-rock acolytes weigh in.

**62 THE CULT** The post-punks turned goth popinjays turned fringe-jacketed monsters of rock relive the transformations that brought a Stateside breakthrough, but at what cost?

## COVER STORY

**70 DAVID BOWIE** It's 1974 and the Dame is moving at speed, chewing through glam rock and George Orwell, Gouster suits and Philly soul. The major players – Earl, Ava, Carlos, Angie and more – revisit a year of creativity, conflict and *mounds* of cocaine.

Tom Sheehan



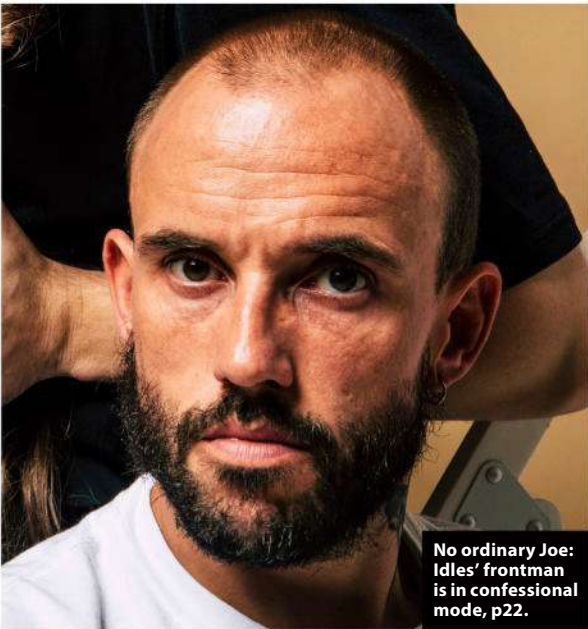
Marginal gains:  
Michael Kiwanuka  
makes *Small Changes*,  
Filter Albums, p86.



**LIVE DRUGS AGAIN**

**SOMETHING NEW THE BEATLES**

THINGS WE SAID TODAY  
ANY TIME AT ALL  
WHEELS ON FIRE  
SUN SHINE  
LET IT BE  
NIGHT TIME  
HONEY DO  
I'M HAPPY AND TO RANCE WITH YOU  
IF I FEEL



**No ordinary Joe:**  
Idles' frontman  
is in confessional  
mode, p22.



**Deal or no Deal?:**  
Breeders' Kim  
takes flight, Lead  
Album, p82.

# MOJO

## REGULARS

- 9 ALL BACK TO MY PLACE** Arooj Aftab, Peter Capaldi and P.P. Arnold share songs for every occasion.
- 114 REAL GONE** Herbie Flowers, Sergio Mendes, Tito Jackson, JD Souther, Roli Mosimann and others, farewell.
- 120 ASK MOJO** Who came on stage on a motorbike/horse/flying saucer/other?
- 122 HELLO GOODBYE** It was the band he always wanted to be in. Then he was. And then he wasn't. Jakko Jakzsyk reflects on his time in – and the end of – King Crimson.

## WHAT GOES ON!

- 12 THE CURE** A 16-year wait for a new LP is over: *Songs Of A Lost World* is coming next month. But what is it, why did it take so long, and is it a full-stop to the story that began in Crawley almost 50 years ago, or a new beginning?
- 20 MANIC STREET PREACHERS** The Manics have another LP in preparation. But what's driving them this time, and what do Dalis Car have to do with it? James Dean Bradfield reveals all.
- 22 JOE TALBOT** Idles' frontman talks Banksy, the upsides of AI and making the audience feel things. Just don't try and make him name the people he wants to piss off.
- 23 PYE RECORDS** The bedrock label of old record buying was put out of its misery in 1980. Now, one man has brought it back, groovy logo and all. Read on for the full story.
- 24 REDD KROSS** The powerpop-punk lifers reflect on 45 years of rock. "We weren't concerned about getting taken seriously," they note.

## MOJO FILTER

- 82 NEW ALBUMS** Breeder Kim Deal spreads the love, plus Michael Kiwanuka, Primal Scream, Soccer Mommy and more.
- 96 REISSUES** Queen's debut repackaged, plus Bryan Ferry, The Beatles and Thin Lizzy.
- 110 BOOKS** An oral biography of the MC5, plus Vivien Goldman collected, the Thunderclap Newman story and more.
- 112 SCREEN** On the road with Bruce Springsteen, written/produced by The Boss.

MOJO ISSN 1351-0193 (USPS 17424) is published 12 times a year by H Bauer Publishing Ltd, Media House, Peterborough Business Park, Lynch Wood, Peterborough PE2 6EA United Kingdom. Airfreight and mailing in the USA by agent named World Container INC 150-15, 183rd St, Jamaica, NY 11413, USA. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, NY 11256. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to MOJO, Air Business Ltd, c/o World Container INC 150-15, 183rd St, Jamaica, NY 11413, USA. Subscription records are maintained at Bauer Media, Subscriptions, CDS Global, Tower House, Sovereign Park, Lathkill Street, Market Harborough, Leicester LE16 9EF, United Kingdom. Air Business Ltd is acting as our mailing agent.

## THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS INCLUDE...



**Pat Gilbert**  
A MOJO veteran of 28 years, Pat recounts The Cult's bonkers conquest of America in the late '80s on page 62 and reviews Amyl And The Sniffers' new album on page 88. By day, he edits MOJO's Special Editions, and talks rare vinyl every Sunday afternoon on Simon Mayo's Greatest Hits Radio show.



**Phil Alexander**  
Our Contributing Editor delivers a story about a band that he first saw with his mum and dad at Earl's Court back in the summer of '83. Since then, Supertramp's *Crime Of The Century* album has left an, er, indelible stamp on him and he revisits the making of that '70s masterpiece on page 44.



**Sarah Sumeray**  
Sarah is an artist based in London specialising in retro comic-inspired art and pop culture reimagined as vintage cartoons. Her work has been featured in galleries both in the UK and abroad and clients include The Cure, Jack White, The Smashing Pumpkins, Wheatus, Live Nation and the BFI.

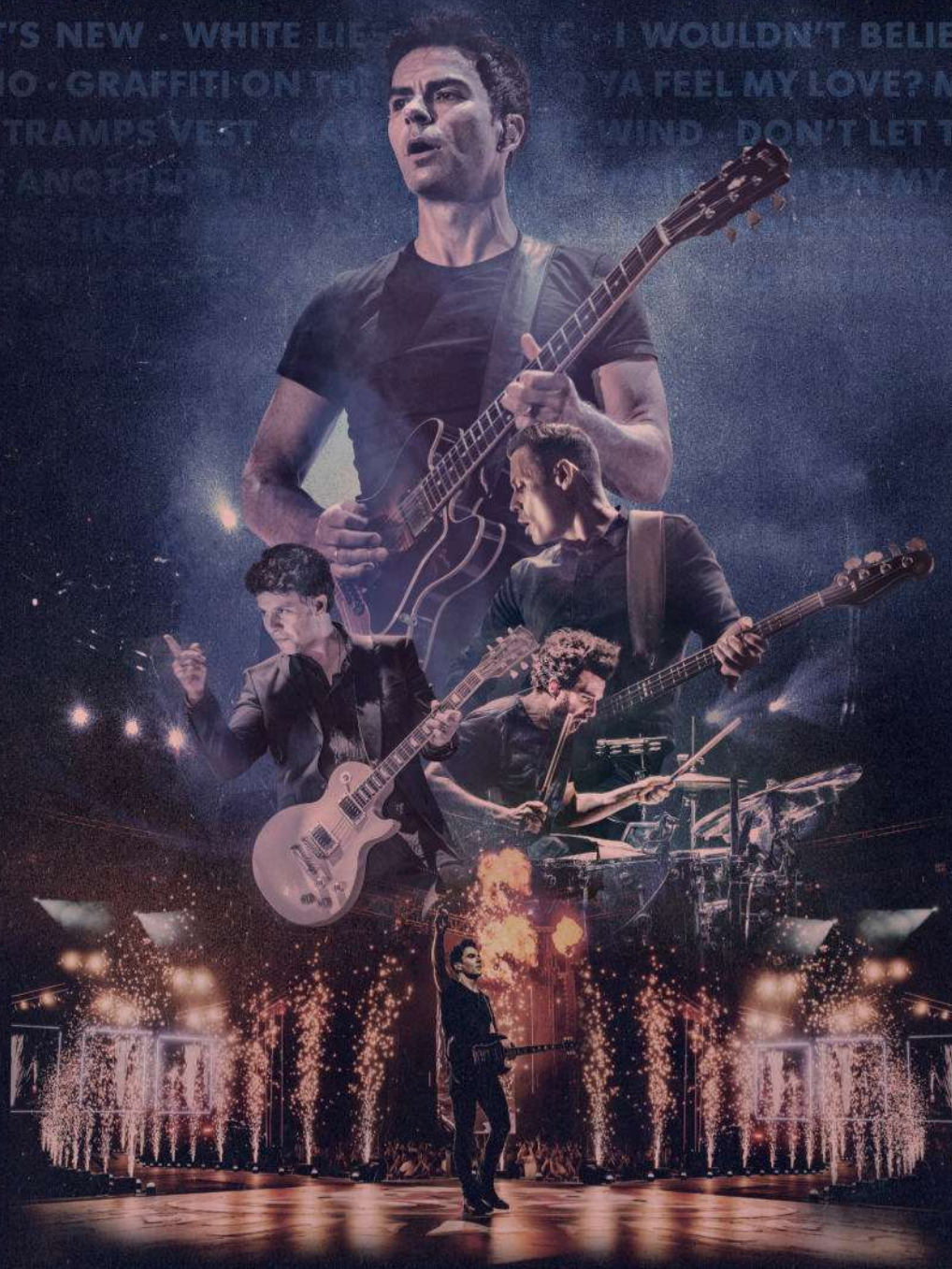
Sarah Sumeray, tomhamphoto.com



# STEREOPHONICS

## STADIUM ANTHEMS

S U M M E R ' 2 5



NEW STUDIO ALBUM 2025

THURSDAY 05 JUNE  
**BELFAST BELSONIC**

FRIDAY 06 JUNE  
**DUBLIN ST. ANNE'S PARK**

SATURDAY 07 JUNE  
**CORK**  
**VIRGIN MEDIA PARK**

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**HUDDERSFIELD**  
**THE JOHN SMITH'S**  
**STADIUM**

SATURDAY 28 JUNE  
**GLASGOW**  
**BELLAHOUSTON PARK**  
[SMIRSESSIONS.COM](http://SMIRSESSIONS.COM)

FRIDAY 04 JULY  
**LONDON**  
**FINSBURY PARK**

SATURDAY 12 JULY  
**CARDIFF**  
**PRINCIPALITY**  
**STADIUM**

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### NO HIT LEFT BEHIND

AN SJM CONCERTS, FESTIVAL REPUBLIC, KILIMANJARO, MCD & DF CONCERTS PRESENTATION BY ARRANGEMENT WITH X-RAY



# FUTURE LEGENDS

## 15 TRACKS OF DYSTOPIAN SCI-FI ROCK

FATHER JOHN MISTY  
ST. VINCENT, HAWKWIND  
THE FLAMING LIPS, THE  
IGGY POP/JAMES WILLIAMSON  
JOHN FOXF & MORE

MOJO



### 1 ST. VINCENT FEAR THE FUTURE

"When the Earth split in two..." A suitably catastrophic start to *Future Legends*, with a machine-tooled rendering of existential dread from the fifth St. Vincent album, 2017's *Masseduction*. Like Bowie, Annie Clark has long been a connoisseur of impending doom, beginning with *The Apocalypse Song* on her 2007 debut, *Marry Me*.

Written by Clark. Published by Nail Polish Manifesto Music (ASCAP). Administered by Hipgnosis Music Publishing and ©&©2017 Loma Vista Recordings. From *Masseduction* (Loma Vista) – ISRC USC4R1702211



### 2 THE FLAMING LIPS RIDING TO WORK IN THE YEAR 2025 (YOUR INVISIBLE NOW)

A phantasmagoric glimpse of what the daily commute might look like next year – as envisaged by Wayne Coyne in 1997. Originally on the Lips' *Zaireeka* LP, where four CDs had to be played simultaneously to hear tracks in their complex entirety.

Written by Michael Ivins, Steven Drozd, Wayne Coyne. Publisher by EMI Blackwood Music, INC, BMI, Lovely Sorts Of Death (BMI), 1997 WEA International Inc. Licensed courtesy of Warner Music UK Ltd, ISRC USWB12004718



### 3 THE THE COGNITIVE DISSIDENT

If Matt Johnson has been mapping out dystopias for some four decades, 2024's *The The* comeback, *Ensoulment*, found him elucidating how so many of those predictions had come true. Note how *Cognitive Dissident* takes some of its cues from Orwell's doublethink concept: "War is peace – West is East."

Composed by Matt Johnson and Barrie Cadogan. Published by Lazarus/Kobalt Music Group – Bucks Music Group. From *Ensoulment*. ©&©2024 Cineola Limited under exclusive license to earMUSIC, a label of Edel Music & Entertainment GmbH. ISRC – GB8KY2400015



### 4 JOAN AS POLICE WOMAN SWEET THING

Bowie originally conceptualised *Diamond Dogs* as a Broadway musical, but Joan Wasser's sinewy take on *Sweet Thing* relocates the action to a more claustrophobic New York. "When I was 11 I dressed up as David Bowie for Halloween," she told davidbowie.com in 2006. "Come to think of it, I may still be dressing up as him today!"

From the EP *Joan As Police Woman* (Reveal Records, 2005) - Written by David Bowie (Warner Chappell Music) ISRC - GB - LDH - 05 - 00002



### 9 FATHER JOHN MISTY THINGS IT WOULD HAVE BEEN HELPFUL TO KNOW BEFORE THE REVOLUTION (THE HAXAN CLOAK REMIX)

On the third FJM LP, 2017's *Pure Comedy*, the meticulously detailed horror show of *Things...* sounded like a lavish Elton showstopper. On this remix by Yorkshire electronic producer The Haxan Cloak, however, the song's dystopian potential is ramped right up with illbient noise and avant effects.

©2017 Bella Union Records, under exclusive license to [PIAS]. Kobalt Music Publishing



### 10 THOMAS DOLBY WHITE CITY

The late '70s and early '80s brought a new generation of bright Bowie acolytes into the pop mainstream, few brighter than Thomas Dolby. The gleaming electrofunk of *White City* comes from his second solo album, 1984's *The Flat Earth*, a document of drug paranoia where protagonist Keith sought to "hide from young Orwellians".

Written by Thomas Robertson. Scale Music And Sound Hits Ltd. ©1984 The Echo Label Limited, a BMG company trading as Echo. Licensed courtesy of BMG Rights Management (UK) Ltd. ISRC: GBAYE8400139



### 11 JOHN FOXF PLAZA

John Foxx was a few years ahead of Thomas Dolby, initially as a founder member of Ultravox. On his first solo album, 1980's *Metamatic*, he leaned harder still into electronic futurism, so that the machine beats and spectral synths of *Plaza* soundtrack a tale of everyday urban alienation, Foxx blankly describing a germ-free, emotion-free new world where "behind all the smoked glass no-one sees you".

Written by John Foxx. Published by Universal Music Publishing. ©&©Metamatic Records 1980



### 12 JOHN VANDERSLICE BE ELUSIVE, BUT DON'T WALK FAR

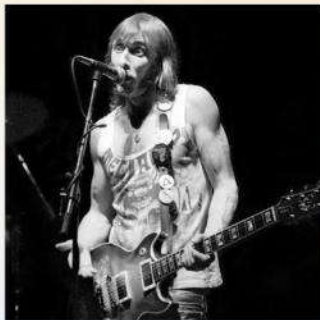
The title might not be immediately familiar, but the song will be – a renamed version of *We Are The Dead*. A longtime indie artist, producer and associate of Sufjan Stevens, St. Vincent, Spoon and The Mountain Goats, Vanderslice covered *Diamond Dogs*, brilliantly, in its entirety in 2013.

Published by transcendental brats (2014). Administered by Tiny Telephone (2014). From *John Vanderslice Plays Diamond Dogs* Tiny Telephone Records ISRC QM6N21589931



**W**HEN DAVID BOWIE SAT DOWN WITH MOJO IN 2002, he described *Diamond Dogs* as encapsulating, "My usual basket of apocalyptic vision, isolation, being terribly miserable." Paul Du Noyer, the interviewer and MOJO's founding editor, pressed the self-deprecating Bowie on a certain strain of apocalyptic visions that had recurred throughout his work. "Dystopian, absolutely," he smirked. "I went to the doctor's for it."

As in so many ways, Bowie was both a trailblazer and a product of his times. Nuclear dread, urban alienation, chemically-induced anomie and a strong reading list all fed into his work; preoccupations shared by many of his contemporaries and descendants. This, then, is the blasted megalopolis inhabited by our latest MOJO CD, *Future Legends*, a musical interzone where art-rock, glam, prog and futurism meet and mutate. Where the dogs decay, the synths hum and samizdat copies of Nineteen Eighty-Four, *A Clockwork Orange* and J.G. Ballard paper the streets. And where it's not always easy to tell whether dystopia is the stuff of sci-fi nightmares – or an uncomfortable reality.



### 5 HAWKWIND HIGH RISE

The Brit-psych overlords in distinctly Bowie-ish form here, from 1979's *PXR5*. The churchy glam grandeur of *High Rise* paints a bleak picture of multi-storey dysfunction, inspired by J.G. Ballard's 1975 novel of the same name. Simon House, keyboardist/violinist and co-writer of *High Rise*, left shortly after the 1978 recording to join Bowie's band for the *Isolar II* tour.

Written by House, Calvert. BMG Rights Management (UK) Ltd. ©1979, 2008 Cherry Red Records Ltd. GBBLY0802722. Licensed courtesy of Cherry Red Records Ltd



### 6 IGGY POP & JAMES WILLIAMSON KILL CITY

A fried dispatch from the edgelands, "where the debris meets the sea", captured by Pop in 1975 on weekend release from psychiatric hospital. The *Kill City* album was recorded as demos, in between the Bowie-produced final Stooges album (*Raw Power*, 1973) and his first formal solo albums, *The Idiot* and *Lust For Life*, also produced by Bowie.

Written by Iggy Pop & James Williamson. Published by Bug Music. Taken *Kill City*. ©1977/2010 Bomp! Records. ISRC USA2B1009901



### 7 KING GIZZARD & THE LIZARD WIZARD MARS FOR THE RICH

Aussie heads King Gizzard & The Lizard Wizard have released a mere 26 albums in the last 12 years, most recently this year's *Flight b741*. The full-bore Motörhead throb of *Mars For The Rich*, however, comes from 2019's *Infest The Rats' Nest*, a heavy metal sci-fi concept album about – what else? – eco-disaster.

Produced by Stu MacKenzie. Written by Michael Cavanagh, Joey Walker and Stu MacKenzie. ISRC code - AUTZK1900038



### 8 CAMPAG VELOCET DRENCOM VELOCET SYNTHEMESC

The London band's compelling mix of PiL, spacerock and Happy Mondays caused a brief sensation at the end of the '90s, when they appeared on the NME cover and headlined a tour over Coldplay. Singing in the Nadsat language of *A Clockwork Orange* perhaps wasn't a recipe for long-term success, but this 1997 single still reverberates with cosmic menace.

Written by Pete Voss. From *Bon Chic Bon Genre* (1999), PIAS Recordings (PIASXLP003)



### 13 BONNIE DOBSON MORNING DEW

The apparent bucolic beauty of this folk standard is, of course, deceptive. *Morning Dew* navigates the fallout in a post-nuclear wasteland and asks, desolately, "Where have all the people gone?" Tim Rose and The Grateful Dead's versions might be better known, but here's the strikingly stark original, written in 1961 and recorded a year later by the Canadian singer Bonnie Dobson at Gerde's Folk City in New York.

Written by Bonnie Dobson. Essex Music. Originally released in 1962 on *Live At Folk City*



### 14 BEAUTIFY JUNKYARDS RADIOACTIVITY

Ready for another unnervingly pretty song about nuclear holocaust? Kraftwerk's futurism is generally more utopian than dystopian, but their 1975 lullaby to *Radioactivity* is the exception to the rule – rendered with delicate grace here by the Portuguese acid-folkers and sometime Paul Weller associates Beautify Junkyards.

Composed by Florian Schneider, Ralf Hütter and Emil Schult. ©1975, 2009 Capitol Records, LLC. All rights reserved. © 2009 Ralf Hutter/Kraftwerk



### 15 DAVID J THE PRESENT

In 1984, Bauhaus bassist David J released a grinding industrial soundtrack to Alan Moore's graphic novel, *V For Vendetta*, from which *The Present* comes. It's left to Moore here to nail the reality of dystopian art. "As with most of the future worlds in science fiction, you're not talking about the future," he says, "you're talking about the present."

David J/Tim Newman (Featuring Alan Moore). From the EP *V For Vendetta*: Grande Edition (Glass Modern) 2019 Publisher: Urbane Music (BMI)

**"WITH THE DRUGS... HE'D SIT DOWN AND READ 15 BOOKS AT A TIME."**

**BOWIE**  
**1974**  
**STARTS PAGE 70**





**PETER PERRETT**  
**“THE CLEANSING”**

**THE NEW ALBUM**

featuring **BOBBY GILLESPIE**  
**CARLOS O'CONNELL**  
**JOHNNY MARR**  
**& MANY MORE**

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- Thursday 13th King Tuts Wah Wah Hut Glasgow
- Saturday 15th Trades Club Hebden Bridge
- Sunday 16th Rescue Rooms Nottingham
- Tuesday 18th The Fleece Bristol
- Wednesday 19th Islington Assembly Hall London



One  
 True  
 Pairing  
 Endless  
 Rain

**ENDLESS RAIN**  
**THE NEW ALBUM**  
**OUT 25th OCTOBER**

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 ★★★★★ MOJO

One True Pairing Live: Sat 16th November 2024 - Purcell Room (Southbank Centre), London





# Arooj Aftab

BROOKLYN BOUNDARY CROSSER

**What music are you currently grooving to?**

Well, I'm currently in the thick of a tour, which is basically an arduous tromp from airport to airport, hotel room to hotel room... so the *Fountain Baby* album by **Amaarae** is on significant rotation and makes everything in my head way swaggy and fun.

**What, if push comes to shove, is your all-time favourite album?**

There are so many perfect LPs by the likes of **OutKast**, **George Michael**, **Sade**, **Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan**, **esperanza spalding**, **Jill Scott**, **Meshell Ndegeocello**. But one that I super love is **Dimi Mint Abba's Moorish Music From Mauritania**. I put it on very infrequently but when I do, it delivers from top to bottom.

**What was the first record you ever bought? And where did you buy it?**

Totally insane, but it was **Ace Of Base's The Sign**. I got it at the Al-Akaria mall when I lived in Riyadh.

**Which musician, other than yourself, have you ever wanted to be?**

**Michael Jackson** all the way, baby!

**What do you sing in the shower?**

I don't, but lately there's a riff from my friend **Madison McFerrin's** song *God Herself* where she goes "you gon' see me and believe." It is so ridiculous and good so I just belt that out.

**What is your favourite Saturday night record?**

I tend to not control the music choices on Saturday. I'm extremely social so on the weekend you'll find me in the company of friends, chilling and partying to whatever they put on, such as **Sade**, **Wizkid**, **Bally Sagoo**, **Thundercat**... it's a fun time.

**And your Sunday morning record?**

*The Dreaming Room* by **Laura Mvula** and *Older* by **George Michael**.

*Arooj Aftab co-curates and plays Le Guess Who? festival in Utrecht on November 10. See [leguesswho.com](http://leguesswho.com)*

# ALL BACK TO MY PLACE

THE STARS REVEAL THE SONIC DELIGHTS GUARANTEED TO GET THEM GOING...

## Peter Capaldi

TIMELORD, SPIN DOCTOR, CROONER

**What music are you currently grooving to?**

I don't know whether grooving's a word I'd apply to myself, but listening intently and haunted by **Alison Moyet's** *Such Small Ale*, **Lisa O'Neill's** *Old Note* and **Bill Fay's** *Time Of The Last Persecution*. I don't quite understand them, but they have something at their core that's powerful.

**What, if push comes to shove, is your all-time favourite album?**

*Diamond Dogs* is sort of fundamental to me. This dramatic, doomy kind of sleazy mystery and rocking sound

is right up my crack of doom.

**What was the first record you ever bought? And where did you buy it?**

**Slade's** *Mama Weer All Crazee Now* from Woolworths, in 1972 when I was 14.

**Which musician, other than yourself, have you ever wanted to be?**

I'm stuck with who I am, but I'm very taken with anybody that can make music. I just want to be anyone that's gifted.

**What do you sing in the shower?**

That's *Life*, by **Frank Sinatra**, which is a more fun precursor to *My Way*. Growing up in Glasgow in the '70s, there was a lot of Frank.

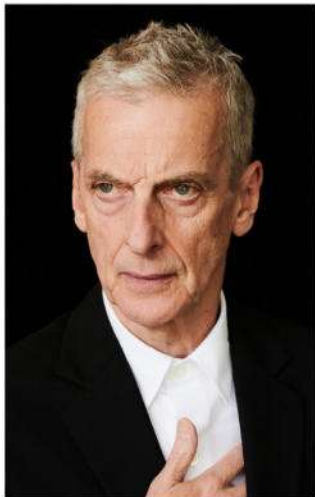
**What is your favourite Saturday night record?**

In the West of Scotland, being melancholy is part of having a good time. So I'd have **The Rolling Stones' Jumpin' Jack Flash** and **Gimme Shelter** - a bit of malevolence creeping in there. Then **Oasis's** *Some Might Say* - I love **Oasis** - and **Anarchy In The UK**, balanced with **Suspicious Minds** by **Elvis and Sister Rosetta Tharpe's** *I Heard My Mother Call My Name*. And the big, sad, end of night song would be **Tom Waits** singing *Somewhere*. Everyone could join in.

**And your Sunday morning record?**

*The Mission* soundtrack by **Ennio Morricone**. **Gabriel's** *Oboe* is deeply moving and spiritual. I got to meet **Morricone** once. I don't have many selfies, but I got one with him.

*Peter Capaldi's Bin Night is out now. New album Sweet Illusions is released in March 2025.*



## P.P. Arnold

LONDON'S FIRST LADY OF SOUL

**What music are you currently grooving to?**

To be honest, my own songs, because I'm preparing for a tour. And I have been listening to **Paul Weller's** *66* recently, that's really good. He's a great songwriter and I like the way he just keeps it moving. I always have respect for different times but I'm not going to lie and say that I'm all up on everything that's happening today, because I'm old school, you know?

**What, if push comes to shove, is your all-time favourite album?**

I have so many, but I'll always put **Marvin Gaye's** *What's Going On* in the mix. I love that record, it's still so relevant and important, spiritually and politically.

**What was the first record you ever bought? And where did you buy it?**

*My Guy* by **Mary Wells**. I grew up in South Central Los Angeles, and our record store was on Main Street.

**Which musician, other than yourself, have you ever wanted to be?**

I've always found that I can be myself better than I can be anybody



else, so I kind of like being myself. I wouldn't mind realising my professional aspirations, after surviving all the challenges, like **Tina Turner**, because I'm still out here doing what I'm doing.

**What do you sing in the shower?**

I like taking relaxing baths. I tend to do my affirmations, just like meditating and just trying to focus, right?

**What is your favourite Saturday night record?**

I'm gonna go back to **Marvin Gaye's** *Got To Give It Up*. That's a groove, that's a Saturday night on the dancefloor. I'm not out there partying and grooving any more though, I've done that.

**And your Sunday morning record?**

**Miles Davis, In A Silent Way**. It takes me back to when I lived in the Cotswolds and looking out on the fields. It's just a nice meditative thing, you know?

*P.P. Arnold's Live In Liverpool is out this month on Ear Music. For gigs see [pparnold.com](http://pparnold.com)*

"I'm old school, you know?"

P.P. ARNOLD

Amy Sussman/Getty Images, Ray Burmiston, Gered Mankowitz



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# Theories, rants, etc.

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**WE REJOIN DAVID BOWIE IN 1974, IN A CITY** on the cusp of musical revolutions. Bowie had moved to New York in April, the same month Television played their first gig at a newish club on the Bowery called CBGB. By August the Ramones, an even fresher and more ramshackle phenomenon, had debuted there too (hopefully you read the full story of that one in MOJO 372).

For now, though, Bowie's voracious taste detectors were focused elsewhere. If his 1970s often seem a relentless and brilliant series of reinventions, 1974 can appear that decade's most radical year. But as Mark Paytress illustrates in his MOJO cover story this month, Bowie was constantly evolving as much he was completely transforming. R&B had subtly informed *Diamond Dogs*, and within days of arriving in New York, Bowie was out seeing The Temptations and The Detroit Spinners – a soul boy reincarnate, an adopted Young American. Disco was also entering the conversation, the emerging soundtrack at New York nightclubs a little less scuzzy than CBGB. Note mention in Mark's feature of one Broadway hotspot called the Hippopotamus Club, where Bowie met Nina Simone. A basement themed like a safari lodge, apparently, but can anyone confirm one outlandish story on the internet: that the dancefloor was a gigantic fibreglass hippo, suspended from the ceiling?



JOHN MULVEY, EDITOR

## The reality is infinitely more subtle

Amazing Dylan articles in MOJO 371. I'm a Dylanophile who's read dozens of Bob books. Every time I think the story's been told, another writer like Grayson Haver Currin or John Mulvey opens a new door for us to understand Dylan's art and personality. The Mercury Rising! article is particularly illuminating as a roadmap of the twists and turns of Dylan's relationship with the Hawks/Band. Truly adroit and insightful writing by Mulvey, noting the way Dylan would float in and out of The Band's circle (once they became The Band), gently moving away from them in the studio from '74 onwards. If Mulvey were to write a whole book about the Dylan/Band relationship, I'd love to read it.

One addition to the list of Bob/Band recorded collaborations. On the reissue of 1972's *Rock Of Ages* live LP by The Band, Capitol included four songs Dylan played with them in New York on New Year's Eve 1971 – Down In The Flood, When I Paint My Masterpiece, Don't Ya Tell Henry (one of the only officially-released versions with Dylan and The Band

of a song from Big Pink), and Like A Rolling Stone. One assumes Bob only played those four songs with them then went off-stage?

Noel Mayeske, College Park, Georgia

## These are our people

Great to see the interview with peerless producer, author and record label boss Joe Boyd [MOJO 370]. His influence on the music business since the 1960s is staggering. Among his many achievements was to produce the first Kate & Anna McGarrigle album, one of the most acclaimed records of 1976. Just a thought: as we're approaching the 50th anniversary of the release of this masterpiece, how about a feature on Kate and Anna's extraordinary career and legacy, and their refusal to bow to the demands of the music industry? PS: Loved the sheer diversity of MOJO 371's CD – Little Feat, Marcia Griffiths, Harmonia and Arthur Russell! Keep them coming.

Steve Forshaw, Whitley Bay

...Your *Forever Young: The Best Of 1974* CD was absolutely outstanding! To feature my favourite song



(The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face), my three favourite drummers (Bill Bruford, Tony Allen and Levon Helm), my favourite guitarist (Robert Fripp), my favourite singer (Robert Wyatt), my favourite band (The Band), and favourite African musician (Fela Kuti) all on one CD, with every track a stunner – quite an achievement!

*Chris Lee, Ripley*

## It's staying human that's important

I've been enjoying your magazinw ever since my father (my biological father, a US hardcore punk legend, whom I'd finally found out about and met in my fifties) bought me a subscription a few years back. I immediately valued what MOJO brings to the table – something which almost all other music rags don't: a non-snotty, apolitical appreciation for all of the sounds out there. I have a too-wide sonic palette, but with tons of gaps, so I can dive into almost any page in any issue of MOJO and find something recognisable, along with discovering something I never knew about. With that unctuous praise for your rag, on to the real point of my e-mail.

Thanks for your interview in MOJO 368 with Pete Townshend – he's one of the first rock'n'rollers that really broke my nascent childhood musical interests wide open, and encouraged me to listen, and not just hear. The mistake in the article I wanted to point out: when describing his addiction to Ativan, the editor adds, in brackets, that it is a painkiller. Bzzzt! – wrong, sorry. Ativan (also known by its generic name Lorazepam) is not a painkiller; it's a medication in the benzodiazepine class of drugs used to treat the spectrum of anxiety disorders. It makes the user feel like the world is not going to collapse in on them, it calms, and it assures the brain that everything is... OK! But, after a while of taking it, the addictive aspect becomes all-too-apparent the moment you cannot source your next round of pills. So, however Pete managed to kick that addiction: well done, Pete! It's notoriously difficult to wean oneself off of.

*James Poolner, Arlington, MA*

## To the past or to the future, to an age when thought is free

I'm rereading Tom Doyle's beautifully written review [MOJO 371] of David Gilmour's career-best solo album, *Luck And Strange*, whilst playing the new sea-blue vinyl. Doyle really enhances the listening experience, as does Ernie Hunt's amazing Gilmour face/Cambridge map mash-up. The melodies have always been present and correct on Gilmour's solo output right from the first single, 1978's brilliant *There's No Way Out Of Here*, through the soft-rock loveliness of *On An Island*, but the lyrics haven't often been a good match. However, Polly Samson is spot on over the whole album, particularly *The Piper's Call*, which includes the reference to *Animals'*

best song, *Dogs*: "But you'll reap what you sow/ As I found long ago." The Montgolfier Brothers cover, *Between Two Points*, makes me wonder what Gilmour would do with their masterpiece, *Journey's End*? Tom is absolutely right, "It's brilliant, moving stuff... ", especially the poignant cameo of the much mourned Rick Wright on *Luck And Strange* and the bonus extended jam from 2007.

*Bruce Marsh, Newbury Park*

... There's No Way Out Of Here, on your list of David Gilmour's greatest hits [MOJO 372], was written solely by Ken Baker and features on the fantastic 1976 Unicorn album *Too Many Crooks*. Gilmour covered it, he didn't write it with Ken. I think a piece on the very underrated Unicorn would make up for this error nicely. We live in hope!

*Matt Allan, via e-mail*

## The past is forbidden. Why?

I've just finished reading MOJO 371 and found your article on Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan a fascinating read. Sadly, it reminded me of your total lack of interest in Flamenco music. Being a reader/collector of your magazine since issue one, I haven't read a piece yet on one of the world's most innovating and invigorating music genres; not even when Paco de Lucia (a master of the Spanish guitar in the 20th century and one of the most respected players in the world) passed away in 2014. Don't you think it's about time, after more than 30 years, to mend such an obvious neglect?

*Jaime Guardamino, via e-mail*

## To be in a minority of one doesn't make you mad

Mucho MOJO love for remembering Deke Leonard and Man in your recent *How To Buy* column [MOJO 370]. I saw them open for Utopia when they toured 1976's *The Welsh Connection* album. Already a fan, I was impressed in person as well. Though I had to leave when Todd Rundgren played his guitar made of ice – too many screaming teenies wearing T-shirts that said "I Am Only A Flower In Todd's Garden".

*Bing Abbott, Santa Cruz*

## That's her style of beauty

I'm a late convert to your magazine having only bought the last three issues, but I just want to say how much I'm amazed at the hard work you guys must put in to get so much info. When I read in your *Real Gone* obituary that Evelyn Thomas had died [MOJO 371], it brought back so many memories. She gave me her autograph in a gay pub in Wimbledon Village after she had performed her *High Energy* hit, and I still have it, almost 40 years to the day that it happened.

*Martin Spencer, via e-mail*

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# WHAT GOES ON!

THE HOT NEWS AND BIZARRE STORIES FROM PLANET MOJO





# Lonely Planet Boy

Haunted by bereavement and disintegration (and *Disintegration*), The Cure's *Songs Of A Lost World* – their first album in 16 years – is finally with us. But what's it all about? And will it be Robert Smith's last? "Often seen as the soundtrack to an eternally doomy adolescence," judges Victoria Segal, "The Cure might just be coming of age."

**T**HERE IS NO blue plaque at The Railway in Crawley, no photographs celebrating the most culturally significant moment in the pub's history: the first official gig by The Cure (formerly Easy Cure) in 1978. The band's original drummer, Lol Tolhurst, has spoken to an old friend on Crawley Town Council about organising some kind of commemorative sign at the pub formerly known as The Rocket – "I keep telling him I'd come over and help open it," he laughs from his home in Los Angeles – but the portents aren't good. When Tolhurst and his wife were recently visiting family in Crawley, first Cure bassist Michael Dempsey picked them up from Gatwick and drove them around the old haunts, including the pub. "The first thing the barman said to my wife was, 'You have to take that hat off if you come in here,'" recalls Tolhurst dryly. "It was very Crawley."

Yet The Rocket has once again become embroiled in The Cure's epic story. On September 13, a dark poster appeared outside, reading "Songs Of A Lost World" and a date: "I. XI. MMXXIV." A mail-drop to fans of similarly embossed postcards followed. Sixteen years after the release of *4:13 Dream*, it seemed as if The Cure's long-promised fourteenth album was becoming a reality, a moment even the most ardent keepers of the *Faith* had started to doubt would happen. On social media, it was pointed out generations of fans had never experienced the real-time release of a new Cure album; some of the kids wearing Boys Don't Cry T-shirts to the 2023 shows weren't even born.

Listening to *Songs Of A Lost World*, it's clear why The Cure launched it at their point of origin. It's a record about endings, about loss and grief, about the compromises and confusions that cling to a person as they move through their lives, warping and distorting their original intentions. There is real poignancy in looking back to a time and place where life was still a clean slate, before you find yourself – as Smith does on the closing track, *Endsong* – looking up at the sky and wondering where you've gone. Maybe it does matter if we all die, after all. ➤

**"I know in my head that I am the sum of a multitude of younger versions of me... but there are moments when I just can't accept it."**

**ROBERT SMITH**

The beginning and the end: Robert Smith on-stage with The Cure, Primavera Sound, Barcelona, June 1, 2012.

Simone Cecchetti/Corbis via Getty Images



**The Cure**

★★★★

**Songs Of A Lost World**

(Fiction CD/DL/LP)

**Recorded at:**

Rockfield, Monmouthshire, and Lost World

**Line-up:**

Robert Smith: voice/guitar/six-string bass/keyboard  
Simon Gallup: bass  
Jason Cooper: drums/percussion  
Roger O'Donnell: keyboard  
Reeves Gabrels: guitar

**Key tracks:**

And Nothing Is Forever  
I Can Never Say Goodbye  
Endsong

Christophe Meng/Abaca Press/Anny Live News, Jazz Archive Hamburg/Ullstein Bild via Getty Images

WHEN THESE songs first emerged, on the European leg of 2022's Shows Of A Lost World tour, the band would open and close their main set the same way: with Alone, its opening line, "This is the end of every song that we sing"; and Endsong, which finishes, "Left alone with nothing/The end of every song/Nothing." The new album follows this sequencing, a kind of dust-to-dust musical palindrome that locks the album into its fate, exits and entrances blocked. Death and disillusionment are hardly unusual Cure elements, but these eight songs have the same concentrated intensity as 1989's *Disintegration*, a record similarly preoccupied with broken dreams, ebbing potential, mortality. That record was a product of Smith's horror at turning 30, then an unimaginable milestone of decay. In 2024, it's inevitable that falling apart means something very different. "Before I used to write about stuff that I thought I understood," said Smith in 2019. "Now I know I understand it."

That year, Smith revealed that he had recently lost his father, his mother and his older brother Richard, the latter instrumental in introducing him to Jimi Hendrix and Captain Beefheart and his companion in an earlier musical venture, The Crawley Goat Band. Richard lived in Poland for years; harrowing *SOALW* song I Can Never Say Goodbye was first played on October 22, 2022, at Krakow's Tauron Arena. It's the song at the eye of the album's emotional storm, Smith singing, "Something wicked this way comes/To steal

away my brother's life." It joins a slim collection of Cure songs directly and explicitly traceable to real events: 2001 single Cut Here, his guilt-crushed song about The Associates' Billy Mackenzie, for example, or Lovesong, his wedding song for his wife Mary. "I wrote this song from a lot of different perspectives, until I finally settled on a simple lyrical narrative of what happened on the night he died," explains Smith in a note sent to reviewers. "Performing it on-stage has helped me to deal with my grief. I miss him."

Mogwai have frequently supported The Cure and the band's Stuart Braithwaite, a long-time fan, attended as many dates on their 2022 European tour as he could. He saw the new songs take shape, he says, becoming not just bonus glimpses into works in progress, but "pillars" of the set. "I Can Never Say Goodbye is quite different," he says. "A lot of Cure songs are personal in quite an abstract

way, but this is personal in a very direct way. It's a really beautiful song and you can see that Robert finds it quite emotional to sing."

Tollhurst, who has known Smith for 60 years ("It's like family, you know?"), understands this new directness through the context of their upbringing. "Our childhood was very strictly Catholic and it encouraged you not to show anything. It's a lifetime's labour to get to that point where you feel you can. Now it's like, 'Well, if I'm not going to say what I really feel about things now, completely and transparently, when am I?' Because it's going to be too bloody late soon."

SINCE HE curated 2018's Meltdown Festival at London's Southbank Centre, Smith has regularly promised a follow-up to 2008's *4:13 Dream*. Just a few vocals to complete. Just some mixing to be done. The title – *Songs Of A Lost World* – was revealed in 2019, and a tour named after it in 2022 – but still no record emerged. Before September, Smith would say. By spring. This year, absolutely. "I can't stand the anticipation much longer," Smith joked in March 2022. "It's killing me."

Tollhurst links this delay to a kind of perfectionism that was baked into The Cure from the start. "For the first three years, we would just rehearse," he recalls. "By the time we got to play in London when we were 19 or 20, people were like, 'Wow, you can play!' We came out pretty well-formed, which I think is the way Robert probably still likes

**"I talked to Robert and he said, 'I'm going to do this album and that's kind of it.' He always says that."**

**LOL TOLHURST**





to do things. He doesn't let anything out, let anything be seen, until it's completely done and right."

Smith, meanwhile, can sound like he's questing for an almost intangible grail. "When it gets done it will be the best thing we've ever done," he said in February 2020. "Which is why I can't afford not to do the best vocals I've ever done. It's not about tone or notes, it's emotion, it's trying to capture that point where you feel something enough to communicate it but you don't break down, 'cos I hate myself when I do that... I want it to be perfect but it's really hard for me to just get the right moment."

By 2021, he was even harder on himself. "I was listening, thinking, This is the best music the band has made, and my words are drivel. Last year I just gave up. I thought I can't do it. They can all be instrumentals."

Smith stuck at it, with striking results. In-



Smith in 2024, plus - above, The Cure's Naked Record Club release and 1989's *Disintegration* LP.

deed, on a record so alert to the cataclysmic effects of mortality, it's remarkable how fundamentally unchanged Smith's voice is, uncracked into a Bob Dylan croak or plunged

to new Leonard Cohen depths. Yet there is no kitchy levity on this record, nothing approaching a pop song - no equivalent of *Disintegration's* spidery Lullaby to break the mood. The Never Enough grooves of the spectacular Drone: nodrone slide closest to a gear-change, but even there, the ground is unsteady.

"I'm breaking up again," sings Smith. *Disintegration*, in other words, with all its oceanic expanses, its cold glittering light.

**O**PENER ALONE is the first station on the album's audaciously bleak, beautiful journey. "Once this song was written, I knew that the *Songs Of A Lost World* album would be made," writes Smith, acknowledging the inspiration of tubercular Victorian poet Ernest

Dowson, and his poem Dregs: "The fire is out, and spent the warmth thereof/(This is the end of every song man sings!)" It's a telling addition to Smith's lace-edged, blood-speckled treasury of Poe, Rimbaud and Baudelaire.

If *Alone's* pain is couched in universal terms, *And Nothing Is Forever* comes from a very specific set of circumstances, "a promise I made to someone that I would be with them when they died," Smith writes. "But for reasons beyond my control, I didn't keep that promise. It upset me dreadfully." There's a painful, escalating catch in Smith's phrasing, twisting the opulent backing into something more desperate, the light of an implacable pink moon just detectable in the piano.

Yet if death is at the core of *Songs Of A Lost World*, it's not the only loss. The torrential dialogue of *A Fragile Thing* rolls in the deepest romantic gloom - "Every time you kiss me I could cry," she said - while *Warsong*, opening with a martial drone reminiscent of *Disintegration*-era rarity *Pirate Ships*, is flooded with deep emotional water. "Warsong is about someone who over the decades I've kind of fallen out with, made up with, fallen out with, made up with over and over," Smith reflects, yet he says it could be repurposed as a wider lament for humanity: "All we will ever know is bitter ends/For we were born to war."

Another kind of loss explored by *SOALW* is loss of self, a concept refracted in the crunched-spine funk of *Drone: nodrone*, inspired, says Smith, by a drone that flew over the singer's garden, throwing him into a

Tom Sheehan, Gabor Scott/Shutterstock, Dan Jessup/Eddie Mitchell/sussexnewsandpictures (2), PA Images/Alamy

Pictorial Press Ltd/Alamy, Camera Press/Paul Slattery



Nothing is forever: Robert Smith, always saying goodbye, Florence, June 16, 2019.



## PLAYS FOR TODAY

Post-millennial Cure, recapped by Victoria Segal.

### Bloodflowers

★★★★★  
(Fiction, 2000)



"Inextricably linked" to *Pornography* and *Disintegration* according to Robert Smith, *Bloodflowers* completed the line-up for 2002's played-in-full Trilogy concerts. After the pop glories of 1992's *Wish* and the scattered *Wild Mood Swings*, here was Y2K Cure returning to core values.

### The Cure

★★★★★  
(Geffen, 2004)



"Anyone who doesn't like this just doesn't like The Cure," said Smith. In a rare acknowledgement of the outside world, though, their twelfth album was co-produced by nu-metal supremo Ross Robinson. A notable heaviness prevailed, but nothing could dilute *The End Of The World's* perfect chorus.

### 4:13 Dream

★★★★★  
(Geffen, 2008)



Allegedly the lighter half of an intended double album, *4.13 Dream* was cruising-altitude Cure, *The Only One* and *The Perfect Boy* in pop mode, *The Reasons Why* and *Underneath The Stars* hitting the *Disintegration* switch. It ended, ominously, with *It's Over*: "I can't do this any more."

### Torn Down

★★★★★  
(Fiction, 2018)



This companion to the reissue of 1990 remix collection *Mixed Up* was originally conceived as a compilation of Cure tracks remodelled by their favourite bands. Smith instead took control, forging new versions of one song from each Cure album. Nicely unstuck.

◀ confusion of doubt. Was he being spied on, or not? Smith doesn't know what to think, and not knowing what to think is almost worse than being watched. Yet it's also a song about not being sure who you are any more – even if your identity, your image, seems as to be as solid as Smith's.

All I Ever Am, meanwhile, pushes the rock star towards the nightmare of a "dark and empty stage", an unfillable void. Smith says it's about "how hard I find 'being' in the present moment is, informed by questions of how 'I' remains 'I' through time... I know in my head that I am the sum of a multitude of other younger versions of me... but there are moments when I just can't believe it, I just can't accept it!"

That "strange feeling of dissociation" peaks in *Endsong's* grand celestial collapse, recorded around the 50th anniversary of the moon landings and testament to Smith's life-long stargazing tendencies. "I was outside looking up and back a lot that summer, lamenting age and an increasingly broken world, and always seemed to return to the same two questions; where did that old world go and where did I go?"

**E** NDSONG MIGHT feel like an asteroid-sized, extinction-event full-stop, but it is not impossible that The Cure could simply be entering another phase in their remarkable career. The album artwork looks like an ancient stone head, an Atlantis relic, its features so worn they are barely visible. Yet it is a 1975 piece by the Slovenian sculptor Janez Pirnat, and the face could just as easily be emerging from the stone as vanishing into it.

The band have faced cruel recent setbacks – keyboardist Roger O'Donnell missed their 2023 South American dates to be treated for aggressive lymphoma – but Smith has not given up completely on the world. Ahead of the Oasis controversy curve, he played

a spiky-haired Robin Hood when he took on Ticketmaster over their pricing for the *Shows Of A Lost World* tour. The band had already declined to take part in any surge or dynamic pricing; when he became aware of the high fees, Smith also spoke out, securing a partial refund for fans. When an Italian fan on social media nudged him towards eco-vinyl concern Naked Record Club, two songs – *I Can Never Say Goodbye* and *And Nothing Is Forever* – were released with profits going to Brian Eno's climate charity Earth Percent (the 5,000 copies sold out in two hours). It's worth remembering before any valedictions, too, that Smith has long promised not one but two albums, as well as a solo noise LP.

"I talked to Robert and he said, 'I'm going to do this album and that's kind of it,'" says Tollhurst. "He always says that – that it's the last thing. But I like the idea that he always had when we started off – that we should always look at *everything* that we do as the last time we're ever going to do it. It puts an intensity to your actions that you should have because otherwise, why are you doing it? As I got older and met different artists who had been around for a long time, there's a sense of entitlement that whatever they do, people are going to like it. Robert's never had that attitude. He's always been, 'I've got to do the best version of whatever it is I'm doing.'"

While The Cure are fortunate to have a regenerating fanbase, the audience who have grown up with them will be staring down the barrel of the same gun as Smith, facing similar griefs, uncertainties, questions. With *Songs Of A Lost World*, The Cure, often seen as the soundtrack to an eternally doomy adolescence, might just be coming of age.

"I don't foresee Robert swanning into his twilight years sipping a margarita on a boat somewhere," says Tollhurst, smiling. "Well, maybe – but the boat would be going somewhere to play a show." M



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Logo a-go-go! (clockwise from top left) The Yardbirds; The Beat; Wings; The Kinks; Adam & The Ants; The Monkees; The The; Funkadelic; ELO – all these band emblems and more feature in Logo Rhythm.

# NEW BOOK LOGO RHYTHM CHRONICLES THE BAND EMBLEM

“IT FELT LIKE we had to do it: if we didn’t, no-one else was going to,” says Jamie Ellul, a musician-turned-designer and branding specialist who has co-authored Logo Rhythm – a sumptuous 450-page history of music logos. More than five years in the making, the book spans everyone from Aretha Franklin to Franz Ferdinand, plus these forensically-told highlights...

## The Yardbirds

Arguably the first proper rock emblem, in that it was used on just about all their output. The designer – in 1963 – was Hamish Grimes: fixer, photographer, and suspected author of the infamous ‘Clapton is God’ graffiti. He aimed at “quirky and comical”, but it suited all their artistic phases. “They had a consistent logo on everything, just like Love,” says Ellul.

## The Beat

The Beat Girl’s story is explained by author Lu Hersey of The Beat’s fanzine The Noise In This World. Comics artist Hunt Emerson found her pictured alongside ska pioneer Prince Buster: she was Brigitte Bond, a ska singer, actress – and trans woman. “No one in the band knew that,” says Hersey, “but somehow that makes her even more perfect.”

## Wings

The big ‘W’ emblem was the rushed brainchild of designer Neil Dean, and first used on the double-decker Macca and co took on their

1972 European tour. The idea was “an inverted Matchless [motorbike] logo with wings.” A collaborator recalls: “We bolted it straight on to the back of the bus and it was done... We got paid five hundred quid.”

## Funkadelic

Created by designer/illustrator Cathy Abel for *America Eats Its Young* (1972). It adorned a giveaway poster and 20-page comic – based on the Scientology-derived Process Church cult – that came with (some) original copies. Both are reproduced in the book. “They’re from these guys called the Stone Brothers in Holland,” says Ellul. “They collect to a crazy level.”

## ELO

Debuted on 1976’s *A New World Record*, and created by John Kosh, ex-art director at Apple. Combines a Wurlitzer jukebox with typography nicked from General Electric. “You could probably bang that out in a couple of hours today,” he says. “[But] the finished artwork was all airbrushed and about four-foot square. The whole procedure probably took three days and two nights.”

## The Kinks

Drummer Mick Avory’s dad – born Carlo Avogadri, and an alumnus of Saint Martin’s art school – first put kinky boots on his son’s kit, before the logo was

finessed by Pye Records’ art department. “I love how wonky and unpolished it is,” says Logo Rhythm co-author Jim K. Davies, an acclaimed copywriter and design specialist.

## The The

Hats off to Fiona Skinner, currently head of design for ITV Daytime, and Matt Johnson’s former partner. After ‘scratching up’ Letraset, she moved on to lino. “I copied and printed sheets of the alphabet then cut and pasted each word of the credits [for 1983’s *Soul Mining*] letter by letter, leaving in the messy lino marks around the main letters.”

## The Monkees

Conceived by a PR man at their TV show’s production company, but created thanks to US illustrator Nick LoBianco, who also designed lunchboxes for *Lost In Space* and *The Munsters* (Charles Schulz also let him secretly draw Peanuts cartoons). It took LoBianco three attempts to reach perfection: the emblem premiered on their second album, *More Of The Monkees*, and lived on.

## Adam And The Ants

The Native-American-headdress logo was created by Daniel Kleinman, now an eminent TV ad director and creator of all but one James

Bond title sequences since 1995. “It took me an afternoon or so,” he tells the book’s authors. “I knew [Adam] as a friend, and I knew where he was going.” Ant management then made him sign away the rights – for a pound.

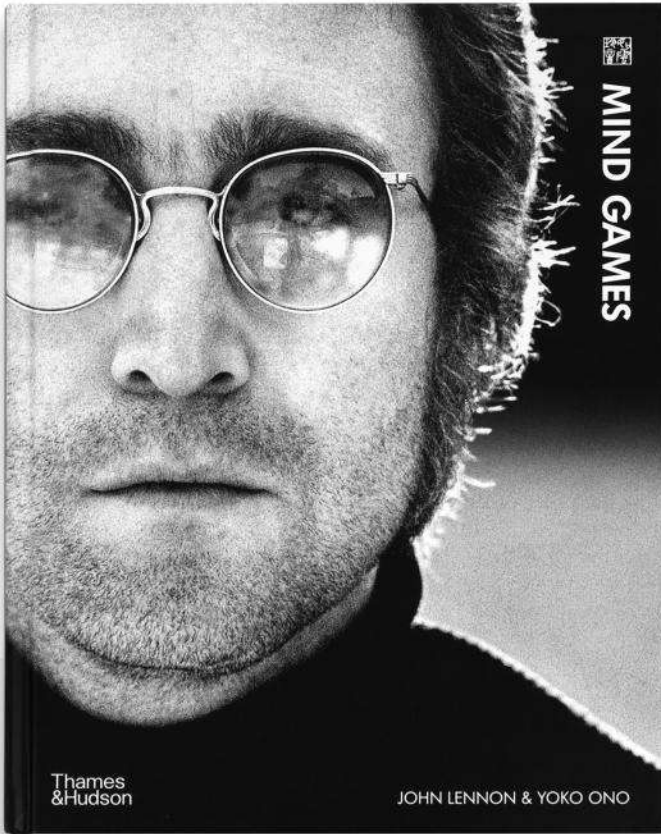
John Harris

“I love how wonky and unpolished The Kinks logo is.”

JIM K. DAVIES, LOGO RHYTHM CO-AUTHOR

Logo Rhythm: Band Logos That Rocked The World is published by Circa: [www.circa.press](http://www.circa.press)





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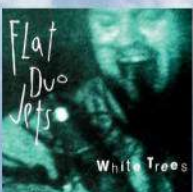
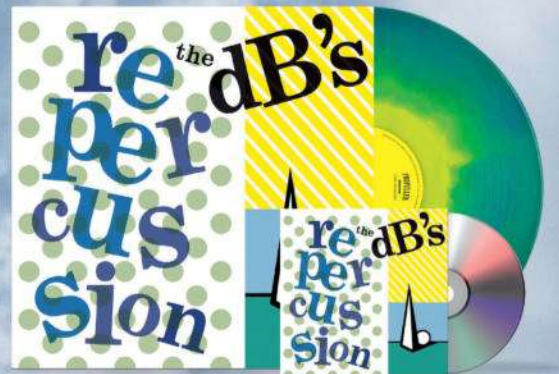
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Staying free: (right) James Dean Bradfield gets inspired by the past, *Door To The River* studio, Caerleon, Wales; (above) Sean Moore's drum kit (and gloves); (below) co-producer Dave Eringa.



“We played a weird parlour game when we'd finished...”

JAMES DEAN BRADFIELD

was about two years of intense, scatter-brained work.”

Produced by regular foils Dave Eringa and Loz Williams, and mixed by Caesar Edmunds, the album was finished in February after a month recording Sean Moore's drum tracks and other overdubs at Rockfield Studios in Monmouth. “We played a weird parlour game when we'd finished,” says Bradfield. “It was, ‘What do you hear in this song?’ And the answers were 10,000 Maniacs, Weather Prophets, Shriekback, Waterboys, Bangles, Dalis Car... not that we were trying, but they were all references.” As well as the aforementioned '80s groups, he also mentions Manics faves Skids, Echo & The Bunnymen and Big Country. “Their message was delivered so forcefully, they weren't bleak about it,” says Bradfield. “All those people from the '80s were teachers. Whenever you reference the past, you're still inspired by it... to be part of a future that you know is kind of trying to dispose of you.”

The let-it-happen approach meant there was no preconceived concept for the album, he goes on. Bradfield wrote three of the 12 lyrics: main lyricist Wire sang three songs. “Nick's trying to analyse his position in the world and reconcile his antagonism towards modern-day politics or beliefs – his song *Critical Thinking* talks about empathy and the well-being industry, whilst we revel in other people's destruction. My three songs were optimistically looking for an answer in a more pragmatic way. I've got a song called *Being Baptised*, which is a postcard from the past about a fucking lovely day I spent with Allen Toussaint, basking in his wisdom and judgement and talent. So that's the dichotomy they have.”

Unlike previous albums, this time there aren't any name guests – “I suppose our guest vocalists have been replaced by Nick singing three songs,” says Bradfield – though touring guitarist Wayne Murray's partner Lana McDonagh appears on one song. “Perhaps we will have to use this sense of freedom to challenge ourselves on the next record,” he concludes. “Looking for that other version of yourself sometimes involves somebody else. But with this album, this is definitely what we wanted.”

Ian Harrison

FACT SHEET

**Title:** TBC  
**Due:** 2025  
**Production:** Dave Eringa and Loz Williams, Caesar Edmunds (mixing)  
**Songs:** *Being Baptised*; *Decline And Fall*; *Critical Thinking*  
**The Buzz:** “Sometimes just to have your best songs is enough, just putting a record out and not trying to describe a big overarching concept, even though there is a thread there. We wanted to sing, play, be free, and for what Nick was writing lyrically to have a place to shine.”  
*James Dean Bradfield*

# THE MANICS GET FREE ON ALBUM 15

IN 1985, the Manic Street Preachers had their first rehearsal and wrote their first song, *Aftermath*, about the miners' strike. How does it feel to be on the cusp of 40 years' active service, asks MOJO, when checking in with James Dean Bradfield? “To be honest,” he says, “I feel an immense sense of freedom.”

This sense of open vistas is ingrained in their latest long-player, whose title was still unknown at press time. The group convened at their *Door To The River* studio in Caerleon outside Newport in late 2022, working in chunks of time as gigs, family life and bass-

ist Nicky Wire's 2023 solo LP *Intimism* took precedence. That said, Bradfield adds, “we started with a bit more urgency than usual. Without knowing it, we had five or six demos already... maybe it was that subconscious threat of time running out after Covid.”

“There was no MO,” he adds. “Sometimes we played live together in a definite band environment, other times it was more isolated, where I just laid a guitar down to a click [track], or Nick [Wire] put a vocal down with a click, or I'd do a really rough acoustic version, and we'd build from those. So it

ALSO WORKING

...after **STEVIE WONDER's** (right) September single *Can We Fix Our Nation's Broken Heart*, film has emerged of him and **George Clinton** duetting on The Parliaments' 1967 single *(I Wanna) Testify* ... of his new 2025 LP, Bauhaus's **PETE MURPHY** says, “it's produced by **Youth** and has big names guesting” ... **PETE**



**TOWNSHEND** may have assured MOJO that **The Who** “aren't done yet,” but he's admitted that, “I am in a period of writers' block” ... work goes on for the long-gestating **BRIAN WILSON/FRED VAIL** country album *Cows In The Pasture*. As well as a documentary featuring Wilson and **Van Dyke Parks** among others, a live show is also planned ... guitarist **Carmen Vandenberg** has confirmed to Total Guitar

that she is playing on new recordings by **MORRISSEY** ... in September, **Liam Gallagher** posted that **OASIS** had recorded a new album. Asked to describe its sound, he gnomically remarked, “TURDOS” ... **Raphael Saadiq** told Rolling Stone that **D'ANGELO** is making a new LP, saying, “He's working on six pieces right now.” One song is expected to be by their one-time group *Linwood Rose*, which also featured

**Q-Tip** ... **FRANZ FERDINAND's** *The Human Fear* arrives in January 2025.



Recorded with producer Mark Ralph, songs include *The Doctor*, *Black Eyelashes* and *Hooked* ... **NADIA REID** (left) is recording her fourth album and promises a “new, fuller sound. I still feel uncomfortable about the word ‘folk’ and being a folk singer,” said the now-Manchester resident. “It makes me sort of cringe”...

Getty, Tom Williams/CQ-Roll Call, Inc via Getty Images



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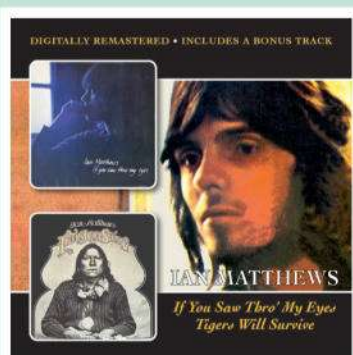
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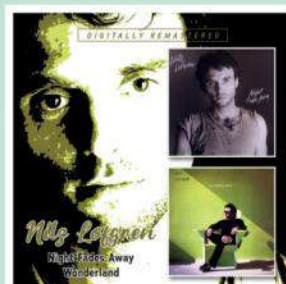
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No sweat!: Idles' Joe Talbot wants to make you laugh and scream.



## HEY JOE

Five tasty Talbot one-twos.

1 **Adrienne Lenker** *Real House* (4AD, 2024)

2 **Tirzah F22** (*DOMINO*, 2023)

3 **The Alessi Brothers** *Seabird* (A&M, 1977)

4 **Electrelane** *Tram 21* (100 PURE, 2007)

5 **Donny Hathaway** *I Love The Lord; He Heard My Cry (Parts I & II)* (ATCO, 1973)

means that it's harder to be impactful and poignant. He has figured out ways of doing that. That was one of those moments.

## "Impactful and poignant" – does that act as Idles' manifesto, too?

I was constantly going to gigs back in the early 2000s, watching models look bored on-stage. It was an insult to me and my mates who paid money to see them, so I wanted to start a band that made people feel. And I hope that we have.

## Do you want to name names?

Joseph Talbot, Adam Devonshire... [continues naming Idles]. You will not catch me naming bands other than mine and bands I love. I'm not

playing that fucking game. I started the band to be the antithesis of those people. Those people are the kinds of people who would name names.

## Why make the video for Grace an AI Chris Martin singing your song in the Yellow video?

I thought it would be funny – but also brilliant – to just AI him singing my lyrics in the Yellow video because it's one of the best videos of that era. I was a film student and all my favourite ideas in art are simple ideas executed brilliantly. My manager knows someone who knows someone, and next thing I know, Chris Martin's calling me. What can I say? He's charitable, he's kind, he's hard-working. He's a real one. He was willing to have the piss taken out of him if that was part of it – which I reassured him it wasn't. I told him why and I'll tell anyone why: this is cool, it kind of sounds like a Coldplay song. It will obviously piss some people off and those sorts of people I like to piss off.

## You've been writing lyrics in the recording booth recently. What are the pitfalls?

I'm very insecure and my insecurity comes out in two ways: either in a loving romantic relationship, though I've been working on that, or in my songwriting, in being a frontperson. I know I'm good at my job, no matter what certain journalists say, but with that comes a lot of insecurity. The more I would write things down, the more opportunity I had to come back and think about what someone else would think about it. So I write a song in about 15 minutes and I never change the words. It's easy because I listen to that song 200 and 300 times. The song is in me. I know what it's going to be about. I don't just go, Right, er, sandwiches. A fencing competi-

tion is seconds in the doing, but it's decades in the making.

## Tell us something you've never told an interviewer before.

It's a tough one (*long pause*). I'm not scared of you lot, so I don't ever hide anything. Honestly, I can't think of anything I haven't told a journalist.

As told to Victoria Segal

*Idles tour the UK and Ireland in November and December.*

# Joe Talbot

Idles' front-dynamo talks love, lyric-writing and liking Chris Martin. And he's not scared, right?

IT'S 8.30PM AND Joe Talbot is on parenting duty, code-switching between caring dad and rock'n'roll fire-starter as he answers MOJO's questions. It fits, given the tough-tender combination that Idles have made their own since their 2017 debut *Brutalism*; with this year's *Tangk*, produced by Radiohead associate Nigel Godrich, they found new ways of stretching out their incendiary explorations of love, politics, friendship and masculinity. "I want to make people dance and I want to make people love," says Talbot, keeping a careful eye on the door in case his

wakeful child materialises. "I want to make people laugh and scream and see themselves in the mirror of our albums."

## Did you genuinely not know Banksy was going to launch his migrant boat artwork into the audience during your Glastonbury set?

No. That particular thing that he made was beautiful and powerful and brilliant, and I think that Danny Nedelko [from 2018's *Joy As An Act Of Resistance*] was the perfect song. We were an appropriate band and we're huge fans and we're very grateful not just for the involvement but also the free press (*laughs*). Obviously over time the saturation of Banksy's work

"A fencing competition is seconds in the doing, but it's decades in the making."

JOE TALBOT



LAST NIGHT  
A RECORD  
CHANGED  
MY LIFE



Elkie Brooks

The Grand Dame of blues, rock and jazz hails Dino & Sembello's Pearl's A Singer (A&M, 1974).



It was 1976. I was in AIR Studios in London with my producers Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller. We were looking for songs for my second LP [1977's] *Two Days*

*Away*. Jerry said he had one to play me, he knew I liked blues and jazz so he wasn't sure if I'd like it because it was more in a country style, but he knew I was open-minded and I already liked some country. So he put on Pearl's A Singer by Dino & Sembello. Ralph Dino and John Sembello were singers and writers in America. They'd already written songs for The Lovin' Spoonful, The Turtles and Tim Hardin and they had worked with Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller on their only album [1974's] *Dino & Sembello*. Anyhow, this song was from that album and I immediately got it.

It was the story that got me – "She sings songs for the lost and lonely... all those dreams that never came true." I love stories. I'd grown up listening to Ella Fitzgerald and Billie Holiday and Dakota Staton, who all sang story songs. So we did the song and I put my bluesy stamp on it. I was lucky enough to work with an incredible pianist called Jean Roussel and he played the most wonderful piano part. We released it as the first single from the LP, the release date was actually on my 32nd birthday – February 25, 1977 – and the record label really went for it. For the promo they dressed me in a gown and it went into the chart and into the Top 10. I did Top Of The Pops and suddenly, after all these years, after singing with Humphrey Lyttelton, Eric Delaney, Dada and Vinegar Joe, I had a hit record.

So hearing Dino & Sembello literally changed my life. I still sing it at every show. Sometimes I forget the words, but it doesn't matter because the audience know all of them and sing along.

As told to Lois Wilson

Elkie's Long Farewell Tour continues in November and into 2025. See [elkiebrooks.com](http://elkiebrooks.com) for dates.

PINK LABEL AND ALL,  
PYE RECORDS IS BACK FROM  
THE DEAD – BUT HOW?

KNOWN FOR years as a voice on Scottish radio and TV – as well running his own Radio Six International station – broadcaster Tony Currie has a new objective. To wit, he's resurrected historic British label Pye, erstwhile home of The Kinks, Sandie Shaw and Petula Clark, among many others.

"I always cherished Pye," says Currie from the label's headquarters in the Inner Hebrides. "I was heavily into big pop instrumentals, and they had John Schroeder, Laurie Johnson, Tony Hatch... I was very sorry in 1980 when the Pye trademark disappeared. I found out later that the owners were too mean to pay the £2,000 to renew it."

Fast forward to 2016 and an idle search on Companies House, and learning that Pye Records had been dissolved, he duly established his own Pye limited company and parked it. Then life happened, including leaving the BBC, ill health and the death of his wife Karin in January 2023.

"I thought, I could sit every night, pissed out of my skull, watching Talking Pictures TV and eating Pot Noodles," he reflects. "Or I could do something outrageous. What's going to absorb all my attention and give me some pleasure? Pye Records. I'm going to get the trademark."

He set about getting the distinctive Pye roundel and precise colour scheme from the Philips company in the Netherlands. This unlocked another arguably quixotic scheme. "I thought, I'm going to make an album with a big orchestra," says Currie, "just like Pye Records always did."

So it came to pass: *Race The Sun* by The Tony Currie Orchestra is a sparkling big band pop album of just the sort they used to make, from its cover art and Ken Bruce's sleeve note up. Played by a

36-piece group, it's full of significances for its creator: the title song's a version of Johnny Scott's swinging fanfare which themed Currie's 1970s show on Radio Clyde, for example, while the arrangement of Tony Hatch's Downtown by Johnny Harris was transcribed from a hissy 1969 appearance on Lulu's TV show found on YouTube (sessioneer Mark Nightingale played the trombone belonging to original soloist Don Lusher on it). Of his pal Hatch, with whom he wrote the LP's Radio Six Theme, Currie says, "a lot of stuff owed its origins to him – he thought it was great, which really meant quite a lot to me."

The new Pye has also released *Harvest Gold* by singer-songwriter Andrea Black, and more new releases are planned. The label does not have access to Pye's post-1962 catalogue. "I want it to be a forward-looking company," says Currie, who's planning another orchestra LP. The 'new' Pye catalogue prefixes carry on from where Pye left off, he adds, and official Pye merch is promised.

It also begs the question: how many other historic dormant labels await rebirth? Nothing seems to be happening

with such evocative names of old as Regal Zonophone, Blue Beat, RAK, Factory, Liberty or Small Wonder, for example, though anyone intending to reanimate them should be prepared for a rough ride. "It involved a great deal of legal wrangling and expensive bills," says Currie of his acquisition of Pye. "It took about a year and cost me a fucking fortune – 10 grand! But it really has thrilled me."

Ian Harrison

See [pyerecords.com](http://pyerecords.com) for more info.

Neil Kirk, courtesy Tony Currie, Mirrorpix



Fingers in the Pye: (above) workers check the audio quality of vinyl at Pye Records, Mitcham, Surrey, 1967; (inset) 2-Tonys: Pye-lovers Hatch (left) and Currie.







In pole position: (left) Redd Kross (clockwise from top) Jeff McDonald, Steve McDonald, Robert Hecker, Roy McDonald, 1987; (above) Jeff (left) and Steve today, better than they've ever been.

REDD HOT

Three McDonald's takeaways.

Born Innocent

(SMOKE SEVEN, 1982)



Redd Kross's lovably chaotic hardcore-era LP debut, with an adoring paean to Linda Blair, a ramshackle cover of Charles Manson's Cease To Exist, and sloppy thrills aplenty.

Phaseshifter

(THIS WAY UP/MERCURY, 1993)



Going into this second major-label outing, new sticksman Brian Reitzell introduced the blissfully unaware McDonalds to alt-rock like Pixies, but the beefed-up Kross still sounded more like Cheap Trick or the Raspberries, with tunes galore.

Redd Kross

(IN THE RED, 2024)



Fighting fit in their fifth decade, the brothers enlisted ex-Chili Pepper Josh Klinghoffer to oversee a double deluge of Beatles-go-new wave powerpop, climaxing with self-chronicling epic, Born Innocent. A mid-career classic.

# 45 YEARS IN, PUNK-POP BELIEVERS REDD KROSS POWER ONWARDS

“WE’RE HAVING a moment,” says Steve McDonald, one half of Californian punk-poppers Redd Kross’s fraternal core, “and I’ve been around long enough to know those don’t come by very often.”

By any standards, autumn ’24 is proving a golden season for fans of RK’s melody-rich music and colourful lore, with the near-simultaneous arrival of a lurid documentary (the Andrew Reich-directed *Born Innocent*), a roller-coaster autobiography (*Now You’re One Of Us*) and a bonanza self-titled double-LP, whose 18 infectious tunes scarcely dip.

A sibling odd couple to rank alongside Sparks’ Ron and Russell, the McDonald brothers were raised in Hawthorne, CA, the LA suburb that was also home to The Beach Boys’ Wilsons. There, Jeff (vocals, guitar)

and Steve (bass) formed their snotty punk band in 1978 when Steve was just 11, initially as The Tourists, then Red Cross, until a legal threat forced them to Zeppelin-ise it.

“We latched onto the only other like-minded people we could find,” says Steve of their early days, “which turned out to be Black Flag.” As the two groups gigged together in ’80 to ’81, Steve’s tender age was a helpful gimmick. “We weren’t concerned about getting taken seriously,” he laughs, “we just wanted to get noticed!”

Jeff’s lyrics “pulled in everything that polluted our brains from the TV culture we grew up in,” but soon their gonzo mainstream shtick (Kiss covers; songs about The Runaways’ Lita Ford) chafed against austere hardcore-punk diktat, and they broke free. Says Steve, “We were like, ‘Screw that, we actually like rock stars! We wanna put on a show!’ We no longer felt we needed to impress these older guys.”

As alt-rock burgeoned in the late ’80s,

Redd Kross were well placed to cross over, but somehow they blew it. At a hometown gig packed with hungry A&R, for example, why open their set with a complete rendition of side two of *Sgt Pepper’s*? “All we had to offer was who we were,” reasons Jeff, “and the crowd were on the same page, just not the biz guys.”

Starting with 1990’s *Third Eye* (that’s future director Sofia Coppola in the buff on the cover), their three major-label albums stiffed, too geekily British Invasion-inspired in the age of *Nevermind*, and their support acts Foo Fighters and Stone Temple Pilots promptly leap-frogged them to the top.

Following a ’00s hiatus, though, their off-centre, Fabs-esque neo-psych commands niche adoration and, beams Jeff, it’s a blessing they never made it.

“We’re not saddled with having to live up to the one hit song we had in our past.

So now we’re able to show up and be as good as, if not better than, we’ve ever been.” He catches himself giving it the hard sell. “Hold on, I sound like Paul Stanley from Kiss...”

Andrew Perry

*Now You’re One Of Us* is published on October 10 by Omnibus Press. Redd Kross is out now on *In The Red*.

“We’re not saddled with having to live up to the one hit song we had.”

JEFF McDONALD



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- WED 12 **HULL CONNEXIN LIVE**
- FRI 14 **LIVERPOOL GUILD OF STUDENTS**
- SAT 15 **WOLVERHAMPTON CIVIC HALL**
- MON 17 **YORK BARBICAN**
- TUE 18 **EDINBURGH USHER HALL**
- THU 20 **GLASGOW ROYAL CONCERT HALL**
- FRI 21 **NEWCASTLE O2 CITY HALL**
- SAT 22 **MANCHESTER O2 APOLLO**
- MON 24 **BRISTOL BEACON**
- TUE 25 **PORTSMOUTH GUILDHALL**
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- THU 19<sup>TH</sup> - UNIVERSITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON AT THE WULFRUN HALL, WOLVERHAMPTON
- FRI 20<sup>TH</sup> - ISLINGTON ASSEMBLY HALL, LONDON

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“People think, ‘These guys must be really fucked up.’”

**BEN ROMANS-HOPCRAFT, WARMDUSCHER**

**FACT SHEET**

- For fans of: The Fall, James Chance, Renegade Soundwave
- *Too Cold To Hold* is Warmduscher's first album on Pete Doherty's Strap Originals label, following stints on Trashmouth, The Leaf Label and Bella Union. "I don't think labels can be homes any more," says Ben Romans-Hopcraft. "They just can't provide that kind of long-term support. There's no insurance policy in music."
- Warmduscher guitarist Adam J Harmer is also in Fat White Family. "They left him in a motorway service station once," says Romans-Hopcraft. "He was deliberating what ice cream to get for, like, an hour."
- The band used to employ *noms de Warmduscher*. Roman-Hopcraft was 'Mr Salt-Fingers Lovecraft'. Quinn Whalley was 'The Witherer'. Clams (real name: Craig Higgins) is the holdout.

**KEY TRACKS**

- Big Wilma
- Midnight Dipper
- Staying Alive

**Take a shower: Warmduscher (from left) Bleu Ottis, Adam J Harmer, Clams Baker, Ben Romans-Hopcraft, Quinn Whalley and Marley Mackey.**

## ARE LONDON AGENTS OF CHAOS **WARMDUSCHER** TOO HOT TO HANDLE?

“I TOOK A LONG hit on the pipe,” intones a lugubrious Edinburgh brogue. “The 5-MeO-DMT is smoother than the conventional stuff... I felt my body slowly dissolve into digital dots...”

Describing the “pre-birth experience” of a short but profound DMT trip is Irvine Welsh, providing a spoken-word intro to fifth Warmduscher album *Too Cold To Hold*. The Trainspotting novelist is a big fan of the south London band, having met frontman Clams Baker and synth-prodger Quinn Whalley on a spree in Miami some years back. “It was us, Irvine and the producer Arthur Baker,” recalls the singer. “It turns out Irvine’s really into boxing. We text each other about the fights.”

Along with languid Warmduscher bassist Ben Romans-Hopcraft, Baker is dodging a late-summer downpour in the bar of Brixton’s Ritz cinema. Sporting a Modelo beer trucker cap and a thin Ronald Coleman moustache, he looks like he could land a punch himself. Today, however, the transplanted Cape Cod native is cordiality incarnate, enthusing about the motley band of artists who’ve helped augment Warmduscher’s scuzzy, rumbustious electro-punk, among them Iggy Pop and Kool Keith. Their latest album includes vocal contributions from Confidence Man singer Grace Stephenson (AKA Janet Planet) and neo-soul star Lianne La Havas. Isn’t the latter too nice

to be hanging with these ne’er-dowells? “Oh no,” says Baker. “She’s proper south London.” Besides, adds Romans-Hopcraft, people get the wrong impression of Warmduscher from their anarchic shows.

“People think, ‘These guys must be really fucked up,’” he notes, one eyebrow slightly raised. “But the chaos of the music is more a reflection of the environment that we live in.”

A case in point: on the way to the Ritz today, the bassist had to negotiate a murder scene at the end of his street. Baker has his own tales of just-surviving in the metropolis.

“In the past, my lyrics have been more surreal,” he says. “This time maybe there’s more reality. Staying Alive is about seeing family members go into the military, and 100 per cent wanting to get out. Weeds In Your Garden came from me nearly getting evicted. I had this stupid idea that I was gonna plant a bunch of Japanese knotweed to get my revenge on the vendors...”

Musically, Warmduscher’s eclecticism hits a peak on the new album – a collision of guitars and beats with inspirations as diverse as Big Black, *Big Fun*-era Miles Davis and raw South African house variant gqom. The band

are an odd mix, too. In the ‘90s Baker made a name running club nights in Manhattan, mentored by drag queens. Quinn Whalley’s dad was Noddy Holder’s replacement in Slade. Multi-instrumentalist Marley Mackey is the son of the late Pulp bassist Steve (“He can do anything,” marvel his bandmates, “except wash his clothes”). Romans-Hopcraft is also half of Insecure Men, a band with schoolmate Saul Adamczewski – co-founder of Fat White Family and Warmduscher – whose problems with hard drugs and mental health have been well documented. “He’s a complicated customer,” says Romans-Hopcraft. “But I learned so much from Saul.”

As a now-stable sextet, Warmduscher forge into the future, with UK gigs this autumn and a US tour booked for February and March. In that, they’ve benefited from a government grant to aid creative exports. It was when the Sun newspaper inveighed against this insult to the UK taxpayer that Warmduscher realised they’d truly arrived. “They were referencing our lyrics like we were gangsters, like

NWA in the ‘90s,” chuckles Romans-Hopcraft. “We were like, This is... gold!”

Danny Eccleston

*Too Cold To Hold* is released on November 15 by Strap Originals. Warmduscher tour the UK from October 29.



# echobelly



## WINTER 2024

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 15 11 Newport<br><i>Corn Exchange</i>                         | 22 11 Edinburgh<br><b>LIMITED TICKETS</b> <i>Cabaret Voltaire</i> | 29 11 Bournemouth<br><i>Old Fire Station</i> |
| 16 11 Gloucester<br><i>Guildhall</i>                          | 24 11 Glasgow<br><b>LIMITED TICKETS</b> <i>King Tut's</i>         | 30 11 Exeter<br><i>Phoenix</i>               |
| 18 11 Birmingham<br><i>The Rainbow</i>                        | 25 11 York<br><i>Crescent</i>                                     | 01 12 Brighton<br><i>Concorde 2</i>          |
| 19 11 Birkenhead<br><b>LIMITED TICKETS</b> <i>Future Yard</i> | 26 11 Grimsby<br><i>Docks Academy</i>                             | 03 12 Leeds<br><i>Brudenell Social Club</i>  |
| 20 11 Stockton-On-Tees<br><i>The Georgian Theatre</i>         | 27 11 Nottingham<br><i>Metronome</i>                              | 04 12 Sheffield<br><i>Network 2</i>          |
|   |   | 05 12 Cambridge<br><i>Mash</i>               |

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- 23 **Sheffield**, Foundry
- SOLD OUT** York, Crescent
- 27 **Manchester**, New Century Hall

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| SAT 05 OCT  | <b>TORQUAY</b> THE FOUNDRY             |
| FRI 11 OCT  | <b>LONDON</b> 229 VENUE                |
| FRI 25 OCT  | <b>NORWICH</b> EPIC STUDIOS            |
| SAT 26 OCT  | <b>BEDFORD</b> ESQUIRES                |
| SAT 09 NOV  | <b>LEEDS</b> BRUDENELL SOCIAL CLUB     |
| FRI 15 NOV  | <b>KIDDERMINSTER</b> 45LIVE            |
| SAT 16 NOV  | <b>YORK</b> THE CRESCENT               |
| FRI 22 NOV  | <b>BRISTOL</b> THE FLEECE              |
| SAT 23 NOV  | <b>TENBY</b> DE VALENCE PAVILION       |
| FRI 29 NOV  | <b>FROME</b> CHEESE & GRAIN            |
| FRI 06 DEC  | <b>NOTTINGHAM</b> METRONOME            |
| SAT 07 DEC  | <b>BIRMINGHAM</b> HARE & HOUNDS        |
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02 <b>BRISTOL</b> Marble Factory	14 <b>MANCHESTER</b> Albert Hall
04 <b>NOTTINGHAM</b> Rock City	15 <b>SOUTHAMPTON</b> O2 Guildhall
06 <b>GLASGOW</b> Barrowland Ballroom	16 <b>LONDON</b> O2 Academy Brixton
07 <b>LIVERPOOL</b> Olympia	18 <b>BIRMINGHAM</b> O2 Institute
08 <b>LEEDS</b> Beckett Students' Union	19 <b>BRIGHTON</b> Dome
09 <b>NEWCASTLE</b> NX	20 <b>CARDIFF</b> University Great Hall
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FRI 18 OCT 2024 ▲ SUNDERLAND	SAT 30 NOV 2024 ■ ROCHESTER	FRI 04 APR 2025 ■ GUILDFORD	SAT 10 MAY 2025 ■ BIRMINGHAM
SAT 19 OCT 2024 ■ MIDDLESBROUGH	FRI 06 DEC 2024 ■ ● LONDON	SAT 05 APR 2025 ■ BRISTOL	FRI 16 MAY 2025 ● DUBLIN
FRI 25 OCT 2024 ■ BATH	SAT 07 DEC 2024 ■ ● STOKE	FRI 11 APR 2025 ● ST. ALBANS	SAT 17 MAY 2025 ● BELFAST
SAT 26 OCT 2024 ■ BRENTWOOD	FRI 17 JAN 2025 ■ NORTHAMPTON	SAT 12 APR 2025 ● LEAMINGTON SPA	FRI 23 MAY 2025 ■ LIVERPOOL
FRI 01 NOV 2024 ■ READING	SAT 18 JAN 2025 ■ CAMBRIDGE	FRI 18 APR 2025 ■ TUNBRIDGE WELLS	SAT 24 MAY 2025 ■ MANCHESTER
SAT 02 NOV 2024 ■ BEXHILL	FRI 24 JAN 2025 ● EDINBURGH	SAT 19 APR 2025 ■ ● BRIGHTON	
FRI 08 NOV 2024 ■ LEICESTER	SAT 25 JAN 2025 ● GLASGOW	FRI 25 APR 2025 ■ PERTH	

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WED 02 APRIL BRISTOL	THU 24 APRIL BASINGSTOKE	FRI 09 MAY MANCHESTER	FRI 30 MAY WIMBORNE
THU 03 APRIL IPSWICH	FRI 25 APRIL CARDIFF	SAT 10 MAY NEWCASTLE	SAT 31 MAY SWINDON
FRI 04 APRIL NORWICH	SAT 26 APRIL FALMOUTH	FRI 16 MAY CREWE	THU 12 JUNE BURY ST. EDMUNDS
SAT 05 APRIL WALSALL	THU 01 MAY GLASGOW	SAT 17 MAY BIRMINGHAM	FRI 13 JUNE WOKING
THU 17 APRIL BRENTWOOD	FRI 02 MAY SUNDERLAND	THU 22 MAY SHOREHAM-BY-SEA	SAT 14 JUNE EXETER

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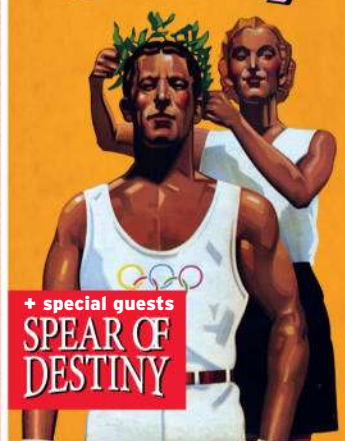
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FRI 20 SEPTEMBER BURY ST. EDMUNDS	FRI 15 NOVEMBER BRENTWOOD
SAT 21 SEPTEMBER SWINDON	SAT 16 NOVEMBER LINCOLN
FRI 04 OCTOBER WALSALL	THU 21 NOVEMBER GLASGOW
SAT 05 OCTOBER COVENTRY	FRI 22 NOVEMBER PERTH
TUE 15 OCTOBER FALMOUTH	SAT 23 NOVEMBER ABERDEEN
WED 16 OCTOBER EXETER	THU 28 NOVEMBER LONDON
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SAT 16 NOV BIRMINGHAM	THU 12 DEC BRISTOL
THU 21 NOV NEWCASTLE	FRI 13 DEC SOUTHAMPTON
FRI 22 NOV LEEDS	SAT 14 DEC BRIGHTON

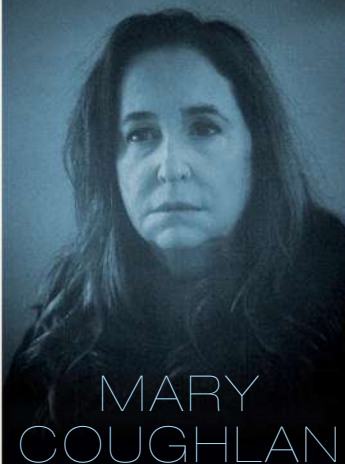
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TUE 22 APRIL MANCHESTER
WED 23 APRIL LEEDS
THU 24 APRIL GATESHEAD



# DIG THIS! SHOVEL DANCE COLLECTIVE'S ANARCHIC NEW TAKE ON FOLK

**S**TEELEYE SPAN meets Henry Cow meets the Wu-Tang Clan? London folk experimentalists Shovel Dance Collective have been delivering an esoteric combination of traditional song, improv and political consciousness-raising since they were drawn together for the first time by the concept of drone folk around Christmas 2020.

Drawn from a pool of hearteningly young musicians, Slade art college students and dissident anarcho punks, there are nine Shovel Dancers in total: in alphabetical order, Mataio Austin Dean (guitar, vocals), Joshua Barfoot (bodhrán, hammered dulcimer, percussion, vocals), Jacken Elswyth (banjo, shruti box, vocals), Daniel S Evans (drums, cello, cittern, guitar, piano, pipe organ), Nick Granata (organs, vocals), Oliver Hamilton (violin, vocals), Fidelma Hanrahan (harp, vocals), Tom Hardwick-Allan (harmonica, trombone, vocals), Alex McKenzie (accordion, burdola, clarinet, flute, whistles, vocals).

Some come from folkie backgrounds, but by no means all ("My parents are still kind of shocked that I'm doing this," admits Evans, whose father's idea of dad rock was the Pixies). Drawing in threads from a lot of far-left field music (US droners Pelt were an early influence on some members), they play a bewildering variety of acoustic instruments, and offer a new perspective on old songs plus an idealistic hive-mind creative vision.

"It's all both egalitarian and ad hoc," Elswyth says of the Shovel Dancers' modus operandi.

"Often people say, 'Who's the boss?'" adds Austin Dean. "And I say, No-one. And they say, 'Yeah, but who's really in charge?' And I'm like, Honestly, no-one."

That might explain the band's unruly recording career. Their moody 2022 debut *The Water Is The Shovel To The Shore* was an EP that got dangerously out of hand, the Shovel Dancers communing through lockdown isolation to forge a double LP-length collection of trad songs, riverside

noise and meditative instrumentals. "It just expanded into this behemoth," says Evans.

Members kept busy with a huge array of solo and smaller group projects (Gentle Stranger, caroline, peb, Sullow) while the collective's second LP slowly came together over the course of the last two years. A mix of studio recordings and pieces taped in other spaces (a church and – in the case of their Four-Loomed Weaver – an old warehouse), it shows that they can do Lankum-style dour: a gothic *The Worms Crept In*,

apocalyptic closer *The Grey Cock*. However, there is a hugely joyous feeling about much of the collection. The *Rolling Wave* is gleeful, their exploded *The Merry Golden Tree* is ecstatic, while a medley of *Kissing's Nae Sin/Newcastle/Portsmouth* exemplifies their sense of folk as an enlightened musical seance.

"The communication with past generations and the dead is kind of baked into the thing," says Austin Dean.

"I definitely draw some sort of comfort from thinking about the way people have expressed themselves through this music; their joys and sorrows," adds Elswyth, who feels that by breathing new life into these songs, the Shovel Dance Collective are drawing the dead into a new musical conversation: "We're playing with them, even though they're not there."

Jim Wirth

*Shovel Dance Collective's The Shovel Dance* is out October 11 on *American Dreams*.

**"Communication with the dead is kind of baked in."**

MATAIO AUSTIN DEAN, SDC



**Ace of spades:** Shovel Dance Collective converse with the deceased.

Pamela Springsteen, Jordan Reyes



Listen up for the month's freedom songs, indie-grot and bluegrass.

**1 WILLIE NELSON DO YOU REALIZE??**

Aged 91, reed-strong Willie sees anew the tripping-balls revelations of *The Flaming Lips*' 2002 gem. Beautiful.

Find it: [streaming services](#)

**2 STEVIE NICKS THE LIGHTHOUSE**

A grave call to defend women's rights after the US Supreme Court's decision to strike down *Roe Vs Wade*, this moves from a whisper to a roar.

Find it: [YouTube](#)



**3 KAKTUS EINARSSON GUMBRI (WITH DAMON ALBARN)**

Intriguing Icelander and friend rhyme wryly about life's magic

over mulchy dance-pop. From *Lobster Coda*, out this month.

Find it: [YouTube](#)

**4 P.J. HARVEY HOLLOWAY**

From Dickens stage adaption *London Tide*, actor Bella McLean voices *Our Mutual Friend*'s cash-strapped Bella Wilfer, reflecting on what's valuable, to a pure-P.J. soundtrack.

Find it: [YouTube](#)



**5 EX-VOID SWANSEA**

The Richard and Linda Thompson of 2020s indie grot follow up their duets in *The Tubs* with this instant classic of jangle-pop. Riffs galore that peak Marr would be proud of.

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**6 SEX PISTOLS AND FRANK CARTER MY WAY**

Heartfelt take on the Sid-sung song of finality, by the rump Pistols and Rotten's stand-in, live in September. To all absent friends.

Find it: [YouTube](#)

**7 BILLY STRINGS ESCANABA**

Lightning-fingered highlight of the guitar prodigy/weed proselytiser's new *Highway Prayers* LP. A bluegrass Django Reinhardt gone prog. Loosely.

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**8 LES HOMMES SONORISSIMA BAY**

The London organ trio bring mesmeric bongo exotica for mental flights of fancy. From *molto bene* new album *Si, Così*.

Find it: [YouTube](#)

**9 BOB DYLAN DESOLATION ROW**

Dylan live in Buffalo gives a rare outing to his storied classic, and whacks his mic stand with a spanner while he's at it. Industrial Dylan!

Find it: [YouTube](#)

**10 WEST 11 THE GREATER THE LOVE**

Ex-Lush/JAMC bassist Phil King and Beth 'Moon Safari' Hirsch combine for indie-grooving uplift. From LP *Atlantic Coast Highway*.

Find it: [streaming services](#)





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# The percussive force of the Faces, Small Faces, The Who and more on “cuddly” Don Arden, plans with Rod and Ron, and the tragic roll call of fallen comrades. “Too young... too young,” laments **Kenney Jones**.

Interview by **TOM DOYLE** • Portrait by **TOM OLDHAM**

**A**N EAST END LAD STANDING ON THE manicured pitch of his Hurtwood Park Polo Club in Surrey, where he has wielded a mallet alongside the royal formerly known as Prince Charles, Kenney Jones still can't quite believe the journey he's been on. "I was saying this morning," he grins, "Fucking hell, I'm 76 next week, and what the fuck has happened to me? What am I doing here?"

The septuagenarian drummer discovered his equestrian skills by chance in the 1960s, when Small Faces frontman Steve Marriott booked the band riding lessons in Epping Forest. "They all fell off, and I stayed on," Jones remembers. "And then I got hooked on it." When he turned 70 in 2018, he played his last polo match. "It is dangerous," he laughs. "Very dangerous. So you've got to be taught properly. Most of the time, you're not looking forward, you're looking behind you."

Jockey-sized and sporting a black, Ronnie Wood-designed shirt white-printed with images of the Faces, Jones is meeting MOJO to celebrate the release of the new *Faces At The BBC* box set of the band's radio sessions. While the group earned a reputation for their loose, thrilling rock'n'roll and drunken shenanigans, Jones says these recordings capture the Faces at their slightly less inebriated best.

"We still went to the pub," he says. "But because it was radio, and we were playing live, we had to just keep it together."

On a stool at the bar of his rustic club house, Jones recalls playing on his first hit, *Whatcha Gonna Do About It*, aged 15. From there, he

held on tight throughout the joyride that was the Small Faces' four-year career, before the band messily morphed into the Faces. Down the years, he enjoyed a parallel existence as a sessioneer for Chuck Berry, Joan Armatrading, The Rolling Stones and Status Quo. Famously, he became The Who's drummer after Keith Moon's shock death in 1978.

Looking back, he says, the only time he ever felt that fame inflated his head was as a young lad returning as a Small Face to his local pub in Stepney. "Every Sunday lunchtime I'd have a drink with my dad, seeing all my mates. I was telling them, 'I've been to Germany,' dah dah dah. One day, everybody was not really talking to me. My dad said, 'Every time we see you, it's all about you.' So, I thought, I'm not going to do this any more."

This ego-free attitude is much in evidence today, particularly when he relates his favourite tale about Britain's current monarch.

"We'd played a match, and I was having a pee," he smiles. "I said to my son, 'Has Prince Charles gone?' I hear this voice saying, 'No, he's still here'... it was Prince Charles. I was so surprised I turned round and pissed on his boots." He stops for a beat. "He's still got 'em..."

## WE'RE NOT WORTHY

**Zak Starkey, Ringo's lad, on a drumming mentor.**



"My dad gave me one lesson, but whenever Kenney was around he'd show me something to learn. If you listen to *Ogdens*, his fills were amazing. He can bump and grind, with incredible fills. It's a bit like my dad on uppers, even though Kenney didn't do drugs. He's brilliant... one of the greatest British rock'n'roll drummers."

**Your mum was an engraver and cutter in a glass factory, your dad a lorry driver. Was there much music in the house?**

Nah. My mum and dad used to scratch their heads and go, "What the fuck have we given birth to here?" They wondered where it came from. The only way I can trace it back is my great, great grandfather was a sergeant major in the Boer War and he played harmonica.

**The Krays were distant cousins on your father's side, and you're sure you must have met** ➤



◀ **them alongside other East End 'rogues'... Ever felt you might have been drawn into a criminal life?**

Oh, yeah. I mean, playing drums saved my life. I often wonder what I would have done. I was a nasty little tea leaf when I was a kid (*laughs*).

**You stole a Lambretta when you were 11?**

Yeah, with my mates. The clutch was broken on it, so we repaired the clutch, and we got caught with it. The guy got his Lambretta back and he said, "What the fuck? It's in better nick than I had it before."

**What was the first music that blew your mind?**

Skiffle. We had a little TV, looked like a big eyeball and this guy come on with a banjo. And that was Lonnie Donegan. When I heard Rock Island Line, aw, that was it.

**At the dawn of the '60s, you're there for the birth of Mod. It was a reaction to rockers?**

Yeah, the Italians brought the scooters over, and they also brought the Cuban heels. And they looked great. I always say a Mod developed out of a rocker.

**The first instrument to attract you was a banjo that you saw in a pawn shop window. But then a mate said another friend had a drum kit and he brought it over to your house. A revelation?**

Well it turned out to be a bass drum, a floor tom-tom, and two sticks, one of them broken in half. So I started playing it on one and a half sticks.

**You met Ronnie Lane via his brother Stan, which led to your first bands The Outcasts and The Pioneers in '64-65. Then you and Lane had a chance jam with the sales assistant in a music shop...**

Ronnie had a Gretsch guitar, and it was really too much for him. He said, "I want to play bass,

'cos it's easier." So we went into J60 [music shop in Manor Park, East London] and a cocky little guy said, "Can I help you?" So we said, "He wants to try bass." I saw this white drum kit and I said, "Shit, I like that." I started playing it, and Ronnie started playing bass. This guy, who turned out to be Steve Marriott, picked up a guitar. The shop's full of people now and we ended up almost getting thrown out of it because we were creating such noise. So we invited Steve to a Pioneers gig in a pub across Tower Bridge. He got on the piano and then all of a sudden, he was singing away, and it was like... "Fuck!" His voice was amazing. He stood on top of the piano and his feet broke one of the keys, so the landlord threw us all out. We ended up sitting on the curb, waiting for my dad to pick me up in his Ford Anglia. The three of us just looked at each other and burst out laughing. And that was to me the birth of the Small Faces.

**Weirdly, you'd had a recurring dream about the three of you performing on TV?**

Yeah, I saw Steve Marriott as clear as day. Before I'd even met him. It's strange, innit. It's a premonition. The Small Faces, we had this wonderful telepathy between us. He never told me what to play. I never told him what to play. None of us. We just knew what to do.

**Don Arden comes into the picture, and you negotiate a management/record deal with him. But you later discover that he was charging everything he spent against your paltry shared 1.5 per cent royalty. You've said he screwed you.**

Well, I don't think he *meant* to screw us, but he probably had a lot of debts. I don't know. As you get older, you get wiser. I'm constantly making excuses for him because he was a big teddy bear. He was a bit of a father figure, in a sense. He said, "Boys, I'll look after your money." As Ronnie Lane said, "Yeah, you certainly fucking did an' all!"

**So Arden wasn't as tough as his reputation?**

Nah nah nah. I can't imagine him being tough. In the '50s and '60s, it was all the rage to be a gangster. So Don Arden wanted to be one of them. When we first met him, he said, "I can sing opera," and he comes out with this (*hooting noise*). Woah, fucking hell (*laughs*). He was a bit like that.

**But it's true about him having Robert Stigwood hung out of a window when he tried to poach the band?**

Oh yeah, it happened. Someone else was hanging him out, not him. Basically, he was a bit paranoid. That's why we never went to America because he was frightened to let us go anywhere out of his sight.

**This is when the 'e' gets added into your name to avoid confusion with other musicians on the Performing Rights Society register. Yet you were still sometimes credited on records as "Kenny"?**

There were a few people in the PRS called Kenny Jones, Kenneth Jones, there must have been about seven. They were forever getting each other's royalties. I said, "Well, tell you what, stick an 'e' in mine." That's how it came about. The fact is, I like it without 'e'. But if I leave the 'e' out, the amount of stick I get for that...

**Take us to the house the Small Faces shared in Pimlico. Chaos? Not much sleep?**

No (*laughs*). None at all. I had my own room there but I thought, I'm gonna get no fucking sleep here. So I'd sleep at my house in the East End. I'd go round Pimlico and McCartney might be there, or Jagger, spliffing away. So it was great... I used to have a great night's sleep, wake up, go round there and they'd all be (*loud snoring noise*), sparko on the floor.

**Sha-La-La-Lee in 1966 reframes the Small Faces as a pop band and not everyone, particularly keyboard player Ian McLagan, was comfortable with that?**

**A LIFE IN PICTURES**

**If the Face fits: Kenney down the years.**

- 1** Lazy Sunday: a young Kenney Jones, with chum.
- 2** Portrait of a beatmaster: Jones behind his kit for a Small Faces TV appearance, Copenhagen, 1966.
- 3** Gone nuts: *Ogdens*-era Small Faces in London, 1968 (from left) Ian McLagan, Ronnie Lane, Kenney Jones, Steve Marriott.
- 4** Five guys walk into a bus: the Faces reckon it's someone else's round, September 1971 (from left) Jones, Rod Stewart, Ronnie Wood, McLagan, Lane.
- 5** Face dancing: The Who in 1981 (from left) Pete Townshend, Kenney Jones, Roger Daltrey, John Entwistle.
- 6** Groovy chukka: Jones in action during the Asprey World Class Cup, Hurtwood Park Polo Club, Ewhurst Green, Surrey, July 17, 2010.



Courtesy of Kenney Jones, Alamy/Getty (7)



Well, by this time, we could all play a lot better. We would jam all the time to Jimmy McGriff and Ray Charles and Booker T And The M.G.'s. But once you get a cute little set of boys all the same age, the cuteness took over.

**You split with Arden and Stones manager Andrew Loog Oldman comes in, signing you to his Immediate label. Did you feel empowered by Oldham?**

We were young, and kind of impressed with him. He had a Rolls-Royce Phantom with a phone in it. Really impressive. It worked as well. It had a big battery that took up all the boot. He was really into music, so he was geeing us up.

**The band embraced psychedelia with '67's Itchycoo Park and then '68's Ogdens' Nut Gone Flake. But you only experienced acid once when the band spiked you?**

Oh, yeah, IBC Studio. I don't know what came over me. It was awful. I went, "Look at my left hand!" I got too out of it. All I know is that was it. "Don't come near me with any of that fucking junkie shit." Drummers can't do that.

**Oldham mixed and released Lazy Sunday without your permission, and you all hated the idea of it as a single. Were you still angry even after it was a Number 2 hit?**

Yeah, because we were trying to lose this teenybopper image. It put fuel to the fire. It was only a bit of fun in the studio. When we were in Germany, we read about it in Melody Maker or somewhere like that. "We've got a hit record in the charts? Oh fuck me, it's that piece of shit." We weren't very happy with Andrew. Lazy Sunday... I can't stand it to this day.

**Marriott wanted Peter Frampton to join the band, but Ronnie Lane and Ian McLagan were totally against the idea. At the end of**

**'68, Marriott quits then heads off with Frampton to form Humble Pie. Did it all feel quite sudden?**

I don't think it was that sudden. I used to love Frampton's playing. For me when he started to play it was like a flower opening. I didn't realise that Steve and Peter were connecting. And so I think Steve saw a way out.

**You felt "short changed" when it came to the end of the Small Faces and believe if you'd toured Ogdens the band would've gone to the next level?**

**"I saw Steve Marriott as clear as day. Before I'd even met him. It's strange, innit. It's a premonition."**

Oh, I think so, yeah. If we'd have stayed together and done what The Who did with *Tommy*, maybe America would've opened their doors for us, and we could have gone on to do better things. But I think what happened was when we finished *Ogdens*, we thought, "How the fuck are we going to top this?" So that was going through Steve's mind as well... all our minds, but especially it got to him.

**Did you feel betrayed by Marriott when he left?**

I did a bit, yeah. It was like losing one of your soulmates, one of your brothers. Not just a friend, but part of you. When you're playing, all your emotions as musicians become as

one. And part of your emotion goes.

**You're rehearsing in the Stones' gear storage space in Bermondsey and Ronnie Lane invites Ronnie Wood, who in turn brings in Rod Stewart, and the Faces are born. A new lease of life instantly?**

Yeah. Rod didn't sing at all [at first]. Sat on the amps. Then he'd look at his watch and go, "Pub's open." So we went down to the Bermondsey Arms, got pissed on brandy. One day I said, "Rod, can I have a quiet word? You fancy joining the band?" He went, "Fucking hell, you think everyone would let me?" I said [to the rest of the group], "I've asked Rod to join the band." Little old me, y'know. The quiet one. They all went, "Oh, no, we don't want another prima donna... another Steve Marriott walking out on us." I just held my ground, and I won.

**But Rod already had a solo deal in place with Mercury. Did that imbalance the band from the off? You felt he was holding back some of his best material for his solo records?**

I've thought about that quite a lot. Yes, I think he was. I think everyone's guilty of it. Every frontman. 'Cos if they're doing solo stuff, they've got to deliver albums.

**The band's irreverent, knockabout vibe was always part of your charm. But was it also your weakness? Did you not look like you took it seriously enough?**

I'm still confused to this day 'cos it's a bit of a drunken blur (*grins*). No, I think, because we had such a rapport with the audience, the party atmosphere, they went with it. And there were times when we were sober enough to play properly...

**Did your own drinking intensify when you were in the band?**





"As you get older, you get wiser": Kenney Jones, still happy to have been a part of it, Hurtwood Park Polo Club, Ewhurst Green, Surrey, September 9, 2024.



◀ You couldn't help but do it. I love brandy and Coke. Port and brandy as well. I'll never forget when we were touring America, and they had this new beer called Löwenbräu. I drank so much of that, when I was playing, the sweat felt sticky. It was the Löwenbräu coming out.

**By *Ooh La La* in '73, Rod was distracted and apparently didn't turn up for the first two weeks of the sessions. Then he slated the LP in the press as "a stinking rotten album". Not long after, Ronnie Lane quit... Were the Faces not really viable without him?**

It didn't really work. As Rod said to me, "When Ronnie left the band, the spirit of the band left."

**Free's Tetsu Yamauchi replaced Lane on bass. He too apparently enjoyed a drink?**

Oh, a bottle of Teacher's every fucking day. He'd go on-stage and when he was sober, he was fine. But he'd end up leaning against the amp, that sort of thing.

**In '73, you play on the Stones' *It's Only Rock 'N Roll (But I Like It)* which comes out of a jam session you have with Jagger at Ronnie Wood's home studio...**

We all lived around Richmond Park. So, as soon as I've got one foot into bed, the phone would ring. "Kenney, we haven't got a drummer." (*Blearily*) "All right, Ronnie, I'll be right round." You'd go round and one night Clapton would be there, another night Bob Dylan would be there. I get this phone call again; drive nervously around the park 'cos I'd had a brandy and Coke. I get round there and there was just me and Jagger in the studio. Don't forget it's about four o'clock in the fucking morning now. We were playing and Jagger said, "Oh, I like that, play it like that." I said, "It's only rock'n'roll." He said, "But I like it." It was daylight when I left, and I thought nothing more about it. I kept thinking about Charlie when I was there. What would Charlie do? When I found out they were going to release it as a single, I said, "I only did it as a fucking demo." I called up Charlie and said, "I really didn't want this to happen, man, I'm sorry." He said, "No it's OK, Kenney. It sounds like me anyway." (*Laughs*) Only Charlie would be so gracious.

**Small Faces tried to reunite with the original line-up in the mid '70s. How soon did Ronnie Lane and Steve Marriott start arguing?**

Straight away they didn't get on. By that time there'd been the space between us, and Ronnie became more Ronnie, and Steve became more Steve.

**Was the Small Faces' reunion without Lane, which produced two poor-selling albums (1977's *Playmates* and '78's *78 In The Shade*), worthwhile in any way?**

We shouldn't have done it. It didn't seem complete. My soul was not totally in it. It was just around about the punk time. Steve was, like, gobbing all over everybody and swearing. I just thought, "Oh fuck, I don't like this."

**Hiring boozy, unpredictable ex-Thunderclap Newman/Wings guitarist Jimmy McCulloch in the latter stages of the reunion... was that a bit, "Here we go again...?"**

Oh Jimmy was great. He was the only breath of fresh air in that. He wasn't really a nutter; he'd just get out of it. He was a great guitarist, great to play with... I'll never forget going to his funeral, and Steve's. It's kind of weird, just being there, going, "Oh fuck, they're not here any more." Too young... too young.

**You and Keith Moon were pals from the days when The Who and the Small Faces toured together in the '60s. You saw Moon the night before his death in September '78, when you attended a screening of *The Buddy Holly***

**Story organised by Paul McCartney. How did Keith seem?**

I said, "How you been?" He said, "Yeah, great. I'm not taking any drugs, and I've stopped drinking completely." I turn the TV on in the morning, and the news came on: "Keith Moon was found dead in his flat last night." I said, "What the fuck? I just left him. He's up to mischief again." I never believed it. Then I found out it was real. Keith's funeral was in Golders Green, and I didn't want to see anyone. So I crept up, I did a little poem, little bunch of flowers, and I just left it and nipped out, so no one knew I was there.

**You initially turned down the offer to be his replacement in The Who because you were in the early stages of working with your new band, *Lazy Racer*?**

I got a call from [Who manager] Bill Curbishley and he said, "Kenney, The Who have had a meeting, Pete, Roger and John. They want you to join the band. They're not considering anyone else." I said, "That's quite a compliment, but I can't." He said, "Well, Pete's coming into

## SMALL WONDERS

The best of Kenney on the kit. By Tom Doyle.

### THE PSYCHEDELIC URCHINS

#### Small Faces

★★★★★

#### Ogdens' Nut Gone Flake

(IMMEDIATE, 1968)



Recorded in fits and starts over five months, the Small Faces' magnum opus was broken into two parts: the 'straighter' side one and the conceptual second side, *Happiness Stan*, in which professional garbler Stanley Unwin related the tale of the titular character's attempts to find the missing half of the moon. Jones's drumming drives it all along: see his ever-shifting rolls in the title track and the way *Afterglow* explodes.

### THE BOOZY BROTHERHOOD

#### Faces

★★★★★

#### A Nod Is As Good As A Wink... To A Blind Horse

(WARNER BROS, 1971)



The Faces' third was their most cohesive, and successful (Number 2 in the UK, Number 6 in the States). Rod's summer '71 solo hit with Maggie May hadn't hurt, and as a result, touring in America, as Jones notes, "We were bigger than the Stones, which is unbelievable." Low-slung opener *Miss Judy's Farm* set the tone, thrillingly speeding up partway through, while *Stay With Me* demonstrated Jones's penchant for swing over flash.

### THE WOUNDED WARHORSE

#### The Who

★★★

#### Face Dances

(POLYDOR, 1981)



Jones's heavy, groovy playing is a stark contrast to the late Keith Moon's fiery flailing, and his fills, particularly on *You Better You Bet*, are of a more orchestral bent. John Entwistle's *The Quiet One* was meanwhile inspired by a metal-y beat he heard Jones playing. But for the drummer, the kit sound Eagles producer Bill Szymczyk achieved in the studio was unsatisfactory, sounding to his ears wet and "pudding"-like.

the office this afternoon... come and see him." I was always happy to see Pete 'cos we were so close. We talked for about two hours about the good old days. Then Pete went, "You've got to join the band. You're one of us." When I did join, I said, "Well, I'm not going to copy Keith Moon." I could only play me.

**Was it an almost impossible task?**

Well, I never felt like I was taking his place. People would say, "What's it like to fill Keith's shoes?" I'd say, "Nah... wrong fucking shoe size for a start."

**You took some flak from fans and critics during the subsequent tour. That must have been frustrating.**

It was unfair. No one had enough time to mourn the death of Keith, 'cos it happened too quick.

**The disaster in Cincinnati at the Riverside Coliseum on December 3, 1979 – where 11 fans were killed in a crush – must have been a horrible thing to happen around the band. You didn't find out until you came off-stage?**

What happened was all around the building were so many doors that should have been left open, and they weren't. Two buses arrived late, and we'd already started playing. So, they rushed down this flight of stairs... I knew something was up. It was weird, because I didn't see anyone on the side of the stage. Then Bill Curbishley, as soon we'd done the last song, *Won't Get Fooled Again*, shouts out, "Come





## “People would say, ‘What’s it like to fill Keith Moon’s shoes?’ I’d say, Nah... wrong fucking shoe size.”

straight off... no encore!” We were straight in the dressing room, and he told us what had happened. And it seemed like the whole room filled up with water.

**You say you “virtually taught” Ringo’s son Zak Starkey to play drums? You gave him one of Moon’s old kits when he was learning to play?**

I was talking to Zak one day, and Maureen his mum. He said, “Keith kept saying he was gonna give me his drum kit, the white one.” So when I was rehearsing one day at Shepperton Studios, I said, “Put it in the van.” So we drove it over to Zak, set it up in his front room. It took up all the fucking room. When he came home from school I said, “Zak, I’ve got a surprise for you.” He couldn’t believe it, all these drums. He was 13, 14, something like that.

**So did it feel somehow like fate that Zak would end up in The Who in ‘96? Or was it a bit weird?**

It was fine. When he joined The Who, I thought, Great, good on you.

**Down the years there have been sporadic Faces reunions. The first was at Wembley**

**Stadium in 1986, when you joined Rod on-stage. Bill Wyman stepped in on bass and Ronnie Lane stuck to singing due to his debilitating MS. An emotional night?**

Very emotional. ‘Cos all of us were more worried and concerned about Ronnie than anything else. Losing Ronnie [Lane passed in 1997] was a big problem for me. We started everything so it was kind of strange.

**Then you, Rod and Ronnie Wood performed here at the polo club in 2015 and then reunited again for the Brit Awards in 2020. Any chance of more shows?**

It’s always being talked about, all the time. People want it more than we realise. So let’s put it this way, we’re getting closer and closer.

**Ronnie has talked up the possibility of a new Faces album, made up of fresh material [from 2021] and unreleased songs from the past. How’s that going?**

It’s taking a long time. Basically, Woody and I have been in the studio together – he plays guitar, and I play drums to it, then Ronnie plays bass, and that’s about it, and we hang on to these ideas. We’ve done about 10 or 11 tracks.

Some are great. Some are not. And we’re discovering [older] stuff all the time. I’ve got loads of my multi-tracks. I’ve got about 350, same with Woody. So we’ve got to try and go in the studio and listen to it *all* and be inspired by other ideas. Also, if we can get some tracks together with Ronnie [Lane] and Mac on them, even better.

**Would you be up for one last world tour?**

‘Course. Fucking right! What, are you going to rehearse for two or three weeks and just do one show? Nah. But the emotional side of it is the fact that Ronnie and Mac are not there. We were thinking, “Who’s going to take the place of Mac?” Steve Winwood came up. It’d be lovely. Watch this space.

**Ultimately, when you look back, any regrets?**

No, no regrets. I’m just happy to be alive and here.

**And your proudest achievements?**

I sum it up this way – the Small Faces were the most creative band I’ve ever been in; the Faces were the most jovial and drunken and wonderful; and The Who were the most exciting. So, I’m happy to have been part of it. **M**







# PRIMITIVE COOL

PRE-EMPTING PUNK IN A MUSICAL WILDERNESS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE GLOBE, **THE SAINTS** MADE MUSIC THAT WAS SAVAGE AND EXHILARATING. BAD LUCK, BAD VIBES AND WUTHERING HEIGHTS SPELT THEIR DEMISE, BUT AS A NEW BOX SET UNDERLINES, THEY'VE REMAINED A BEACON FOR ARTISTS INCLUDING NICK CAVE, MUDHONEY, EVEN SPRINGSTEEN. "IT WAS A QUEST TO MAKE OUR OWN CULTURE," THEY TELL **ANDREW PERRY**.

**C**

IN A MUGGY EVENING IN SUBTROPICAL BRISBANE IN JUNE 1976, A surly band of late-teenagers collectively known as The Saints entered a local studio, in a despairing effort to make their roar of frustration heard.

Even within Australia, their home city was regarded as a backwards country town by the more sophisticated folks in Sydney and Melbourne, and its state government under Queensland's right-wing premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen was notoriously repressive, using state-of-emergency measures to quash trades union and anti-war demonstrations.

After convening at Corinda State High School in 1971, singer Chris Bailey, guitarist Ed Kuepper and drummer Ivor Hay had already been chiselling at a fierce aural response to the geo-political situation for five years, their dissatisfaction further exacerbated by Brisbane's moribund music scene. Lame boogie-rock covers combos prevailed, and venue bookers shunned The Saints for not playing ball.

"In Australia generally, nobody took native bands or the potential of music here seriously," says Mick Harvey, who, along with Nick Cave, saw a life-changing Saints gig at Melbourne's Tiger Room in April '77, which directly influenced their band, The Birthday Party. "It was all Olivia Newton-John, and Howzat by Sherbet. The Saints were really in the vanguard of changing all that."

Forced to cut their teeth live via rowdy parties at the city centre shopfront they'd occupied on Petrie Terrace, they routinely played to 20 or 30 mates who all agreed they'd got one song which channelled the youthful anger they felt in Brisbane – isolated, disenfranchised, hopeless. For them, (I'm) Stranded nailed it.

With zero prospects of reaching more people even locally, Kuepper, who'd left school at 16 to work in the distribution warehouse at Astor Records, struck upon the idea of recording and releasing the song themselves. ➤

Nowhere to run to:  
The Saints in Brisbane,  
Australia, 1976 (from left)  
Ed Kuepper, Chris Bailey,  
Ivor Hay, Kym Bradshaw.

Credit in here





Angelic upstairs: The Saints rocking Club 76, their live-in venue at 4 Petrie Terrace, Brisbane, (from left) Bailey, Kuepper, Hay, Bradshaw; (insets) 1976 original punk blueprints (from left) *Ramones*, The Saints' self-released 45, *The Damned's New Rose*.

“Making a record was a world of mystery to us,” says Kuepper today, “until I noticed these people coming into Astor to have custom pressings done – usually country & western or folk singers. It was amazing, you could bring in a tape, and later go out with a whole pile of records.”

So, in September '76 they collectively stumped up 500 dollars for studio hire and another 500 for manufacture of a single, blasted out (I'm) Stranded and B-side No Time in a few hours, and eagerly awaited the end product of this magical process.

“When we got the box of records in at Petrie Terrace,” says Hay, “we put one on the record player, and the world just sort of lit up. Ed, Chris, me, and all our friends, went outside and danced around in the street in the rain, so elated that we'd got this far – the single worked!”

At 48 years' distance, (I'm) Stranded still resonates as a singular howl from the void. It quickly transpired, however, that The Saints were not alone. Similar feral energies were bubbling in Anglo-American rock: two or three weeks earlier, the Ramones' debut long-player landed from New York, and the following month, The Damned's *New Rose* became UK punk rock's inaugural waxing.

Within a few months, the four firebrands were transplanted 10,000 miles away to London, where their confrontational attitude proved to be insufficient armour against the brutal British record business.

Under fire, they cut three fast-evolving albums whose subsequent influence has been colossal on artists from Cave and Mudhoney through to contemporary Aussie punks Amyl & The Sniffers, while a copy of their self-released 45 has been archived at their home country's equivalent of the Smithsonian Institute as a totem of indigenous rock. Next month, a vinyl box set is due, consisting of their debut album – also (I'm) Stranded – plus a demo mix, contemporaneous singles and live tracks from 1977 shows in Sydney and London. It's an overdue reminder of their potency and enduring value.

At the time, though, none of The Saints' evident strengths could save them from bitter ruin.

**A**N ALBUM RELEASED IN THE 1990s STYLED THE SAINTS as 'The Most Primitive Band In The World'. Recorded on a mono cassette deck in Kuepper's parents' garage in 1974, it captures the formative ensemble blasting through tracks destined for February 1977's full-length debut, (I'm) Stranded, plus a couple of R&B covers, with a corrosive sound predating Transatlantic punk by a clear two years. As with other prescient acts including Ohio's Rocket From The Tombs and Ontario's Simply Saucer, there's a wonderful romance about these wayward youths incubating proto-punk in isolation.

“It was a quest to make our own culture,” says Kuepper, “to have something that was valid. I bought *Funhouse* by The Stooges in 1971, on the strength of one of the worst reviews I had ever read of a record, and that was kind of the shining light. At my instigation, there was a certain trashy aesthetic, liking mid-'60s Elvis films [they'd cover Kissin' Cousins], just because you knew it would rub people the wrong way. All this stuff is what bonded us.”

There was, however, a deeper bond between Kuepper and combustible frontman Bailey.

“Chris was born in Kenya, but had this Northern Irish parental background, quite political,” says Hay. “He had one brother and five sisters, who all doted on him, and one of them, Margaret, was involved with the feminist movement. He also had ties with the local Communist Party and the Anti-Vietnam Moratorium.”

“Then, Ed's parents were immigrants from Bremen, Germany, which had been bombed to hell in the war – literally, young refugees coming to a new country with Ed under their arm. I think they both found commonality in a disconnectedness they'd both come through, and the music that came out reflected the growth they found in each other.”

For their initial songs, Kuepper would write a verse and a chorus, Bailey added lyrics and they'd finish them collectively in rehearsals, which, their guitarist adds, “were diligent, not just drunk-fests”. Often short of a bassist, Kuepper and Hay discovered a unique, combined rhythmic propulsion.

(I'm) Stranded came to Kuepper as he sat on a railway platform

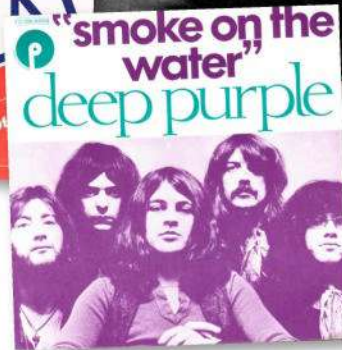
Jennifer Ray Gow, Richard Bella/Dalle/Comichix, George Bodnar Archive/ConcPix, Bledbyn Butcher



"WE'D PLAY SOAKED THROUGH WITH SWEAT, THEN CLIMB ONTO THE ROOF AND HURL INSULTS AT PASSING POLICEMEN. LIKE EVERYONE ELSE, THEY HATED US." KYM BRADSHAW



Doing the robot: (clockwise from main) The Saints kill it at London's Marquee, autumn 1977 (from left) Bailey, Algy Ward, Kuepper, Hay; solo-era Ed Kuepper; mid-'80s vintage Bailey in Paris; (insets) unholy spirit of '76 vibes from Sherbet and Deep Purple.



in suburban Auchenflower. "To clarify," he laughs, "it wasn't because the train never arrived – I was just waiting for the next one, bored out of my mind." Other songs ranted at consumer culture – the Stones' Satisfaction updated for the mid '70s.

All of this chafed against the gatekeepers of the Brisbane covers scene, where, says Hay, "Smoke On The Water was the big song of the period. There were a lot of satin outfits, and this thumping boogie music, which people would do this weird mechanical stomp to – that's where [Kuepper's song] Do The Robot came from."

By '75, The Saints had found fanboy bassist Kym Bradshaw, and, unable to play anywhere else, they'd do shows at Petrie Terrace.

"Me and Ivor lived there, and we renamed it Club 76," says Bradshaw. "We'd converted the shop front into a space for the audience to go. It'd be 90 degrees outside, humidity at 100 per cent, and this place would be packed. We'd play soaked through with sweat, then afterwards climb onto the roof to cool off, drink beer, and hurl insults at passing policemen from the nearby cop shop. Like everyone else, they hated us."

**R**ECORDING (I'M) STRANDED ALSO REQUIRED THE Saints to plot an unconventional path. First there was the studio: Bruce Window, which majored in advertising jingles.

"It was a 16-track place, verging on the pokey side," Kuepper recalls, "and we loaded in under cover of darkness. The engineer, Mark Moffatt, made it clear that he definitely didn't like what we were doing musically, but he was a generous fellow, and even lent me a better amp than the one I had. We recorded and mixed the two tracks for the single that night in about five or six hours."

At playback the next day, Bradshaw, who, uniquely among the band, had experienced The Saints' assault from the audience, suggested that the recordings needed beefing up. They hastily multi-tracked Kuepper's guitar 10 or more times, each track very slightly out of phase, "to get this really thick wall of sound".

While the tapes were at the pressing plant awaiting manufacture, their mood was deflated when a friend brought over a copy of *Ramones*. "We were like, Aw fuck, we're no longer unique!" Kuepper sighs.

Still hoping for recognition, he mailed out many of the initial 530 plain-sleeved 45s (now worth £1,500 each) to record companies and music mags, including Sounds in London, where punk rock was exploding but as yet unrecorded. Sounds declared (I'm) Stranded Single Of The Week in multiple issues during the latter months of 1976.

Initially, the band were unaware of the accolade: UK music papers took eight weeks to reach Brisbane, and none of them had a phone. The first they heard was when Kuepper and his girlfriend went for Sunday lunch at his parents' place, which they'd used as a contact address. "Mum presented me with this massive pile of telegrams from record companies, and letters with pound notes in them from people wanting to buy the single. It was both confusing and incredibly exciting."

The Aussie office of EMI dismissed their approach, but when fledgling indie Power Exchange licensed (I'm) Stranded for a British single release, EMI's London HQ, who'd just signed the Sex Pistols and were readying *Anarchy In The UK* for the shops, "put the hard word" on their Antipodean colleagues to secure The Saints on a three-album contract.

By early December, as the Anarchy bus trundled fruitlessly across England and Wales, Kuepper and co were back in Bruce Window with EMI Australia's in-house producer Rod Coe, bashing out a further nine songs as-live in two days for the uncompromising (I'm) Stranded LP.

Upon its release in February '77, to a fanfare of gushing reviews, their overseers at EMI subsidiary Harvest were agreed: The Saints were the right band at the right time, but in the wrong place. In early June, barely into their twenties, the four youngsters were packed off to London with scant managerial guidance or ➤



**Product placement:** The Saints contain their delight at being in Plymouth, June 29, 1977 (from left) Kuepper, Bailey, Bradshaw, Hay.



**Saints alive:** Bailey and Kuepper reunited at the Forum, Melbourne, January 14, 2009; (above) The Saints in March 1982 (from left) Janine Hall, Bailey, Ian Shedden; (inset) Wuthering Heights, AKA This Perfect Day's chart nemesis.

**"CHRIS COULD BE STUBBORN, AND HAD A MISCHIEVOUS STREAK, SEEING HOW FAR THINGS COULD BE PUSHED, WHICH COULD BE NASTY." IVOR HAY**

◀ professional experience. Within a mere 16 months, they had imploded.

**T**HE SAINTS WERE WAY AHEAD OF THE punk curve: their disdain for mid-'70s rock; the DIY release to circumnavigate the mainstream biz (four months before Buzzcocks' *Spiral Scratch* EP); and even the multitracked wall-of-guitars characteristically purloined by Steve Jones for *Never Mind The Bollocks, Here's The Sex Pistols*. So they had plenty going for them when they landed in Blighty, but on an inter-personal level they were fatally flawed.

"At the beginning," reflects Hay, "Chris and Ed really supported each other in their own way. It wasn't that Chris was secretive, but there was a rehearsal one time in Ed's garage, and Chris just wasn't in the game that day, and Ed said, 'What the fuck is wrong with you?' Chris said, 'My father just died.' Ed was genuinely shocked, like, 'Why the hell didn't you tell us?'"

"There was never much talking," says Hay. "There was Chris's weird way of doing stuff, and Ed used to find it hard to show emotion. Once we went to England, Chris didn't seem to feel he needed that support thing any more, like he could do everything himself."

Immediately on arrival, The Saints were stricken by their first disaster. On June 5 and 6, 1977, without any warm-ups, they opened for the Ramones and Talking Heads at the Roundhouse, and everything went wrong: Kuepper broke strings and blew an amp; Hay's bass drum pedal died. The UK punk fraternity's first impression was they dressed boring, and stood there like statues.

The only visual document of The Saints playing live derives from Sydney's Paddington Town Hall two months earlier (the audio is included in November's box set), and indeed, there's no leaping around. As Mick Harvey aptly says, "they'd just stand and deliver."

Several days after the Roundhouse, Harvest rushed them into Wessex studios with Pistols engineer Bill Price to cut another explosive single, *This Perfect Day*. Hopes were still high, and when it charted promisingly at Number 34 in the UK chart in mid-July, the label secured a *Top Of The Pops* appearance, usually guaranteed to propel a song further upwards.

"We watched the show on the boat over to Paris the next day," says Hay, "really excited about what lay ahead, but instead of moving up, it dropped straight out of the charts again, because EMI was so busy pressing *Wuthering Heights* for Kate Bush, there wasn't



any stock in the shops. After that, it felt like it became this self-perpetuating thing, like, 'If you're not moving up, we'll just focus on other artists.'"

**A**FTER THEIR INITIAL SHOWS IN THE UK and Europe, Kuepper and Hay flew back down under to collect more belongings, while Bailey, dating an EMI publicist, stayed on. With the mood increasingly sullen, Bradshaw quit to join The Lurkers, then Captain Sensible's solo band, before leaving music for investment banking.

"I was more comfortable working with other people," he says.

With Alasdair 'Algy' Ward – later of The Damned – substituting on bass, The Saints' autumn tour played out under a bombardment of saliva, and Kuepper began to cut a confrontational figure, incensed by patronising music-press headlines like "Would you let these men tie your kangaroo down, sport?" Harvest's effort to steer the band towards the new wave via matching green suits was "met with derisive laughter", says Kuepper, not too ruefully.

Despite their faltering commercial trajectory, however, The Saints remained creatively impeccable. By October, they were back at Wessex recording a second album, much of it written pre-London, but with lyrics raging against the machine that was exploiting yet undervaluing them. *Know Your Product* led off the campaign with a swaggering brass riff as its chorus. Released as a single in February '78, almost two years before The Clash deployed horns on *London Calling*, it was anything but standard-issue punk and failed to chart. Undeterred, for their third UK tour they hired a horn section, but that sparked the disagreement which split the band.

"Chris had this idea that they should be dressed in tuxedos, and I really hated the idea," sniffs Kuepper. "I wanted it to look like a rock'n'roll band, and not cater to that silly showbusiness idea. Anyway, the tour didn't go that brilliantly, and Chris left."

Even before their second album, *Eternally Yours*, was released in May 1978, The Saints had effectively split, yet re-formed on a temporary basis to record a third, *Prehistoric Sounds*. At the sessions, Bailey pushed in a soulful direction, arguing successfully for Otis Redding and Aretha Franklin covers, while Kuepper explored brass in a less definably generic style.

"I didn't want to be a white R&B band," he says today. "Looking back, it's easy to see how the two could've been reconciled, but that wasn't an option for me at the time. We had no manager, and

Shutterstock, Retna/Avalon, Bledbyn Butcher



a wiser head might've just advised us to take a holiday. It would've been great to continue."

For his part, Hay reveals that he and Ward hadn't been told the band was already over.

"I don't have a clear memory of Ed and Chris wrestling on the ground or anything," he says. "There might've been times where Chris drank too much and got snarly. He could be stubborn, and had a mischievous streak, seeing how far things could be pushed, which could be nasty. Ed wouldn't say a lot, but that was all just the normal dysfunctional Saints we'd come to know and love! Chris obviously thought he was a big boy now and could do his own thing and be in control."

The day after *Prehistoric Sounds* came out in October '78, it was announced that The Saints were over.

**E**VEN AS THE REPUTATION OF THEIR three mould-breaking albums has burgeoned across the intervening 46 years, Bailey, Kuepper and Hay never enjoyed a related payday. In the immediate aftermath, Bailey bought the rights to The Saints' name and traded on it for a further 11 albums, but, claims Kuepper, "he always had a chip on his shoulder about the original band, because it flew a little bit higher."

"In our early days," says Mudhoney's Mark Arm, "The Saints were foundational. When I'd throw out a 'yeah' or a 'c'mon' in Touch Me I'm Sick, that was a nod to The Saints. Burn It Clean was our attempt to do the fast chord changes in This Perfect Day, and failed miserably. My fingers don't move that fast! So we ended up putting it on a B-side."

Post-split, Kuepper, deprived of their £60-a-week EMI wage, had no option but to return home and start again, initially with the skronky Laughing Clowns, thereafter as a classy left-field solo artist, and, intermittently, with The Aints.

In 2001, the original Saints briefly reunited on-stage at the ARIAs, AKA the Aussie Grammys, only to be overshadowed by world events – it was 9/11. In the '00s, both Kuepper and Bailey were drafted into Nick Cave's Bad Seeds, Bailey for a duet on '03's *Nocturama*, and Kuepper replacing Harvey mid-tour circa '08's *Dig, Lazarus, Dig!!!* "I was a bit of a fifth wheel," he concedes.

Harvey, ironically, occasioned the only full Saints reunion, as curator of '09's touring Aussie version of the All Tomorrow's Parties festival, where they played (*I'm Stranded*) in full, but it was frictional, and the following year's Bailey-Kuepper duo shows saw the inebriated singer mouthing off on-stage, leading to what Kuepper drily terms "a separate limos situation".

"Over time, Chris's drinking became totally debilitating to his health," says Hay, who drummed on Bailey's *All Fools Day* in '86, and, after leaving music to become a technical writer, remained in contact with the singer at his home in Haarlem, Holland. "He'd become pretty reclusive. A year before he died, he'd lost a kidney and had some sort of gangrene in his leg, which was going to be amputated."

"During Covid," says Kuepper, "I spoke to him a few times about doing something around the box set, and we probably got on better than we had for decades. Often times our phone conversations would end in mildly abusive tirades, and I remember saying to my wife he almost sounded reflective. I didn't know he was going to die, though, and it's slightly mysterious how he actually did so."

After Bailey passed on April 9, 2022, Kuepper and Hay have enlisted Harvey (second guitar), Arm (vocals) and Sunnyboys' Pete Oxley (bass) plus a three-piece brass section to air the original Saints repertoire across 12 Aussie shows in November, with a UK visit possibly late next year.

"I just accept the fact that we'll never really get our dues, and I don't let it get to me," concludes Kuepper. "Rehearsals won't start in earnest for a little while yet." He smiles. "We don't want to get too good, you know?"

*The Saints' (I'm) Stranded 4-LP deluxe edition is released on In The Red on November 15. A new Saints album, The Long March Through The Jazz Age, featuring Chris Bailey performances and the latest line-up of the band, is released in January 2025 on the Saints label.*



# HALLOWED GROUND

**BEYOND (I'M) STRANDED – 10 MORE TOP-DRAWER SAINTS AND RELATED TUNES. BY ANDREW PERRY.**

Desolation Row-style symbolism (the narrator's a "one-eyed midwit with a curse"). Could they ever have topped it?

## THE SAINTS

### The Prisoner

(from *Prehistoric Sounds LP*, Harvest, 1978)

Another extraordinary stand-out from their valedictory waxing, its ace perambulatory Algy Ward bass line propelling The Saints' answer to Dylan's Ballad Of A Thin Man (which they formatively covered), as Bailey scathingly yowls of "a man in a cage", imprisoned by straight society.

## LAUGHING CLOWNS

### Year Of The Bloater Goat

(from *Everything That Flies Is Not A Bird EP*, Red Flame/Prince Melon, 1983)



Ed Kuepper's next band was a five-year exercise in abandoning punk for more experimental

pastures, often tinged with skronk-jazz thanks to foregrounded sax and trumpet, but also packing infectious moments like YOTBG, whose gambolling alt-rock is topped with a quintessential Kuepper horn-riff chorus.

## THE SAINTS

### Just Like Fire Would

(from *All Fools Day LP*, Mushroom, 1986)



With 1984's mournful down-under hit Ghost Ships, Bailey sought to "make strings as powerful as Les Pauls and Marshalls," but this smouldering Springsteenian rocker is the pick of his post-split Saints repertoire, so great that Bruce himself covered it on 2014's *High Hopes*.

## ED KUEPPER

### Everything I've Got Belongs To You

(from *Honey Steel's Gold*, Hot, 1991)



Starting with '85's *Electrical Storm*, Kuepper's solo incarnation helped define Antipodean alt-rock, and he

finally broke through with the ARIA-winning *HSG*, and this attendant Top 30 Aussie hit, whose lyrics of break-up malice are offset by rolling acoustic/piano splendour.

## THE AINTS!

### Red Aces

(from *The Church Of Simultaneous Existence*, ABC Music, 2018)



In the '90s, Kuepper's Aints reignited the energies of '77-78 Saints. In 2017, he convened a new line-up and added an exclamation mark to air unreleased Harvest-era compositions, including this brass-ed-up banger which was up against Know Your Product for single selection but was instead, bafflingly, shelved.

## THE SAINTS

### Messin' With The Kid

(from *I'm Stranded LP*, Harvest, 1977)

The Saints' debut album was a pulse-racing blammo affair nodding to The Stooges, early Stones and Aussie '60s-garage brutes The

Missing Links, except for this spectacularly elegant hymn for the downtrodden, evoking that broken feeling in the Faces' Debris. "It makes you crawl," indeed.

## THE SAINTS

### This Perfect Day

(Harvest single, 1977)



The Antipodean emigrés' first London recording was written by Kuepper in Brisbane the previous

Christmas Day while his parents were out at church, on his dad's classical guitar. Its breakneck chord changes and Bailey's ferocious attitude have attracted covers by The Fall and Tropical Fuck Storm.

## THE SAINTS

### Know Your Product

(Harvest single, 1978)



Disgusted by the orchestrated brass deployed by early-'70s musos such as Chicago, Kuepper says he "heard horns in a melodic role", here effectively making a blaring trumpets-and-sax riff the chorus of a rollicking anti-capitalist rock tune. Since aped by Thee Hypnotics and Mudhoney, but never bettered.

## THE SAINTS

### No, Your Product

(from *Eternally Yours LP*, Harvest, 1978)



A Who-ishy expansive four minutes, exhausting in its fury, about breaking free of society's many draggy impediments, seemingly a response to both borderline-apartheid Queensland and racist London, where Bailey saw "NF banners flying in the wind/Like free lobotomies/I don't recommend one".

## THE SAINTS

### Swing For The Crime

(from *Prehistoric Sounds LP*, Harvest, 1978)

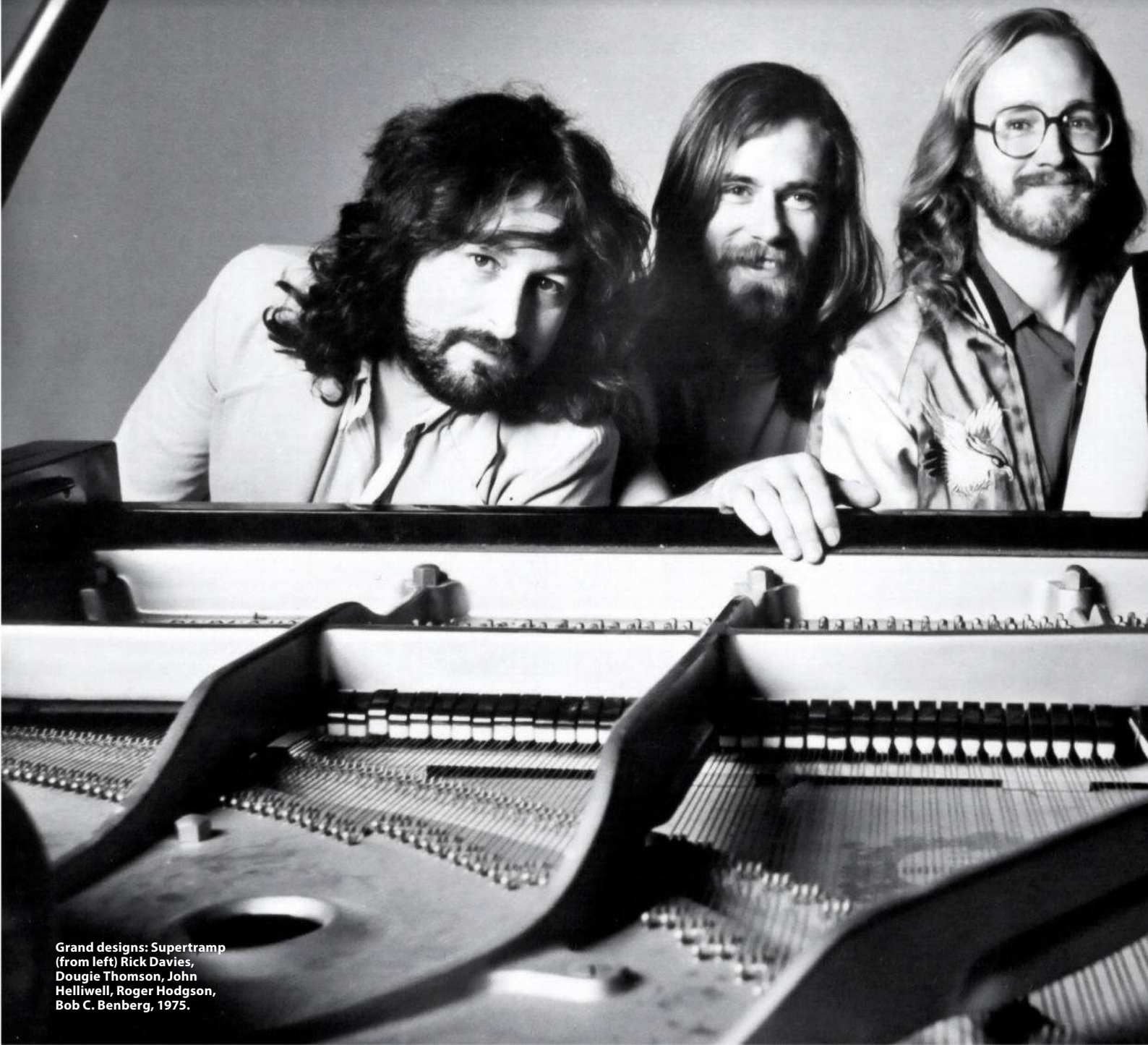


Less than two years after (*I'm Stranded*), The Saints, about to disband, hit this peak of sophistication thanks to Hay's choppy polyrhythms, Kuepper's sweeping brass and Bailey's



# THE ART OF

TAKE A SONGWRITING ODD COUPLE, ZIGGY'S PRODUCER AND A PLATE OF HASH CAKES... 50 YEARS AGO, **SUPERTRAMP**'S **CRIME OF THE CENTURY** CAME FROM NOWHERE TO RANK AMONG THE DECADE'S BIGGEST ALBUMS. BUT IT WASN'T JUST THE FANS, OR CRITICS, WHO WERE AMAZED. "WHEN WE HEARD IT, OUR MINDS WERE BLOWN," THE BAND TELL **PHIL ALEXANDER**.



Grand designs: Supertramp (from left) Rick Davies, Dougie Thomson, John Helliwell, Roger Hodgson, Bob C. Benberg, 1975.



# The tramp



“I AM AS BROAD-MINDED AS THE NEXT man, but I was surprised to see bare breasts on the cover of Supertramp’s *Indelibly Stamped* album. I was also astounded to see contraceptives on the cover of Birth Control’s album. Are album covers going to get more obscene? If so, something should be done about it.” So began a letter from outraged reader C Allen of Tooting that appeared in the issue of British weekly music paper *Melody Maker* published on July 1, 1971.

The week previously, Supertramp had released their second album – its sleeve featuring the bare, heavily tattooed chest of one Marion Hollar – and receiving, as *Sounds* newspaper pointed out, “a noticeably cooler reception” than the band’s self-titled debut a year earlier.

Salacious artwork aside, the 10 tracks on offer sounded uneven: the quasi-Quo boogie of opener *Your Poppa Don’t Mind* at odds with the seven-minute-plus album closer, the acoustic, flute-driven *Aries*. As 1973 dawned – after a two-year run of bad shows (including an ill-advised Scandinavian jaunt which left them temporarily stranded) and minimal record sales – the band’s principal songwriters, Rick Davies and Roger Hodgson, had a decision to make.

“Rick and I did sit down and say, ‘Let’s call it quits,’ and we did,” Hodgson told this writer in 2014. “For two days. I was thinking of going to India.” In the end, the 23-year-old opted for a less mystical adventure, signing up to play guitar in Chuck Berry’s pick-up band for a short run of UK shows.

The notoriously temperamental rocker met his new band 20 minutes prior to their first gig in Manchester, ordering them to follow his lead. Halfway through the gig, he spotted the shy, retiring Hodgson loitering towards the back of the stage. “Go out front and earn your money! Take this solo!” he barked.

“I trotted out, terrified, into the middle of the stage and did a solo and then slid back into the shadows of my amp!” Hodgson recalled. “Chuck Berry winked at me. It was quite an experience.”

Eighteen months later, in an unlikely turnaround, a re-constituted Supertramp would release *Crime Of The Century* – an album that matched the harmonic power of turn-of-the-decade Beach Boys to the musical ambition and eccentric textures of British progressive rock. A cousin to

contemporary releases by Elton John (*Caribou*) and Fleetwood Mac (*Heroes Are Hard To Find*) but which eclipsed both, creatively and commercially.

Photographs of Supertramp from 1974 show an almost book-ish set of individuals seemingly unprepared for the stardom about to over- ➤





Super troopers: (clockwise from left) early-Tramp lineup (from left) Davies, Hodgson, Richard Palmer-James, Robert Millar, Dave Winthrop, outside the Revolution Club, London, August 1970; chairmen of the keyboards: Hodgson (left) and Davies, Olympic Studios, January 15, 1974; Tramps (from top) bassist Dougie Thomson, sax man John Helliwell, drummer Bob C. Benberg; billboard ad for *Crime*, Sunset Strip, LA, 1974; Helliwell gets it bloody well (quite) right, 1975; A&M Records founders Herb Alpert (left) and Jerry Moss.



◀ take them, as they embarked on a run of hits that would peak in 1979 with a US Number 1 in *Breakfast In America* and end in 1983 with Hodgson's shock departure from the group.

"I don't think we had a goal in mind when we started the album," says Hodgson, reflecting on the album's impact, "and we didn't realise what we'd created at first either."

**T**HE AD THAT RICK DAVIES PLACED in the classified section of *Melody Maker* on August 9, 1969 was unflowery, offering a "Genuine opportunity for good musicians". Roger Hodgson called the listed number and secured an audition for the mystery band. His initial impressions weren't good but when Davies and Hodgson headed to the pub, they enjoyed each other's company, kicking off a relationship of contrasts.

An arch-realist, Richard Davies was born into a working-class family on July 22, 1944, in Swindon, Wiltshire. Inspired by percussionist Gene Krupa and boogie player Meade Lux Lewis, he swapped his early passion for drums for the piano before studying art at Swindon College. By the time he met Hodgson he'd already played in a rock'n'roll band, his own blues band – Rick's Blues – with a young Gilbert O'Sullivan, and The Joint, a soul-inspired combo based in Europe who were funded by a Dutch millionaire. According to Davies himself, he was driven by fear: "Fear of ending up back in a factory."

Nearer the other end of Britain's social scale, Portsmouth-born Charles Roger Pomfret Hodgson, six years Davies' junior, grew up in Oxford and was packed off to boarding school at an early age – first to Woodcote House in Surrey and then Stowe School in Buckinghamshire (old boys: Prince Rainier of Monaco, David Niven, Richard Branson).

"I was a sensitive boy thrust into the middle of nowhere with 600 other boys," he recalled of his time at Stowe, describing his education as being akin to living through "the end of the Victorian era". Leaving school, he joined psych outfit People Like Us, cutting a 7-inch for Decca, before recording a second single with the equally short-lived Argosy – a whimsical outfit that featured the young Reginald Dwight (AKA Elton John) on piano, guitarist Caleb Quaye and drummer Nigel Olsson. Music, according to Roger, was always "a quest". A quest for what? "Happiness, love and peace."

The first music Davies and Hodgson made together was under the name Daddy, before switching to Supertramp (taken from Welsh poet W.H. Davies's 1908 *The Autobiography Of A Super-Tramp*). There's YouTube footage of them playing in Germany in early 1970 – as a four-piece with Hodgson on bass – blasting out

a 10-minute blues-rock version of Dylan's *All Along The Watchtower*.

Originally, lyrical duties were entrusted to guitarist Richard Palmer, who also shared lead vocals on two of the tracks on *Supertramp*. It was his departure in December 1970 that forced Davies and Hodgson to assume full responsibility for the band's output, both lyrically and with a shift in sound to a more piano-based approach. The pair's differing personalities were

already evident but both had begun to view music as more than just a way of scratching a living.

"Rick and I were very different," Hodgson admits. "And there was a huge difference in our influences, but we were also both very alike because we were very dysfunctional. We looked to music to feel good about ourselves."

**I**F THE FIRST TWO SUPERTRAMP LPs SUGGESTED A band in search of a sound, the duo's new set of songs signified a new-found cohesion.

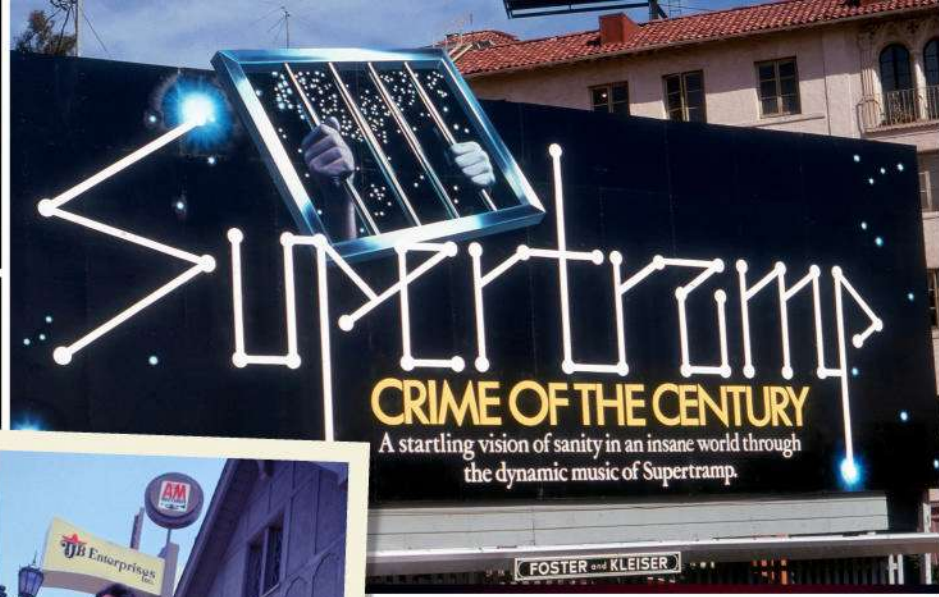
Before Hodgson's brief spell with Chuck Berry, Davies had already written the strident *Bloody Well Right*. Hodgson had had *Dreamer* since he was 19 – "It exploded out of me one day at my mother's house in Wantage," he told me. Another song, *School* – routined extensively with Davies – was a scathing attack on the alienation he felt as a result of his elite education. "I had a lot of wounds to heal," he noted.

What they needed were musicians who could do justice to these songs. First through the door was 22-year-old Glaswegian bass player Dougie Thomson, formerly of The Alan Bown Set.

"The original group had collapsed and there was a sense of the band being in disarray," recalls Thomson today. "When I first met Rick and Roger, they were a little dishevelled, shall we say."

As auditions continued at the Pied Bull pub in Islington, north London, Thomson proved to be a galvanising influence. He was never officially asked to join Supertramp but, such was his pragmatism, Hodgson handed him a bag of receipts. "'You can take care of the business,' is what he said," smiles Thomson. And, for a majority





of the band's career the bassist would do just that.

For the new recruits, Supertramp's songs-in-waiting were the convincers. "Roger played me a version of Breakfast In America on pump organ when we were at his mum's house and that was it," says Thomson.

California-born drummer Bob C. Benberg (*né* Siebenberg – a name he would return to in the latter part of the band's career), then a member of pub rock combo Bees Make Honey, popped by the band's shared house in Holland Villas Road and heard another batch of unreleased songs, Hodgson's *If Everyone Was Listening* and Davies' *Asylum* among them.

"I knew then that there was something special there," says the drummer, who shared the songwriters' love of Traffic, Spooky Tooth and Procol Harum. "I liked that stuff and I knew I could add the American feel of someone like Levon Helm from The Band – different from the feel that you got from British drummers at the time. A sense of power."

For the final piece of the sonic puzzle, Benberg had hoped to enlist the services of his brother-in-law Scott Gorham (later of Thin Lizzy), and the guitarist flew over from LA to audition. His arrival, however, coincided with Thomson's call to an old friend he knew from The Alan Bown Set, sax and reeds player John Helliwell.

"I went to meet the band at Manfred Mann's studio where they were rehearsing," Helliwell recalls. "Rick was there wearing an anorak and I thought, What a strange-looking guy. Roger was there too and the first tune he played me was *From Now On* [destined for 1977's *Even In The Quietest Moments*]. I thought, Woah!

"I'd been used to playing with jobbing musicians that just got on with it but these guys were different," continues the Yorkshire-born jazzier. "They were experimenting and changing things as they went along

until they felt it was right. And there was also the contrast between Rick and Roger, which

I thought was really interesting."

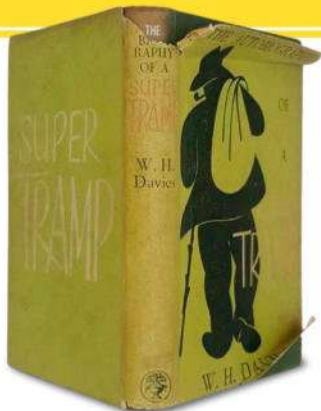
**B**Y THE AUTUMN OF '73 THE IMPACT OF THIS LATEST batch of songs was already evident on their new bandmates. The question now was whether, after the polite failure of their last two albums, anyone at their label, A&M, would give a damn.

Thomson decided that he and Hodgson should appeal to label boss Derek Green face to face. Green was surprised to see them but introduced the pair to A&R man Dave Margereson. An irrepressible Londoner who'd started out as an actor, Margereson had worked at CBS where he'd signed Johnny Nash (overseeing his 1972 UK Number 1, *I Can See Clearly Now*), the 26-year-old Bob Marley, and a fiery young Irish guitar player named Gary Moore, before being poached by Green to join A&M. Cue a familiar pattern: Margereson heard the band's latest demos and was hooked. All they needed to do now, he felt, was become a proper band.

To that end, in November 1973 Margereson persuaded Supertramp to decamp to Southcombe, a £20-per-week farmhouse in Somerset. Benberg and Helliwell brought their wives, Thomson his wife and daughter. Davies and Hodgson had yet to start their own families. "I felt alone and so did Rick, so we concentrated on the music," admitted Hodgson years later. "But we had a relentless passion that drove the band."

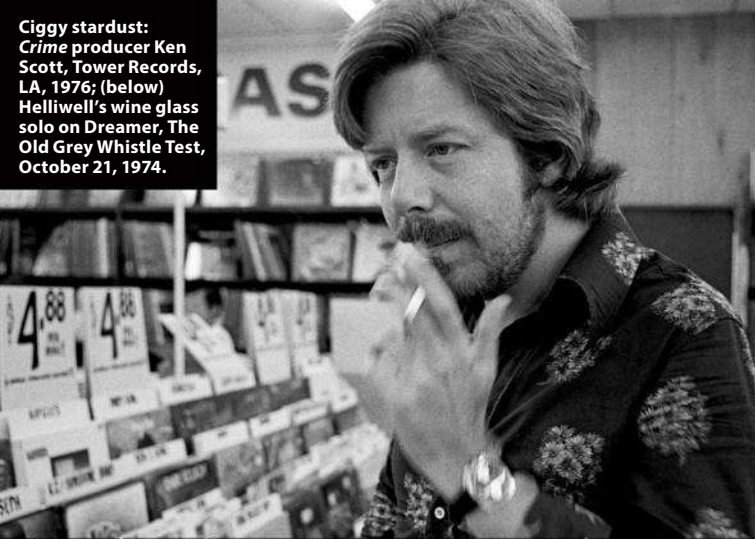
Southcombe would prove to be a hugely positive experience for Supertramp. After a leisurely morning, they'd begin playing mid-afternoon and routine new songs into the night. With their gear set up in the low-ceilinged room next door to the kitchen, the results were captured on a Sony reel-to-reel and constantly fine-tuned. Songwriting ➤

**"RICK AND I WERE VERY DIFFERENT, BUT ALSO VERY ALIKE BECAUSE WE WERE VERY DYSFUNCTIONAL."**  
ROGER HODGSON





**Ciggy stardust:** *Crime* producer Ken Scott, Tower Records, LA, 1976; (below) Helliwell's wine glass solo on *Dreamer*, *The Old Grey Whistle Test*, October 21, 1974.



# SUPERSONICS

**"PAIN IN THE ARSE" KEN SCOTT ON CRAFTING A HI-FI BENCHMARK. PHIL ALEXANDER IS ALL EARS.**

"I NEVER LISTENED to the first two Supertramp albums, and I still haven't," says Ken Scott. That was probably a good thing; in truth, neither suggested a band capable of making an era-defining album. And yet, *Crime Of The Century* is just that.

The legendary producer is quick to state that there was no master plan when he entered Trident Studios with the band in 1974. His instinct, encouragement and deft touch proved enough. "I knew the band were special, the material was special, so the album had to be special," he tells MOJO today. "We had to go above and beyond for it to stand a chance. Which is exactly what we all did."

By his own admission, producer Scott is "a pain in the arse" when it comes to capturing sound in the studio. And yet, despite *Crime*'s sonic splendour, he believes that the album's real secret lies in the band's ability to play intuitively together, allowing him to capture a great performance first and foremost. Roger Hodgson would always have a final say on the guitars, Rick Davies would sign off the piano – and both combined on the vocal harmonies. Above all, Scott captured the space in the band's sound, allowing each track to breathe before adding the detail.

Scott also insisted that the sound effects – like the wine glass played by Helliwell on *Dreamer* – should be real (Old Grey Whistle Test footage from '74 shows him doing it live). The playground sounds on *School*, says Scott, were recorded "in a primary

school garden during lunch hour," while the claustrophobic ambience of *Hide In Your Shell* is enhanced by a bowed saw. That combination of space and detail also ensured that *Crime* soon became the go-to disc for hi-fi shops showcasing the latest stereo system to potential new customers.

Amusingly enough, Scott faced a similar listening experience recently as he was prepping what he hopes will be the 50th anniversary release of *Crime*.

"I was in Abbey Road listening to the copy tapes of *Crime* the other day with their half-speed mastering guy, Miles Showell, because we can't locate the originals," says Scott. "God knows where they are! But he listened to the set of tapes we put on and he turned round and said, 'This is absolutely astounding!' I was also speechless because it sounded so good. Like I said, we all set out to make something special, and I suppose we managed just that."



and team bonding combined. Hodgson wrote *Hide In Your Shell* at Southcombe after every member of the band bar Davies had consumed a plate of hash brownies. The song's juxtaposition of the composer's love-led idealism against the "scramble" of real life outside encapsulated Southcombe's idyllic retreat. "It was the place where we learnt to see each other as we really were," says Benberg, "and we learnt the dynamics of the band as people and as players."

Conscious that it had been over two years since the band's last release, Margereson suggested they record and release a new song

as a sign of life. *Land Ho*, hurriedly produced by the A&R and the band and released on March 1, 1974, failed to chart.

Undeterred, Margereson ploughed on. His original choice of producer for the single had been Ken Scott, who'd engineered Elton John's last two albums and was fresh from producing Bowie's *The Rise And Fall Of Ziggy Stardust And The Spiders From Mars* and *Aladdin Sane*. Yet, despite Margereson's ebullience, Scott remained resistant to the idea of working with Supertramp.

"I didn't really like the demos at all," he admits. "They just seemed to be half-baked, half an idea at a time, but Jack Nelson, who ran the producers at Trident Studios where I worked, told me A&M really wanted me to do the band. In the end I went to see them live at a showcase with Jack. When we left, Jack said, 'You're right, don't bother doing them.' I turned around and said, 'Are you kidding? They're incredible!'"

On February 4, 1974, Scott travelled down to Somerset to put the band through their paces. Further impressed with what he heard, five days later he took them back to Trident.

"The music was really ambitious and they really wanted to push things. So that's what we did in the studio," he says. "The band were just open to any suggestions about how to make the record sound different. I used all the experience that I'd had from some pretty intense sessions with The Beatles and we tried everything we could think of."

"Ken was a good mentor," says Hodgson. "He encouraged us to experiment with everything from saws being bowed, to glasses being played with a finger. He gave us the ultimate opportunity to create."

For Scott, the contrasting songwriters put him in mind of some of his more celebrated clients.

"The partnership between Rick and Roger reminded me of Lennon and McCartney," he says. "Those differing personalities made the music sound the way it did."

**T**HE AVERAGE COST OF A HOUSE IN THE UK IN THE summer of 1974 was £9,000. Supertramp had already spent double that before they'd even come close to finishing the album that became *Crime Of The Century*.

One factor was Ken Scott's meticulousness. Benberg recalls that it took three days for the producer to get the drum sound he wanted. "And that was working almost 10 hours a day!" he laughs.

The overspend was such that LA-based label boss Jerry Moss (the 'M' in A&M) felt the need to pay them a visit.

"I panicked totally because we had what amounted to the basic tracks and that was about it," recalls Scott. "I'd never really met a head of a record label at that point, either, but Jerry came down, heard what we were doing, said, 'That's great!' and left."

In the end *Crime* took five months to record in three London studios: Trident, Rampart, and Scorpio Sound – where it was mixed because Scott was particularly keen on the monitors. But it was time well spent, the considered production decisions justified by the results. From Rick Davies' ethereal, Morricone-esque harmonica part that opens *School* to the sweeping Richard Hewson-arranged strings that conclude Davies' blue-collar mini-epic, *Rudy*, *Crime* was full of bravura touches.

Like *The Dark Side Of The Moon*, it was an album designed to be listened to in one sitting – although the band couldn't be sure of how well it worked until the very end of the process. "Because the mix was manually done, it meant that 10- or 20-second sections were done at a time," says Hodgson. "When we heard it, our minds were blown."

*Crime*'s astounding spatial and sonic qualities were matched with emotional writing that sprang from Hodgson and Davies' hopes and fears. Never before, either, had the two been so well-balanced. Davies' earthy baritone married Hodgson's light tenor to heady effect, and while previously Davies had dominated, each assumed lead duties on four tracks each.

"When I sat down and listened to the album as a whole," remembers Ken Scott, a man known for his modesty, "I thought we'd achieved perfection."





**“RICK AND ROGER REMINDED ME OF LENNON AND McCARTNEY. THOSE DIFFERING PERSONALITIES MADE THE MUSIC SOUND THE WAY IT DID.”**

**KEN SCOTT**

**Dreamer team: (clockwise from top) Supertramp (from left) Hodgson, Davies, Benberg, Helliwell, Thomson, on-stage, May 1975; *Crime* pays: the band with their gold disc, 1976 (Dave Margereson is second from right); Rolling Stone ad from December '74 for “startling vision of sanity,” *Crime Of The Century*; happy Trampers in 1975: (from left) Benberg, Davies, Helliwell, Thomson and Hodgson.**

**B**Y THE TIME *CRIME* WAS FINALLY released in October 1974, Dave Margereson – now also Supertramp’s manager – had whipped A&M’s promotional department into a frenzy. Yet results were initially disappointing. *Crime* swam in the lower reaches of the UK albums chart – peaking at 40 in late November before slipping out entirely.

Heading out on tour, they took the ‘fake it ’til you make it’ approach – Margereson and the band determined they would only play headline shows in order to present their new music properly. Supertramp’s sound man and trusted friend, Russel Pope, would ensure the band’s live sound was pristine, complemented by the work of lighting designer Tony Shepherd.

“We had to create an atmosphere,” reflects John Helliwell, who adopted the role of the band’s live ringmaster due to Davies and Hodgson’s continued reluctance as frontmen. “So, we also made the decision to present the album itself by playing the first side, then a few older tunes and new tunes that we hadn’t recorded yet, before finishing with the entire second side.”

Town hall and university shows through to the end of 1974 beat a drum for Supertramp’s new LP, supported by positive live reviews. Sales rallied in late January ’75 and were ignited by the release of *Dreamer* in February (described by band champion John Peel as a track that “should rivet lovers of good music whenever they gather together”). Between February and April, Hodgson’s keening anthem was unavoidable on UK radio, and peaked at 13 in the UK singles chart on March 8. The following week, its parent album hit Number 4, in time for Supertramp to head off on tour in the US, where *Crime* would be the first Supertramp LP to crack the Top 40.

“A&M took us to a hotel overlooking Central Park and gave us a suite on the 29th floor or something,” recalls Helliwell. “We thought, ‘Wow! This is fantastic!’ We embraced it all and we got to know the cities bit by bit as we played. Then Roger broke his wrist so we had to cancel gigs but we decided we’d stay out there and record our next album.”

Supertramp’s embrace of the US would pave the way for the staggering commercial success of 1979’s *Breakfast In America*, sales of which



would top 20 million. And yet, it would also speed the classic line-up’s demise, with a sapping tour that deepened divisions among the band members.

“I had the impression that Supertramp was disintegrating,” Hodgson would tell band biographer Abel Fuentes. “In those concerts, I felt like an actor performing the same part night after night. We had become slaves to a huge production.”

In 1983, wearied by disputes with Davies over their respective songwriting contributions in Supertramp, Hodgson announced he was going solo.

**O**VER TIME, THE COMMUNAL SPIRIT OF Southcombe has long evaporated. Legal shots have been fired between band members – Hodgson claiming that while he had allowed Davies to keep the Supertramp name in 1983, he had done so without granting Davies the right to play any of his songs.

Another case between band members went to court earlier this year over a 1977 agreement where Davies and Hodgson had granted a share of songwriting royalties to Helliwell, Siebenberg and Thomson. While Davies settled out of court, Hodgson contests that the arrangement was intended to last in perpetuity. He won the case but an appeal is pending.

Against this backdrop, any kind of anniversary celebration of *Crime Of The Century* by the band seems unlikely. Yet the LP’s musical impact remains undimmed, its key themes – tackling what Helliwell describes as “‘The Man’, education and governmental issues” – sounding even more pertinent in 2024. And beyond that, the record endures as a conversation between two songwriters with contrasting but complementary takes on the world, both at the top of their game.

“It’s an honest, autobiographical album,” concludes Hodgson, “because we wore our inner selves on it. And, in the end, I think that’s what people identify with.”





**Winning last year's Mercury Prize was a boon for EZRA COLLECTIVE and a landmark for British jazz. But with inspirations as diverse as Cannonball Adderley and Damon Albarn, they're already moving on, with a new album that updates yet exalts the spontaneous spirit of their genre. "It's as real as music gets," they tell MAT SNOW.**

Photography by ALIYAH OTCHERE

**W**HEN EZRA COLLECTIVE WON LAST YEAR'S MERCURY MUSIC PRIZE WITH their second album, *Where I'm Meant To Be*, and sold out a headlining show at the cavernous Wembley Arena this November, something building for over a decade had shifted a tectonic plate.

Jazz wasn't supposed to do this. A jazz LP would always make the Mercury shortlist for best British album, earn a polite round of applause, then the gong and £25,000 purse would go elsewhere. And when jazz enjoyed one of its generational revivals, it would stall on the club, theatre and festival circuit, never scaling up.

That London's Ezra Collective have bust through the ceiling tells us many things. About the passionate, idealistic grandchildren of the long-gone British Empire bringing it all back home to a multicultural, multigenerational audience hungry for a fresh sound and story. About a century-old art form long settled into sedentary scholasticism rediscovering its dancing shoes and youthful *joie de vivre*. Indeed, the Ezras' Soweto Kinch-inspired saxophonist James Mollison's career highlight so far is "a seated jazz festival in Poland full of middle-aged people. They didn't seem that impressed but over the course of the gig we chipped away and by the end they're all out of their seats dancing."

It's a story with very deep roots, in Ezra drummer-bandleader Femi Koleoso's view, going back some 2,500 years.

"Not to get too nerdy with you," he tells MOJO, explaining how the group takes its name from a symbol of renewal based on learning from the past, "but the Book of Nehemiah and the Book of Ezra ➤





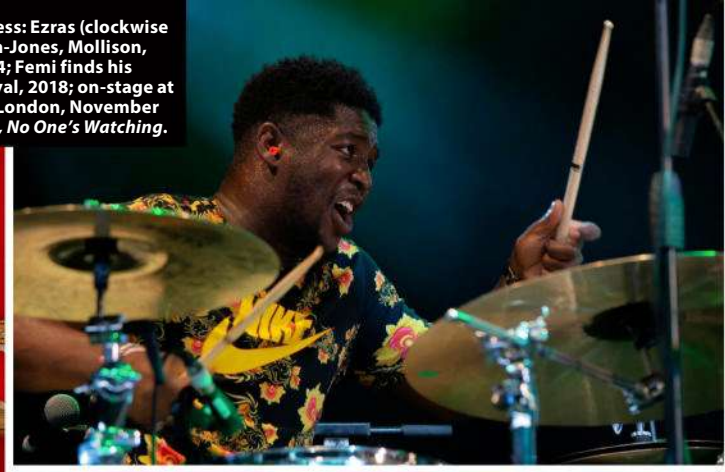
The shape of jazz to come:  
Ezra Collective (from left)  
TJ Koleoso, Ife Ogunjobi,  
James Mollison, Femi  
Koleoso, Joe Armon-Jones,  
London, July 2024.





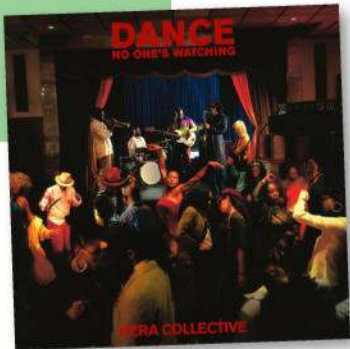


Collective consciousness: Ezras (clockwise from left) Femi, Armon-Jones, Mollison, TJ, Ogunjobi, July 2024; Femi finds his groove, WOMAD festival, 2018; on-stage at the Royal Albert Hall, London, November 7, 2023; new LP, *Dance, No One's Watching*.



**“WE’LL NEVER BE ENTERED FOR THE MERCURY PRIZE AGAIN. I WOULDN’T WANT TO TAKE THAT SPACE AWAY FROM SOMEONE.”**  
Femi Koleoso

◀ were written in the same breath...” Biblical exegesis is rare in the music scene. Committed, active Christianity is rarer still, with three out of five of the wildly fashionable Collective – they modelled Burberry in Vogue this summer – attending a Nigerian Baptist church. Beyond career and stardom, beyond even music, Ezra Collective are on a mission to give back, just as they received in the first place.



**B**UT HOW TO TOP A PARADIGM-SHIFTING ALBUM? Perhaps, by recording a better one. “Immediately after pressing ‘submit’, I always think, I’d rather do this, should have done that,” confesses Koleoso over juice in London’s Hoxton, a natty green neckerchief offsetting his crisp white T-shirt. “But for the first time in my life, I pressed the red button to stop recording and felt we’d really done justice to all our ideas.” His band’s third album thrillingly justifies his confidence. Like its prize-winning predecessor, *Dance, No One’s Watching* reflects its highly charged moment of creation. The preceding *Where I’m Meant To Be* had the pandemic’s pent-up bunker-mentality energy – “In lockdown, me, James and Femi used to go for runs, our only physical interaction,” recalls the trumpeter Ife Ogunjobi, who’d only joined Ezra the year before. “To see each other more, we ended up doing more exercise and getting really, really fit.” By contrast, *Dance, No One’s Watching* celebrates reopening and release. It’s inspired by 2022’s joyously liberated gig and dancefloor crowds, and also by their friend Steve McQueen’s BBC drama *Lovers Rock* in his 2020 *Small Axe* series. McQueen’s film supplies the album’s binding concept and loose storyline: a Saturday night out and Sunday morning homecoming with an epiphanic vision of heaven, as captured on the LP’s closer, *Everybody*, based on a Nigerian Baptist

church song and, like Miles Davis’s version of *Porgy And Bess*’s *Prayer* (Oh Doctor Jesus), a sublimely beautiful peak.

“A night out can be exemplary of life,” Koleoso expands. “It has a birth, a middle, an end.” With that concept in mind, the band “started writing music in that direction.” The Ezra method is tried and tested. Individuals will bring in a basic idea – Koleoso, for example, will voicenote a melody and bass line – which the whole band then develops in jam sessions and often road-tests before recording in just one or two takes to preserve freshness.

Where a tune calls for a vocal, Ezra have friends aplenty, including Loyle Carner, Jorja Smith and Olivia Dean from the intersecting worlds of rap, grime, neo-soul, pan-African pop and jazz – the lines have been getting ever more blurred, especially since Kendrick Lamar’s profoundly influential *To Pimp A Butterfly* in 2015. On the new album’s single, *God Gave Me Feet For Dancing*, Yazmin Lacey ran with a tune Koleoso came up with in the shower coupled with an idea he’d had chatting with DJ Annie Macmanus on her *Changes* podcast. “From Kojey [Radical] and Emeli [Sandé] to Sampa [The Great] and Moonchild Sanelly, it’s always been, give them a concept and direction and see what they come up with,” says Koleoso.

Freedom within guidelines is the essence of jazz, and for all the tautness of Ezra’s Afrobeat-inspired horn riffs and rhythms – Fela Kuti and his drummer Tony Allen and bassist Nweke Atifoh are inspirations for Femi and his bassist brother TJ – players are free to find their improvisatory flow, and none more so than Ezra co-founder and keyboardist Joe Armon-Jones, who nonetheless relishes their ensemble discipline: “It’s taxing to improvise, a different kettle of fish to grooving with a band, part of a unit, locking into the groove playing different genres – that feels very natural and satisfying.”

Despite its detailed concept and sophisticated sound – much of it was recorded in Abbey Road (Koleoso is a Beatles fan) – *Dance, No One’s Watching* is far from overcooked. “What you hear is exactly what happened live, literally every sound with no editing, nothing,” Koleoso explains. “It’s as real as music gets. The organic nature of this record was having our friends and family in the room when we recorded it – like Cannonball Adderley’s [1966 track] *Mercy, Mercy, Mercy* where you hear the presence of people in the room.

Eyevine (2), Camera Press, Getty, Alamy (2)





Let it...Be: (clockwise from left) EC pick up the 2023 Mercury Prize for *Where I'm Meant To Be*; hanging out with Nubya Garcia, London, 2018; Armon-Jones finds the right key at home, 2019; Femi bangs out the polyrhythms; Buster Mantis, Deptford, 2018.



## LET JOY BE UNCONFINED

The best of the Ezras (and family) so far.  
By Mat Snow.

### EZRA COLLECTIVE

#### Chapter 7

(Self-released, 2016)



Quoting Duke Ellington's Caravan, the TJ Koleoso-originated Enter The Jungle kicks off Ezra's template-setting

debut EP, mashing bop, Afrobeat and more. Fela Kuti's Colonial Mentality gets dubbed up, Ty raps and Zara McFarlane sublimely hosannas on I Have A God.

### EZRA COLLECTIVE

#### You Can't Steal My Joy

(Enter The Jungle, 2019)



Cut overnight and bookended by Sun Ra and Fela Kuti compositions, this Afro-boom-bap-to-samba debut album

spotlights John Gilmore devotee saxophonist James Mollison (who originates the earworm Quest For Coin). Loyle Carner and Jorja Smith spice and sweeten proceedings.

### JOE ARMON-JONES

#### Turn To Clear View

(Brownswood, 2019)



Ezra keyboardist Armon-Jones musters his contemporaries in immersive jazz/neo-soul/dub/hip-hop/broken

beat soundscapes from which emerge terrific tunes like Yellow Dandelion, sung by Georgia Anne Muldrow, and You Didn't Care, starring sax queen Nubya Garcia.

### EZRA COLLECTIVE

#### Where I'm Meant To Be

(Partisan, 2022)



Its sleeve art a nod to Thelonious Monk's Underground LP, Ezra's Mercury Prize-winner embraces a starry list of vocal feats,

including Nao on Sun Ra's Love In Outer Space. Inspired by Damian Marley's Welcome To Jamrock, Mollison's Togetherness is the cherry on a feast for feet and ears.



space. "Nothing Ezra Collective do will ever be entered for the Mercury Prize again," says Koleoso. "I wouldn't want to take that space away from someone that hasn't had their show yet."

Despite never having been a Tomorrow's Warrior – he studied physiotherapy rather than music – TJ shares his brother's philosophy.

"I've questioned my purpose within music because I never thought myself much of a musician," he admits. "But my knowledge of my purpose on earth has become stronger, and my faith in Jesus is a big part of that."

TJ draws on the Parable of the Talents for inspiration: "When you stand before God, the question will be, What did you do with what you had? We've got instruments, voices, families, proximity to certain communities. Did you use what you had to help people?"

Though now an enthusiastic mentor, Femi, just turned 30, remains a mentee too: of DJ and impresario Gilles Peterson; of Moses Boyd as a reliably wise head ("Any contract I don't understand, I'll call him up"); of the late 'Uncle' Tony Allen who Femi befriended as his informal drum student; and "this era of Ezra Collective is most closely mentored for me by Damon..."

Koleoso toured as drummer with Damon Albarn's Gorillaz in 2019 and 2022, and everything on those jaunts "became a learning experience. Damon's ability to bring the very best out of everyone he's with. The art of killing gigs: how to get a crowd on your side and get them going; one after the other, he tears every show to the floor. And I saw him write and release *Cracker Island* [Gorillaz] and *The Ballad Of Darren* [Blur] in the same year.

"I'm School of Damon," chuckles Koleoso. "I'm already writing past this album for Ezra..."

He pauses. There's another motto here. "Make the song. Put it out. Move on." **M**

"The very deepest level of human emotion can be hard to conjure on demand," he reflects. "But when I'm looking at my mum who took me to my drum lessons, or at Joe's siblings or TJ's wife, to invoke that feeling becomes so much easier and more natural; it hits differently. Recording this album, there were kids in my youth group in the room, and when I'm playing songs about joy, that's what I want for them."

**A**DAD FOR LESS THAN A YEAR, FEMI Koleoso has a lot to juggle. On top of Ezra Collective, he puts into practise the principles he learned from his parents Tope and Kemi, who came to the UK from Nigeria as, respectively, a biomedical scientist and a nurse, and now are pastors at the Jubilee Church in Enfield, north London, in whose youth bands their sons Olufemi and Toyosi (TJ) played.

Community work is among the values reinforced and examples set over the years by, among others, the late reggae poet Benjamin Zephaniah when he visited Koleoso's primary school; his drum teacher Tim Giles who hipped him to jazz, dub and funk; and, most importantly, the distinguished jazz double-bassist Gary Crosby whose Tomorrow's Warriors jazz development programme, based in London's Southbank Centre, ran free workshops for young talent (alumni also include drummer Moses Boyd and saxophonist Nubya Garcia). Ezra Collective were born there in 2012 when, as the Tomorrow's Warriors Youth Ensemble, they won the Yamaha Jazz Experience competition at the Cheltenham Jazz Festival.

Obedying Crosby's motto of 'Each one, teach one', as well as donating a portion of their gig fees to youth organisations, these former Tomorrow's Warriors work hard to pass on their knowledge, expertise and experience to new generations. This nurturing includes making



# BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

IN 1982 **TOM PETTY** WAS A STAR AND **THE HEARTBREAKERS** ONE OF THE HOTTEST BANDS AROUND. BUT FAME, DRUGS, DOUBT AND INTERNAL DIVISIONS WERE TAKING A TOLL. IN 2024 A REISSUE OF *LONG AFTER DARK* AND A LONG-LOST CAMERON CROWE DOCUMENTARY REVEAL A GROUP WALKING A TIGHTROPE, THRASHING AROUND FOR WAYS TO SURVIVE, LET ALONE SUCCEED. "THERE WAS A LOT OF CRUELTY IN THE ROOM SOMETIMES, UNNECESSARILY," THEY TELL **GRAYSON HAVER CURRIN**.

PORTRAIT BY **DREW SACKHEIM**



Lucky man: Tom Petty in an outtake from the *Long After Dark* album cover shoot, 1982.





# S

TAN LYNCH WAS ON THE BEACH IN Santa Monica when he realised his life had changed, that his adolescent rock star dreams were suddenly real.

Lynch and another drummer friend, Robert Williams, had been jogging down the California shoreline when they heard one of Lynch's drum breaks blasting from a transistor radio. Tickled, they stopped to listen. That's when the duo noticed that three nearby radios were each playing separate singles from *Damn The Torpedoes*, the third album by Lynch's band, Tom Petty And The Heartbreakers: *Refugee*, *Here Comes My Girl*, *Don't Do Me Like That*. In the dawning days of 1980, this wasn't a blip; this was a phenomenon.

"I'm from fuckin' Florida, and the last thing I remember, I'm playing in a titty bar for 50 bucks a week," a grinning Lynch tells MOJO from the same Florida house he bought later that year. "Now I'm in a famous rock band, I guess? We're like a sauce, and the world is marinating in this shit."

Just three years earlier, the Heartbreakers' rock'n'roll ambitions had seemed stillborn. Their self-titled 1976 debut had sold only a few thousand copies Stateside when the band opened for Nils Lofgren in the UK in May 1977 and positive British press grew momentum. With Mike Campbell's serrated riff cutting beneath Petty's sneer, *Breakdown* had become a tardy hit, helping propel the Heartbreakers' follow-up album, *You're Gonna Get It!*, to the charts only months later.

That record, though, was but a minor prelude to *Damn The Torpedoes*, financed by Neil Young/Joni Mitchell manager Elliot Roberts and fixated over by producer Jimmy Iovine as Petty wrestled his way out of the record contract that had drawn him from the Sunshine State to the Golden one. The Heartbreakers quickly became one of the country's biggest bands, the hitmakers at the crossroads of old-fashioned rock and the burgeoning new wave.

Indeed, just weeks after that beachside epiphany, Lynch remembers leaving LA's The Forum in a limousine next to Roberts, who blew smoke from a joint he'd just rolled into the drummer's face. The Heartbreakers had just played their first show there, and the car was bound for an afterparty at the Whisky A Go Go. Lynch asked Roberts if they needed to let anyone know they were on their way, so they wouldn't have trouble getting past the crowds. Roberts just laughed.

"Elliot goes, 'Crosby, Stills & Nash would give their left nut to be hot, but right now, you're hot. One day, you may be rich. One day, you may be famous. But this is the best,'" Lynch remembers. "He was right."

But being too hot, of course, can burn, as Petty and the Heartbreakers were beginning to learn. A year later, their fourth album, *Hard Promises*, had not yielded the

same payload of singles as *Damn The Torpedoes*, and the distractions were mounting: hard drugs, intra-band dramas, financial dilemmas, looming divorces, outside collaborations, stalkers, tonsillitis, interviews. As Petty told Circus in January 1983, "There are two things we can constantly do without even trying: spend money, and stay in trouble."

Two months earlier, the band released their fifth album, *Long After Dark*. Its 10 tracks represented the apotheosis of their work so far. Petty's elliptical scenes of loneliness and alienation balanced atop a band with one foot in the past and the other in the future, with synthesizers and percussion pulling against Campbell's incisive guitars, Lynch's punchy drums, and Benmont Tench's soulful piano. "It's a good little rock'n'roll record with good songs and good playing," Petty told Paul Zollo 20 years later. "But I don't know that we advanced a lot."

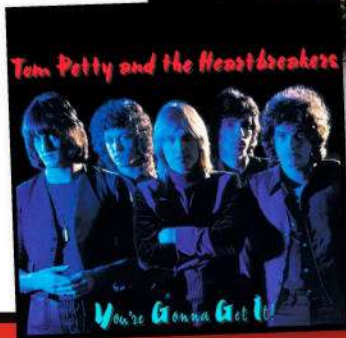
In 2024, two expanded reissues – of *Long After Dark* itself and of Heartbreakers *Beach Party*, an unexpectedly intimate documentary portrait of Petty that Cameron Crowe made for MTV in 1982 but was only shown once – reveal what Petty was endeavouring to gloss. Here was a band wrestling not only with their sound but also with fame itself, or how to remain what Lynch calls "fingers on a fist" when the world seemed to be prising them apart. Originally titled *Between Two Worlds*, *Long After Dark* finds Petty and the Heartbreakers inching toward an existential crisis.

"He would never talk about what songs were about, but they were always about our lives," Petty's oldest daughter, Adria, tells MOJO from her Connecticut home, a portrait and a doll of her father over her left shoulder. She has been methodically exploring and issuing

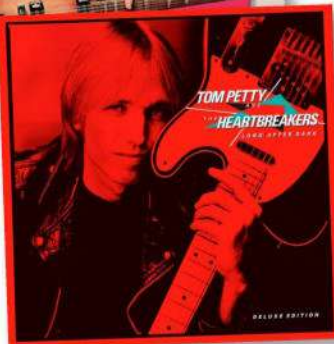
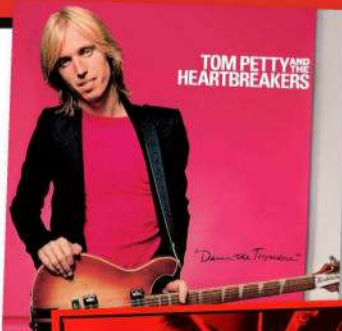
his archive since his death from an accidental drug overdose in 2017. "It looks like he's caught between two relationships – and this relationship with fame, wanting more of it or wanting to walk away from it."

**F**OR MUCH OF HIS LIFE, PETTY had not been an obvious frontman, let alone a certain star.

A kid of the lower middle class in Gainesville, Florida, Petty long seemed a shiftless misfit. At perpetual war with an unsatisfied father who worried he was gay, and so bad at school he once burned a hole in a report card trying to transform an F into a B with what he called "special ink", his *raison d'être* became rock'n'roll. At 10, Petty shook Elvis's hand when the star was making a movie nearby. He duly traded his slingshot for a stack of 45s and, two years later, had his first guitar. ➤



**"IT WAS LIKE BEING ON MARS – FAST, CRAZY, INTENSE, KIND OF EXOTIC. WE WERE LIKE REDNECKS IN SPACE."**  
MIKE CAMPBELL



Getty (3), Aaron Rapoport, Jim McCrary/Redferns/Getty





Hit the lights: (main) Tom Petty And The Heartbreakers, 1982 (from left) Howie Epstein, Stan Lynch, Tom Petty, Benmont Tench, Mike Campbell; (top, clockwise from left) Petty and Campbell fight to win at the Los Angeles Forum, June 29, 1981; Mudcrutch (from left) Campbell, Petty, Tom Leadon, Randall Marsh, 1974; Petty rips it up, 1981.



◀ In that rapidly expanding college town, he wasn't alone. Instead, he was the unremarkable bassist for a string of covers bands cobbling together gigs. Even in Mudcrutch, his band after he'd bailed on high school and a series of hated manual labour jobs, he shared singing and songwriting duties for years. But Tench – the private-schooled son of a judge – recognised an uncanny bond between Petty and Campbell as soon as he saw them, sneaking into a bar underage. He wanted in. “There was some kind of extra charisma coming off Tom and Mike from the get,” Tench says. “It felt different.”

Indeed, it felt different enough that, in 1974, Petty and a few other Mudcrutch emissaries headed west to Los Angeles with a demo. They returned with a record deal and an invitation to migrate. As they packed, Danny Cordell called with another offer from Shelter Records, an imprint cofounded by Leon Russell, then very hot himself. They accepted, left on April Fool's Day, stopped by Russell's famous Church Studio in Tulsa, and finally made it to Los Angeles.

“It was like being on Mars – fast, crazy, intense, kind of exotic,” Campbell remembers today. “There were hookers walking up and down the street, flashing motel lights. As Stan put it, we were like rednecks in space.”

Though the band was excited to be in California and its vaunted record industry, the relationship didn't seem reciprocal, as if their departure date had been a portent. A rock band from Florida, Mudcrutch actually debuted with a reggae song called Depot Street, which Billboard said was the “closest thing to actual reggae to have a chance to be a major AM hit to come along in some time.” That didn't happen, and Shelter soon dropped Mudcrutch, keeping Petty (and co-writer Campbell) around as a solo act. Petty became a kind of accidental sidekick to Russell, tagging along to sessions with Brian Wilson, George Harrison, and Terry Melcher. These brushes with icons only made Petty long for what he'd lost. “It made me ready to be back with my people,” he told biographer Warren Zanes. “Not rock stars. Not session players. My band.”

Petty stumbled back into his band accidentally, after Tench asked him to stop by to add harmonica to some demos. Lynch, another member of that fertile Gainesville scene, had also come west. He and Tench were scheming a cock-rock concept called The Drunks, with a self-titled debut theoretically followed by *Back For More* and a fifth album dubbed, well, *A Fifth*.

“I was feral, and it was wonderful, a logical extension of Gainesville,” Lynch says. “I was riding a stolen motorcycle to work. I would cash a check that wasn't mine – a street kid.”

But the idea for The Drunks evaporated on Petty's arrival. Everyone understood this was different. By the end of 1975, they had all committed to the Heartbreakers; by the end of 1976, they had released their debut, which Lynch stacked himself in the record store where he worked. They waited for the world to notice.

“The Heartbreakers were a squad – brothers, locked in, going to fight to the end to make this happen,” Campbell says. “We had one purpose: to make the band great, together.”

**“WE GOT IOVINE BOPPING,”** PETTY MUTTERS in his soft Southern way just off microphone at the end of Straight Into Darkness, a *Long After Dark* anthem about an innocent love corrupted.

The album was finished and would be out in six months, November 1982, but Petty and the Heartbreakers were back in the Record Plant, cutting live studio takes for French TV rock show Houba Houba. There were hints of relief and sarcasm in Petty's



**“TOM WOULD NEVER TALK ABOUT WHAT SONGS WERE ABOUT, BUT THEY WERE ALWAYS ABOUT OUR LIVES.”**

**ADRIAN PETTY**

voice, and deservedly so: woes with the rhythm section had hamstrung the *Long After Dark* sessions, so much so they'd cost the Heartbreakers' original bassist Ron Blair and almost lost them Lynch, too.

Blair was likely on the way out, anyway. The road had worn him down, and he was daunted by the high stakes at this level of success. “Everything was just life or death,” he told Rolling

Stone a quarter-century later, “and it just took its toll on me.” He bailed on a week-long band vacation in Florida and rejoined them alongside his wife, Liz, a *faux pas* for this marauding posse. He recorded the prowling *Between Two Worlds* with the Heartbreakers, the first song they cut for *Long After Dark*, and was soon gone.

“We played with a couple of different bass players, including Graham Maby, who played with Joe Jackson. A great bass player, but his sound didn't fit in,” remembers Tench. “But the day Howie showed, it's, ‘Who's this guy?’ He knew stuff of ours that hadn't been released. He left more space, and he grooved like mad.”

Petty met Howie Epstein – a Milwaukee multi-instrumentalist drawn to California for a gig with John Hiatt – while producing *Drop Down And Get Me*, a kind of comeback for early rock crooner Del Shannon. Epstein's knack for high harmony worked like catnip on Petty, an Everly Brothers acolyte, and he recognised Epstein could add welcome vocal reinforcement. Petty had struggled with tonsillitis and vocal cord nodules in the early '80s, forcing him to cancel or postpone shows. “The main difference,” as Petty put it simply in Record, “is that now we sing a little better.”

The addition, however, made Stan Lynch less indispensable. He was, as Tench remembers, “a fantastic harmony singer”, but Lynch admits he was anything but consistent. “Howie could *sing*, man. I





Miracle worker: (main) Petty damns the torpedoes, Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium, July 24, 1979; (inset, left) producer Jimmy Iovine; (opposite page, clockwise from left) Petty with wife Jane, 1979; Tom gets a pass from Jerry Lee Lewis, January 17, 1984; Petty and Mike Campbell with Bob Dylan at Farm Aid, 1985.



was back there screaming my brains out, *trying*, and sometimes I'd get it," Lynch says. "But Howie never had a bad night."

Since Iovine enlisted as the Heartbreakers' producer for *Damn The Torpedoes*, however, Lynch had had quite a few bad days. During those sessions, he was fired, quit, and rehired multiple times, with session drummers recruited to no avail. Iovine knew Lynch could play hard but didn't think he grooved, especially in a way that would propel those songs onto the radio. When the Heartbreakers did a reported 70 takes of *Refugee*, they were hunting for a feel, for a smash. During *Long After Dark*, the cycle repeated itself. *Hard Promises* hadn't produced a massive hit, and they wanted one. Petty's decision to keep Lynch around flummoxed Iovine. "In his mind," Lynch says, "I was eminently fucking replaceable, like I was in the way."

Lynch and Tench were best friends in the Heartbreakers, the counterpart to Campbell and Petty's unspoken brotherhood. Tench saw his pal as an underappreciated listener, responsive to how everyone else moved. He couldn't comprehend Iovine's grievance.

"Jimmy hated the way he played, and I don't think they *liked* each other from the first minute," says Tench. "I thought, What is this bullshit? But I had no sway over Jimmy, and Tom was trying to make the best record he could.

"But in neither case, *Torpedoes* or *Long After Dark*, did we get a single track from drummers we brought in — B.J. Wilson from Procol Harum and Terry Williams from Rockpile, one of the best drummers ever," Tench continues. "But the day Stan came back, we got two tracks. What the hell? Quit messing around."

Looking back across four subsequent decades as a session musician, songwriter, and producer, Lynch understands. He was a kid high on testosterone and anything else he wanted, pounding away because that's all he knew. He had yet to develop dynamics or sub-

tlety. "You're full of shit, and you're full of yourself," he says. He simply wishes the Heartbreakers had been mature enough to communicate beyond disses and dismissals.

"Being the drummer in the Heartbreakers was wonderful, amazing, but it tore a hole in my central nervous system," says Lynch, hesitantly. "There was a lot of cruelty in the room sometimes, unnecessarily, and I gave as good as I got."

**E**VERYTHING WASN'T COPACETIC BETWEEN IOVINE and Petty, either.

*Damn The Torpedoes* had been a breakout for both of them and, much like Petty, Iovine had gone from a figure in music industry marginalia to someone who, in Roberts' parlance, was hot. He had dated Stevie Nicks and facilitated the chart-climbing collaborations between her and Petty. But, according to Petty, he spent much of those *Long After Dark* sessions on the phone, often to Bob Seger talking about *The Distance*, the other album he had on the go. More than once, Petty told Paul Zollo the singer took razor blades and kitchen scissors to the phone cord, literally cutting Iovine off so he would work.

"It was that album when I felt he'd betrayed me," Petty later told Zanes, doubling down. "As I saw it, I'm a full-time job."

Petty and the Heartbreakers cut 19 songs across multiple sessions and studios, but Iovine didn't think several of them fit the reputation they'd built at the nexus of classic rock's accessibility and punk rock's attitude. Don't Make Me Walk The Line was as radiant as any E Street Band jewel, its pouncing piano and xylophone chimes making the lovesick song feel like a blatant bid for radio affection. With its cantering beat and warm group harmonies that recalled the Everlys, *Keeping Me Alive* sounded too country to Iovine, as did *Turning Point*, an optimistic anthem about hard times ➤



◀ fading in the rearview. (All three find a home on the *Long After Dark* reissue.)

There were some advances. An avowed fan of Roxy Music's *Avalon*, Petty was a synthesizer enthusiast. "They're the instruments of the times, and you should deal with them," he told Record. They splash through the cracks of *Long After Dark*, like bits of stained glass making a room glow. Petty plays a Prophet-5, while Tench's Oberheim OB-Xa traces through several songs.

Synths plunge in and out of You Got Lucky, the first single and a sneering taunt about a pending break-up. Petty compared it to Breakdown, "except with more modern instruments," but, for Campbell, it was a real coup, combining old and new ways of working. In a bedroom that's now part of his kitchen, Campbell looped a drum snippet from a record he no longer remembers with a TEAC 4-track. He added guitar and bass using a small Soundcraft mixing board, then took it to the Record Plant. They'd recorded so much of *Long After Dark* live, and this was a distinctly different approach. Lynch, Campbell said, added new life on drums, while Petty inspired the guitar solo.

"I said, What do you think I should play? And he said, 'Play something like Clint Eastwood, The Good, The Bad And The Ugly,'" Campbell says, laughing as he sounds out those tremolo notes. "That was Tom directing me."

The one exception to *Long After Dark*'s spring-loaded rock came at the end with A Wasted Life, a soft-focus plea for someone Petty loves not to ruin their life with depression or drugs. (Petty's first wife, Jane, had just given birth to their second daughter; their marriage was fraying, though they would remain together for 14 more years.) It was, ironically, the first time Lynch saw opium smoked in the studio. "It helped create the weirdness of that track," says the drummer, shrugging.

It was a desperate end to a dark album, Petty often writing as if he'd been cornered by fame until he felt ostracised, lashing out at whatever and whomever neared. The dead ends of A One Story Town, the dangerous possibilities of We Stand A Chance, the doubtful perspective of Deliver Me: when Iovine circumscribed Petty's sounds, he circumscribed his feelings, too.

"There was so much fortitude in those three records with Jimmy," says Adria Petty. "But by the time the last one was edited down, it was darker. Tom liked to play with duality, even if he didn't know what to call it, where there was always hope. He always thought things had possibility."

**I**N THE EARLY '80S, PETTY WAS not exactly an easy or candid interview.

His public fights with his record labels, first over an unfavourable contract and then over an attempt to charge



## "PETTY DOESN'T HAVE A STINKER!"

The soundtrack to new Apple TV show *Bad Monkey* includes 21 Tom Petty covers. Adam Granduciel and Kurt Vile discuss their versions with Grayson Haver Currin.



**ADAM GRANDUCIEL (THE WAR ON DRUGS) ON YOU WRECK ME:** "In high school, *Wildflowers* [1994] was a Top 40 rock record. And Tom was, what, 44? And You Wreck Me was

my song when I was coming of age, eighth or ninth grade. I wore corduroy pants, always thrifting for a pair of cool corduroys. I never wore a pair of jeans until I was 29. So the line about 'I'll be the boy in the corduroy pants,' that was fucking me. And then worlds collided when Dave Grohl played with them on SNL. I remember Mike Campbell playing the big red Gibson 335, and I thought, These guys are cool as shit. I was starting to play guitar, and it was so easy to play along with those songs. It all started coming together with Petty, all started to just make sense."



**KURT VILE ON LEARNING TO FLY:** "I thought the Learning To Fly video was cool, but it wasn't until a little while later that I realised it was the best song ever. We lived in the 'burbs outside

Philly, and we had this one tiny diner, I think the Olympic Diner. There were five booths, but they all had their own personal jukebox. I'd be there with my high school friends, and I'd play Learning To Fly. It would make me feel insanely nostalgic even then. Learning To Fly is a blueprint to a pop song I want to write. I'm always chasing that. Every song that comes through the radio of his is awesome. Petty doesn't have a stinker on the radio. He seemed tough and cool but melodic and a great singer who just delivered all the time."

The *Bad Monkey* soundtrack – which also includes Sharon Van Etten, Nathaniel Rateliff and Jason Isbell – is out now.

more for his albums, provided easy fodder for inquiring journalists. But he started going only skin-deep, choosing to talk more about the basics of production or the outline of his past rather than the real stuff that motivated his songs. After evading Rolling Stone's Mikal Gilmore for days after losing his voice in 1979, Petty finally responded to a conceptual question about antiheroes with, "You know, I don't think about these things that much."

But in an earlier Rolling Stone interview, before the songs of *Torpedoes* catapulted Petty, Cameron Crowe captured a much more open person, an endlessly quotable prankster who talked about switchblades in his boots and who could badmouth Elvis Costello and Johnny Rotten in a single thought. Recognising this rapport, Danny Bramson – the head of Backstreet Records, the Heartbreakers' home since *Torpedoes* – contracted Crowe to make a documentary about Petty they could deliver to MTV to promote *Long After Dark*.

Petty was in, with one caveat: it needed to be weird. "This idea of it being a self-satisfied portrait, he was not into that," Crowe remembers. "He wanted it to be cool and irreverent and not look like the corporate thing he'd just come out of a battle with. If he was going to splash around in these waters, fame by way of corporate promotions, he wanted it to be something that wouldn't be a compromise."

Indeed, there are few portraits of a rock band so disarming, real, or goofy as Heartbreakers Beach Party, named for an antic 1980 Heartbreakers number about a seaside cook-out. It was screened after midnight just once on MTV. Crowe soon got a call from MTV executive Chip Rachlin, saying it wasn't fit for the channel, then barely a year old. It became an object lesson for Crowe, still years away from making Say Anything and Singles, not to bargain. "Tom was quietly proud it aired only once, so it became like Cocksucker Blues," he remembers, laughing. "You had to be there."

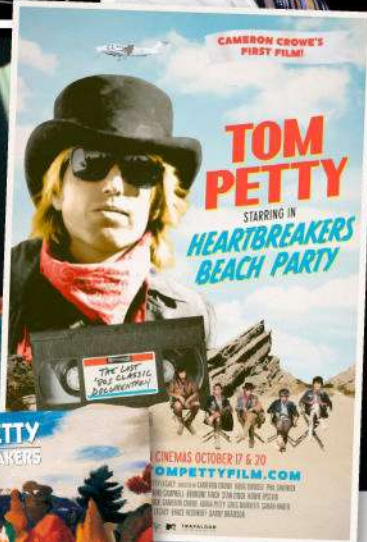
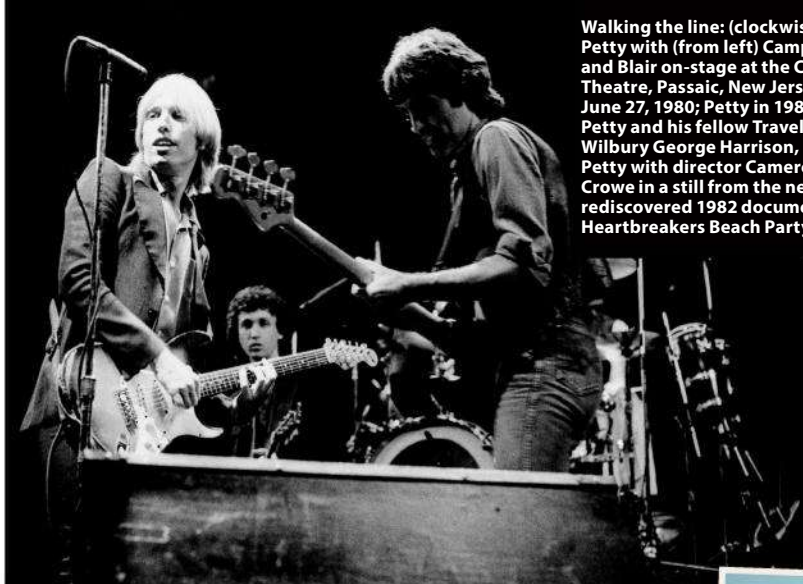
When Adria Petty saw the footage last year as part of an archival dump, she was stunned. She remembered the film being shot in her family home when she was seven, and she recognised the assorted rooms of her childhood. But she didn't expect to see her sometimes-enigmatic father opening up so much about songwriting, whether showing Crowe how American Girl owed more to Bo Diddley than Roger McGuinn or how much patience waiting for the lyrics to The Waiting required.

Petty wrestled with the ridiculousness and convenience of limousines, how to keep his concerts safe without making them sanitised, and how to deal with the honours and riches of fame while remaining a rebellious kid from the Florida swamps. It pulled open a window on a period of Petty's career during which he'd kept things opaque. "He's talking about his recording process, all this stuff he was pretty cryptic about later in life," Adria remembers. "That was insane."

During one of the poignant final scenes, Petty sits in his home garden and tells Crowe about reconciling his public and private images, or how he has realised there is no costume.



Walking the line: (clockwise) Petty with (from left) Campbell and Blair on-stage at the Capitol Theatre, Passaic, New Jersey, June 27, 1980; Petty in 1986; Petty and his fellow Traveling Wilbury George Harrison, 1992; Petty with director Cameron Crowe in a still from the newly rediscovered 1982 documentary *Heartbreakers Beach Party*.



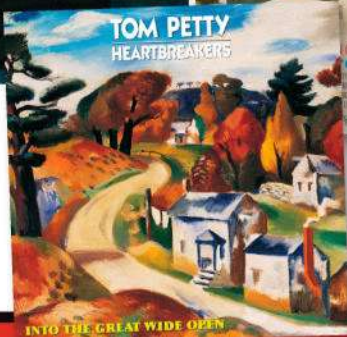
What's in his life makes it on record and vice versa. "I hate those rock stars or any artist who goes, 'Well, there's me, and then there's the character,'" he tells Crowe. "It's you, man."

Crowe remembers it well, with the kids playing and Jane cooking inside. That was the stuff of *Life After Dark*, with Petty letting his world bleed onto tape — even if he didn't always want to explain it. "That was bold at the time, because you were supposed to have a persona that was bigger than life," Crowe says. "He said, 'I'm not bigger than life. Life is bigger than me, and I'm just a guy living my life.' That showed in his later stuff."

**I**N OCTOBER 1984, ALMOST TWO years after the release of *Long After Dark*, Tom Petty shattered his hand. He'd been in his home studio late in Encino, trying and failing to find the magic he'd captured during an early demo for what would become the Heartbreakers' sixth album, *Southern Accents*. Exasperated, he punched (or slapped, as he sometimes put it) the wall, breaking several bones in his fretting hand. "I wasn't trying to hurt myself," he insisted to Creem a year later.

Petty had been trying to make his world smaller since *Long After Dark*'s draining sessions and exhausting tour. He'd built his own studio, let Iovine go, and started penning songs about back home. There was a productive co-writing dalliance with Eurythmics' Dave Stewart, but *Southern Accents* initially suggested a beleaguered Petty trying to step sideways from fame, to find some centre. The work was slow and sporadic, but the booze, cocaine, and pot were not.

The broken hand meant he had to call Iovine back in, and what started as a strong concept album soon got away from him. He'd also passed on the Campbell demo that Don Henley turned into



**"YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO HAVE A PERSONA THAT WAS BIGGER THAN LIFE. TOM SAID, 'I'M NOT BIGGER THAN LIFE. LIFE IS BIGGER THAN ME.'"**  
CAMERON CROWE

Boys Of Summer, and Tench was now an in-demand session player. His marriage had worsened, as had his relationship with Lynch, damaged by financial disagreements and those taxing sessions with Iovine. Petty was one of the world's biggest rock stars, but fame suddenly felt painful. "We had too much time on our hands," Petty told Zollo. "I didn't know how to live in the world."

*Long After Dark*, then, represented the end of relative innocence. Fame cost the Heartbreakers a bassist and strained Petty's long-standing relationship with Lynch in ways that, the drummer admits, would never fully heal. The Heartbreakers would become Dylan's backing band and Petty a Traveling Wilbury before they would make another great album together, 1991's *Into The Great Wide Open*. But even that

came amid a truly hot streak for Petty — 1989's *Full Moon Fever* and 1994's *Wildflowers*, two monumental solo albums where he fully tapped the pop and so-called country impulses Iovine had resisted on *Long After Dark*. Indeed, those sorts of tunes made Petty the best he would ever be.

"It's just a record of pop songs, but I was feeling pressure, people saying that you didn't send us a message," Petty said of *Long After Dark* in that Creem story where he explained the broken hand. "Well, I didn't have any message to send."

That's not quite right: *Long After Dark* did have a message, one about plunging straight into darkness and then finding the things that helped you get out again. In 1982, though, Petty, the Heartbreakers, and Iovine only managed to share half of that story. **M**





Charged up: The Cult's Billy Duffy (left) and Ian Astbury take a break during the recording of *Electric*, Electric Lady studios, New York, 1987.



# THE CULT CRACK AMERICA

Riding the success of 1985's *Love* LP, **THE CULT** looked West, plugging into hard rock and hip-hop for *Electric* and West Coast vibrations for *Sonic Temple*, a US smash in 1989. Forty years since their transition from Death Cult into the band they resemble today, they relive the creative ferment, emotional turmoil and on-the-road chaos. "That was such an intense period," they say. "It's amazing that we survived."

Interviews: **PAT GILBERT** Portrait by **DREW CAROLAN**

**Billy Duffy:** We'd had a hit with *She Sells Sanctuary* and were in pre-production for the *Love* album. Nigel Preston, our drummer, had got into some serious Class A drug use, so Mark Brzezicki from Big Country stepped in. The last two songs we worked on were *Love* and *Phoenix*, and Mark lit up these heavy riffs with his playing. Ian [Astbury] heard it, and thought it was the best thing ever, particularly *Phoenix*.

**Jamie Stewart:** Suddenly we regained our focus. There was a lot of pendulum-swinging in our career, coming in and out of sync. But with those tracks we seemed to get it together.

**BD:** We began to develop this idea of mixing rock, goth and disco. But *Love* was a weird set-up: the album was recorded on a digital desk made by Mitsubishi. A Japanese chap slept underneath it in case it broke.

**Bob Rock:** I thought *Love* was such a great album, it sounded so *new*. It had all those layers of psychedelic noise going on with Billy's guitars, and Ian's voice sounded so powerful... It's still my favourite (*laughs*).

**BD:** We went to America to tour *Love* and suddenly we were exposed to a broader range of music. The stuff we listened to at home – Free, Bad Company, Led Zeppelin – was actually on the radio and the people we encountered in America really embraced us. In Britain we felt very much under the jackboot of journalists who'd never gotten over punk rock.

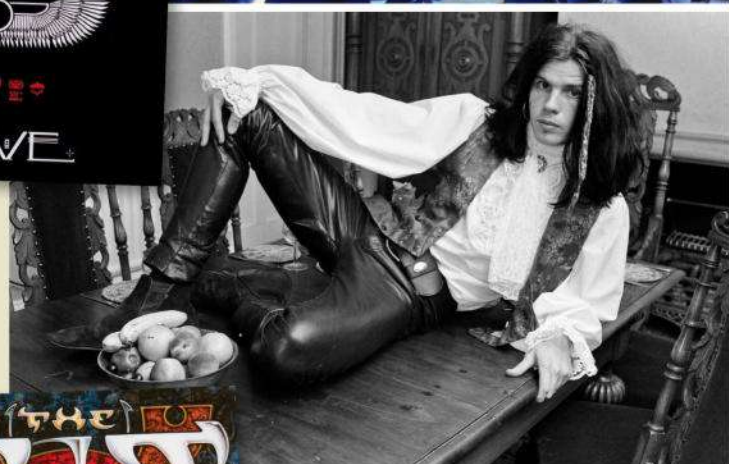
**Ian Astbury:** The commercial success was head-spinning. I'd been homeless for quite a while, then I got asked to join Southern Death Cult and I was on the cover of the NME [October, 1982] when there wasn't even an album out. All of a sudden you're in the public eye and everyone's judging you based on the way

you look. I remember walking into the Hammersmith Palais just after *Love* had come out, I think it was a Killing Joke show, and this kid just walked up to me and punched me square in the face. Didn't even say anything.

**Alan Edwards:** Ian Grant [co-manager] and I were really focused on breaking them in America. Billy was really keen, because he'd been stuck in northern England for years, in the rain and the cold. But Ian was obsessed with it. He'd grown up partly in North America, so he had this interest in Native Americans which played into the imagery of *The Cult*.

**BD:** When we came back from the American tour of *Love*, we were determined to make something a bit more rock. Then Ian had a bit of a wobble. I remember in Italy, on a little tour we did before we went into the studio, he threw all these lyrics out, like, "They're all ➤"





**“ELECTRIC CAME OUT, AND EVERYBODY’S LIKE, ‘YOU’VE TRASHED YOUR ROOTS AND YOUR ORIGINS. HOW DARE YOU!’”**

**IAN ASTBURY**

“shit.” So when we went into record, I don’t think Ian was really there. There was a separation between him and the band. He’d work on his own with [producer] Steve Brown late into the night.

**IA:** We were at Richard Branson’s Manor studios in rural Oxfordshire. It was so far away from what our real life was. We weren’t really interested in hanging out in the garden, you know? Except we found out they had a wine cellar. We soon got that open. So we kind of got entrenched and it was almost as if this album was going to be *Love II*. It was heavily layered. And as usual I was pushing for something more raw. It felt like we were *making* a record, as opposed to *birthing* one.

**BD:** When it was finished, *Peace* [as the record was then called] wasn’t the quantum leap we expected. But the songs were OK.

**AE:** Ian came up with idea of getting Def Jam’s Rick Rubin to remix a track or two. He’d had all this success with Run-DMC and the Beastie Boys and was the hottest producer around. Nobody really got it. The label, Beggars Banquet, here [in the UK] were resistant. I just don’t think any of us really saw that as a way forward.

**IA:** We’d been in a club in Toronto in late 1985 and I heard Cookie Puss by the Beastie Boys. I was instantly stopped in my tracks and went to the DJ and said, What is this? I felt a real kindred spirit with this music, the sound, how stripped back it was, how raw it was.

**BD:** We went to meet Rick in New York. It was funny, he didn’t drink, never smoked weed, I didn’t trust him [laughs]. He hadn’t moved out of his dorm at NYU and I don’t think he’d even recorded a band at this point. He said, “I’ll remix your album, but you need to let me cut one track from the ground up.” We ended up doing a whole album.

**IA:** I remember Rick putting on a VHS of Blue Cheer playing Summertime Blues. He said, “You like the [MC]5? Check these guys out.” I was like, Wow, that is *raw*. How do you get *that* in a room?

**BD:** Rick was like, “Do you like early AC/DC?” Yeah. “Early Led Zeppelin? Aerosmith?” He just wanted to establish what we considered to be the fundamental pillars of good rock. A lot of things went on from a guitar player’s point of view. He said we’d only use a rented Les Paul and Marshall. He was like Pol Pot and just scraped everything away, which was sort of genius. Him and [engineer] George Drakoulis were like Batman and Robin.

**Rick Rubin:** The idea that I was still going to NYU and walking from my dorm room to Electric Lady studios every day to produce an album was insane. And it was a group from England who I had only met because they liked my Def Jam 12-inches. I remember Ian really embracing the whole process.

**AE:** Rick was like a student. He used to eat hamburgers and drink Coca-Cola. But Ian [Grant] and I were playing catch-up doing the deals. This was all costing money.

**BD:** *Electric* was sort of a cartoony record, because we were living cartoony lives. We were young men in New York going mental, right? One day we came in and the Beastie Boys are all jamming on our gear. Public Enemy came down. Then we all went to see Slayer, met the guys in Anthrax...

**Cult following:** (clockwise from above left) Southern Death Cult (from left) Haq Nawaz ‘Aki’ Qureshi, Barry Jepson, David ‘Buzz’ Burrows, Ian Astbury, Bradford, 1982; flowered up: The Cult (clockwise from left) Astbury, Billy Duffy, Jamie Stewart, Nigel Preston, 1985; “Anything for dessert?”: Astbury minds his table manners, July 1985.

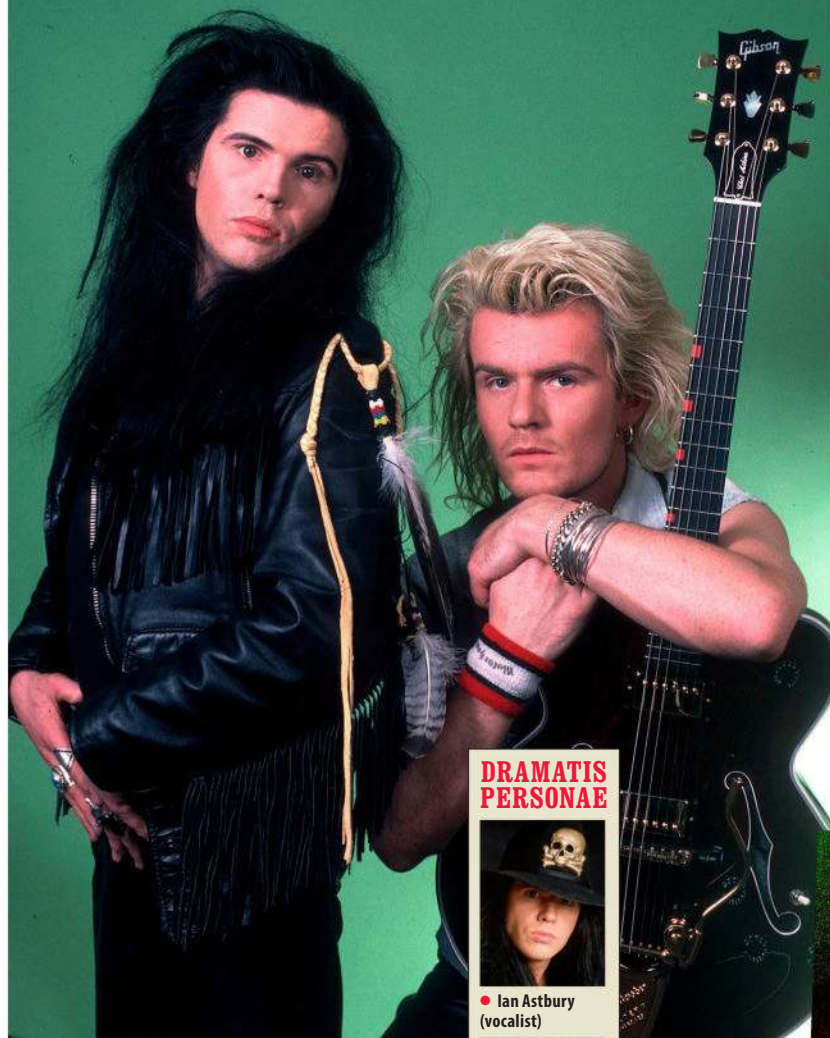
**IA:** At the MTV New Year’s Ball, 1986, the Beastie Boys are like, “Come on-stage with us.” So that’s me on-stage with the Beastie Boys, doing No Sleep Till Brooklyn. Overall, we were pretty excited about *Electric*. It felt less like we were *aspiring* to something, and more like we were *becoming* something. But it came out, and everybody’s like, “You’ve trashed your roots and your origins. How dare you!?”

**AE:** They went out on tour in America with Billy Idol, then Guns N’ Roses. Ian was a real frontman – fights, getting bottles of whiskey smashed over his head, insulting record label people, wrecking hotels. At one of the gigs, Guns N’ Roses had to smuggle him out of the venue to stop him getting arrested for swearing on-stage. He made John Lydon look like a choir boy, but on the other hand he had a spirituality about him and really original ideas. He was an artist.

**JS:** I’d sit in the gym the next morning, talking to Billy about what Ian had been doing the night before – whether it was walking naked across his balcony railings at two o’clock in the morning or getting drunk and trashing some club. He was having a difficult time of it. It got to the point where no one could relate to him.

**IA:** That’s around when we got banned from Rolling Stone. It was some kind of fashion piece on music moguls and their protégés, which we did with Seymour Stein, who’d licensed us to Sire for the States. We arrived at the studio for a fitting, and I looked at the clothes on the rail, and I said,





**DRAMATIS PERSONAE**



● Ian Astbury (vocalist)



● Billy Duffy (guitarist)



● Jamie Stewart (bassist)



● Rick Rubin (producer)



● Bob Rock (producer)



● Alan Edwards (co-manager)



**Sonic boom:** (clockwise from left) Astbury and Duffy begin to pull in different directions; *Electric warriors:* Stewart, Les Warner, Astbury, Stephen 'Kid Chaos' Harris, Duffy, Munich, July 7, 1987; at the 1989 MTV Video Music Awards (from left) Stewart, Duffy, Matt Sorum and Astbury.



I'm not wearing any of this. I know how to dress myself. So the session got wrapped pretty quickly, and I was given the whisper: "You just screwed our relationship with Rolling Stone."

**AE:** It was all getting a bit Spinal Tap. Someone lost it once when a limo turned up that was the wrong colour.

**BD:** We'd gotten into this habit of breaking up all the gear on-stage, every rock cliché. It got a little grisly, a lot of shenanigans. I drank very enthusiastically in those days, and even I was like, Whoah, this is getting a bit pie-eyed.

**AE:** They got to somewhere like Brisbane and literally ran out of equipment. After that Australian leg, the tour didn't get completed. It started to fall in on itself.

**JS:** That tour had been a disaster and lost money. We'd already recorded in one of the most expensive studios in Britain without releasing a record [ie, *Peace*]. The records were successful but we were in debt.

**IA:** It seemed to be exploding on the commercial side. But I went to Harley Street to see the doctor and he diagnosed nervous exhaustion. That was the first time I really felt I was on a dangerous path.

**BD:** We had spent a lot of our spare time in Los Angeles in '87 between tours. I didn't go back to England. I ended up meeting Steve Jones and riding around with long hair on a Harley-Davidson. I decided to stay there and get American management.

Ian [Grant] and Alan were mad with us.

**AE:** I got a call from their new manager Howard Kaufman. From a mobile phone in his Rolls-Royce, driving through Beverly Hills...

**JS:** They weren't happy. They were in the process of setting up a New York office and we were still under contract. Lawsuits flew and it got horrible.

**AE:** It ended up with a major altercation watched by a crowd in the street. It was pretty extraordinary. The police were called.

**IA:** I was personally very, very attached to Ian and Alan. They were like bigger brothers. For the first time in my life, I felt I had some mentorship. My own father wasn't as present as I would have liked him to have been. But the momentum around me was so much I couldn't fight it.

**BD:** I felt like we had a window of opportunity to make it in show business, in a serious way. But it's like, I don't think we're going to be able to fake this. We need to be properly good. We need to write good songs, play them really well. I noticed on tour with Slash and [Billy Idol's guitarist] Steve Stevens that they practised all the time. America's too vast to blag it.

**IA:** *Sonic Temple* was an LA record. But not the superficial, Beverly Hills LA. It's Doors territory, it's Love territory. It's also the seat of esoterica in the West.

That's where Christopher Isherwood went, Aldous Huxley, the Theosophists. There's a lot of mythology to be discovered in Los Angeles. Also, it was a place

where we got left alone a bit. It was getting dangerous walking around London. I was attacked several times.

**BR:** I got a call from Billy, who I'd met briefly, and went down to LA to talk to him and Ian. I liked *Electric*, but as a fan, I was like, What the fuck? I wanted to bring back what Billy did on *Love*, a lot of guitars and stuff. So *Sonic Temple* set out to be a cross between *Electric* and *Love*.

**BD:** We took a massive gamble with Bob Rock. We didn't really entertain doing another record with Rick. It was a great one-off. Rick's not a producer that can help you if you only have half an album of material. Bob is.

**BR:** With Ian, it was the first time I ever met, like, a rock star, a guy that totally lived it. He was suspicious of me on that album and took a while to warm up. I'd worked with Bon Jovi and Aerosmith, but I came from a punk background, which he came to understand. He was great: I don't want to say Jim Morrison but... he had lots of notebooks and ideas. One night we went to see Iggy Pop and Ian brought him back to the studio on the back of his chopper.

**IA:** I would have continued with Rick. Bob was very much more about getting in the room, working songs out, pulling things apart. It was actually quite challenging. And I just wanted to do things instinctively. There was a certain agenda creeping in the room that I railed against every day. I was saying, Let's strip it down. Let's keep it raw. The record, in many ways, is a combination of Billy, Bob, myself, all pulling in different directions.

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"Wanna ride?":  
Astbury on his  
chopper, July 1989.



**"WITH IAN, IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I EVER MET, LIKE, A ROCK STAR, A GUY THAT TOTALLY LIVED IT."  
BOB ROCK**

**BR:** Ian wanted it a bit rougher, yes. Jamie? He was the John Paul Jones figure. He was a great bass player. He held it together.

**BD:** We were friends with Metallica and toured with them in summer 1989. I wasn't convinced that their crowd would like us. They still had their very hardcore, primarily male fan base. They hadn't changed into the new, improved, touchy-feely Metallica. So it was a hard tour for us. But it won us a lot of fans. Fire Woman [the single] went platinum.

**AE:** We watched on as The Cult had a Top 10 hit in America with *Sonic Temple*. The dream of breaking America had come true.

**IA:** I thought Fire Woman was our albatross. I didn't think it was a fair representation of the band. It was like we were evolving into this A&R person's wet dream of what The Cult should be.

**BD:** Ian had some relationship issues ongoing with his girlfriend, Renee [Beach], and that was falling apart on the back of all the touring. So he was in a bad, bad shape towards the end. I think he was just struggling with the success to a degree. I don't think it sat that well with him.

**IA:** There was another component in that I found out my father was dying of cancer. So I was kind of vulnerable, less vigilant. We were doing the MTV awards in Los Angeles in '89, and the day of

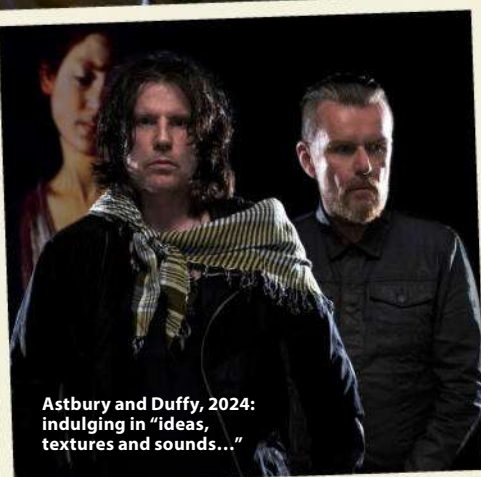
the show, my father sat me down and said, "My cancer's terminal." I was ripped apart. I walked on-stage that night and gave zero as a performance. I was just so not connected to it. I actually got berated by my manager, and my partner at the time, for throwing away this 'incredible opportunity' by not doing the little dance.

**JS:** I made up my mind going into that tour that it was going to be the end. I got married around that time. No one was talking to anyone else. Billy said, "Fuck it, it's a drag but you've made up your mind." I've no idea what Ian thought. I went to see him in his hotel room and he was surrounded with books and the TV was on. Ian and Billy couldn't talk to each other. This enormous castle was built on those shifting sands.

**IA:** That tour was chaos for me. I was distraught about my father. I was exhausted. The lifestyle took over. We had to pull the tour early. I went home to my father's funeral. That was such an intense period. It's amazing that we survived.

**BD:** Howard Kaufman said, "Well, now you've had success and made some money, it's going to be very interesting." I said, Why? He said, "Well, you don't need to do it any more." They call it 'fuck-you money' – y'know, I never liked you anyway, time for my solo album (*laughs*). The funny thing is, we've never really cracked the middle of America, the heartland. Most of the people in the Midwest who liked The Cult had already moved to the big cities on the coast. But they still like us over there... **M**

*Additional material provided by Danny Eccleston and Andrew Perry. The Cult began a UK tour on October 21 at Leicester's De Montfort Hall. More info at [thecult.us](http://thecult.us)*



Astbury and Duffy, 2024:  
indulging in "ideas,  
textures and sounds..."

## The Cult Now

The group are galloping into the future "like a burning unicorn," says Ian Astbury.

ON THEIR current 8424 tour, Ian Astbury and Billy Duffy celebrate 40 years since they retired their Death Cult moniker and embraced an unknown future.

"I don't think of it as a retrospective, or an anniversary, though," Astbury tells MOJO. "I don't need a cake. '8424' is just a convenient moniker. I like how it looks like it could be a year in the future, like a date out of *Blade Runner* or something."

As far as Astbury is concerned, even at 62, the same fire burns within that produced the songs on *Love and Electric*. "I've never felt that sense of entitlement," he insists. "I was always the most earnest person in the room. And I'm pushing for a future for this band where we can really, truly incubate and indulge in ideas, textures, sounds..."

The Cult's current tour embraces the entirety of the group's history, including more recent albums *Choice Of Weapon* (2012) and *Under The Midnight Sun* (2022), with a band including Robert Plant vet Charlie Jones on bass. The singer concedes, however, that last year's Death Cult dates, which concentrated entirely on songs from 1981-85, "was a reset. It was, Let's go back to zero. When a performer is like that, on fire, it's like a burning unicorn. It's all your trauma, all your lived experience. When I step over that threshold, I don't know what's gonna happen."

And these shows? "They're like Death Cult on steroids."

Danny Eccleston



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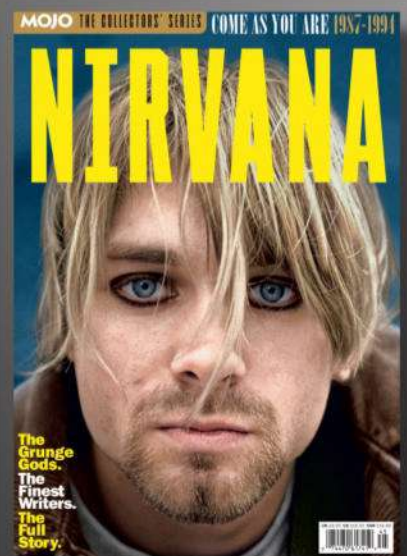
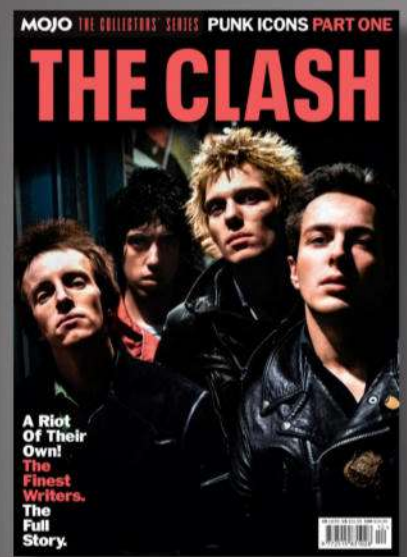
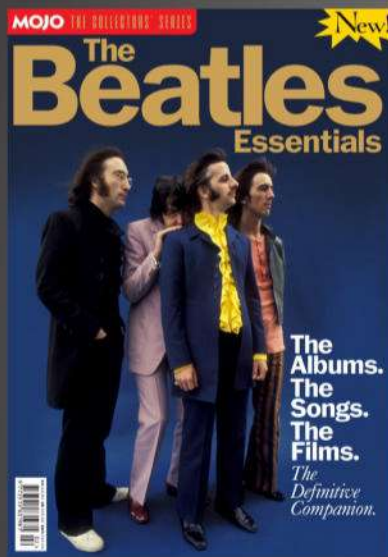
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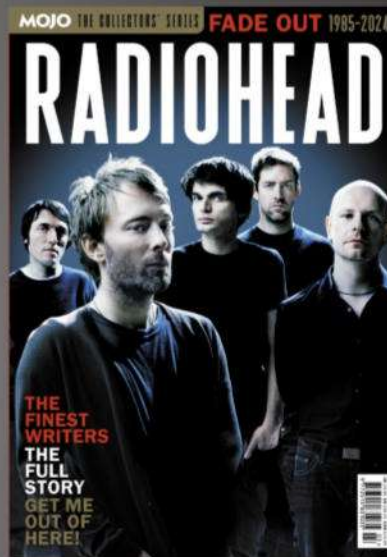


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# TROUBLED SOUL

**DAVID BOWIE's 1974 beggars belief. Two genius albums – Diamond Dogs and Young Americans – completed. Multiple shifts in music and iconography undertaken. All in the midst of personality crisis and management meltdown. Fifty years on, bandmates and associates relive a rollercoaster ride. “There were so many drugs,” they tell **MARK PAYTRESS**. “Even John Lennon hadn’t seen so much cocaine.”**

**M** ID-APRIL 1974: 22-YEAR-OLD EARL Slick was hungry for work. He'd recently auditioned for Dr. John on a tip from Michael Kamen, his sometime band leader, but it hadn't led to much. Nevertheless Kamen, Slick's mentor of sorts, had a good feeling about this one. "You're gonna get a call from somebody," he told the guitarist. "It's a big one, so get your shit together."

"First of all, I'd expected a rehearsal place," says Slick, "not a dark, empty room at RCA studios in midtown New York City." After some small talk with an assistant who introduced herself as Coco, he plugged his 1965 SG Junior into one of the two amps there, before a voice came over the monitor: "Put the headphones on. We're going to play you some tracks. Just play along..."

First up was Diamond Dogs. Slick remembers that, because his hero was Keith Richards and the song had a Stones-like swagger. "The audition couldn't have lasted more than 20 minutes," he says. "Then... dead fucking silence." ➤

The Sun/News Syndication. Michael Ochs Archives/Getty Images







"Who can I be now?": two faces of Bowie in '74 - performing Rebel Rebel on Dutch TV in February; on-stage during the Diamond Dogs Tour in LA in September.





Wood's Richmond home studio, the charismatic twosome traded vocals on *It's Only Rock'n Roll (But I Like It)*, a glam jam inspired by T. Rex's *Get It On*. Three weeks later, on December 27, Bowie was in Trident Studios teaching session guitarist Alan Parker the best riff Keith Richards never wrote. It was the zinging refrain to new song *Rebel Rebel*. "I just wanted to piss Mick off a bit," Bowie later admitted.

During the first weeks of 1974, these sessions for Bowie's first post-Spiders album continued back at Olympic Studios in Barnes, west London, the Stones' studio home since late 1966. Says Mike Garson, Bowie's keyboard foil on *Aladdin Sane* and its emerging follow-up, "I knew about the Stones having been there. When you go to a studio like that, there's a magic that feels like the notes find you as much as you find them."

Yet for all the mutual affinities, there was little creative kinship between the Stones and Bowie. Olympic engineer Andy Morris worked with both in 1974. "With the Stones, there were loads of hangers-on," he told MOJO. "David was a workaholic. He would come in at one in the afternoon and some days we wouldn't leave until five in the morning."

Besides, while The Rolling Stones had a sound, David Bowie had a method – permanent revolution.

**T**HE ALBUM DESTINED TO BE titled *Diamond Dogs* was the closest Bowie would come to a genuine solo album. He conceptualised it; played most of the guitars and saxes; lay on the studio floor for hours applying William Burroughs' cut-up technique to the lyrics; juxtaposed Stones-style rockers with operatic, dystopian ballads, funk rhythms with punkish guitars; and tossed in material from thwarted stage shows *Orwell's 1984* and *Ziggy The Musical*. "It was often just us in the studio," recalls Garson, still marvelling at the album's creative coups. "I can't believe he pulled *Sweet Thing* out of me. I thought I'd given everything I had on *Aladdin Sane*."

The 'Dogs' of the title, Bowie said later, were inspired by tales of the "urchins" who lived on the rooftops of Victorian London. And with the album completed by March, Bowie turned to his friend Geoff MacCormack to ask: "Would you mind being a Dog?"

Pals since primary school in the mid-'50s, the pair had grown close again since Bowie found a role for MacCormack – punningly redubbed Warren Peace – as a backing singer in the enlarged entourage he'd taken to the States in February 1973. Now on April 3, 1974, the dogs were fleeing blackout Britain on the SS *France* out of Cannes, destination New York.

"As a kid David was crazy about American football," his ex-wife Angie Bowie tells MOJO today. "But one of the things he really loved about America was that it was a new country, that they'd thrown out the British and designed it themselves."

Now Bowie had designs of his own on the States: a vast theatrical show that would be hauled across North America and billed as *The Year Of The Diamond Dogs* – with a stage set that would echo the album's apocalyptic themes, as encapsulated in the title track's ➤

◀ When a studio door opened, a pale, skinny figure walked gracefully towards him, stretched out a hand and introduced himself: "I'm David Bowie."

"He was dressed the way an English rock star might think a Harlem pimp would dress," Slick noted in his recent memoir, "loose, baggy pants matched with Capezio dance shoes. To top it off, he had bright orange hair under a grey fedora." As the pair talked, the guitarist spotted something else – no eyebrows.

"There was a strangeness about the whole thing," says the native New Yorker, whose own visual cues were standard issue rock muso – blue jeans, giant belt buckle, long hair, velvet jacket.

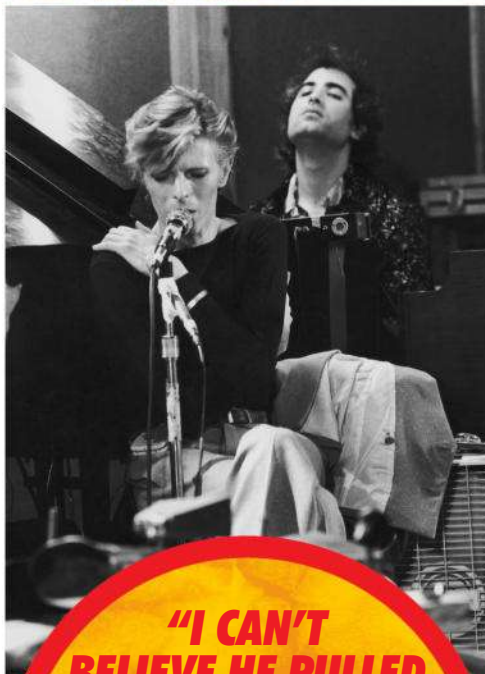
The following day, Slick was invited over to Bowie's suite in the Sherry-Netherland, at the south-east corner of Central Park, where his hair was styled and he was measured up for a suit. This wasn't rock'n'roll, brooded the guitarist, this was *showbiz*. Even so, he loved Bowie's latest album, *Aladdin Sane*, and wasn't about to pass up the chance to play guitar-heavy songs like *Panic In Detroit* and *Time the length and breadth of North America*. It was, as Kamen had promised, a big one.

**S**INCE RETIRING ZIGGY STARDUST, his alien rock star alter-ego, at London's Hammersmith Odeon on July 3, 1973, Bowie had lurked in the shadows, Nosferatu-like. Now, in spring 1974, he was preparing to rouse himself from hibernation – in a new city in a new country. Earl Slick was but one of a whole retinue of new recruits.

The success and notoriety of the Ziggy project had ignited an enormous outbreak of star worship that both fascinated and appalled Bowie. At Ziggy's 'retirement' party, he could now hold court at the top table flanked by Lou Reed, whose transgressive songs of New York sleaze had inspired him, and by Mick Jagger.

Androgynous, animalistic, the consummate rock prince, Jagger had been in Bowie's sights for some time. The young pretender had covered the Stones' *Let's Spend The Night Together* in carnivalesque style on *Aladdin Sane*. That autumn, he duetted with Mick's ex Marianne Faithfull on *Sonny & Cher's I Got You Babe* for a TV special destined for the States, and slept with her too.

By winter 1973, Bowie's vampiric inhalation of Jagger was almost complete. In early December, at a late-night session in Ron



**"I CAN'T BELIEVE HE PULLED SWEET THING OUT OF ME. I THOUGHT I'D GIVEN EVERYTHING I HAD ON ALADDIN SANE."**

**MIKE GARSON**



Pedigree chum: Bowie brings a friend (and significant reading, bottom right) for the *Diamond Dogs* publicity shoot, 1974; (opposite page, from top) 'Philly Dogs' Bowie and Earl Slick on-stage at Michigan Palace, Detroit, October 16, 1974; Bowie and Mike Garson during *Young Americans* sessions, Sigma Sound Studios, Philadelphia, August 1974.





# JACKBOOT STOMPIN'

**Bowie's plans for George Orwell's 1984 were thwarted, but his dystopian visions of chaos and tyranny lived on in Diamond Dogs and beyond, writes DORIAN LYSKEY.**

**T**HE WAY BOWIE told it, there would be no *Diamond Dogs* if not for George Orwell's widow Sonia. In September 1973 he began working on a musical adaptation of Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* with playwright Tony Ingrassia. The following month he debuted a song-in-progress, 1984/Dodo, on-stage in London at the punningly titled 1980 Floor Show. In November he told William S Burroughs it would be a TV special. He was to play Orwell's unhappy rebel Winston Smith, with Marianne Faithfull rumoured for his hedonistic lover Julia. Yet within weeks the project was dead and Bowie was building a new home for the orphaned songs: *Diamond Dogs*. Speaking to *Circus* magazine in 1976, Bowie blamed Sonia Orwell for the change of plan. "She was the biggest upper-class snob I've ever met in my life," he complained. "Good heavens, put it to music?" It was really like that.

It's a good story with a convenient killjoy villain but they never actually met and it wasn't personal. The fiercely protective Sonia had been so dismayed by a 1956 Hollywood neutering of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* that she blocked all further screen adaptations until her death in 1980, musical or otherwise. What's more, Bowie's manager Tony Defries had submitted a sloppy proposal and an insultingly low offer. It was a non-starter. Still, Bowie felt that his dream of "19-bloody-84" had been stolen from him.

Bowie included Orwell's novel on a 2013 list of his favourite books. He must have discovered it young. "You always felt you were in 1984," he said of his childhood in post-war Brixton and Bromley. "That's the kind of gloom and immovable society that a lot of us felt we grew up in." He was born in January 1947, when snow and Siberian cold led to fuel rationing and power cuts. Orwell, living six miles away in Islington, complained of a "lousy winter" with "unheard-of weather".

The next time Britain suffered such severe fuel shortages was October 1973, due to the oil embargo arising from the Yom Kippur War. Planning to emigrate and addicted to doom, Bowie was acutely sensitive to the country's escalating anxiety about unrest and decline, leading to either societal collapse or some kind of dictatorship. Having recently travelled through the USSR, he was already devouring books about totalitarianism. He was in an Orwellian frame of mind.

**I**N THE END, *Diamond Dogs* was a dystopia of two halves. Side one's hectic, lurid Hunger City owes more to the lawless sci-fi ganglands of Burroughs' *The Wild Boys* and Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange* than to the grey, monolithic tyranny of Orwell's *Airstrip One*. The Orwellian show tunes arrive late, rearranging fragments of the

novel in Burroughsian cut-up fashion.

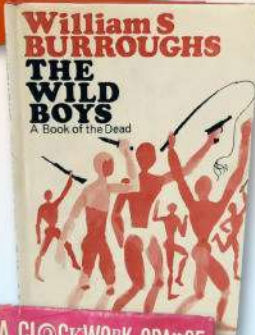
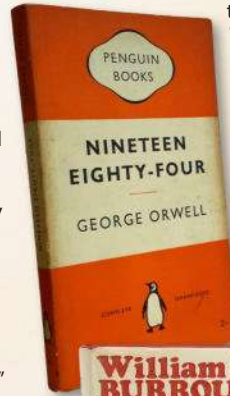
We Are The Dead reimagines Winston and Julia's final assignment before the Thought Police arrive. Dodo, severed from 1984 and then dropped altogether, describes how Winston's colleague Parsons was betrayed by his own children and dispatched to the "scorching light" of the Ministry of Love. Chant Of The Ever Circling Skeletal Family is Bowie's *Two Minutes Hate*, approximating the ritual's "hideous grinding screech" and "subhuman chanting". He was clearly intimate with the text. The song 1984's reference to an alleged plot against Big Brother ("Looking for the treason I knew in '65") is a very deep cut indeed.

Whether Bowie possessed the narrative discipline or political sympathies to have pulled off a successful adaptation is debatable. Orwell was profoundly sceptical of power and those who seek it. Bowie, however, was intoxicated by the intersection of stardom, mass media and dictatorship, from the teenage Nietzscheans of Oh! You Pretty Things to the tyrant-hustler in Somebody Up There Likes Me. His songs teemed with supermen and saviours. When John Lennon and Stevie Wonder sang about Big Brother, they identified with the little guy but Bowie's craving for "someone to follow... someone to fool us" is gloriously anthemic – a sweet surrender. Whose side was he on?

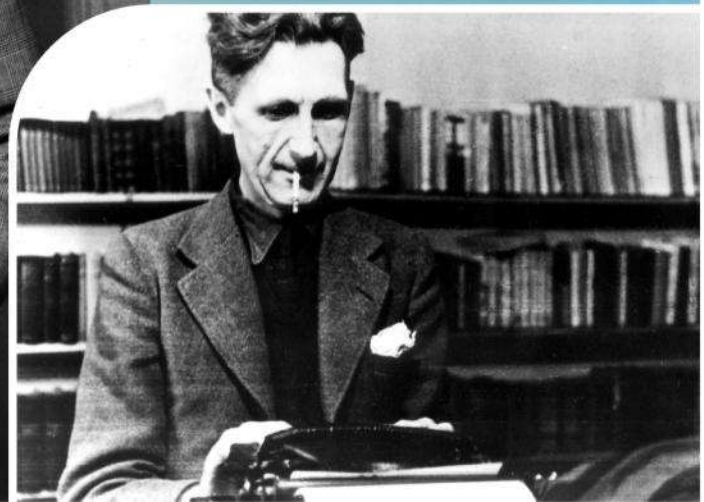
Bowie gave set designer Mark Ravitz three dark touchstones for the *Diamond Dogs* Tour: "Power, Nuremberg and Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*." Soon, he was describing Hitler as "one of the first rock stars" and claimed the chaos of the mid-1970s demanded "an extreme right front" to "tidy everything up". Berlin soon smacked the glamour of fascism out of him and he disowned the "bizarre nihilistic fantasy world" that spawned his half-mad provocations, but he was a long way from Orwell's moral clarity.

Bowie got another shot at Orwell a decade later, when he pitched to soundtrack Michael Radford's movie 1984. But the film's producer, Richard Branson, politely declined and chose the Eurythmics instead. Like Winston Smith, Bowie couldn't win.

*Dorian Lyskey is the author of The Ministry Of Truth – A Biography Of George Orwell's 1984 and Everything Must Go: The Stories We Tell About The End Of The World.*



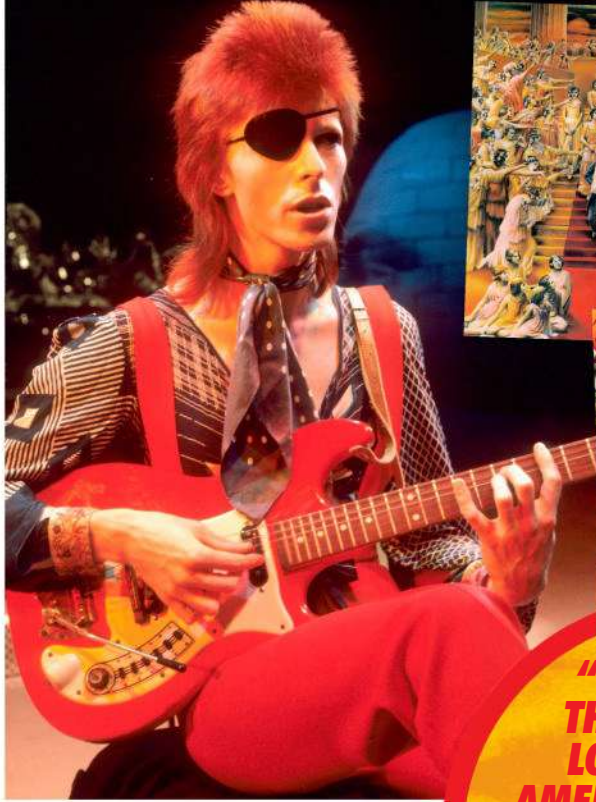
**"YOU ALWAYS FELT YOU WERE IN 1984. THAT'S THE KIND OF GLOOM THAT A LOT OF US GREW UP IN."  
DAVID BOWIE**



**Wild boys:** Bowie meets William S Burroughs, February 1974; (right) George Orwell, author of *Diamond Dogs* inspiration *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, at work in 1946.



Rebel soul: (from left) Bowie says goodbye to glam on *TopPop*, February 13, 1974; recording *Diamond Dogs*; (inset) the Guy Peellaert-illustrated sleeves for The Rolling Stones and Bowie.



**"ONE OF THE THINGS DAVID LOVED ABOUT AMERICA WAS THAT THEY'D THROWN OUT THE BRITISH AND DESIGNED IT THEMSELVES."**  
**ANGIE BOWIE**

opening salvo of "This ain't rock'n'roll – this is genocide."

Seeing Fritz Lang's 1927 silent cinema masterpiece *Metropolis* on his 27th birthday – January 8, 1974 – helped Bowie visualise it: a near-future cityscape hosting various dreamlike set-pieces: Bowie roped by the 'Dogs', wild boys who stalked the blood-stained rooftops; boxing his way out of despair in a makeshift ring for *Panic In Detroit*; playing Hamlet during *Cracked Actor*; surveying the crowd from a mechanical cherry-picker during *Space Oddity*. As he told his small army of helpers, the musician now known simply as 'Bowie' in his publicity material wanted the show to evoke "Metropolis, Nuremberg, Power."

"When we were kids, like nine," says MacCormack, "we were round his house looking at the records, books and magazines his dad would get him. One [magazine] had this story about a couple of wrestlers fighting to the death. It was gross, gouging each other's eyes out and shit like that. And the more freaked out I became, the more David got into telling it."

Bowie's enduring taste for the macabre was all over *Diamond Dogs*. Before leaving for New York, he'd overseen the album artwork which depicted him as half man, half dog amidst a circus of curiosities inspired by Tod Browning's 1932 cinema classic, *Freaks*. The artist, Guy Peellaert, had already been commissioned by Mick Jagger to illustrate the next Rolling Stones album cover. Jagger learned never to mention names in front of Bowie again.

Photographs by Terry O'Neill, on which the cover artwork was based, reveal that stardom was another theme obsessing Bowie more than ever. Beside his outstretched left boot in one shot is a copy of Walter Ross's *The Immortal*, a pulpy 1958 novel concerning the fast life and early death of one Johnny Preston. "A combination of James Dean, Marlon Brando and the Devil," claimed the US dustjacket, the Preston character is a busy bisexual and drug-using actor "who became so much a part of the world of illusion and shadow that he seemed to exist even when he was no more."

For a budding fantasist in suburban Bromley, *The Immortal* was the ultimate *entrée* to the dark glamour of fame-chasing US-style.

**A**WAITING BOWIE'S ARRIVAL IN NEW YORK ON April 11 was Ava Cherry, a striking young black singer with peroxide hair. In addition to recruiting for his upcoming tour, he was, he'd told her back in London, crossing the Atlantic to "do a soul record".

The pair had first met at a party for Stevie Wonder in February 1973; by the autumn, Cherry was Bowie's live-in lover at his new Oakley Street townhouse in Chelsea. She soon became the latest in a growing line of protégés, first – with MacCormack – as part of vocal trio The Astronettes, then as a soloist. Cherry was also Bowie's conduit to the latest sounds from young black America.

"David was checking out Marvin Gaye, Al Green and Michael Jackson but his favourite was Aretha," Cherry tells MOJO today. "When I got my own flat in Chelsea, he'd phone and I'd always be playing Aretha's [1973 single] *Until You Come Back To Me (That's What I'm Gonna Do)*. He loved it. But he'd also say, 'Don't you have any other records?'"

Back in 1965, for his Manish Boys single, *I Pity The Fool*, Bowie had summoned up an approximation of blues shouter Bobby Bland, the song's original singer. Now, a decade on, having fallen in love all over again with contemporary black music – Ann Peebles' *I Can't Stand The Rain* was, he said, the "best record in years" – Bowie appreciated its more sophisticated, even feminine aspects.

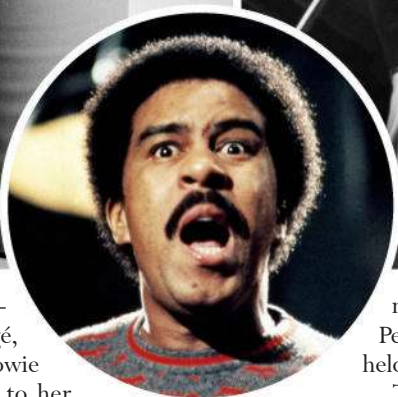
Early signs of his new soul kick were evident on side two of *Diamond Dogs*. *Rock'n'Roll With Me*, a co-write with Geoff MacCormack, was a big-sounding R&B ballad. *We Are The Dead* set Bowie's mouth-watering word salad against a solemn, otherworldly Fender Rhodes gospel sequence. But it was 1984, with its chattering wah-wah guitar and swooping string arrangement, that marked the biggest musical shift. "[David] kept playing me Barry White songs and saying, 'I want it to sound like that,'" recalled the cut's original producer Ken Scott. Yet the finished track was closer to the darting menace of The Temptations' 1972 hit, *Papa Was A Rollin' Stone*.

In fact, within days of docking at New York, Bowie boasted of having seen The Temptations, as well as The Detroit Spinners. There was something else he was grooving to. "Latin music was the great unknown," says MacCormack, recalling the "ghastly" British TV show *Come Dancing*, where amateur ballroom dancers attempted Anglicised versions of the samba and rumba. "Hearing genuine Latin and Puerto Rican musicians in clubs in New York," he adds, "was a revelation."

By April 17, the pair were at RCA Studios giving *Rebel Rebel* a Latino makeover for the US, although neither was a rival for Tito Puente. "I'm a table-top percussionist," chuckles MacCormack, "about as good on congas as [T. Rex's] Mickey Finn." ➤



A spot of bovver: (clockwise from left) Bowie and Lulu, December 27, 1973; a Sunset Strip billboard heralds the Diamond Dogs' arrival in Los Angeles, 1974; recording *Young Americans* at Sigma Sound, Philadelphia, August 1974 (from left) Bowie, Ava Cherry, Geoff MacCormack; Richard Pryor kicks off.



That same day, Bowie conducted a session for another protégé, Lulu. Can You Hear Me, a new Bowie ballad, was a potential follow-up to her Bowie-produced hit version of The Man Who Sold The World. Two nights later, after seeing Todd Rundgren at Carnegie Hall, Bowie mentioned that he hoped to produce Lulu at Willie Mitchell's Royal Studios, Memphis, home of Hi Records and the sublime Al Green sound. "She's got a real soul voice," he enthused. "She can get the feel of Aretha."

RCA in-house guitarist and member of The Main Ingredient Carlos Alomar played the Lulu session. "The booking didn't mention Bowie," he says. "It was just a band putting down a rhythm section. Then David walks out of the control room... Remember, I'm a Puerto Rican with a big Afro and a dashiki. He was the whitest person I've ever seen and, oh my god, with orange hair! We were quite a pair. He wanted to talk about Thelonious Monk, Cab Calloway and Mary Lou Williams, about the chitlin' circuit and the Apollo. I invited him to my place, and we started hanging out together."

**D**AYS LATER, BOWIE, MACCORMACK AND AVA CHERRY made their way to the Apollo Theatre, Harlem, where The Main Ingredient were the house band.

"David came to see The Main Ingredient, but he also wanted to see Billy Paul and Richard Pryor," says Alomar. "I invited him to meet Richard, who was nice to begin with, then he was like, 'You guys, get the fuck out of my room!' I tried to apologise, but David said, 'No, perfectly fine.' It seemed that being kicked out of Richard Pryor's room was good for bragging rights!"

Had the new buddies passed through Times Square, they would have seen the giant billboard for ex-Spider Mick Ronson's debut solo album, *Slaughter On 10th Avenue*. By late May, with *Diamond Dogs* out and the tour opening on June 14, it was Bowie's turn — emerging from the shadows in a blaze of publicity, including a US TV ad. Rebel Rebel stalled at 64 in the Billboard singles chart, but the album was Bowie's most successful yet Stateside, hitting 5.

The five-week early summer dates brought new levels of Bowiemania to the USA. With frequent set and costume changes, it was more Broadway than rock gig. "We had this huge city in a huge are-

na," tour coordinator Fran Pillersdorf told Bowie biographers Peter and Leni Gillman. "There was only one man inside and he held the stage like [Judy] Garland."

The production's 10 musicians and dancers stayed mostly hidden. The music — supervised by Michael Kamen — was lighter, more showbiz than the Spiders From Mars. Both All The Young Dudes and The Jean Genie had been dramatically rearranged, the latter now more a pair with Lou Reed's Walk On The Wild Side, that song's starring bass line played by tour bass man Herbie Flowers.

"That original Diamond Dogs Tour was the thing I was most proud of," says Geoff MacCormack. "Some people were a bit freaked out because he wasn't Ziggy any more, but it was so clever and well done without looking flip."

By the time the tour reached Philadelphia's Tower Theatre in July — taped for the subsequent *David Live* double album — two R&B numbers had been added. One was a relative obscurity, The Ohio Players' 1969 single, Here Today And Gone Tomorrow. The other, Eddie Floyd's Stax floor-filler Knock On Wood, emerged from a chat with Earl Slick.

"My R&B roots come from Memphis," says the guitarist, "Otis, Eddie Floyd, Steve Cropper's 'Wrecking Crew'. You had that, you had Motown and later you had Philly, which was much more pop. David went with Philly."

**B**OWIE FIRST VENTURED INTO SIGMA SOUND Studios, the home of Gamble & Huff's 'Philly Sound', during the tour's Philadelphia residency. An Ava Cherry session on July 9, which included her take on Sweet Thing with Bowie on sax and backing vocals and Earl Slick on guitar, gave Bowie a chance to scope it out. He block-booked it for two weeks beginning August 8. However, his initial plan, to use the studio's regular musicians, fell through when — with the exception of conga player Larry Washington — they turned him down. "David was disappointed," says Carlos Alomar, "but I reassured him: you saw me at RCA, I've got my people, we can do this."

Retaining just Mike Garson, sax player David Sanborn, Ava Cherry and Geoff MacCormack from the touring band, Bowie recruited bassist Willie Weeks and drummer Andy Newmark, both fresh from work on Ron Wood's *I've Got My Own Album To Do*.

Terry O'Neill/Iconic Images, Kent Gavin/Mirrorpix/Getty, Robert Landau/Corbis via Getty, NBCU Photo Bank/Getty





featured soloists: Anthony Hinton, G. Diane Sumler and Luther Vandross

LUTHER



Caning it: (clockwise from above) Bowie during the Dick Cavett Show broadcast, December 5, 1974; Diamond Dogs Tour musical director Michael Kamen; Young Americans BV team Anthony Hinton, Diane Sumler and Luther Vandross; Dogs Tour bassist Herbie Flowers; Young Americans producer Tony Visconti; "workaholic" Bowie.

**"DAVID WALKS OUT OF THE CONTROL ROOM... HE WAS THE WHITEST PERSON I'VE EVER SEEN AND, OH MY GOD, WITH ORANGE HAIR!"**  
**CARLOS ALOMAR**

Weeks' reputation was assured by his appearance on Donny Hathaway's 1972 *Live* album; Newmark had recently played on Sly Stone's *Fresh*.

For the first two days, the musicians worked with regular Sigma engineer Carl Paruolo, who'd been at the controls for William DeVaughn's US Top 5 hit *Be Thankful For What You've Got*. Then Tony Visconti – back in London, and recently restored to Bowie's inner circle in time to mix *Diamond Dogs* – received an urgent call.

"David said, 'Can you get to Philadelphia by tomorrow?'" the producer told me last year. "I took an early flight and got [there] on a sweltering hot afternoon. I hadn't slept. David's driver, Tony Mascia, met me at the airport and spirited me away to Sigma where a session was already in progress. I walked in and there was Carlos, Andy, Willie [and] David Sanborn, all crack session musicians. But no David. The musicians were just jamming."

Bowie arrived around 11pm. "He was very skinny," continued Visconti. "He hadn't been eating well and wasn't in good health. But he did have a new song: Young Americans. We started working on it immediately. The basic track was completed in a couple of hours."

A couple of days later, Alomar brought along 'his people' – wife Robin Clark, Anthony Hinton, Diane Sumler and young hopeful Luther Vandross, all singers.

"Carlos and Robin brought Luther along and said, 'We thought you might like to hear what he sounds like,'" remembers Ava Cherry. "Well, David didn't stop talking about him all night! 'He's got the smooth tone and the soul. I want him to arrange all the vocals.' Luther's groove connected



with David's groove. Finding Luther made David feel more comfortable with what he was trying to do."

"Luther was the ringleader," adds Mike Garson. "He would assign harmony parts, they'd all huddle in a circle and Carlos and I would play phrases over and over."

It was a pattern of delegation that Garson was used to seeing at Bowie sessions: "David knew when to be the student and when to be the teacher."

**T**HE TRACK THAT WOULD EVENTUALLY title Bowie's next album – his most surprising musical left-turn accompanied by his most startling visual transformation thus far – owed more to Vandross than just its vibe.

"Young Americans had a strong, lengthy dialogue but no hook," Visconti told me. "Then one time, as Luther led the backing vocals, he snatched at the words 'Young Americans' and came up with the perfect musical hook: 'Young American, Young American, she wants the Young American...'"

The points of difference with Bowie's earlier work were piling up. Young Americans' verses poured out like early Springsteen – hardly surprising as Bowie had had *Greetings From Asbury Park, N.J.* on constant rotation since he'd seen the New Jersey tyro at Max's Kansas City in February 1973. And without a lead guitarist adding rock ballast, it was often left to sax player David Sanborn to perform the fills and solos. Bowie envisaged Sanborn, who'd made himself indispensable on the recent tour, as the combo's King Curtis. "He played the alto with the guts of a big instrument," says Earl Slick, who'd also played with Sanborn in Michael Kamen's band. "I'd rip licks from David all the time."

For the first time in years, this was Bowie music that minimised

Gilles Petard/Redferns/Getty David Redfern/Redferns/Getty, Michael Putland/Getty

Terry O'Neill/Iconic Images, Ann Limongello/Disney General Entertainment Content via Getty, Michael Ochs Archives/Getty



# SIGMA SOUNDS

The best of the Philly soul that blew Bowie's mind, 1971-74. By LOIS WILSON.

## THE EBONYS

**You're The Reason Why**  
(Philadelphia International Records, 1971)



The Ebonys, a dramatic vocal quartet built around duelling tenor and falsetto leads, put the

fledgling Philadelphia International Records on the map when this Gamble & Huff-penned, Thom Bell-arranged ballad gave the label its first US R&B Top 10 hit in summer '71.

## DAVID SIGLER & DEE DEE SHARP

**Conquer The World Together**  
(Philadelphia International Records, 1971)



A statement of purpose from 'the holy trinity' – G&H, plus Bell – where Sigler and the honey-voiced

then-Mrs Gamble update Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell's call and response for the '70s. A plausible prototype for Bowie and Luther Vandross's vocal to-and-fro on *Young Americans*.

## THE O'JAYS

**Love Train**  
(Philadelphia International Records, 1972)



Backstabbers warned of "smiling faces" in the wake of Watergate; this Bobby Martin-arranged follow-up put smiles on faces for all the right reasons; a gospel-infused unity anthem featuring Eddie Levert's vigorous tenor, it gave the group their sole US pop Number 1.

## THE STYLISTICS

**People Make The World Go Round**  
(Avco, 1972)



Thom Bell with lyricist Linda Creed took soul music to new levels of sophistication with The Stylistics, a group synonymous with romantic ballads (the sublime *Betcha By Golly, Wow*) but equally capable of expressing urban tension over palatial orchestration, as here.

## BILLY PAUL

**Am I Black Enough For You**  
(Philadelphia International Records, 1972)



Coming off the back of his worldwide hit *Me And Mrs Jones*, this firebrand protest couldn't

be more different as the former jazz man, over studded horns and Afrocentric licks, is recast as the socially conscious revolutionary with raised fist aloft.

## RUTH McFADDEN

**Ghetto Woman (Part 1)**  
(Gamble, 1972)



Sounding like nothing else coming out of Philly at the time, *Ghetto Woman*, produced by Gamble and

co-written with Cary Gilbert, features the vocally unabashed McFadden – part Marlena Shaw, part Betty Davis – declaring valorous liberation over an uncompromising funk groove.

## FIRST CHOICE

**Armed And Extremely Dangerous**  
(Philly Groove Records, 1973)



Not Gamble, Huff or Bell (although it does feature some of Sigma house band MFSB) but the work instead of Philly's other mainstays Norman Harris and Alan Felder, who sweeten the churchy fervour of singers Rochelle Fleming, Annette Guest and Joyce Jones to great effect.

## THREE DEGREES

**When Will I See You Again**  
(Philadelphia International Records, 1974)



"The vocal range they achieve is incredible. Just listening to them turns me on," Bowie said of Fayette

Pinkney, Valerie Holiday and Sheila Ferguson, who were dubbed Philly soul's Supremes but shared leads. Familiarity has reduced their critical stock, but listen with fresh ears and there's no denying their magic.

## MFSB

**TSOP (The Sound Of Philadelphia)**

(Philadelphia International Records, 1974)



MFSB were Philadelphia International's engine room. Stretching to some 30 musicians, they

worked in simpatico harness to create a sophisticated style with gritty undertow. This Gamble & Huff composition, a US Number 1 single, also provided the exultant main theme to US TV show *Soul Train*, which debuted in 1971.

## HAROLD MELVIN AND THE BLUENOTES

**Satisfaction Guaranteed (Or Take Your Love Back)**

(Philadelphia International Records, 1974)



Best known for their tortured ballads – *If You Don't Know Me By Now*; *I Miss You*, etc – sung by the tender growler

Teddy Pendergrass, The Bluenotes could also essay a more pacy opulence, as evidenced by this infernally catchy ear worm.



< intellectual content. "It's one of the first [things] I've done that bounds along on emotional impact," Bowie would comment later in 1974. "There's not a concept in sight."

Thanks to the ensemble, an effortless mood pervades the recordings, notably the more restrained cuts, *Win and Right*. "Right was difficult to do because David wanted these crossed vocals answering him," says Ava Cherry. "It was so intricate, but Luther was such a dedicated perfectionist that it worked. David loved it."

"David would say, 'No, that's a little too drastic,' or, 'That's nice, let's try that,'" Alomar adds. "But he's not going to tell us what to play. If you get gospel musicians in and ask them to play gospel music, why on earth would you stick your two cents in? Man, he's got his own job to worry about! We gave it to him in such a flash flood that he had a whole album done in two weeks: 'Now where are those lyrics?'"

Having the final say musically was one thing; giving that music its voice was quite another. Unknown to virtually everyone, Bowie was taking regular counsel with The High Priestess Of Soul.

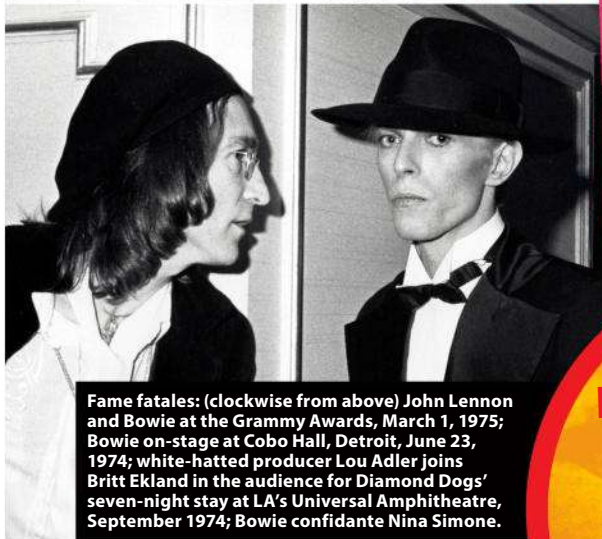
Nina Simone had seen Bowie at Madison Square Garden in July. Days later, after a chance encounter at New York's Hippopotamus Club, the pair struck up a phone friendship. The singer and activist, who thought Bowie resembled Charlie Chaplin in his "clown suit and big black hat", had been going through a rough patch. "Don't listen to those who call you crazy," he reassured her. "Only some of us can reach where you have risen."

Like Jagger, or even earlier inspirations Marc Bolan and Lindsay Kemp, Nina Simone was for Bowie a keeper of a rare and exquisite flame. For every quiet assurance he'd give her, she'd unwittingly share her secrets back. The following year, he'd repay her with an homage, an update of her 1966 version of *Wild Is The Wind*.

"When it comes to those he considered soulful, it was generally female singers," says Carlos Alomar, "especially in the jazz genre. He knew who Mavis Staples was, who Dionne Warwick was. I cannot say he sings like Eddie Kendricks, but he certainly tried to reach those high notes like Eddie Kendricks."

**O**N JULY 21, DAYS BEFORE ENTERING SIGMA, BOWIE had a conversation with his MainMan management company President Tony Zanetta that would change the course





**Fame fatales:** (clockwise from above) John Lennon and Bowie at the Grammy Awards, March 1, 1975; Bowie on-stage at Cobo Hall, Detroit, June 23, 1974; white-hatted producer Lou Adler joins Britt Ekland in the audience for Diamond Dogs' seven-night stay at LA's Universal Amphitheatre, September 1974; Bowie confidante Nina Simone.



**"SOME PEOPLE WERE A BIT FREAKED OUT BECAUSE HE WASN'T ZIGGY ANY MORE, BUT IT WAS SO CLEVER AND WELL DONE."**  
**GEOFF MacCORMACK**

son Band – warmed up the crowd with a selection of soul tunes featuring Vandross and the singers. “In some cities, we got better write-ups than David!” says Garson. Earl Slick was less impressed. “We were doing stuff like The O’Jays’ Love Train. I thought, What the fuck am I doing up here?”

Dressed in a double-breasted ‘Gouster’ suit, now more often brown than the silver-blue outfit he wore during the early summer, Bowie commanded the stage as if an inter-war gangster from Chicago’s South Side. He cherished the association, especially after a conversation with Ava Cherry’s jazz-playing father, who presented him with his own original Gouster suit. During the autumn, having toyed with ‘Shilling The Rubes’ and ‘One Damn Song’, ‘The Gouster’ became the provisional album title.

By mid-November, as the dates began to wind up, the tour pulled into Boston. “When we walked on-stage,” says Ava Cherry, “the people in the first two rows were all sitting with these [skull] masks on. And they wouldn’t take them off! David said, ‘What’s all that about?’ I said, I don’t know.”

As Geoff MacCormack remembers it, that was the night Ava Cherry greeted the crowd with the words, “Hello, Buffalo!”

**M**EANWHILE, BACK IN LONDON, BBC producer Alan Yentob was reviewing footage filmed over 11 days in early September during the tour’s second leg. He’d originally titled his documentary *The Collector*, inspired by Bowie’s magpie penchant for anything from styles to accents. Yet so much of the material revealed a performer adrift in his own universe, best illustrated by a scene showing a corpse-like Bowie identifying as a fly in a carton of milk while Aretha Franklin’s *Natural Woman* plays in the background. Yentob gave it a new title: *Cracked Actor*.

Things got stranger after the tour’s end. On December 5, viewers of the Dick Cavett Show were shocked by the sight of a cane-wielding, visibly caned David Bowie’s unravelling in front of them.

“That was a five-star debacle if I’ve ever fucking seen one,” remembers Earl Slick. “He was so out of it.” The guitarist saw it as the culmination of a tough year marked by overwork and mounting business problems. “If he’d been like that all the time, we’d never have got through all that touring.”

“I worried about his health,” says Ava Cherry. “It wasn’t necessarily the cocaine. I was trying to get him to stop smoking so much. With the drugs, I tried to ration it so he wouldn’t go overboard, but he liked to use [cocaine] to work. He’d read 15 books at a time.”

Meanwhile, Bowie was more and more immersed in the celebrity whirl. At a party for Dean Martin’s son in LA in September he dragged his new friend Elizabeth Taylor away from a conversation with John Lennon – something Lennon and his companion, May Pang, thought somewhat off. Later in the year, he came across Lennon again, this time at New York’s Record Plant, where Lennon was wrapping up *Rock ‘n’ Roll*, his notorious *quid pro quo* for copyright violations in *The Beatles’ Come Together*. This time, the pair appeared to bond, with Lennon proffering some business advice.

“In the beginning, John thought David a bit aloof, very ‘I’m David Bowie’,” May Pang told me in 2001. “He soon realised it was more a mask than anything else and they got on well. But there were so many drugs. Even John hadn’t seen so much cocaine.”

That winter, Bowie hit upon an idea that would both seal the friendship and impress RCA before the inevitable face-off with Defries. He booked a session at New York’s Electric Lady, and invited Lennon to join him. The bait was *Across The Universe*, a song the Beatle had never recorded to his satisfaction. The date was on or around January 15, 1975.

“David was so excited,” says Ava Cherry. “Is he going to ➤

Robert Mathew/Camera Press, Mark Sullivan/Getty, Michael Ochs Archives/Getty, Ron Galella/WireImage

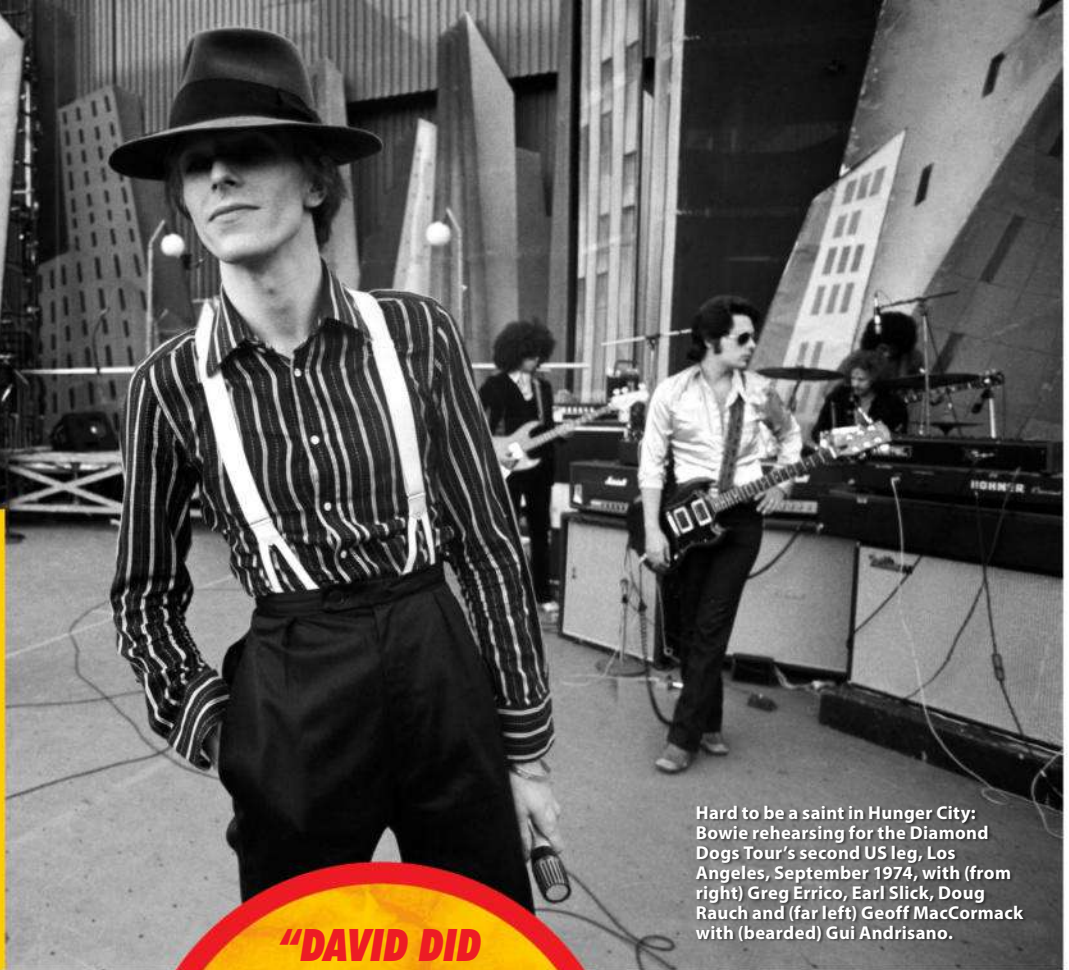


## FRAME, FRAME, FRAME, FRAME!



Visit the Iconic Images Gallery, the exclusive home of Terry O'Neill, to view and purchase the best in pop culture photography and

books. The archive contains some of the greatest music photography of the last 75 years, including iconic shots of David Bowie, The Rolling Stones, Jimi Hendrix, Elton John, Oasis, and hundreds more. [iconicimagesgallery.com](http://iconicimagesgallery.com)



Hard to be a saint in Hunger City: Bowie rehearsing for the Diamond Dogs Tour's second US leg, Los Angeles, September 1974, with (from right) Greg Errico, Earl Slick, Doug Rauch and (far left) Geoff MacCormack with (bearded) Gui Andrisano.

**"DAVID DID NOT LIKE CONFRONTATION. THE EXPENSES WERE ENORMOUS, AND HE WAS PAYING FOR THAT. HE WAS PISSED OFF."**  
**ANGIE BOWIE**

◀ come in with the granny glasses on? He was like a little kid. The bell rang, the door opened and there's John wearing the granny glasses! They hugged, David asked John to play guitar, and we had the most amazing session."

Once *Across The Universe* was bagged, Carlos Alomar started knocking around a funk rhythm. "David said, 'Carlos, do something with that,'" the guitarist recalls. "I said, OK, let me have five more guitar parts and let's see what you say. When he came back, he said, 'I say done!' He just threw in this little extra part and that was it."

That became the basis for *Fame*.

"David talked about the power of fame a lot," says Ava Cherry, especially with Lennon, who was still bothered by his life as an 'ex-Beatle' and embroiled in his own business tangles. Hardly surprising, then, that Bowie improvised a rap about the trappings of fame over the rhythm: "Bully for you/Chilly for me" wasn't the half of it.

"He asked me to sing a vocal part on the 'descending fame' bit," says Cherry, recalling the session. "Then he asked John to do it. Then he did his part. That's all our voices on it."

Alomar had partly based the song on The Flares' *Foot Stompin'*, featured on the October/November tour dates. Clearly rooted in the music Bowie had devoured with Geoff MacCormack in his teens, including James Brown (Brown would recycle the riff on his 1975 single *Hot (I Need To Be Loved, Loved, Loved, Loved)*, as if to re-establish proprietorship), *Fame* was nevertheless a massive step forward into hard-edged funk. Conversely, *Across The Universe* is often regarded as one of the great missteps in Bowie's catalogue. Yet it's defiantly of the moment, standing as a strangled-sounding reminder of Bowie's state of mind at the end of a rollercoaster 1974. It confused the hell out of Lennon. "John couldn't figure out why he was doing it," said May Pang.

**O**VER CHRISTMAS, BOWIE HAD HOLED UP IN HIS new suite at the Pierre Hotel, New York. With plenty on his mind, yet restless with the urge to create, he found himself rebuilding the 'Hunger City' set from *Diamond Dogs* in miniature,

constructing three- and four-foot buildings from clay and mounting them across tables. His visions of civilisation in meltdown were returning. But was it society that was crumbling, or Bowie? As he'd admit to *MOJO* in 2002, "I think you can see the apocalyptic thing as the manifestation of an interior problem."

But first, the practical issues. In late January 1975, Bowie instigated legal proceedings against MainMan. The case took months to unravel, and would come at huge cost, with Defries ultimately entitled to take a percentage of Bowie's sales until 1982. The success of *Young Americans*, which hit the US Top 10 in April and charted for a year, helped soften the blow. Meanwhile, the title track peaked at 28 in the Billboard pop chart in May, before *Fame*, released in July, finally delivered what Bowie had been missing. Hitting Number 1 for two weeks in September, *Fame* served as sweet confirmation that his about-turn into American black music and last-minute bet on a team-up with Lennon had paid off.

By this time, Bowie was living in Los Angeles, having just spent three months in the lunar-like landscapes of Arizona working on *The Man Who Fell To Earth*. Ava Cherry was there when the film script landed in Bowie's lap, late in January 1975, offering the fledgling actor the chance to lose himself completely.

"We were sitting watching The Beatles on television, talking about Otis [Redding] and Led Zeppelin," she remembers. "David said, 'See how we can influence people for good or for bad? I want to influence them for good.' Then the doorbell rang."

It was casting agent Maggie Abbott — who said Bowie looked "ghastly" — delivering the script to his New York home.

"This whole sense of the otherworldly just fell even more into place as he was sitting there, reading me lines from the pages," Cherry reflects. "It was perfect for him. He was handed the script, and he just went into the zone." **M**

*Further reading: All That Glitters: The Ava Cherry Story, by Ava Cherry; David Bowie: Rock 'N' Roll With Me by Geoff MacCormack; Guitar: Life And Music With David Bowie, John Lennon And Rock And Roll's Greatest Heroes by Earl Slick. Angie Bowie's many books are available via [angiebowie.net](http://angiebowie.net).*



# MOJO FILTER

YOUR GUIDE TO THE MONTH'S BEST MUSIC

EDITED BY JENNY BULLEY [jenny.bulley@bauermedia.co.uk](mailto:jenny.bulley@bauermedia.co.uk)

## CONTENTS

### 82 ALBUMS

- Kim Deal: we've never loved her more
- God of small things: Michael Kiwanuka
- Top toons from Amyl And The Sniffers
- Peter Perrett cleans up
- Primal Scream bring the love
- Plus, Bon Iver, Laura Marling, The War On Drugs, Willie Nelson, Soccer Mommy, Coldplay, Leon Bridges and more.

### 96 REISSUES

- Fit for Queen: their debut LP sumptuously reupholstered
- Carry on screaming: The Beatles' US LPs on mono vinyl
- CSNY live in '69
- File Under: solo John Cale
- Plus, Bryan Ferry, Johnnie Taylor, Thin Lizzy, New Order, Yara Asmar, Ian Hunter and more.

### 110 BOOKS

- Opposition party: an oral history of the MC5
- Plus, Van Halen, MF Doom, Sinéad O'Connor, Thunderclap Newman and more.

### 112 SCREEN

- Meet The Boss: Bruce Springsteen's 2023 tour doc.

## INDEX

Amyl And The Sniffers	88	Friday, Gavin	90	New Order	98
Aphex Twin	98	Gendel, Sam	91	Neufeld, Sarah,	
Asmar, Yara	99	Godspeed You! Black		Parry, Richard Reed,	
Beatles, The	100	Emperor	92	Foon, Rebecca	89
Blasko, Sarah	93	Hard Quartet, The	84	Parks, Tess	87
Bon Iver	94	Hart, Beth	91	Perrett, Peter	90
Bridges, Leon	84	HOO	93	Peterson, Oscar	
Bug, The	85	Hooker, D.R.	101	with Ellis, Herb	101
Butterss, Anna	87	Hunter, Ian	101	Petty, Tom & The	
Cale, John	104	Isbell, Jason	87	Heartbreakers	98
Cantrell, Jerry	84	Jobson, Peter		Pixies	90
Chitra Neogy,		Alexander	93	Primal Scream	92
Manoshi	99	Joy, Samara	91	Propaganda	87
Coldplay	84	Kelly, Paul	93	Queen	96
Cooder, Joachim	89	Kilbey, Steve	103	Regan, Fionn	93
Courteeners	85	King Crimson	101	Saints, The	98
Crosby, Stills,		Kiwanuka, Michael	86	Sakamoto, Ryuichi	103
Nash & Young	103	Laine, Pekka	89	Seeds, The	101
Danny & The		Lancaster, Byard	98	Soccer Mommy	85
Champions Of		Lee, Toby	91	Sophie	92
The World	87	Lone Justice	92	Spoon	103
Dar Disku	91	Manzanera, Phil	103	Stick In The Wheel	93
Deal, Kim	82	Marling, Laura	85	Swayze, A. &	
Double Exposure	99	Marr, Johnny + The		The Ghosts	90
Doug Carn Trio, The	99	Healers	103	Taylor, Ebo	89
Elucid	91	Martin, Horace	99	Taylor, Johnnie	101
Etran De L'Air	87	MOMO.	84	Thin Lizzy	103
Ezra Collective	92	Mortimer	87	Underworld	90
Famous	89	Motörhead	101	VA: The Albarika Story	99
Ferry, Bryan	99	Necks, The	85	War On Drugs, The	85
Finnigan, Kelly	89	Nelson, Willie	85	Wunderhorse	89

"We were always precocious boys and that's how it should be."

BRIAN MAY HAS HIS WAY. REISSUES P96



Queen I



# Raw Deal

Breeders founder's solo debut synthesises loss, grief and pain into glorious, life-affirming pop. By Stevie Chick. Illustration by Sarah Sumeray.

## Kim Deal



### Nobody Loves You More

4AD. CD/DL/LP

WHILE PEERS like former Pixies bandmate Frank Black and fellow Daytonian Robert Pollard revel in their productiveness, Kim Deal prefers the slow-drip approach. Her band The Breeders have released a mere five albums over the 35 years since they formed, while her sole side-project, The Amps – a stopgap outfit founded during a temporary feud with twin-sister and Breeders bandmate Kelley – folded after one album, and her first solo album under her own name has been over a dozen years in the making. Deal ascribes this slow pace to a hazy perfectionism on her part. Though she says she's always writing, she told me a decade or so ago that "avoiding cliché" was paramount, suggesting that for every song we get to hear, there are dozens more lying rejected in the demo pile. For Deal, songwriting is a



"Nobody Loves You More is a singularly uplifting, life-affirming listen."

slow process of honing, of homing in to that unique voice so recognisable from her work to date – a voice that rings so clear, and funny, and sad, and with such deft power here.

The path to her first solo album began with Deal – who believed that the "disruption" of the internet had left the music industry so impoverished that "nobody could afford bands any more" – starting up her own cottage industry in her hometown of Dayton, Ohio, self-recording a batch of songs, self-released as a series of two-track 7-inch singles that she mailed to customers herself. She fired off five of these perfectly imperfect nuggets between 2012 and 2014 – an impressive work rate by her standards, all the more impressive considering Deal was doing double-duty caring for her elderly parents. Deal had planned to compile these tracks as an album, but decided she'd rather record a batch of new songs, a process complicated by the writing and recording of The Breeders' most recent album, 2018's *All Nerve*. And then, a year before the pandemic and within 12 months of each other, Deal's parents passed away. Add in the complications of lockdown, and it's amazing this album was completed at all.

permeates the album, its songs referencing struggle, trauma and bereavement. And yet *Nobody Loves You More* is a singularly uplifting, life-affirming listen, where joy and despair, love and loss, are irrevocably entwined, and kept afloat by Deal's unfailing lightness of touch.

The back story is most explicit on *Are You Mine?*, though still veiled enough that it could pass as a simple love song. The titular refrain: "Are you mine/Are you my baby?" began as words Deal's mother Ann, in the late stages of Alzheimer's, asked her daughter one night. The song unspools with economy and restraint, its crooning pedal steel establishing a subtle empathy, while strings sound a note of uncertainty: the choppy waters that surround her. The understated lyrics inhabit Ann's sense of disorientation, her displacement, while also locating bonds of love and motherhood thought lost to the fog of dementia. "I have no mind," Deal sings, the line dangling precarious and unfinished, until she resolves it with, "For nothin' but love." "Have you seen me lately?" she asks, adding, "I have no time," referencing the temporal confusion experienced by Alzheimer's patients. Still, that precious sliver of recognition remains in the song's refrain. It's a brilliant, frankly devastating piece of songwriting.

Throughout, Deal layers the happy with the sad with more happy and more sad, her songs rich with chiaroscuro. The opening lines of the opening title track – "I don't know where I am" – again conjure Ann, but we're in Kim's head now, experiencing the complex, limitless, painful love felt by the carer for her ailing parent: "I just stop at the sight of you standing there." The impossibly upbeat *Coast* – its lackadaisical lilt scored by Chicago marching band *Mucca Pazzo* – is moored in the darkness of Deal's addiction years, revisiting a winter two decades past when, Deal tells *MOJO*, she was "losing my mind in Nantucket, trying to dry out on the island." It opens with a grimly droll assessment of her circumstances – a "hard, hard landing" leaving her believing she should "duck and roll out of my life" – but focuses instead on the Nantucket youth, ditching their day-jobs and grabbing surf boards at merest rumour of waves, the exuberance of these "beautiful kids on the coast" reinvigorating a momentarily defeated Deal. The slow-motion surf music of *Wish I Was* delivers some further wisdom from this era, Deal singing, "Coming around is easy/Coming down is rough" over a knowing and lovely *Velvets-y* chug.

slow process of honing, of homing in to that unique voice so recognisable from her work to date – a voice that rings so clear, and funny, and sad, and with such deft power here.

Mortality is forever a background presence here. The impossibly dreamy *Summerland* traces the path of Bas Jan Ader's doomed attempt to sail the Atlantic Ocean (see *Back Story*) and finds romance within his fatal misadventure ("This world's for me... I'll follow the night"). But amid all this pain and loss – the very stuff of life, especially once you pass a certain age – remains a sense of vitality, of hope. The anthemic *Disobedience* is mired in existential dismay – "If this is all we are," she whispers, "I'm fucked" – but is, in essence, a raging against the dying of the light, an assertion of life over death, Deal snarling, "I go where I want/While I'm still on the planet." The album closes with *A Good Time Pushed*, a shadowy love song where Deal is either fantasising about "follow[ing] you off of this world" or "push[ing] you off of this world", its final words repeating the chorus over and over: "We're having a good time." This, she's saying, is ultimately all there is. Life is short, and hard, and invariably ends with sorrow for your loved ones, but the joys somehow make it all worth it. Especially if, once in a glorious blue moon, life brings with it sublime Kim Deal records such as this.



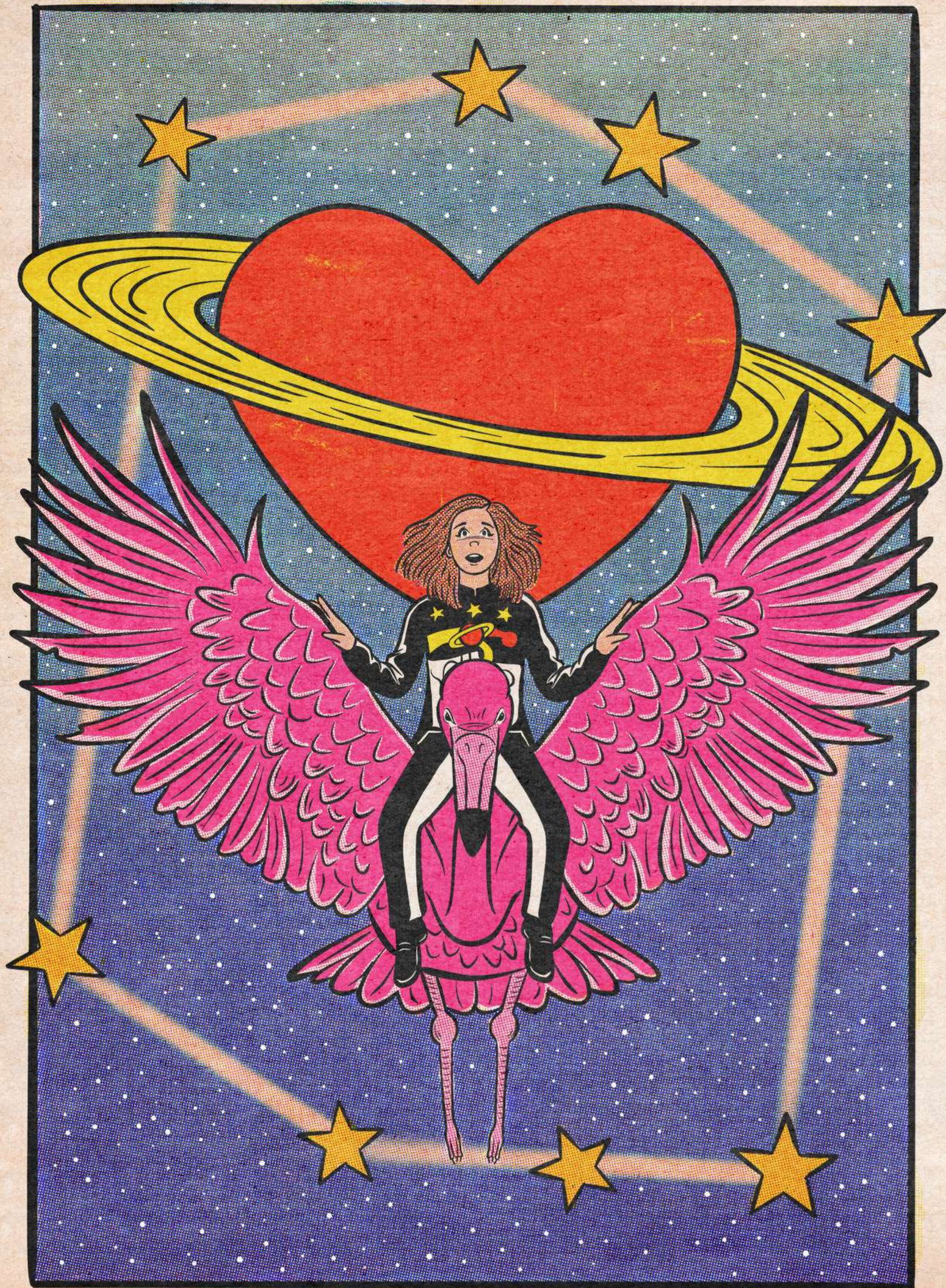
#### BACK STORY: EPIC FAIL

● The album's cover, by Alex Da Corte, is inspired by the artist Bas Jan Ader's ill-fated solo attempt at sailing across the Atlantic – and also, Deal's fascination with the concept of failure. "It has to do with all the pathos I was experiencing," she says. "My dad died, and I would drive his old Caddy around and listen to his old *Mellow Hits Of The 70s* cassette, and think about the bravado of these old stars like George Jones and Waylon Jennings in their middle-aged heyday, and how by the late '80s they're tired, they're on their third wife, and they've got mutton chops and cop glasses and high liver enzymes... Like Bas Jan Ader – he's all bravado, setting off in search of the miraculous... And he fails. They never see him again. I don't know if there's anything to be learned from that. I just think it's good that people try."

Steve Gullick

**KIM SPEAKS!** DEAL ON CARING FOR HER MOTHER, SUPPORTING OLIVIA RODRIGO AND A BREEDERS XMAS SONG...









**Hair-raising adventures: Kim Deal swears The Breeders have a Christmas song.**

# “The songs put themselves in a sorting hat.”

Kim Deal speaks to Stevie Chick.

## How was The Breeders' recent tour supporting 21-year-old pop superstar Olivia Rodrigo?

“We did four nights at Madison Square Garden! Being the opening act to a big thing like Olivia basically means playing to people who are trying to find their seats. But it was an exciting adventure. She’s a fantastic singer, and she’s been very supportive of us. She talks about how, for her, there’s ‘before hearing Cannonball’ and ‘after hearing Cannonball’, and how we broke her little brain.”

## In 2013, you told me you were releasing solo 7-inches, because “no-one can afford bands any more”.

“After five of them, I thought about putting the singles out as an album, so people didn’t have to keep getting up to turn the 7-inches over, but felt weird about selling people the same songs again. I decided to write a bunch of new songs for the album, but then the 20th anniversary of *Last Splash* happened, and then The Breeders recorded our *All Nerve* album. Once all that was done, I started writing solo songs again. I’m always writing.”

## What determines if something you write becomes a Breeders song or a Kim Deal song?

“They put themselves in the sorting hat – they sort of say what house they’re going to be in. For instance, *Summerland* has a ukulele on it, and I knew that would really bum [Breeders bassist] Josephine Wiggs out in such a deep, profound way it could never be a Breeders song. And when I wrote *Coast*, I could hear the horn part in my head, and I tried to get Kelley [Deal, Breeders guitarist] to play the horn part on guitar. But it didn’t sound as fun; I knew it would be more fun to have the horns. But again, I knew Josephine wouldn’t like that, so...”

## Tell me about Are You Mine?. The title suggests it’s a love song, but it’s more complex than that, isn’t it?

“My mother had Alzheimer’s. I was caring for her, and one day she stopped me in the hallway and asked me, ‘Are you my baby?’ And there was something so sweet about it – she didn’t know my fucking name, but she knew that I looked more than familiar. It was more than, ‘Who the fuck are you?’ – she meant, ‘Were you my little baby doll?’ It just showed that the strand of motherhood actually can endure. Even with the mind completely gone, and all notion of what a family might be gone, there was still some umbilical cord there. When she said, ‘Are you my baby?’, it was a beautiful sentiment that I wanted to live in – I wanted to think about it, to understand it. And it’s a good love song, too. I was so lucky. She was so sweet. So the thought of it is just so warm and great, to live in her asking me that, and then just thinking about it.”

## Will you make another solo album? Is there more Breeders music to come?

“I swear to God, The Breeders have a Christmas song. It’s not done, but it’s an idea. A pretty good idea. Josephine’s not pleased, but she’ll just have to live with it...”

## Coldplay

★★★★

Moon Music

PARLOPHONE. CD/DL/LP

Tenth album and sister record to 2021’s *Music Of The Spheres*.



Overseen once again by Swedish pop producer Max Martin, *Moon Music* picks up

where its predecessor left off, with the opening piano-led title track setting the atmospheric mood. But it soon becomes clear that a slight desperation to stay commercially competitive is the main driver here: feelslikeimfallinginlove is four-on-the-floor synth-pop with a “la-dee-lo” hookline; the perky Good Feelings throws disco into the mix. A title-free track represented by a rainbow emoji provides the standout, being a Floyd-go-Flaming Lips slowie that samples Maya Angelou singing gospel standard God Put A Rainbow In The Cloud. But, overall, the suspicion lingers that if Coldplay followed their noses back in the direction of 2019’s experimental, if flawed, *Everyday Life*, the result would be far more interesting music. While their emphasis on sustainability is admirable – the vinyl and CDs for this release are ground-breaking eco models – too much of this sounds like recycled plastic pop.

Tom Doyle



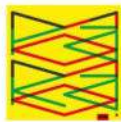
## MOMO.

★★★★

Gira

BATOV. DL/LP

Doing it for the kids, a Rio-born guitarist comes good.



For his eighth album, Brazilian guitarist Marcelo Frota moved to

London, recruited a fairly stellar gang of friends – Angus (Alabaster DePlume) Fairbairn, Jessica Lauren, Carwyn Ellis among them, with each of the guests getting a track to shine on – for a series of spontaneous live recordings, with minimal advance planning. A risky endeavour then – even if his only goal was to make something his young daughter could dance to – yet when it works it is spellbinding. The opener, *Pára*, is a case in point: a slow, swampy funk workout with built-in chills. Fairbairn steals the honours on *Oqueeei*, an Ethiopian-flavoured jam that builds in seductive circles; inspired by Tim Maia, *Jão* has an insistent samba beat and, again, great horns and keyboards. An album that demands repeated playing... let’s hope his daughter appreciates it as much as the rest of us will.

David Hutcheon

## Leon Bridges

★★★★★

Leon

COLUMBIA. CD/DL/LP

Texan singer’s fourth revisits old haunts and aims for the toppermost.



Following 2021’s future-facing R&B set *Gold-Diggers Sound* and

recent years collaborations with Khruangbin that ventured into left-field funk, Leon Bridges’ (partly) self-titled fourth returns him to more straightforward commercial territory, likely after its predecessor saw his chart positions slip. While recorded in Mexico City with Kacey Musgraves collaborator Ian Fitchuk, it sees him revisiting his years growing up in Fort Worth, with the breezy, ’70s Isley Brothers-styled Panther City referencing the city’s nickname, a friend’s sibling who’d “always borrow my tapes and lost them things” and his father warning him to hurry home and avoid “all the crack heads and prostitutes over the Rosedale”. Peaceful Place slips in a bit of Afrobeat and That’s What I Love echoes *Channel Orange*-era Frank Ocean, and throughout Bridges’ vocal talents continue to shine.

Tom Doyle



## Jerry Cantrell

★★★★

I Want Blood

DOUBLE J. CD/DL/LP

Fourth guitar-drenched solo album from Alice In Chains leader.



Singer Layne Staley may have been the face of Alice In Chains, but Jerry Cantrell

was the brains. His guitar unleashed the classic rock edge which enabled them to escape the grunge cul-de-sac; his harmonising with Staley humanised them and, an addict himself back then, he co-wrote most of the heroin-based lyrics. With Alice In Chains still ongoing, solo Cantrell has never strayed too far from the mothership. Too guests including Faith No

More’s Mike Bordin and Guns N’ Roses’ Duff McKagan, *I Want Blood* is a dense wall of guitar wizardry with solos to spare on Let It Lie. There’s variety, too, in the galloping title track, the dreamy closer It Comes and, best of all, Afterglow with its climax-building verses and rather beautiful chorus. There’s nothing here to startle, just further confirmation that Cantrell remains a force to be reckoned with.

John Aizlewood



## The Hard Quartet

★★★★★

The Hard Quartet

MATADOR. CD/DL/LP

Stephen Malkmus-anchored alt-supergroup’s excellent debut effort.



Perhaps not what Malkmus-watchers might’ve requested

post-2022’s auspicious Pavement reunion, The Hard Quartet is still a highly desirable proposition: an extravagantly skilled four-man team that knows every angle on rock music-making, here shoe-horning it all into 15 electrifying in-the-moment compositions. Superficially, it may be the most Pavement-y record their singer’s been involved with since 1999’s valedictory *Terror Twilight*, yet on closer inspection it’s not even Malkmus singing on seemingly characteristic lopes like *Rio’s Song* (that one’s sometime Bonnie ‘Prince’ Billy cohort Matt Sweeney). Also outstanding: Ty Segall sideman Emmett Kelly’s two entries (mid-’60s Byrdsian gem *Our Hometown Boy*; deconstructed desert-blues *North Of The Border*). With Malkmus on the mike, *Six Deaf Rats* stretches out across six mesmerisingly edge-of-collapse minutes, its labyrinthine improv expertly steered by drummer Jim White, while gambolling opener *Chrome Mess* and twisty-turning *Action For Military Boys* also score top marks. A delectable-sounding record slathered in guitar magic: what’s not to like?

Andrew Perry



**Lone star: Texan singer Leon Bridges returns to more commercial territory.**

Steve Gullick





**The Necks**

★★★★★

Bleed

NORTHERN SPY. CD/DL/LP

**Aussie post-jazz trio create another classic on the quiet.**

Given how The Necks established their fearsome rep through pieces lasting for the best part of an hour, their last two albums – 2020's *Three* and last year's *Travel* (No. 13 in MOJO's Albums Of 2023 rundown) – looked a bit like commercial cop-outs, with tracks barely stretching beyond 20 minutes each. Not exactly the stuff of zingy Spotify playlists, of course, but this 23rd Necks album is a reassuring return to the (even) longer form – one track, 42 minutes of profound, unbroken musical exploration. If the trio's music has traditionally manoeuvred between genres, tending closest towards improvised jazz, *Bleed* zeroes in on their ambient instincts. Hence Chris Abrahams' guiding piano and organ lines are more space than notes, while Tony Buck orbits around his percussion arsenal and guitar with herculean restraint. One to file alongside fan favourites *Aether* (2001) and *Open* (2013): records that initially appear starkly minimalist, but gradually reveal boundless, beautiful depths.

John Mulvey



**Willie Nelson**

★★★★★

Last Leaf On The Tree

LEGACY RECORDINGS. CD/DL/LP

**Another entry to Willie's list of esoteric collections.**



Ever since Nelson's 1971 concept LP *Yesterday's Wine*, he's periodically released records that show a philosophical and ethereal side of his personality. So it is with this 153rd LP. It's appropriate for the 91-year-old singer-songwriter to focus on mortality, and with the help of producer and son Micah Nelson, Willie pulls it off. The title song by Tom Waits and Kathleen Brennan, *Keep Me In Your Heart* by Warren Zevon and Jorge Calderon, and *If It Wasn't Broken* by LA anarcho-busker Sunny War all stand out as life lessons set to powerful melody and rendered in Willie-sing. His voice is a bit more raw in his 91st year, but that just adds yet more resonance. Long may he run.

Michael Simmons

**The War On Drugs**

★★★★★

Live Drugs Again

SUPER HIGH QUALITY RECORDS. CD/DL/LP

**Live recordings from their 2022-23 tour find Philadelphia's neo-classic rockers aiming for a communal connection.**



Arriving a swift four years after the first concert album from The War On Drugs, *Live Drugs Again* flirts with some cinematic sequel clichés, particularly in how it sounds bigger and brighter than its predecessor. The grander scale largely derives from the album being culled from recordings captured on the supporting tour for *I Don't Live Here Anymore*, the 2021 album that found leader Adam Granduciel opting for optimism. The positive vibes in the source material reverberate strongly on-stage, echoing through the handful of older numbers here – repeated from *Live Drugs*, the epic *Under The Pressure* can be used as a mile marker – and finding flight within the heavy dose of newer songs. Live, the band's urgency and spaciousness transform their fondness for cavernous arena rhythms and antiquated synths from clever re-appropriations into something that teases transcendence.

Stephen Thomas Erlewine



**Laura Marling**

★★★★★

Patterns In Repeat

PARTISAN/CHRYSALIS. CD/DL/LP

**Exquisite and spare, a wide-eyed study of parenthood's anxiety and awe.**

After the 2023 birth of her daughter, Laura Marling – whose stunning and stark 2020 album *Song for Our Daughter* was written long before she was a parent – found herself with unexpected time. She'd watch the sleeping kid and play guitar, surveying her flood of feelings and realisations in songs she recorded at home, largely alone. We hear her become a mother and musician in real time, baby babbling as Marling laughs while taking hesitant strums during opener *Child Of Mine*. It is a sharp and tender document of dawning domesticity, Marling realising dual roles as guardian and observer above a chorus of astonished oohs and ahhs. Magnificently paced and candid, these 11 songs surface self-doubt and self-assurance as Marling learns to let parts of herself go. "I want you to know that I gave it up willingly," she

sings of her own life at the album's arresting climax, pledging herself in this brilliant entry into public parenting.

Grayson Haver Currin



**The Bug**

★★★★★

Machine

RELAPSE. DL/LP

**Dub diabolist Kevin Martin's first instrumental album brings the noise, and then some.**



Kevin Martin's The Bug project enlisted a murderer's row of dancehall and grime MCs to collaborate on dystopian-future dub that could shred any sound-system. On his first instrumental album under that moniker – comprising tracks from a series of self-released digital EPs – the space left by the absent vocalists is occupied by an overload of industrial textures, the din of malevolent machinery. Bound to mutant reggae rhythms, Martin's sounds are of a grain so abrasive as to draw blood, but while much of *Machine's* considerable power to thrill derives from Martin's sonic extremism, there's an impish creativity also at play. Shafted sounds like the BBC Radiophonic Workshop cooking up some fearsome dub, while Hypnotised creeps like *Ghost Town* fed through the Kevin Martin mangle, and the eerie, slo-mo chase

music of Buried sounds like rave tunes played at the wrong speed.

Stevie Chick



**Courteeners**

★★★★★

Pink Cactus Café

IGNITION. CD/DL/LP/MC

**Seventh LP from increasingly expansive Mancunians.**



2020's *More. Again. Forever.* began a new, mature Courteeners phase. Four years on, they've evolved again. They remain wholly beholden to Liam Fray's songwriting, but they're assisted by contemporaries: upwardly mobile Scottish soul singer Brooke Combe offers depth-giving harmonies on *Sweet Surrender*, as does Pixey on the unusually swearsy *First Name Terms*. *Solitude Of The Night* Bus skirts too close to Arctic Monkeys, but Fray is developing apace. There are anthems such as the heroic *The Beginning Of The End* – DMA's guest – and the Union City Blue-esque *Love You Any Less*, but *Bitten By Unseen Teeth* is a reflective closer, there's whistling on the title track, and *Weekend Shy Of A Feeling* lollops like prime Coral, whose Ian Skelly is another guest. Courteeners could have found themselves marooned in a meat'n'potatoes indie ghetto. Right now, they're bigger and better than that.

John Aizlewood

**Soccer Mommy**

★★★★★

Evergreen

LOMA VISTA. CD/DL/LP

**Nashville singer elegantly expands her sound and mines her soul.**

WRITTEN AND recorded in the wake of an unspecified "profound and also very personal" loss, it's clear from the opening of *Evergreen* just how deeply Sophie Allison, AKA Soccer Mommy, has been affected by it. Lost is an orchestrated beauty foregrounded by Allison's aching delivery in a song of regret for things never said or done. There's a new level of sophistication here, befitting the fact that the one-time teenage home-recorder is now 27 and this is her fourth album. There's humour, too – in the grungy *Driver* she describes herself as "a five-foot-four engine waiting to move" – and M sounds like Elliott Smith if he'd been produced by Cocteau Twins' Robin Guthrie. But as her admissions in the delicate, closing acoustic title track prove ("Two years gone by and I'm still pondering it all"), grief ultimately colours everything on this frequently beautiful album.

Tom Doyle

**Mum's the word: Sophie Allison, AKA Soccer Mommy, is still pondering it all.**





Do you know Michael Kiwanuka? MK's latest makes emotional connections.



# Little wonder

First-rate songwriting, hypnotic beats and empathetic emotions on north Londoner's fourth. By Tom Doyle.

## Michael Kiwanuka

★★★★★

### Small Changes

POLYDOR. CD/DL/LP

TWICE DURING his spellbinding set on the Pyramid Stage at Glastonbury this summer Michael Kiwanuka attempted to perform the intro to *Solid Ground*, the penultimate track on his last album *Kiwanuka*, before his malfunctioning synth forced him to abandon the song. "This is like my worst nightmare," he sheepishly grinned, before quickly recomposing himself and seamlessly carrying on. But it was a glimpse of the diffident, anxious man – a self-confessed "overthinker" – so often apparent in his songs.

Five years have passed since that Mercury-winning third album and this long-gestated successor reflects the hopes and fears of a 37-year-old father of two now living on the English south coast having quit his native

London. If the singer has always been confessional, even when he's gently fretting, it now comes with life experience and some sagacity. Made once again with the production team of Danger Mouse and Inflo, Kiwanuka says the latter in particular helps to top up his self-confidence and stop him second-guessing himself.

"We can be solid but barely make a dent," he offers in slow-burning opener *Floating Parade*, with its Melody Nelson bass line, wafting strings, and oblique narrative involving a desire to lose himself in the crowd and kill his anxiety. "I chased the waterfalls/I was the leaving kind," he sings elsewhere, with a hint of Fred Neil-styled escapism, in *One And Only*, a song that's ultimately about resolving to be a better partner.

Though there aren't any drastic changes to his warm, woody sound, there's an evident assurance that the record-making team know what they're doing is exactly right. Tasteful tones and masterful grooves feature throughout, in a production that is artfully sparse, so that when an orchestral part swoops into the mix, or fizzy guitar solo bursts in, it has



maximum effect. The spirit of '70s soul still clearly informs his work, but *Small Changes* is also modernist, with its subtly overdriven beats (fast becoming this decade's sonic vogue), or the thick, wobbly synth riff that drives *Follow Your Dreams*.

It's playful, too. Audience applause and babble opens *Lowdown (Part I)*, in which a rolling Pino Palladino bass part and Al Kooper-styled Hammond interjections from Jimmy Jam conspire to evoke a kind of downtrodden take on The Beta Band's *Dry The Rain*, replete with a naggingly beautiful melody. Even if they aren't often evident in the songs, Kiwanuka says his influences this time around were more wide-ranging: Gene Clark, Sade, Beth Gibbons, Mazzy Star.

Listening to the latter band's 1993 song *Fade Into You* apparently inspired the closing track, *Four Long Years*, which sounds nothing like it but retains its 6/8 time signature and elegant moodiness in a lament for lost love featuring tremolo guitar and a melody that curls like smoke. But as personal as all of these songs sound, there's a universality to *Small Changes* that, as with all Kiwanuka's records, will emotionally connect with others. Everybody hurts, it seems to say, but this might help.



**Anna Butterss**

★★★★★

**Mighty Vertebrate**

INTERNATIONAL ANTHEM. [CD/DL/LP](#)

**Their spine is the bass line! In-demand LA sessioneer's second solo LP.**

THE AUSTRALIAN-born, LA-based bassist Anna Butterss has a pretty eclectic CV, including as it does sessions with Phoebe Bridgers, Aimee Mann, Makaya McCraven and Jason Isbell. It's their work alongside Tortoise guitarist Jeff Parker, however, that's the strongest indication of where this exceptional second solo album lands. *Mighty Vertebrate* often sounds like a stylish update of Tortoise circa *TNT*, a flexible amalgam of jazz, post-rock, noir twang (Seeing You), squelchy electronica (Pokemans) and more, dovetailing nicely with much of the music recently released on International Anthem. Butterss evidently doesn't shy away from the comparison, given Parker is here contributing a trademark solo to Dance Steve, and another Tortoise man, John Herndon, provides the cover art. But their musical identity is playful, too, and though the album opens with an isolated funky bass line, Butterss proves a democratic bandleader, often ceding the spotlight to saxophonist Josh Johnson and guitarist Gregory Uhlmann, Butterss' companions in another fine group, SML.

*John Mulvey*



**Spine-tingling:** Anna Butterss shares the spotlight on exceptional second effort.

**Propaganda**

★★★★★

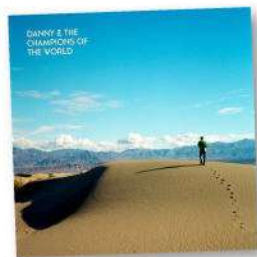
**Propaganda**

BUREAU B. [CD/DL/LP](#)

**Düsseldorf's dark synth-poppers pick up from where they left off in 1990.**

For the first album credited to Propaganda since 1990's *1234*, founder Ralf Dörper is joined by Michael Mertens, who came on board in the run-up-to 1984's debut ZTT single *The Nine Lives Of Dr. Mabuse*. The singer now is the UK's Thunder Bae. Intriguingly, *1234*'s opener *Vicious Circle* is reworked. Back then, the singer was Susanne Freytag. More rhythmic than before, the new *Vicious Circle* is more electroclash than filmic. Elsewhere, the dark *Love:Craft*'s swirling, swooping strings evoke the '80s while the bubbling *Tipping Point* could have been recorded at any point in the past 40 years. The sense of history is further stressed by *Distant's* Wire-referencing line, "I feel mysterious today." Closing with the German classic *Wenn Ich Mir Was Wünschen Dürfte* – with Hauschka on piano – confirms this iteration of Propaganda isn't afraid to embrace the past.

*Kieron Tyler*



**Danny & The Champions Of The World**

★★★★★

**You Are Not A Stranger Here**

LOOSE. [CD/DL/LP](#)

**Danny's Champs return with love songs and negotiations with maturity.**

Always one of the UK's finest purveyors of Americana-indebted songcraft, Danny George Wilson has only become more intriguing and compelling a songwriter. His first album with his *Champions Of The World* in seven years is perhaps a little more "glass-half-empty" than his more optimistic works of the past, foregrounding negotiations with relinquished dreams, negotiations with the disappointments of adulthood, seismic revelations within the quotidian. But there's also tender magic – I'm In Love, which feels more Robert Wyatt than Willie Nelson, ruminates on moments of precarious joy within a catalogue of random objects. Sounding more like a

low-key *Soft Bulletin*-era *Flaming Lips* than any of Wilson's more typical references, it concludes with a happy-sad paean to human fallibility, scored by syn-drum eruptions and uplifting piano, that feels like the anthem he's been working towards for almost 30 years.

*Stevie Chick*

**Tess Parks**

★★★★★

**Pomegranate**

FUZZ CLUB/HAND DRAWN DRACULA. [CD/DL/LP](#)

**Toronto-born singer-songwriter dials-up transporting languor.**



For fans of dysfunctional cool-dom à la Royal Trux's Herrema and Hagerty, Tess Parks' LPs with The Brian Jonestown Massacre's Anton Newcombe looked appetising. The hazy psych of 2015's *I Declare Nothing* and its self-titled 2018 follow-up were somewhat hit and miss, however, their hereafter marked by a long Parks sabbatical during which she was "...taking refuge making paintings, sitting in silence for hours." *Pomegranate* continues the sun-dazed ruminations of 2022 solo comeback *And Those Who Were Seen Dancing*, Parks' trademark tranquillised drawl piloting slow-burning psych daydreams which flag gold-painted coffins and petals on eyelids. Whatever 'flow' is, she has it, Koalas and Charlie Potato shimmering like

hot tarmac mirages, and trippy Parker Surround coming on like Parks and key collaborator Ruari Meehan's nod to The Orb's *Little Fluffy Clouds*. Repeat listens focus the kaleidoscope.

*James McNair*

**Jason Isbell And The 400 Unit**

★★★★★

**Live From The Ryman Vol. 2**

SOUTHEASTERN. [CD/DL/LP](#)

**Admirably non-retrospective live album.**



The home of country may be steeped in nostalgia, but Jason Isbell isn't. Six years after his first *Live From The Ryman*, the second comprises 15 songs from his most recent non-covers albums (2020's *Reunions* and 2023's *Weathersvanes*), plus 2009's not wholly prophetic *The Last Song I Will Write* and a reverential trawl through Tom Petty's *bleak Room At The Top*: "my favourite of all his songs," Isbell tells the crowd. So instead of being a raucous career celebration, *Vol. 2* is both a moment of consolidation and one to reflect upon how far he's evolved since leaving *Drive-By Truckers* in 2007. These are big, often Neil Young-evoking, songs (especially the anthemic *Overseas*), but the acoustic section showcases Isbell's craft and depth. In the long run it's a footnote, but it makes and

scores a solid point too.

*John Aizlewood*

**Etran De L'Air**

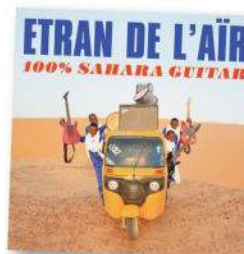
★★★★★

**100% Sahara Guitar**

SAHEL SOUNDS. [DL/LP](#)

**There's a good reason no one at a Niger wedding has ever done the Birdie Dance.**

On tour in the United States last year, the longest-running wedding band in Agadez, Niger's febrile Tuareg stronghold, took the opportunity to record their third album in a Portland studio, the first time any of them had been in a building designed for making music. Anyone expecting them to lose the plot and get bogged down in *Second Coming*-like sloth and overthinking will be disappointed: *100% Sahara Guitar* is simply a better-sounding version of their previous albums – two lead guitarists playing up-tempo desert blues against each other while the rhythm section groove away. Indeed, Alghabid Ghabdouan on drums may steal the whole affair, his unshowy swing is an absolute joy. No Mdou Moctar



shredding, no Tinariwen melancholy, just the sort of mood-enhancing beat music that ought to get every wedding guest on the floor from sunset to sunrise.

*David Hutcheon*

**Mortimer**

★★★★★

**From Within**

EASY STAR. [CD/DL/LP](#)

**Promising debut from rising reggae hopeful. The 2-LP version includes dub cuts from Tippy I Grade.**



One of the current wave of upcoming artists changing the direction of contemporary Jamaican music scene, Mortimer McPherson became part of Winta James' Overstand Entertainment stable through a guest spot on Protoje's *Ancient Future LP*; solo single *Lightning* was a chart-topper in 2019. This much-anticipated debut is complex and deeply personal, unafraid of crossing genres and taking risks: *Balcony Swing* is an R&B ballad about unplanned pregnancy, *Whole Heap* an unplugged meditation on personal growth, and the moving *Not A Day Goes By* a superior new roots groove that details mental anguish. James' unobtrusive production has plentiful keyboard earwoms and judicious use of Nyabinghi percussion, plus there's guest spots from Damian Marley, Kabaka Pyramid and Lila Iké.

*David Katz*



**Sleazy riders: Amyl And The Sniffers are more emotionally nuanced on their third offering.**



# Never mind the bollocks!

Melbourne punks' smart, funny and emotionally nuanced return floors Pat Gilbert.

## Amyl And The Sniffers

★★★★★

### Cartoon Darkness

ROUGH TRADE. CD/DL/LP

MOJO WAS straight out of the traps in early 2018 when, with their first two EPs packaged as the *Big Attraction* LP, Amyl And The Sniffers were set to visit these shores for the very first time. Our profile caught them full of youthful piss and vinegar, their fashion-defying rat's-tail mullets as fresh and nasty as their old-school street punk sounds.

That was over six years ago, after which two more studio albums have revealed steady growth – the last, 2021's *Comfort To Me*, providing a noticeably thicker, heavier, marginally more metal-y backdrop for Amy Taylor's profane, bolshy, sex-charged diaries of life in the goon-sack sewer of Melbourne's punk *demi-monde*. Which begs the question: how do you continue to develop musically as a punk band and still be punk?

*Cartoon Darkness* achieves this by doing something rather clever: what the Sniffers do well it simply works tirelessly to do even better. Key to this is a judicious exercise in sonic reduction at the hands of veteran post-punk producer Nick Launay (recently of Nick Cave and Idles renown), who makes everything crisper, cleaner, edgier. It perhaps helps that the record was made at the Foo Fighters' 606 studio, on the near-mythical console used for *Rumours* and *Nevermind*; yet while the latter was all about making Nirvana sweeter, here Mission Sniffer is to become brighter and more dynamic. And, critically, more emotionally nuanced.

The opening track, Jerkin', bursts in with a spare, push-pull riff, Taylor verbally assaulting a suitor – "You're a dumb cunt, you're an asshole" – before rising into a sinuous chorus that advises, "Keep jerkin' on your squirter, cunt, you won't get with me!" So far, so Amy, and it will come as no surprise that her trademark confrontational, sex-politics invective is still the Sniffers' defining feature, as on the Barbie-doll-voiced protest to wear a Tiny

Bikini, the travelogue of controlling behaviour described on the Patti Smith-conjuring rap U Should Not Be Doing That, or the brattish Me And The Girls.

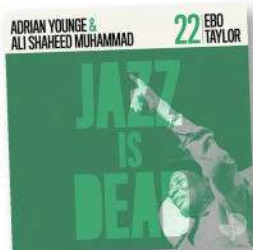
But elsewhere there's a new emphasis on feeling and experience. Chewing Gum, all mid-paced pulse and twisty guitar, features a genius moment when "the voice of me when I was a girl" speaks to the grown-up Amy, reassuring her that's she "doing fine". Yet the startling poignancy of that moment pales against the tugging sadness of Bailing On Me, a Goffin-King-style ballad that in the Sniffers' punky hands brings to mind X-Ray Spex. Another slowie, Big Dreams, is even better, pinching the sorrowful motif of Tears For Fears' Mad World and adding corkscrew R.E.M. guitars, a welcome complement to Dec Mehrstens' thrill-

ing, default-Captain Sensible punk-metal flights.

"The best roses are always grown out of cow shit," sings Taylor, sagely, on Going Somewhere. She should know: smart, funny, characterful, there's virtually nothing not to like about this record.







## Ebo Taylor

★★★★★

JID022

JAZZ IS DEAD. CD/DL/LP

**Ghanaian highlife and Afrobeat pioneer still grooving hard at 88.**

Festooned with awards in his native Ghana, Afrobeat grandee Taylor was pivotal in putting his motherland's music on the map in the 1960s. Largely perceived as an obscure cult figure outside of Africa, in recent years, however, reissues and compilations have exponentially helped to widen his audience, as has US R&B star Usher sampling Taylor's 1977 track Heaven for his 2010 song She Don't Know. Eager to spread the word about Taylor's genius, Jazz Is Dead's Adrian Younge and Ali Shaheed Muhammad have helped him create one of the most satisfying ventures of his long career. From the get-go, *JID022* crackles with a kinetic energy that drives the album's unrelenting, addictive dance pulse. Standouts include the intoxicating Get Up, the super-funky Obi Do Wa and horn-flecked Obra Akyedzi, all of which are characterised by ecstatic chanted vocals, jazzy flute arabesques, belching saxes and being irresistibly danceable.

Charles Waring

## Wunderhorse

★★★★★

Midas

COMMUNION. CD/DL/LP

**Shades of Pixies, The Smiths, The Lemonheads and Nirvana pass through this top-drawer second album.**



Jacob Slater served time as the frontman of London neo-punkers Dead Pretties (and even played drummer Paul Cook in Danny Boyle's *Pistol* series), before writing the songs that made up Wunderhorse's 2022 debut, *Cub*. The quartet have taken a big leap with this follow-up, recorded with producer Craig Silvey at Pachyderm Studios in Minnesota, scene of the making of Nirvana's *In Utero* and P.J. Harvey's *Rid Of Me*. Even if the influences are clearly apparent, it's all done with such verve that it's entirely infectious. The title track fizzles with attitude and melody and slashing guitars (imagine Thin Lizzy playing Sultans Of Swing), while the

Abby Ross



Feeling plucky: Joachim Cooder's latest is tangibly nourishing.

## Joachim Cooder

★★★★★

### Dreamer's Motel

TEMPLE OF LEAVES. CD/DL

**California dreaming on solo LP four.**

BROADLY A concept LP about fondly-remembered places now impossible to revisit, *Dreamer's Motel* sometimes conjures the questing intricacy of Paul Simon's early 'world'



mbira playing—think a more versatile cousin of the African thumb-piano—is the prominent colour in a joyful, largely major-key palette, while dad Ry's rich but subtle input on guitar, mandolin and banjo is also EQ'd with a softer focus. Consequently, Joachim and Juliette Commagere's

music ventures (see *Sight And The Sound*).

Cooder's *Array*

airy harmonies on *Let Me See My Brother Walk* and *Godspeed Little Children*... feel untethered, unoccluded, and the head-clearing, almost tangibly nourishing music of *Dreamer's Motel* really breathes. It's all over in 30 minutes or so, seven quietly exotic songs flowing clear as a mountain stream until gruff, sinuous closer *Down To The Blood* alights in Tom Waits's boneyard.

James McNair

slow-burning Superman sounds like Jeff Buckley fronting *The Velvet Underground* and involves the metaphysical escape fantasy of an office worker. Altogether, it's a brilliant, rock-revitalising offering.

Tom Doyle

## Sarah Neufeld, Richard Reed Parry, Rebecca Foon

★★★★★

First Sounds

ONE LITTLE INDEPENDENT. CD/DL/LP

**Montreal instrumental trio return to dreamy first principles.**



Violinist Sarah Neufeld and multi-instrumentalist Richard Reed Parry are storied Quebecois art music fellow travellers, best known for their Arcade Fire tenure if not their Bell Orchestre side-project, while Rebecca Foon's cello has helped propel Montreal post-rockers Esmerine and A Silver Mt Zion. This collaboration is a part-improvised re-exploration of the chamber-ambient atmospheres the three friends conjured together as neophyte experimenters a quarter of a century ago. Wistful opener *Slow New Year* sets the tone, its yearning violin arpeggios etched with Foon's swooping bow work, a transporting marriage of elegiac melody and immersive texture. A

similar quality pervades the self-explanatory *Duelling Flutters* and hymnal *Maria*, while *Day Three* introduces rumbling percussion and billows of dissonance. Occasionally, things err towards churning, reverb-soaked opacity, but the next moment of plaintive reverie is never far away.

David Sheppard

## Famous

★★★★★

Party Album

UNTITLED (RECS). CD/DL/LP

**From the same Brixton Windmill pub scene as Black Midi and Black Country, New Road: the latest post-punk commotion.**



Famous is essentially south Londoner Jack Merrett, plus revolving contributors. This debut forges its singular vision from what he's called, "a flawed and partial human life", running a highly quotable gamut from "I'm the prince of darkness Abaddon" (The Destroyer) to "Love you mum, call me if you need anything" (Love Will Find A Way), spiced with confessional splurging and manic epiphanies. Like their established peers, Famous have their own thrilling take on post-punk, embracing '60s garage and '70s rock, more CBGB's than south London, enhanced by Merrett's croaky drawl, slowing to Sprechgesang or exploding into screams. He's clearly drawn to extremes: God

Holds You quakes like *The Birthday Party*, but he murmurs *It Goes On Forever* ("two sheets of fentanyl and we can do it all again") like he's suffering withdrawal symptoms.

Martin Aston

## Pekka Laine

★★★★★

Pekka Laine & The Enchanted In Slumberland

SVART. CD/DL/LP

**Finnish equivalent of John Peel fashions the music of his dreams.**



In his native Finland, Pekka Laine is familiar from his music journalism, as a documentary director and radio DJ. A John Peel-like champion of music's margins, he was also the guitarist of the surf/exotica-leaning garage-psych outfit *Hypnomen*. There have been other bands but his first solo album, the surf-a-delic *The Enchanted Guitar Of Pekka Laine*, arrived in 2021. It was a sensation in Finland. The mostly instrumental follow-up opens with *Ruhr By Night*, which posits the union of Neu! and '60s session-guitar ace Al Casey. Further in, *The Drifter* fuses spaghetti western moves with a jazz-funk groove. Elsewhere, genre mash-ups nodding to Lee Hazlewood, Joe Meek's jerry-built space music, Italian giallo soundtracks and Zapp's electro-funk. Pointedly titled after the surreal early 20th

century comic strip *Little Nemo In Slumberland*, this crazy-quilt album manifests musical visions which would normally be limited to dreams.

Kieron Tyler

## Kelly Finnigan

★★★★★

A Lover Was Born

COLEMINÉ. DL/LP

**Coming-of-age second solo album by the Monophonics frontman.**



Kelly Finnigan began his musical journey in the '90s as a teenage DJ in the Bay Area, and on his second solo album the singer/writer/producer hymns the rare '60s soul records he spun back then. It's a collaborative project featuring myriad members of modern-retro soul's new generation (*The Ironsides*, *Parlor Greens*, *Dap-Kings* etc), all whom he's previously worked with. He calls it "a homecoming", referring not just to the album's sound and personnel but also to a move he made midway through recording to Ohio, where his parents originated. There's definitely the sense he's found his natural habitat and people here, his vocals an intoxicating mix of might and mercy, wailing and crying over imploring ballads with bespoke Hammond warble, scritch guitar and hungover brass. Key tracks are *Prove My Love* and *Chosen Few*, but it's all top quality.

Lois Wilson





Doing it clean: Peter Perrett's new songs come with a bionic, titanium-reinforced bounce.



# Still the one

Perrett makes a fresh start, again. By Victoria Segal.

## Peter Perrett

★★★★★

### The Cleansing

DOMINO. CD/DL/LP

YOU WOULD need to be made of marble not to pick up on the deep regret that churns underneath *The Cleansing*. “You’re just an old man/Who went too far out to sea,” Peter Perrett sings on *Mixed Up Confucius*, while

All That Time doubles down on that sorrowful drift. “All that time I thought I was having fun,” the former Only One sighs over enervated piano and strings, “just another wasted life.” That’s before *Art Is A Disease*, a cautionary tale about flogging yourself for a dream that might never pay out more than a handful of buttons and a pile of dead calendars.

The highs and lows of Perrett’s life are well-defined: a bright bolt of success with *The Only Ones* and their three albums, a modern standard under his skinny belt with *Another Girl*, *Another Planet*, and then ruinous stretches of addiction interspersed only by a brief ’90s

return as *The One*. The narrative shifted, though, with 2017’s *How The West Was Won* and 2019’s *Humanworld*, records that forced a fresh perspective on a career that once seemed irrevocably withered.

*The Cleansing* continues this cheering trend, Perrett rounding up a cross-generational pool of musicians to realise his still-sharp vision. There are his sons, producer and guitarist Jamie and bassist Peter Jr, but also Johnny Marr — once thrown into a police cell wearing an Only Ones *Baby’s Got A Gun* T-shirt — Fontaines D.C.’s Carlos O’Connell, who co-produced and arranged three tracks, and Bobby Gillespie and Douglas Hart, the former Jesus And Mary Chain comrades reunited on the artfully scuffed title track.

If his support network is striking, it is Perrett himself who steals focus, his voice — a mysterious substance that seems to have been dug out from between the floorboards of a condemned building — so immediate that it almost seems like an unfair advantage over other singer-songwriters. *I Wanna Go With Dignity* piles up painful testimony to the lost, but offers solace in a glorious, almost tactile Stooges thump; *Set The House On Fire* astutely delineates the difference between setting the world alight and having a Richard Pryor-style accident. He might be physically frail — COPD, a recent broken hip — but these songs come with a bionic, titanium-reinforced bounce. A double album of them, too, which tells its own story.

If *The Cleansing* is steeped in a wistful acknowledgement of decline — and it’s probably best not to listen to the nihilist *Sweet Jane* chug of *Less Than Nothing* if you’re having the slightest wobble about your mortality — it’s also the work of a man who takes real pleasure in storytelling, melody, laser-guided metaphors. Perrett might not have been having fun before, but even factoring in a song called *Do Not Resuscitate*, this finally sounds like the real thing.



## Underworld

★★★★★

### Strawberry Hotel

SMITH HYDE PRODUCTIONS. CD/DL/LP

First ‘conventional’ album since 2016’s *Barbara Barbara, We Face A Shining Future*.

After the 52-tracks-in-52-weeks online splurge of 2018-19’s *Drift Series 1*, Rick Smith and Karl Hyde doubtless needed a minute to regroup. While that format allowed them to explore the long-form potential of digital infinity, this relatively concise 65-minute album nevertheless finds Underworld trading in limitlessness, as *Strawberry Hotel* expertly blurs the listener’s perception of time, often drifting, indeed, for minutes on end (to wit: *And The Colour Red*’s acid-squiggling pulsation), subtly shifting sonic perspectives and intensities. Other trancey

in-lane highlights include *Denver Luna*’s fluctuating Pearl’s *Girl*-style stream-of-consciousness rap, and *Sweet Lands Experience*’s nod to *Born Slippy*’s shouting-lager geezerdom. Forty-two minutes in, *Ottavia* brings a major shift as a female voice laments “women’s miserable sex” over wonky beats, while *Stick Man Test* closes out with, of all things, reverb-heavy folk picking. Thirty years on from *Dubnobasswithmyheadman*, the masters of post-rave audio narrative still know how to blow your tiny mind.

Andrew Perry

## Gavin Friday

★★★★★

### Ecce Homo

BMG. CD/DL/LP

First album in 11 years from erstwhile *Virgin Prune* (and U2 creative director).



*Ecce Homo* reunites Gavin Friday with Soft Cell’s Dave Ball close to four decades after the latter helmed the *Virgin Prunes*’ second (and last) 1986 album, *The Moon Looked Down And Laughed*. Far from that record’s gothy rock,

this 13-track set is high on orchestral manoeuvres and dark, clubby moves. The title track sounds like *The The* gone raving, *The Church Of Love* has a hint of *The Human League*’s *Love Action* about it, and *Lady Esquire* dares to retrofit Iggy Pop’s *Nightclubbing* with *Glitter Band* cries of “hey”. With lyrics informed by loss and his current post-divorce relationship with a man, at the age of 64, Friday has clearly found himself and made a deeply heartfelt record, most of which is perhaps best heard at club-level volume.

Tom Doyle

## Pixies

★★★★★

### The Night The Zombies Came

BMG. CD/DL/LP

First Pixies LP with new bassist Emma Richardson.



Their T-shirts proclaimed “Death to the Pixies” decades ago, which maybe negates the gormlessly undead album title. The record is full of more idiosyncratic kinds of revenant — and ensnaring music. The bell-pretty hooks of *The Vegas*

Suite were inspired by the 1950s standard *Que Sera, Sera* (*Whatever Will Be, Will Be*). The sombre *I Hear You Mary* was triggered by the Pixies’ time at Rockfield Studio in 2012, but frames this Welsh corner with gargoyles and cobblestones. Most acute in its ancient revisionism is *Hypnotised*. The lyrics are modelled on the sestina, a verse form from 12th-century Provence. There’s none of their foundational bloodied rampage but the near title track *Jane* (*The Night The Zombies Came*) deftly blends a Spector-esque baion beat with a haunting dual vocal from frontman Black Francis and new bassist Emma Richardson, formerly of *Band Of Skulls*. This most thrillingly deathly of bands remains alive.

Roy Wilkinson

## A. Swayze & The Ghosts

★★★★★

### Let’s Live A Better Life Than This

IVY LEAGUE. CD/DL/LP

Devilishly good Devo-y post-punk from Tasmania.

Arriving with 2020 debut *Paid Salvation* amid Grade-A Aussie punk rock from Amyl & The

Sniffers, *The Chats* and *Those New South Whales*, this trio excelled with their Hives-like shout-along choruses. Halted by Covid, Andrew Swayze got sober and channelled the attendant energies into transforming his Ghosts’ sound. To that effect, parts of this second LP go post-punk: with lyrics of joyful self-liberation, opener *Tell You All The Time* introduces a twitchy Devo feel, echoed later by *Sick Kinda WRLD*, with its hilarious borderline-Telstar synth solo, and the goofily irresistible *Cool Cucumber*. With Hives-y moments still afoot (see *Easy Come*), it’s a bit like pinballing between festival stages circa ’03, just as garage-rock gave way to NYC punk-funkers *The Rapture*, and *LCD Soundsystem* — in a good way. With four or five outright bangers aboard (again), Swayze’s Ghosts now swiftly rise.

Andrew Perry





## Samara Joy

★★★★★

Portrait

VERVE. [CD/DL/LP](#)

A new jazz voice from Gen Z.



Jazz in 2024? In the UK it's the hipsters mashing up the form with Afrobeat, dub, grime, house and hip-hop who are making the running. But from the States comes 24-year-old singer Samara Joy, trailing TikTok fame and triple Grammy wins, who sings in a purist style that has echoes of Sarah Vaughan and Ella Fitzgerald. There are songs here that Frank Sinatra and Nat King Cole made famous, and she adds her own imaginative lyrics to Charles Mingus and Lou Donaldson tunes. But Joy is much more than a rote singer of standards: her voice, mixing sensuality and power, can be exquisite; her a cappella opening to Reincarnation Of A Lovebird is stunning. Soaring vocal improvisations have a precision perfection. Joy's popularity isn't about young fans tuning into the music of their parents – it's more their grandparents'. So hardly cutting edge, but she makes plenty of today's R&B singers sound one-dimensional.

John Bungey

and North Africa), and looks for inspiration to India, Istanbul and the Maghreb. Recorded in Bristol, but the highlights come from the duo spreading their net wide: Indian disco queen Asha Puthli stars on the steamy, Moroder-quoting Baar Baar; Algeria's Aymen Attia sounds remarkably like Cheb Khaled on Galbi (particularly his 1992 single Didi, a huge global hit); and Sabir adopts a very Khruangbin-like groove with the Turkish singer Billur Battal featured. Not totally original, then, but still a kitchen-disco smash.

David Hutcheon



## Elucid

★★★★★

REVELATOR

FAT POSSUM. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Intense third solo outing from the other half of left-field New York rap duo Armand Hammer.

A deep thinker with an ever-changing rap style that rolls with reckless vigour, Elucid's third solo LP strays farther out from hip-hop, its increasingly freeform songs embracing discord and dissonance. Whether addressing his negligent landlord (SLUM OF A DISREGARD) or self-analysis on Ikebana ("I feel everybody knew but me!"), Elucid's songs tackle modern life's travails via teasing, cryptic wordplay, mordant humour and acerbic wit. While a flurry of guest spots (Sketch185, Creature) spice its potent brew, his chemistry with Armand Hammer bandmate Billy Woods reverberates heaviest on BAD POLLEN around a dusty piano loop and fractured Arabic vocal sample. Co-produced with avant-garde musician Jon Nellen, REVELATOR is confrontational

and sometimes uncomfortable (see CCTV's shrill metallic screech), but always enthralling.

Andy Cowan



## Toby Lee

★★★★★

House On Fire

100%. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Incendiary third LP from British blues-rock prodigy.



At 19, Toby Lee is the unlikely road-hardened blues veteran. Born far from

the Mississippi Delta in Banbury, Oxfordshire, Lee swapped his ukulele for a guitar when he was six and felt an immediate connection with the instrument while developing an affinity with blues music via axe gods like Stevie Ray Vaughan and B.B. King. Now, the award-winning youngster has released his first LP of all-original material, an impressive, well-rounded collection highlighting Lee's versatility as well as virtuosity. Standouts include Soul On Me, a sanctified soul-rocker, and Into The Light, lit up by Lee's searing slide guitar. In contrast, the soulful Patiently Waiting For Love pays homage to Stax-style R&B. Joe Bonamassa once hailed Lee as "the future of the blues" and although that expectation-loaded accolade might seem a heavy burden for one so young, on this evidence, Lee carries it with ease.

Charles Waring



## Dar Disku

★★★★★

Dar Disku

SOUNDWAY. [DL/LP/MC](#)

Bahraini DJ duo reveal their passion for the disco beat that thrived from Algiers to Bollywood.



Though Mazen Almaskati and Vish M's debut is founded on their youthful love of Talking Heads and Arthur Russell, what shines through is how much they missed the melting pot of home (Bahrain) after moving to London. If the notion of a Bahrain music scene doesn't ring any bells, that may be because it's at the heart of the SWANA belt (Southwest Asia



## Sam Gendel, Benny Bock, Hans Kjorstad

★★★★★

Dream Trio

LEAVING. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Three avant-jazz improvisers push the boundaries on intimate set recorded in Japan.

Having reworked Joni Mitchell and Judee Sill on *The Doober* (with bassist Sam Wilkes) and explored bossa nova on *The Room* (with guitarist Fabiano do Nascimento), Sam Gendel's third collaborative album of 2024 is his most unorthodox yet. Alternating between wind controller and soprano sax, his dexterous cascades of notes are punctuated by unexpected flashes of skronk as he weaves between Bock's udo synth and Kjorstad's subtle violin. While a cheerful sense of abandon runs through the liquid phraseology of India and glitchy, microtonal Charango, it's often hard to determine where one player ends and the other begins – particularly amid the Sakamoto-like drift of FallsLake. Elsewhere, the unlikely mutations of Ten Dreams reveal something more impressionistic, performed with grace and restraint.

## ALSO RELEASED

### Badbadnotgood

★★★★★

Mid Spiral

XL/INNOVATIVE LEISURE. [CD/DL/LP](#)



In contrast to 2021's dense *Talk Memory*, *Mid Spiral* captures the Canadian trio of

Al Sow, Chester Hansen and Leland Whitty at their most straight-up and laid-back. A sprawling double that rifles through styles (jazz-funk, fusion, samba, psych) with a new maturity – movingly on *Rewind Your Mind*, anonymously on *Last Laugh* – it forgoes the hip-hop energy and rough edges that once defined them.

### TRAINING with Ruth Goller

★★★★★

Threads To Knot

SQUAMA RECORDINGS. [DL/LP](#)



Sax/drums Berlin duo Johannes Schleiermacher and Max Andrzejewski like to warp sound

via modular synth circuitry in ways that will appeal to the adventurous. Schleiermacher veers from lyrical Coltrane to heated Brötzmann over Ruth Goller's thunderously upfront bass lines and Andrzejewski's skittering backbeats on standouts *Threadfin* and *Longingly*. The trio craft an evolving industrial jazz with a powerful emotional core.

### Work Money Death

★★★★★

People Of The Fast Flowing River

ATA. [DL/LP](#)



In the spirit of *Impulse!* and *Strata-East's* late-'60s/early-'70s output, these

Leeds-based torch-bearers for spiritual jazz hit their groove on album number three. Masters of hypnotic slow builds, On The Fast Flowing River's galvanising pulse and *We Are The People's* jaunty piano refrain give tenor saxophonist Tony Burkill ample space to prove his way with a lingering hook.

### Weird Of Mouth

★★★★★

Weird Of Mouth

OTHERLY LOVE. [DL/LP](#)



Nothing is held back on this improvisation between alto saxophonist Mette Rasmussen, pianist

Craig Taborn and drummer Ches Smith. While abstract *Existence* combines wailing screams, quixotic keys and complex grooves, *In Search Of Soul* is positively tranquil. Rasmussen's muted tones hovering at an alien pitch. Weird by name, nutty by nature, it's a feast of contrasts where melody and cacophony collide. AC



Picture perfect: Samara Joy sings in a pure style.



Bob's full house: Gillespie and crew's latest is up there with Primal Scream's best.



# Love is the message

Bobby Gillespie and co deliver a Philly disco-influenced mid-career high. By Andrew Perry.

## Primal Scream

★★★★★

### Come Ahead

BMG. CD/DL/LP

PRIMAL SCREAM were never a band reasonably destined for “mature work”. From 1988’s *Stooges/MC5* black-leather ramalama, and ’91’s disco-psych *Screamadelica*, through to the brutal agit-electronica of 2000’s *XTRMNTR*, Bobby Gillespie’s team were always too single-minded in their experimental rock’n’roll crusade to reflect upon life beyond it.

Thirty years since Motown-stomping *Rocks*, however, the war-torn Scream are a very different proposition these days from that Glaswegian gang of old, their creative core long since reduced to just Gillespie and guitarist Andrew Innes. After 2016’s *Chaosmosis* chased the synth-pop *Zeitgeist* to little commercial reward, Bobby G says he struggled to summon the motivational purpose for another long-playing transformation.

It was Belfast producer/soundtrack maestro David Holmes, overseer of 2013’s *More Light* (their best since *XTRMNTR*), who cajoled him into breaking the stalemate, reversing their usual process by sending ready-made beats recorded with an LA rhythm section, for Gillespie and Innes to write words and music over.

The resultant *Come Ahead* has plenty of the Primals’ trademark sonic edge, thanks to a strong electronic undercurrent, but the foregrounded gospel choir and astonishing orchestration bring an overriding sense of classiness. A pervasive hand-on-hip street-funky groove, with the sweep of the strings and the voices, frequently evokes the

reassuringly expensive proto-disco of Gamble & Huff’s Philadelphia International.

There’s a sense of the Scream growing up here: opener *Ready To Go Home* marries a sophisticated glitterball shuffle to lyrics about facing the toughest of mid-life realities – mortality. Gillespie apparently sang them to his own father in hospital the night before his passing, yet with its ecstatic eight-strong choral intro (mirroring *Screamadelica*’s introductory rush on *Movin’ On Up*) and violin-racing celebration of release from life’s agonies, it’s a wonderfully joyful treatment of the darkest topic.

In a self-penned accompanying statement, Gillespie talks of how penning his 2021 autobiography *Tenement Kid* unlocked unforeseen confidence for him as a writer, first felt while creating that year’s duet outing with Savages’ Jehnny Beth, *Utopian Ashes*. That album’s excruciating narrative of marital decline here gets a belated happy ending, perhaps, in *Heal Yourself*’s redemptive hymn of gratitude to a supportive lover, its words of unflinching self-analysis (“I wouldn’t let her in to share my darkness”) carrying a palpable confessional charge.

Elsewhere, political ideas loom large: class inequality (*Innocent Money*) and religious war (*Deep Dark Waters*) are urgently addressed, while on two longer borderline-spoken-word songs, stirring yarns tell of war veteran neglect (*False Flags*) and English colonial evil (*Settlers Blues*).

If Gillespie’s newfound authority impresses, Innes, too, adds beautifully understated guitar throughout, and somehow Holmes creates sublime order amid Brian Irvine’s elite-class string arrangements, the House Gospel Choir’s testifying, and the volumising electronics. A triumph in thematic/aural juxtaposition, *Come Ahead* is up there with Primal Scream’s best.



## Godspeed You! Black Emperor

★★★★★

No Title As Of 13  
February 2024  
28,340 Dead

CONSTELLATION. CD/DL/LP

Canadian crew issue eighth transmission from the edge.



A flickering projection reading “hope” has long been part of Godspeed You!

Black Emperor’s performances, a beacon that has guided them through more than a quarter of a century of heavy global weather. Following 2021’s *G\_d’s Pee At State’s End!*, their latest sees the Montreal group again pushing the limits of what music can mean at times of darkness, the martial witness-bearing of *Pale Spectator Takes Photographs* as much part of their work as the fiercely willed transcendence of *Babys In A Thundercloud*. Where they find beauty, it is often implacably bright – the fireball guitar of *Sun Is A Hole Sun Is Vapors* – while the transition from *Raindrops Cast In Lead*’s ecstatic whirl to the scorched-earth strafe of *Broken Spires At Dead Kapital* shows their dynamic mastery. No consolation, no platitudes: just stark commitment to picking up human signals through the storm.

Victoria Segal

for the bliss. It’s late summer sunshine in music form.

Danny Eccleston

## Lone Justice

★★★★★

Viva Lone Justice

AFAR. CD/LP/DL

Unreleased early-'80s tracks from LA cow-punks.



Though not the ‘band re-forming, gigs ahoy!’ event it was dressed up to

be – Maria McKee quashed such rumours in last month’s *MOJO* – *Viva Lone Justice* reminds us of all that made the original line-up special. These 10 salvaged/refurbished treasures from bassist Marvin Etzioni’s and guitarist Ryan Hedgecock’s respective personal archives include stirring McKee vehicle *You Possess Me* and a raucous take on The Undertones’ *Teenage Kicks*, which McKee saw as a nod back after Feargal Sharkey’s hit cover of her own *A Good Heart*. The ‘drinking in my Sunday dress’ vibe is most pronounced on *Rattlesnake Mama*, a gloriously feral testament to LJ thriving where LA punk met rockabilly and honky-tonk. McKee is currently writing a book about her colourful family history, but there’s certainly public appetite for a *Lone Justice* last hurrah.

James McNair

## Ezra Collective

★★★★★

Dance, No One’s Watching

PARTISAN. CD/DL/LP

Brit-jazzers ac-cent-tchu-ate the positive on third album.



After last year’s landmark Mercury Prize win, and with Sons Of Kemet now dissolved,

Femi Koleoso’s ebullient group inherit the ‘scene leaders’ mantle. An array of crisp, danceable grooves and multiple melodists in tenorist James Mollison, trumpeter Ife Ogunjobi and keysman Joe Armon-Jones have made them the most approachable of their contemporaries, and *Dance, No One’s Watching* sees their mix of African, Caribbean and black British musics further dial down the ‘j’ word. Whether delivering tough Afrobeat grooves, pierced by Mollison and Ogunjobi’s whistleable unisons, on The Herald, Lagos-recorded Ajala and thrilling *Expensive*, or turning wistful on *Palm Wine* (where a filigree of highlife-inspired guitar beguiles), they’re always reaching out, with melodies underlined by vocal contributions on three tracks, and even their most introspective number, *N29* – starring Armon-Jones’s spangled electric piano – goes

## Sophie

★★★★★

Sophie

TRANSGRESSIVE. CD/DL/LP

Posthumous release from avant-pop figurehead.



Nearly four years after Sophie’s sudden death, the DJ and producer’s

brother and studio manager Benny Long and a crew of trusted collaborators have finished the LP intended to follow-up 2018’s *Oil Of Every Pearl’s Un-Insides*. While these tracks were apparently close to their final form before Sophie died, they form part of a planned “pop album” and therefore don’t quite hit the unearthly replicant extremes of their predecessors, never quite as brutal as *Ponyboy*, nor as strange as *It’s Okay To Cry*. Behind the moments that sound like megachurch guided meditation, however, are flashes of brilliant disturbance: *Plunging Asymptote*, narrated by multi-media artist Juliana Huxtable, plots its own nightmare graph with minimalist precision, while *Gallop* (featuring Evita Manji) and *Elegance* (featuring POPSTAR) escalate the drill-bit intensity. Inevitably, though, *Sophie* stands as a monument to what might have been.

Victoria Segal

Adam Peter Johnson



## Fionn Regan

★★★★

○ Avalanche  
NETTWERK. CD/DL/LP

**The Irish singer returns to his idyllic past with adult bittersweetness.**



When the tender voice of Fionn Regan broke through clouds of piano during Bon

Iver's landmark 22, *A Million*, the throwback sample prompted a question: where, exactly, had the one-time Irish sensation gone? Regan had been making records all along, but none of them matched the hype or acclaim of the 2006 debut *Bon Iver* borrowed from, *The End Of History*. Written in Mallorca and played almost entirely by Regan, his seventh album tries to salvage some promise and glory from his mid-twenties, its tender songs about looking for companionship or at least belief in oneself built on exquisite folk atmospheric that shimmer like early *Bon Iver* or sprawl like vintage Fleet Foxes. It is gorgeous in the way a hotel painting is – very pleasant to look at once or twice but not to ponder for too long, an autumnal soundtrack whose glow fades like leaves.

Grayson Haver Currin

## Sarah Blasko

★★★★★

I Just Need To Conquer This Mountain  
MVKA. CD/DL/LP

**Losing God and an "inseparable" friend never sounded so joyful.**



Sometimes everything has to break before being put back the right way. Raised in a

Pentecostal church believing the rapture would come before she was 30, 47-year-old Sarah Blasko long ago extricated herself from her church's doomsday thinking, but losing contact with a close friend with a similar background brought it all back. God is ever-present,

whether wondering on opener *The Way* if losing faith caused her personal problems, or embracing her Godless future on the closing *Divine*. In spite of such heavy thoughts, the album has a lightness of touch that is both joyous and redemptive, its gospel flavours bordering on deep soul that, on tracks such as *In My Head* and *I Can't Wait Anymore*, lifts it alongside such imperious break-up albums as Mavis Staples' *Only For The Lonely*. With Blasko's crystalline voice never sounding more assured or relaxed, this is her defining album so far.

Andy Fyfe

## Peter Alexander Jobson

★★★★★

Burn The Ration Books Of Love  
ABSOLUTE. CD/DL/LP

**Northumberland songwriter's belated solo debut.**



Formerly bass/keys anchor of Manchester's *I Am Kloot*, who split in 2016, Jobson has

since delved into film/TV soundtracks and touring duties (Guy Garvey; Nadine Shah) while crafting this richly saturated country-noir beauty along the way. *Burn...* shares *Kloot*'s hungover tenderness but shifts the mood toward Richard Hawley; PAJ's deep-trawling baritone and northern Leonard Cohen aura dispensing hard-won philosophy and wry autobiography in slow doses. Occasionally, he taps into the spirit of the variety club circuit: *Holiday (Live)* and *Just 'Cause I'm Dead* are very Jake Thackray. Jobson documents the extremes of his experience: the ache of homelessness (Home); the day he almost burned down his home village of Alnmouth (The Night Of The Fire); bad decisions in love (Mountain); and friendships in Kesta's 11 minutes of spoken-word remembrance over a soundtrack of slow-burning ambience, encapsulating Jobson's intensely personal vision.

Martin Aston

## HOO

★★★★

|||  
BIG POTATO. CD/DL/LP

**Shoegazing staples reassert their core values.**



HOO used to be Holton's Opulent Oog. *|||* is their third album under the

contracted name, and fifth overall. While former Coley Park mainman Nick Holton is the prime mover, the band also features sundry founder members of Chapterhouse, Mojave 3 and Slowdive. Jackie Oates sings on one track. All of which points to what the follow-up to 2021's *We Shall Never Speak* (on which Oates also appeared) might cleave to. And, indeed, it largely does: sky-high shoegazing with dives into pure noise and the incorporation of electronics as textural augmentation and to enhance melodic focus. Each of *|||*'s 10 tracks achieves a different outcome from the same building blocks: the second-album Slowdive stratospherics of *SNAKE*, a Flying Saucer Attack cavernousness on album cover *Method Papers*, the jittery Chapterhouse-like dance-adjacency of *Myself When I Am Real*. Assured, and decisively on-piste.

Kieron Tyler

## Paul Kelly

★★★★★

Fever Longing Still  
COOKING VINYL. CD/DL/LP

**After four decades and 29 albums, one of the Aussie singer-songwriter's finest.**



Few do love and nostalgia better than Australia's Paul Kelly, and the songs

bracketing *Fever Longing Still* express both as well as he's ever done. Opener *Houndstooth Dress* ("It sticks to you like a judge sticks to the law") sparks with sexual tension, while the closing *Going To The River With Dad* is its upside down, a heartwarming childhood fishing memory. The depth of feeling expressed in these opposite ends of love's spectrum shows Kelly's songwriting powers are still on peak form. Elsewhere, *Taught By Experts*, first written 30 years ago, sounds like a refugee from his 1986 breakthrough album *Gossip*, *Back To The Future* wistfully asks an ex "what if?", and *Double Business Bound* could've been dug up for one of Bob Dylan's recent covers albums. The stylistic shifts and sheer quality of the songwriting make *Fever Longing Still* almost the perfect Paul Kelly album.

Andy Fyfe



## Stick In The Wheel

★★★★★

A Thousand Pokes  
FROM HERE. CD/DL/LP

**Crafty Cockneys reject the English pastoral.**



The pearly queen and king of modernist London song, Nicola Kearey and Ian Carter deliver a filthy pea-souper with their fourth studio album, a determinedly ungentrified vision of misrule from the capital's margins. With thudding percussion, distorted guitars and eerie Auto-Tune deepening *Stick In The Wheel*'s slightly gleeful vision of a world galloping out of control, *A Thousand Pokes* stirs up old ballads and broadsides (Brisk Lad or sucker's lament *Cracks*), sentimental street songs (Lavender; What Can The Matter Be?) and political material (*Watercross-O*) into an apocalyptic Bertolt Brecht stew: knees up, Mother Courage. "We're born to walk on rotten ground," Kearey states mournfully on *Burnt Walk*, and here *Stick In The Wheel* are sure-footed with their daunting urban music of defiance. Nymphs and shepherds run away; nasty urchins rule OK.

## ALSO RELEASED

### Angeline Morrison

★★★★★

Ophelia  
ANGELINEMORRISONMUSIC.  
BANDCAMP. CD/DL/LP



If 2022's *The Sorrow Songs* – the deep-fake folk record that gave a voice to England's

long-standing black communities – brought Morrison rightful acclaim, it underplayed her spooky side. Her opus on alchemy remains in the works, but in the meantime *Ophelia* brings hand-whittled tales of ghosties, elusive women and astrology to restate her Linda Perhacs/Licorice McKechnie uncanniness. Harken to the witches' tunes.

### Henry Parker & David Ian Roberts

★★★★★

Chasing Light  
CUP AND RING. CD/DL/LP



Gasping for more guy-on-guy acoustic action after Jim Ghedi & Toby Hay's LP for Topic last year? Fill your boots as Lammas Fair prog-folk beast Parker and Cardiff twangler Roberts get their GADGBEs and DADGADs together for this mesmeric set of Jim O'Rourke's *Eureka-via-Bert And John* collabs. Trip on their light at its most fantastic on *Wedber Wood*, *Road To Mallaig* and pre-Raphaelite mood-board *The English Dreamers*.

### The Rheingans Sisters

★★★★★

Start Close In  
RHEINGANS SISTERS. CD/DL/LP



With end times dread and faint hope the colours for autumn 2024, Derbyshire's

fiddling siblings capture the mood on their first since 2020's *Receiver*. There's Lankum menace on *Devils* but *Drink Up* is a tubthumping ode to weary joy, while *Un Voltigeur*, *Shade Chaser* and *Si Sabiatz Drolletas* manage in their own way to inveigle ABBA, Philip Glass and Robert Wyatt into a joyous clog dance up the Pyrenees. Take a bow.

### Cohen Braithwaite-Kilcoyne

★★★★★

Play Up The Music!  
GRIMDON. CD/DL



Britfolk's Appalachian adventures are well known, but with his third LP, Midlands concertina mage Braithwaite-Kilcoyne spiders Anansi-style around the Caribbean and US to show how black performers reshaped trad material. *Hangman*, *Slack On The Line* and *Tacoma's Song* show the Granny's Attic man's thousand-suns-bright style, while a churchy *Little Musgrove* (as remade in Jamaica) smoulders rapturously. Play loud. JW



**Landslide victory: Fionn Regan conjures an autumnal soundtrack.**





**P.P. Arnold**

★★★★★

Live In Liverpool

EAR MUSIC. [CD/DL/LP](#)

UK soul grande dame's 2019 performance at Liverpool's Grand Central Hall; a mix of then-current album *The New Adventures Of...* tracks and '60s Mod club faves including thrilling takes on The First Cut Is The Deepest and Angel Of The Morning. *LW*



**Cahill//Costello**

★★★★★

Cahill//Costello II

GEARBOX. [DL/LP](#)

Experimental guitarist and jazz drummer's mutual passion for minimalism peaks on a second set of ambient post-rock improvs. From Ae//FX's insistent polyrhythms and MBV-esque blurs to JNGL's hypnotic motifs and high-adrenaline beats, the Glasgow duo evoke atmospheric, emotive soundscapes. *AC*



**Craven Faults**

★★★★★

Bounds

THE LEAF LABEL. [DL/LP](#)

Yorkshire's mysterious electronic maverick returns to the moors on his heady, elemental third. The overlapping arpeggios, sly rhythmic shifts and evolving melodic builds of 18-minute centrepiece Waste & Demesne refine his gift for evoking natural warmth from banks of impressive analogue tech. *AC*



**Fielvel Is Glauque**

★★★★★

Rong Weicknes

FAT POSSUM. [CD/DL/LP/MC](#)

Zach Phillips and Ma Clément condense more ideas into one song than some bands ever manage. A leap on from 2022 debut *Flaming Swords* that interpolates improvised takes with a hired octet, these 14 jazz-pop miniatures offset whimsical structures and playful flaws with sharp hooks. *AC*



**Paula Rae Gibson**

★★★★★

The Roles We Play To Disappear

33 XTREME. [DL/LP](#)

Backed by Alex Bonne, Kit Downes, Matthew Bourne and Rob Luft, this husky-voiced Londoner marries electronica and avant-jazz with spectral songs. Amid downbeat squirls, Gibson evokes Jarboe, David Sylvian and Keeley Forsyth. *AC*



**Julie**

★★★★★

My Anti-Aircraft Friend

ATLANTIC. [CD/DL/LP](#)

LA trio's youthful vigour belies the superior songwriting basis to their debut's grungey twist on shoegaze. Catalogue, sung by bassist Alexandria Elizabeth, confirms a Sonic Youth fixation, while Knob's Slint-like dynamics hit further '90s alt-rock pleasure centres. Drummer Dillon Lee is heroic throughout. *JB*



**Kurious**

★★★★★

Majician

METALFACE. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Following Common/Pete Rock and LL Cool J, a stealth contender for Dad-rap album of 2024. A marginal '90s figure, Kurious's fifth is unrepentantly old school, exec produced by late mentor and kindred spirit MF DOOM. Neat Theme From A Summer Place sample for the super-old school, too. *JM*



**La Paire D'O'r**

★★★★★

La Paire D'O'r

HEX ENDUCTION. [DL/LP](#)

Australia-via-Seattle duo serve hot kosmische soup outta the Can, as Martin Bland's drumming urges Guy Maddison's mantric synth diabolism beyond the darkside. Annabella Kirby brings vocal flight, and Mark Arm fruitfully intones cautionary tale Merde Du Chien Sur La Palouse. *KC*



**Scions**

★★★★★

To Cry Out In The Wilderness

IDÉE FIXE. [DL/LP](#)

"When we go down/We go down swinging," wails Cormac Culkeen on Fight Song, a left-field chamber-pop-folk dust-up between Polyphonic Spree and Marry Waterson. It's the climax of this offbeat septet's rallying stand against climate disaster. *AC*



**Ulrich Troyer**

★★★★★

Transit Tribe

4BIT PRODUCTIONS. [DL/LP](#)

Top-drawer future-dub explorations from Venetian avant-garde electronicist/DJ Troyer. A collab-heavy set, with British poet Roger Robinson emoting over undulating bass synths (Lago Di Garda) and balafon master Mamadou Diabaté providing melodic bounce to Latzfonsner Kreuz. *SM*

**EXTENDED PLAY**

**Bon Iver**

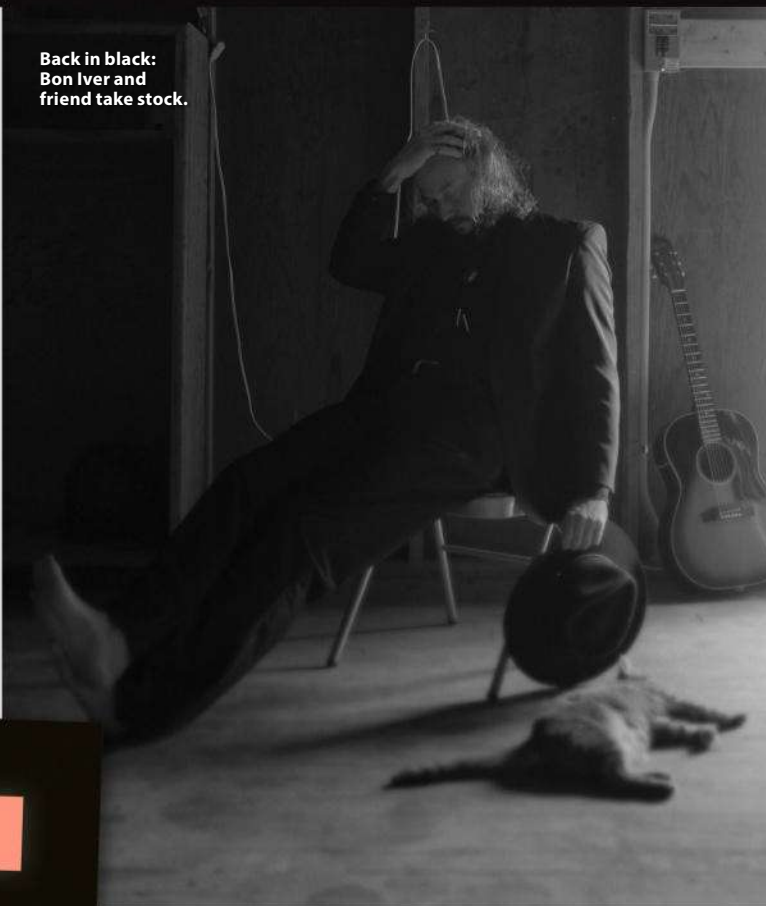
**SABLE,**

JAGJAGUWAR. [CD/DL/EP](#)

THIS NEW EP signals the end of the vision quest Bon Iver's Justin Vernon has undertaken over the last decade. Which is not to diminish his unlikely collaborations with Kanye West, Mouse On Mars and Travis Scott, or challenging opuses like 2016's *22, A Million*. But on *SABLE*, Vernon's voice is no longer obscured by electronic distortion, and he's no longer complicating his acoustic tangles with digital glitches. And while the lyrics capture a man still sorting through his uncertainty ("There are rings within rings within rings," he murmurs gnominically on Things Behind Things Behind Things), there's a trace of hope in there, too: Awards Season finds him reasoning, "You can be remade/You can live again." The wandering is over, and Vernon's investing all he's learned in music hewing closer to the folk-founded songwriting which made his name.

*Stevie Chick*

**Back in black:**  
Bon Iver and friend take stock.



**Us**

★★★★★

Underground Renaissance

KRAUT POP! [DL/LP](#)

Supercharged young Finns play speeding rocking blues, garage punk and even some sunshine pop, with the restless leg righteousness of those hassled for ID in pubs (one song seems to be about snowball fights). A seismic experience live, too. *IH*



**Various**

★★★★★

Tonight I'll Go Down Swingin'

NINE MILE. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Lone Justice drummer Don Heffington gets a wide-ranging tribute. See Jackson Browne's heartsore Everywhere I Look, with drums from Jim Keltner, who also sings over MOMO's beatnik clatter; and Fiona Apple's country ballad Lately. *JB*

Erinn Springer



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MUNDY  
CAIT O'RIORDAN**

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20 BIRMINGHAM O<sub>2</sub> INSTITUTE  
21 LONDON O<sub>2</sub> SHEPHERD'S BUSH EMPIRE  
22 MANCHESTER O<sub>2</sub> RITZ

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04 BIRMINGHAM O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY2  
05 LIVERPOOL O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY  
06 BRISTOL O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY  
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FRI 25 OCT 2024 LONDON O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY2 ISLINGTON\*  
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FRI 22 NOV 2024 LIVERPOOL O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY2\*  
THU 19 DEC 2024 MANCHESTER O<sub>2</sub> RITZ\*\*  
MON 23 DEC 2024 NEWCASTLE O<sub>2</sub> CITY HALL\*  
SAT 25 JAN 2025 BOURNEMOUTH O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY\*  
SAT 26 APR 2025 BIRMINGHAM O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY2\*  
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Fri 25 Oct SHEFFIELD O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY  
Sat 26 Oct LIVERPOOL O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY  
Fri 08 Nov BRISTOL O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY  
Sat 23 Nov BIRMINGHAM O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY2  
Sat 30 Nov MANCHESTER O<sub>2</sub> RITZ  
Fri 20 Dec OXFORD O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY2  
Sat 21 Dec BOURNEMOUTH O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY

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NEW DATE ANNOUNCED  
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SAT 14 DEC BOURNEMOUTH O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY

**2025**  
SAT 08 MAR EDINBURGH O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY  
SAT 10 MAY LONDON O<sub>2</sub> ACADEMY BRIXTON

ELVANA.CO.UK



# First in line

Time to give the crown another polish: Queen's debut album rebuilt and extensively revisited over multiple formats that restore the originally intended running order. Plus demos, live tracks and a new stereo mix. By James McNair.

## Queen



### Queen I

EMI. CD/DL/LP/MC

**W**ORDS DENOTING regal splendour are clichéd when discussing Queen, but tasked with describing this extensive 2024 “rebuild” of the band’s 1973 debut, one must fall in. It comes in a plush purple box embossed with heraldic-looking gold script. It reminds you that Queen have the bottomless resources – and appetite, still – for exemplary archiving. In terms of re-animating the fledgling band’s unmistakable life force, it’s a royal flush. “*Queen I* is the debut album we always dreamed of bringing you,” Brian May and Roger Taylor have said, alluding to CD1’s stereo remix/forensic refurbishment of the original release’s compromised sonics.

Gone, you immediately notice, is the papery drum sound that at times made Queen’s exuberant hello feel waterlogged. Now, Taylor’s rapid-fire fills near the top of Great King Rat sound like a one-man Edinburgh Tattoo. Better yet, each little element of *Queen I*’s flamboyant, sometimes preposterous excess now has its own place in the sonic firmament, youthful, incomparable Freddie Mercury close enough to touch. Rest assured, though, that the integrity of the original recordings remains. There are no new overdubs.

Across six CDs, one vinyl LP and a lavish, 108-page book, this is *Queen I* viewed from various pertinent angles. CD2, also remixed for 2024, has versions of five of the LP’s songs taken from the famed prequel the

band demoed at De Lane Lea Studios in London in January 1972, while CDs 5 and 6 demonstrate how *Queen I* material translated live, firstly via period sessions for BBC Radio (CD5), then largely via set stand-outs from the band’s celebrated March 1974 show at London’s Rainbow Theatre (CD6).

The latter disc also brings previously unreleased rarities including a cassette-sourced performance of Jesus – or “Big J”, as Mercury calls him – from London’s Imperial College in August, 1970; ie, prior to John Deacon joining Queen on bass. Elsewhere, a rare performance of early Queen song Hangman recorded in San Diego in March ’76 is infinitely more meat-and-potatoes, its obvious debt to key early influence Free likely explaining why it was never given the studio treatment.

Perhaps CD4’s instrumental backing-track version of *Queen I* – “suitable for karaoke!” announces its sleeve – seems superfluous, a little gimmicky, but all is forgiven listening to CD3, where outtakes, studio chit-chat, guide vocals and false starts take us behind the veil. “Oh, it’s you Bulsara,

you bastard! It’s you who’s flat!” laughs May after aborting a take of Mad The Swine, here restored to the original LP’s tracklisting. It’s just ‘bantz’, though, and the bond between he and Mercury is obvious. “All right Bry-syl!” parries/patronises Freddie seconds later, and off they go again.

Subtitled *Queen I Sessions*, CD3 is a fascinating glimpse into the groundbreaking complexity of what the band was attempting. We hear Mercury count in the bossa nova sections of Doing All Right, and note that this version leads with acoustic guitar, not piano. Further in, Liar’s primal riffage and operatic, one-word refrain have monolithic power, prompting Mercury to at one point shout, “Get a load of this!” Quite.

The story behind *Queen I*’s snatched, wee-small-hours recording stint at St Anne’s Court in Soho, London still seems romantic. Picture it: the console at Trident Studios still warm from Bowie’s *Ziggy Stardust* sessions, and Queen’s four very different personalities jousting their way through the backwards guitars and daft, ‘books-with-maps’ melodrama of Mercury’s My Fairy King.

Yes, you can hear the influences, but May’s old-fireplace-and-a-sixpence-fired guitar sound and Mercury’s exotic, shapeshifting song structures trod pastures new, while Roger Taylor’s castrato-pitch vocal harmonies brought Carl Orff-like drama to the band’s upper strata. Queen had yet to rein in their virtuosity in the full service of songcraft, but they already sounded like nobody else. They were aiming higher, though, and felt the original version of *Queen I* was close, but no cigar. Between the lines, the 1973 version’s sleeve notes said as much: “[This] represents at least something of what Queen’s music has been the last three years.” The album was finished and mixed by November ’72, but a lengthy shop-around for deals meant it wasn’t released until July ’73. May recalled “feeling sick” at the loss of momentum, especially

while attending a landmark 1972 gig by a certain glam icon: “Bowie had made his mark, and we were still struggling to put a record out.”

Now, more than a half-century on, May and Taylor can put all that angst and frustration behind them, presumably with the full blessing of reclusive former bandmate, John Deacon. Nothing here is done by halves, and the care and attention lavished upon this box set is obvious. “It’s been a delight to bring it up to where we wanted it to be,” notes Roger Taylor, but revisiting *Queen I* has also left him “amazed how bloody religious some of the lyrics are.”

This is not, it’s true, the cross-dressing, pointy-breasted Freddie Mercury of the I Want To Break Free video, far less the incorrigible thrill-seeker of Don’t Stop Me Now. Instead, the Zanzibar-born singer raised in the Iranian Parsi Zoroastrian faith brought rock professional Jesus – quite conceivably influenced by Andrew Lloyd Webber’s recently-premiered Jesus Christ Superstar – and Liar’s Catholic confession-box rifferama (“Father, I have sinned”). One verse of Jesus even finds Mercury watching Christ heal a leper with the touch of his hand. It was a tad unusual, certainly, but it was all grist to the Queen singer’s mill.

Even more miraculous Freddie songs lay ahead.



“Queen had yet to rein in their virtuosity in the full service of songcraft, but they already sounded like nobody else.”



#### BACK STORY: HERE'S ONE WE MADE EARLIER

• *Queen I*’s The Night Comes Down was an outlier. It actually hailed from their first ever recording session, which took place on January 7, 1972 at Wembley’s De Lane Lea after the still-unsigned band was hired to test new studio gear. Queen got their preferred version of the song onto their John Anthony and Roy Thomas Baker-produced debut by smuggling in the De Lane Lea master in a box labelled ‘Trident Studios’. It was then mixed there, the powers that be seemingly none the wiser.

© Douglas Puddifoot, Queen Productions Ltd

#### BRIAN SPEAKS!

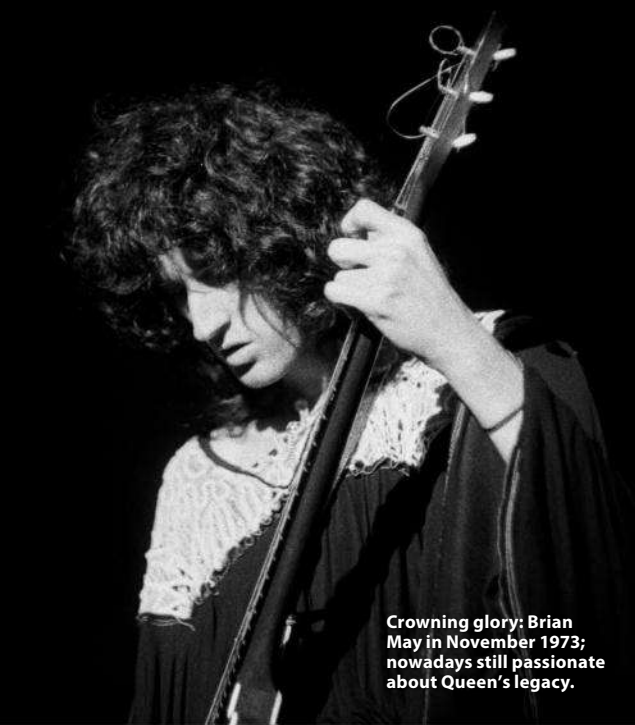
MR MAY ON FREDDIE’S RELIGION, FIXING THE PAST, AND THE FUTURE.



Royal command performance:  
Queen (clockwise from top  
left) John Deacon, Roger  
Taylor, Brian May and Freddie  
Mercury, March 1973.







**Crowning glory: Brian May in November 1973; nowadays still passionate about Queen's legacy.**

## “We were always precocious boys.”

Brian May speaks to James McNair.

### How did it feel to revamp the sound of Queen's debut 50 years on?

“It felt great! I'm not saying the original version was bad – it just wasn't what we dreamed of. Freddie and John, too, were always conscious of this thing in our past which seemed like it couldn't be fixed.”

### Roger's drum sound is a revelation. What else has been improved?

“Everything. Every instrument has been re-examined from the bottom up. The guitars were originally recorded very dry, so we've remedied that. I remember my dad saying, ‘There's no ambience, Brian. I don't feel like I'm in the room with you playing next to me.’ But we weren't in a position to lay down the law, and we felt that if we stepped out of line we would lose the opportunity altogether. Roy Thomas Baker did an excellent job under the circumstances, but he was wedged between us young hopefuls and this management company [Trident Audio Productions] who saw us as a can of beans.”

### Queen's legacy clearly still matters to you.

“Absolutely. The passion is still there. We still get angry if things aren't right, and it's still fun. We recently sold our wares to Sony, of course, so we're clearly not doing this for the money. When I pop off from this planet, I would like to know that I've done my best on anything that I ever touched.”

### Does John Deacon still have a say?

“John still has a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ say. We get messages that he's happy with what we're doing, but he doesn't want the stress of being involved creatively, and we respect that. Freddie we can't talk to, sadly. But the four of us worked as a team for so long that Roger and I have a pretty good idea what our fellow Queen members would be saying. This thing is longer than anybody's marriage.”

### Revisiting the album, Roger has said he's “amazed how bloody religious the lyrics are...”

“I was surprised, too. Freddie was obviously born a Parsi into the Zoroastrian faith, but he also attended a school in Zanzibar which I believe was a Christian school. The workings of Freddie's mind were interesting and sometimes obscure. I don't really know where his lyrics for Jesus came from any more than I know where Bohemian Rhapsody came from.”

### Any plans to apply this approach to the rest of your back catalogue?

“I certainly think *Queen II* deserves that treatment. There are many layers on that record and there wasn't really the technology to make that heard. I think we'll stop there, though. By *Sheer Heart Attack* we had everything under our fingers.”

### Are you surprised new opportunities to burnish the crown keep coming?

“I am, but you make your own opportunities, don't you? I can get very stressed if things aren't done properly and discussed the way they used to be. We were always precocious boys who'd say, ‘We want the record promoted this way, we want these images used...’, and that's how it should be. The sculptor doesn't deliver that statue and then say, ‘OK, you can chip away at it now.’”

## Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers

★★★★★

Long After Dark (Deluxe Edition)

GEFFEN/UME. CD/LP

Petty's 1982 LP, his last with producer Jimmy Iovine, gets an expanded remaster.



Something of an overlooked record in Tom Petty's canon, *Long After Dark* arrived just as

MTV started to supplant AOR as the primary avenue for bands like The Heartbreakers. The group responded in kind, broadening their palette with such new wave affectations as the synths that add a gilded nocturnal pulse to You Got Lucky. The sleek sound glosses over how the LP isn't much more than a simple, old-fashioned rock'n'roll record, a collection of songs held together by robust riffs and an unyielding sneer. That attitude is amplified on the bonus disc on this double-disc expansion which captures an unvarnished Heartbreakers through a combination of cracking live-in-the-studio performances and worthy unreleased tunes, highlighted by the aching ballad Never Be You, the punchy pop of Don't Make Me Walk The Line and the lean menace of One On One.

Stephen Thomas Erlewine

## The Saints

★★★★★

(I'm) Stranded (Deluxe Edition)

IN THE RED/UNIVERSAL. LP

Four-LP reissue of the Australians' epochal debut with extra mixes, singles and live shows.



Before New Rose or Anarchy In The UK, The Saints' September 1976 single

(I'm) Stranded was only second to the Ramones in heralding the furious velocity of 1977. Arriving shortly afterwards, the group's first album totally delivered on that promise, with 10 tracks of fast and angry rock music that – unlike the Ramones and their copyists – used tension and release to heighten the effect of the mid-tempo Story Of Love and the shredding feedback jam Nights In Venice. Everything here has been released on the 2004 CD box *All Times Through Paradise*, but the hook here is the first issue on vinyl of the 1976 white label version of the album, with extra track Untitled. Also included is another disc of contemporary singles – including the ultimate in teenage nihilism, This Perfect Day – and five songs from the unbelievably intense April 1977 Paddington Town Hall show, which is the best live footage anywhere from that

year. An essential document this, from one of the era's fiercest and greatest groups.

Jon Savage

## Aphex Twin

★★★★★

Selected Ambient Works Volume II

WARP. CD/DL/LP/MC

'Expanded Edition' of electronica classic, still too selective.



Late 1993, MOJO interviewed Richard 'Aphex Twin' James as he was locating

the music for his next album: “This weekend I thought I'd go round [to my friends' houses] and get all the tapes of tracks I didn't have,” he confided. “There were 75! And that was only friends in London.” *Selected Ambient Works Volume II*, released in March 1994, ended up having 24 tracks (25 on vinyl), so it's disappointing this 30th anniversary edition only features 27. No quibbling about the quality, of course. *SAW II* remains an authentic masterpiece, a collection that found uncanny new textures and resonances in minimalist electro-soundscaping. Nevertheless, with just two excellent tracks – th1 [evnslower] and Rhubarb Orc. 19.53 Rev – previously unavailable on physical formats (they were part of a Soundcloud dump in 2015), there's a sense here of an opportunity missed. Why give us only *Volume II* now, when *Volumes III* and *IV* could have been added to the box?

John Mulvey

## New Order

★★★★★

Brotherhood

WARNER MUSIC. CD/DL/LP

Box set of New Order's fourth album, from 1986.



Kamala Harris prefers jazz, but her husband, Doug Emhoff, was recently filmed

exiting a record shop with *Brotherhood* on vinyl. He should've waited for this 'Definitive' box set – 1-LP/2-CDs/2-DVDs; audio also available as download. New

Order's most underrated album welds machine-augmented rock thrills (*Paradise*; *Way Of Life*) to gorgeous expansiveness (*All Day Long*; *As It Is When It Was*) and the dancefloor exaltation of *Bizarre Love Triangle*. Eight tracks here are listed as previously unreleased, including longer versions. Broken Promise and All Day Long acquire new potencies as instrumentals, the latter drawing heavily on the prelude from Wagner's *Das Rheingold*. The exhilarating Stephen Hague remix of *Bizarre Love Triangle* now extends to near six minutes. The DVDs feature TV appearances and two concerts, including Echo & The Bunnymen's Ian McCulloch crooning memorably on Ceremony at Manchester's Festival Of The Tenth Summer.

Roy Wilkinson

## Byard Lancaster

★★★★★

The Complete Palm Recordings 1973-1974

SOUFFLE CONTINU. DL/LP

Avant-garde jazz saxophonist/flautist's fertile early-'70s period in deluxe 7-LP box set.



A Berkeley graduate who apprenticed in Sunny Murray's '60s free jazz quintet, Byard

Lancaster's leader game took flight in the early '70s under pianist/producer Jef Gilson's guardianship. The Philadelphia repaid his faith with a quartet of stand-alone outings that showed a 360-degree picture of his talents – his distinct, keening tone and Eric Dolphy-like flute to the fore on the trio-recorded *Us*, then in funky unison with trumpeter Clint Jackson across *Mother Africa*'s two long conga-enhanced movements. While *Funny Funky Rib Crib* explored floor-shaking Afro-funk with nuance and wit, it's *Exactement* where the risk-taking is unbound, whether mixing alto and soprano saxes on the mournful/erosive C. Marianne Alicia or processing himself via Octavoice on Dr Oliver W Lancaster. Beautifully curated, all four albums are also available as stand-alone CDs.

Andy Cowan



**Brotherhood beyond: New Order's fourth LP gets the 'definitive' treatment.**

© Queen Productions Ltd



The life of Bryan Ferry's *Retrospective* reminds us what lies beneath the surface perfection.



**Various**

★★★★★

The Albarika Story  
ACID JAZZ. CD/DL/LP

Top-drawer sampler of 1970s Benin Afro-funk imprint.



Named with the Arabic word for "divine blessing", Albarika Store

was a record shop opened in the mid-'60s in Porto-Novo, Benin, by one Seidou Adissa, stocking the indigenous waxings assimilating US soul and Cuban rhythms which had proliferated, like ska in Jamaica, in the wake of '60s independence from colonial rule. By the early '70s, Adissa's label was bankrolling generously staffed combos like Orchestre Poly-Rythmo de Cotonou to buy sharp suits, and to record in Lagos's hi-tech EMI studios, where local Nigerian Afrobeat inevitably rubbed off on their sound. Consequently, his 100-plus LP releases and 250 singles were exuberant, diverse and extraordinarily high-fidelity for an indie. Here, Acid Jazz collect stand-outs from their four-year Albarika Store reissue programme (Les Sympathics' joyful Yoruba-pop chant Ego-Ibo), and some rare 45s (Orchestre Anassoua-Jazz De Parakou's hypnotically woven funk, Bakassine Gabou) – a divine blessing, indeed, as surviving originals fetch a packet.

Andrew Perry



**Horace Martin**

★★★★★

You've Changed

ARABUSTA. CD/DL/LP

Scarce mid-'80s digi-reggae nugget.

Horace Martin began his career in the late 1970s after hanging out in studios with Gregory Isaacs and Alton Ellis. Early singles for Prince Huntley, Witty Henry and Dentlock led to overseas performances and after a debut LP for Blackbeard, Martin cut *You've Changed* at Channel One for aspiring producer Garfield Brown, with Huntley handling arrangements. Atop the minimal backing of bassist Danny Axeman and drummer Ranganat, Mallory Williams adds a futuristic synthesizer edge and Soljje Hamilton brings a dubwise element to the mixdown, as heard most notably on War (an update on the Stalag riddim) and on the cautionary Gambling Man; The

Neil Kirk

**Bryan Ferry**

★★★★★

Retrospective: Selected Recordings 1973-2023

BMG. CD/DL/LP

81-track celebration of the former Roxy frontman's 50-year solo career, plus outtakes CD.

THERE'S ALWAYS been something of Jeremy Brett's Sherlock Holmes about Bryan Ferry; the meticulous

technique, the suave style, and those rare moments where we glimpse the flawed individual behind the performance. Listening to this 5-CD journey through Ferry's past, from '70s cover-artist alchemist, to '80s ambient ghost and the arch '20s jazz trickster of The Bryan Ferry Orchestra, it's easy to be dazzled by the smooth, immaculate surfaces. Thankfully, the collection's fifth CD, a selection of recent experiments and old outtakes, shakes us out of our



reverie. From a brilliantly tense 1977 cover of the Detroit Emeralds' 1972 disco hit *Feel The Need*, to a Velvets-drone re-murking of Dylan's *She Belongs To Me* and his recent doomy techno-goth NIN collaboration *Star*, these rough, raw and unfinished gems remind us that Ferry's art was never just about surface perfection but always in what lies beneath.

Andrew Male

Original Fire Fire transforms Calypso Rose's soca anthem into dancehall and the title track is a humorous take on a stale relationship. Arabusta's quality reissue includes lyrics, rare photos and the whole backstory, the limited-edition blue vinyl holding the greatest appeal.

David Katz

**Double Exposure**

★★★★★

My Love Is Free

SOULMUSIC/THE SECOND DISC. CD

Excellent 4-CD box containing three Salsoul albums plus bonus remixes.



Double Exposure took the Philly soul baton during the second half of the 1970s with a trio of LPs recorded for Salsoul; 1976's *Ten Percent*, 1978's *Fourplay* and 1979's *Locker Room*, all three featuring lush male tenor voices, rooted in R&B – they were previously the United Image signed to Stax – but backed by four-to-the-floor drums, thumping bass and hooky strings, forward-looking to disco. The quartet are best known for the Walter Gibbons 12-inch remix of their debut album's title track – it's often cited as the first 12-inch commercial release. It isn't, although it was one of the earliest. A better starting point is their outlandish cover of The Four Tops' *Baby I Need Your Loving* – in their hands, a joyful

call for sexual, spiritual unity and abandonment on the dancefloor.

Lois Wilson

**The Doug Carn Trio**

★★★

The Doug Carn Trio

REAL GONE. LP

Ultra-rare late-'60s jazz record makes a Lazarus-like comeback.



Before his spiritually inclined recordings for Black Jazz Records in the early '70s, this Florida-born keyboard wizard cut his debut album in 1969 leading an organ trio for Herman Lubinsky's Savoy label. The LP was quickly deleted and forgotten but now commands three-figure prices on the secondhand market. Copies are so rare that for this first reissue, the cover had to be recreated from photos of the original artwork. Thankfully, the master tape survived and is now remastered, allowing us to hear the first chapter of Carn's career in vivid detail. Sounding more like Larry Young than Jimmy Smith, Carn's forte is succulent, organ-led grooves, which range from exploratory originals such as the meditative *Yna Yna's Delight*, which hints at his later work for Black Jazz, to standards like *My One And Only Love*, distinguished by Don Hales's

dexterous guitar. A solid soul-jazz offering.

Charles Waring

**Yara Asmar**

★★★★★

Home Recordings 2018-2021/Synth Waltzes & Accordion Laments

HIVE MIND. DL/LP

Double vinyl reissue of the young Lebanese puppeteer, video artist and musician's earliest recordings.



It's testament to the power and beauty of this twenty-something's instrumental music that her first two cassette-only releases are already being given the deluxe vinyl treatment a year or so on from initial release. Recorded at home on cassettes and mobile phone, utilising percussion, piano, synths, tin toys, glockenspiel and her grandmother's old Hohner Marchesa accordion, and interspersed with field recordings of hymns sung in Lebanon churches, all of which Asmar reworks into miniature waltzes, *Home Recordings* is a hauntingly beautiful collection of intimate ambient soundscapes that enchant with their celestial sorcery. Blending the mournful wheeze of her grandmother's accordion with delicate New Age synth and her grandfather's reel-to-reel recordings of birdsong, 2023's *Synth Waltzes...* is more elegiac

but no less beautiful, a slow gentle drift into abstract memory and psychedelic inner space.

Andrew Male

**Manoshi Chitra Neogy**

★★★★★

Wood Orchid

MODERN HARMONIC. CD/DL

First CD release of Indian poet/filmmaker's 'lost' second LP, recorded in Prague in the early '00s.



After making a counterculture splash with 1968's *The Perfumed Garden*, an erotically-charged reading of a 15th-century sex manual, Chitra Neogy pursued careers as actor, academic and filmmaker. A meeting with Petr Filák in New Mexico ultimately returned her to the studio, the musician's stripped-back mix of tabla with oud, gumbri, shalm, guitar and cello retaining her debut's discrete sonic blueprint. However, only *Live In Love* ("I touch my body/I feel the glory") sounds like a throwback, with more spiritual concerns dominating *Ganesha* and *Broken Bird's* wordplay, while faint echoes of Nico peek through *I Walked And Walked's* slow cello sprawl. Throughout, Neogy's mystical wanderings, delivered in a resonant poetic tone not a million miles from Moor Mother, weave their meditative magic.

Andy Cowan





Back in the USA: The Beatles in 1964 – the unbeatable sound of conquest.

# Love me dudes

A vinyl box set of The Beatles' first six American studio LPs in mono. By David Fricke.

## The Beatles



1964 US Albums In Mono

APPLE CORPS LTD/UMR. LP

AMERICA AND BRITAIN are two nations separated by salt water, a common language (per George Bernard Shaw) and different Beatlemanias. The UK phenomenon in 1963 remains the gold standard for pop hysteria, a massive rush of love at the speed of light detonated by a handful of singles and an album, *Please Please Me*, almost half of which was covers from the club sets.

The former colonies were late to the party – EMI's Yankee arm, Capitol Records, spent that year exercising its right of first refusal – but we caught up fast. And this deluxe, vinyl set of The Beatles' first six American studio LPs from mono-master tapes in period sleeves (also available separately) – is hardly the full chaos. Add the cash-ins by '63 licensee Vee-Jay plus the sudden worth of the 1961 Hamburg sessions, and nearly two dozen US albums and 45s were issued over 1964. Capitol's trade pitch for *The Beatles' Story*, a two-LP audio documentary released that November and a bonus in the box, put it bluntly: "The greatest profit package in history."

But this helter skelter has a story of its own, a weirdly reordered, uniquely illuminating arc of breakthrough at once belying and beholden to Capitol's mercenary disregard for the Parlophone canon (shortened LPs to save on publishing royalties; made-up platters sequenced with the logic of a roulette wheel). If *Please Please Me* is the first, giant step of a killer bar band led by two emerging-virtuoso composers, Capitol's debut, *Meet The Beatles!*, is that genius unleashed with visceral finesse: nearly all John Lennon-Paul McCartney originals, largely drawn from the British jump forward, late-'63's *With The Beatles*. In this telling, America doesn't stand a chance – the shotgun entrance of I Want To Hold Your Hand and I Saw Her Standing There; the hard Liverpool stares in Robert Freeman's iconic Mod-noir cover photo – and George Harrison is a writer from the start (Don't Bother Me).

In his 2007 book, *The Beatles' Second Album*, Dave Marsh makes a convincing case for that April '64 grab bag of *With...* remnants and B-sides as "an ungainly, fraudulent mess" capturing "the greatest rock'n'roll band the world has ever seen... with maximum brute force." Here are the Fabs of Cavern and Star-Club lore, heavy on the Detroit soul – the hip rescue of Devil In Her Heart, then a '62 obscurity by



The Donays; Lennon and Harrison's rare lead-vocal exchange in *The Miracles' You Really Got A Hold On Me*. McCartney owns the Little Richard bonfire Long Tally Sally (not yet out in the UK) and She Loves You, by then old news in Britain, closes the record like radiant, breaking news. In short, pure party from a band and year like no other.

*Beatles '65* – released in December 1964 and based on the fourth UK LP, *Beatles For Sale* –

comes close, a half-hour of robust roots (Chuck Berry, Carl Perkins) and modernism (the plaintive sheen of No Reply; the feedback intro to I Feel Fine). As for the rest, there's not much reason now to love the truncated US edition of *A Hard Day's Night* except nostalgia. *Something New* is plenty of fun but barely coherent: more covers, leftovers from the film and the German-language version of I Want To Hold Your Hand. And *The Early Beatles*, actually a '65 release, is arguably the first Beatles reissue, Capitol's round-up of lingering Vee-Jay tracks.

The inevitable irony is that the first-class packaging and mono fidelity makes this serial potpourri feel new and thrilling again – while none of it accurately reflects The Beatles' creative intent and daily momentum. Yet no matter how you slice it, this is the historic, unbeatable sound of conquest. Britain has its gospel. This is ours.



## D.R. Hooker

★★★★★

The Truth

NUMERO GROUP, DL/LP

**Evangelical 1972 private-press oddity gets a bright-sounding new reissue.**



Depending on which version of the story you read, Donald Hooker was either a

Connecticut businessman who found God or an acid-fried hippy who reinvented himself as a 'born again' evangelical. Either way, in 1972 at Dynamic Recording Studios, in New Haven, Hooker, along with a group of local Connecticut musicians laid down these 10 tracks of semi-autobiographical Christian psych. Drawing heavily from the paranoid Vegas art-rock of The Doors' *The Soft Parade*, but imbued with apostolic lyrical fervour, *The Truth* exists as more than mere outsider-art oddity, thanks to the tightness of Hooker's ragtag pick-up band and the effects-laden engineering skills of former doo wop producer Tom Sokira. Standouts include apocalyptic surf-rock freak-out *The Sea* and harmonic doom-funk reprimand *Forge Your Own Chains*, but there's nothing here that gets by on mere comic novelty and, at its best, it's enough to have you singing to the heavens.

Andrew Male



## Ian Hunter

★★★★★

Short Back N' Sides

CHRYSLIS, CD/LP

**1981's Clash-produced fifth solo album. Includes reggae.**

By 1979, it was clear that Ian Hunter's solo career would never eclipse Mott The Hoople. *You're Never Alone With A Schizophrenic* (also reissued, but only on vinyl) broke the US Top 40, but was curiously anaemic. Two years later, *Short Back N' Sides* was co-produced by Mick Jones and featured Clash team-mate Topper Headon on drums in a rare moment of the new guard embracing the old. Long-term collaborator Mick Ronson co-produced, Todd Rundgren dropped in on *I Need Your Love* and the results were Hunter's most inspired effort, incorporating the elegiac (rather than the pubby) side of Mott on Old Records *Never Die* and the standout *Central Park N' West*. He also veered into Clash-style reggae on *Theatre Of The Absurd* and

## Johnnie Taylor

★★★★★

One Step From The Blues

STAX, CD/DL/LP

**New compilation reveals legendary soul man's bluesier side.**

WITH HIS hoarse-throated singing style that sounded like he'd gargled with razor blades, church-reared Johnnie Taylor followed his mentor Sam Cooke from the gospel into the secular world. Taylor sang alongside Cooke in *The Highway QC's* and later replaced him in *The Soul Stirrers*. After a stint at Cooke's SAR label in the early '60s, Taylor joined Stax where he quickly filled the void left by Otis Redding's death. This new retrospective focuses on his blues-tinged Stax repertoire, finding him ruminating on affairs of the heart. The killer track is *Cheaper To Keep Her*, an astute observation about the value of marital compromise. He also muses on forbidden love (*Steal Away*), wrong decisions (*Woman Across The River*), and infidelity (*I'd Rather Drink Muddy Water*). Capturing Taylor before the disco inferno consumed him, this is a fine tribute to the man dubbed 'The Philosopher of Soul'.

Charles Waring



The Philosopher's soul: Johnnie Taylor gets the blues, 1967.

experimentalism on *Noises*. An extra disc/album of mixes, demos and cast-offs is almost identical to the 1995 reissue.

John Aizlewood

buffed until they sparkle like new sports cars, it is humanising to hear Lemmy wrestle with age during the lurching *I Don't Believe A Word* and shout himself out of breath during the semi-symphonic *God Was Never On Your Side*. Want to hear Motörhead be crass and churlish, ribald and righteous? They never stopped.

Grayson Haver Currin

## Motörhead

★★★★★

We Take No Prisoners (The Singles 1995–2006)

BMG, CD/DL/LP

**Who says old rockers need new tricks to be convincing?**

Motörhead were a band for 40 years, from Lemmy's unceremonious Hawkwind exit in 1975 until his death in 2015, a lifetime of hard living and relentless touring crammed into that span. But when most people mention Motörhead, they're referencing a classic six-record run that ended in the early '80s, irascible LPs that helped fling open heavy metal's ironclad gates. Motörhead, though, actually pummelled on to the bitter end, as this collector's compendium of choice cuts from 1995–2006 loudly reaffirms. In this moment of tech-assisted elder superstars, where voices get



## The Seeds

★★★★★

Future

BIG BEAT, LP

**Superb vinyl deluxe edition of 1967 third album with second disc of outtakes.**



The Seeds went flower power with *Future*, their third album, influenced not by *Sgt. Pepper* as is often cited – recorded before that was issued – but more likely *Love's Da Capo*, with Sky Saxon recruiting that group's Tjay Cantrelli to play on it. The album was Saxon's concept, its 11 songs augmented with woodwind, tabla, tuba and a full string section, with only one track, *Out Of The Question*, drawing on their previous *Pushin' Too Hard/No Escape* template. The rest capture a more innocent, child-like Saxon preoccupied with fantasy, fairy tale and the chimerical on standouts *March Of The Flower Children* and *Flower Lady & Her Assistant*, both utterly transfixing. The bonus cuts, meanwhile, reveal

the core group – Daryl Hooper, Jan Savage, Rick Andridge – upholding their punk aesthetic before overdubs.

Lois Wilson

## The Oscar Peterson Trio With Herb Ellis

★★★★★

Hello Herbie

MPS, CD/DL/LP

**A joint effort by two jazz masters.**



Along with Art Tatum, Bud Powell and Phineas Newborn, few jazz pianists possessed the technical facility of Oscar Peterson. The Canadian virtuoso's right and left hands often played in counterpoint or could also simply double the right and left's lines in harmony and lightning speed. Guitarist Herb Ellis was equally superlative, and joined by Sam Jones on bass and Bob Durham on drums, this 1969 collab was truly a super session. Primarily a blues album, *Naptown Blues* and *Blues For H.G.* are perfect examples: down and dirty roadhouse. *Seven Come Eleven* is a standard popularised by jazz guitar pioneer Charlie Christian and highlights Ellis's string prowess in Christian's finest tradition. There are moments throughout when both leaders are wailing in tandem, creating a hip cacophony, rarely equalled by others.

Michael Simmons

## King Crimson

★★★★★

Red: 50th Anniversary Edition

PANEGYRIC, CD

**New mixes and bootlegs round out a four-disc set.**

It's always worth celebrating an album as monumental as *Red*. Here was a band emerging from prog to create a new form of cerebral heavy rock that would have a huge influence on the more thoughtful players of grunge and metal; *Red* still sounds modern today. This edition features the glossy surround sound mixes from Steven Wilson that mark such anniversaries. Some remixes by David Singleton offer a few insights into old favourites. However, anyone hoping for revelatory outtakes will be disappointed and no one is going to listen to *Starless: Percussion Overdubs* more than once. The live album *USA* appears in primed-up form, so too some foggy 1974 bootlegs that didn't make the *Road To Red* box set. Robert Fripp always says that no one is forcing you to buy, but sometimes you fear for completists.

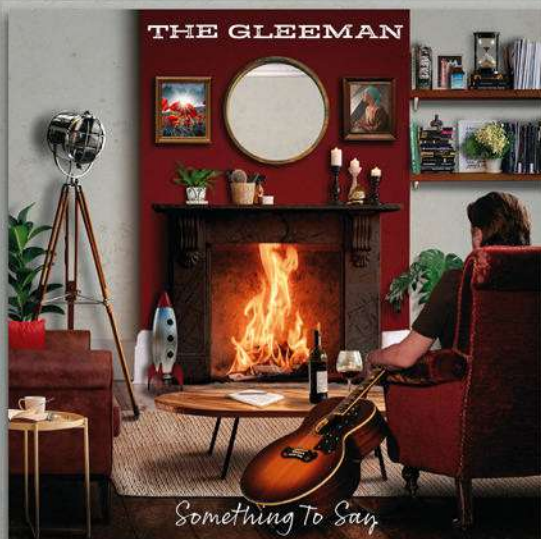
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The boys are back...: Thin Lizzy (from left) Brian Robertson, Phil Lynott and Scott Gorham, live and dangerous at Colston Hall, Bristol, October 22, '76.



## Thin Lizzy

★★★★★  
1976

UMR. CD/LP

**Lizzy's pivotal year, heard across five CDs of remixes, demos, outtakes and live tracks.**

REMARKABLY, MORE Lizzy gold surfaces. This time it's from 1976, year of both *Jailbreak* and *Johnny The*

*Fox*, the best studio LPs featuring both Scott Gorham and Brian Robertson. *Jailbreak's* piano-led outtake Brian's Number finds the truculent Gorham in unusually tender mode, while alt. take 2 of Don't Believe A Word drips with confessional danger. May 1976 had seen Phil Lynott's hepatitis nix a US tour that would have cemented The Boys Are Back In Town's hit single status, but he wrote parts of *Johnny*

*The Fox* in his hospital bed, later finessing songs about old flames of Robertson and Gorham (*Borderline*; *Sweet Marie*). Fiery radio sessions and seedling demos bring context, while sleeve notes by MOJO's Mark Blake shed light. Neat that drummer Brian Downey cites The Meters/The O'Jays as inspirations for Johnny The Fox Meets Jimmy The Weed.

James McNair



## Spoon

★★★★★

*They Want My Soul* (Deluxe More Soul Edition)

MATADOR. CD/DL/LP

**The Texans emerged from a hiatus, re-energised and, turns out, vulnerable.**

The secret to Spoon has long been their ability to swagger through songs of self-doubt or sadness, to strut like rock stars in moments that would derail mere mortals. Think of Britt Daniel's aplomb as a singer, Jim Eno's propulsive drums, or the way the guitars always seem to bare barbed teeth. The moment leading to 2014's *They Want My Soul* must have been rife with questions, since the exhausted band had just taken a few years apart. The sound didn't show it. The walloping rhythm of *Rent I Pay*, the cascading keys of *Outlier*, the sparkling essence of the title track: this was full Spoon radiance. This generous tenth-anniversary edition, though, finds the soft spot beneath, especially on an exquisite piano version of *Inside Out* that summons *After The Gold Rush* and a version of *Rent I Pay* that feels like The Beatles on a budget. Here's the softness inside one of the United States' best rock bands.

Grayson Haver Currin

## Ryuichi Sakamoto

★★★★★

*Coda*

WEWANTSOUNDS. CD/LP

**Long-awaited first UK release for Yellow Magic Orchestra mainstay's solo piano landmark.**

Sakamoto's 14-track piano-only version of his hugely influential soundtrack for the sado-masochistic David Bowie buddy movie *Merry Christmas, Mr. Lawrence* was originally released under the title *Avec Piano* in a luxurious cassette book format to a Japanese public hungry for Walkman fodder in 1983. More than 40 years on, even ears potentially jaded by intervening decades of Gonzales and Nils Frahm will struggle to avoid acknowledging how great this playful mid-Pacific take on the Western classical tradition sounds on vinyl. "Asian music heavily influenced Debussy, and Debussy heavily

influenced me" noted Sakamoto wryly, and the twist in *Coda's* tail is two bonus tracks from 1981 which throw the solo piano fish firmly back into the limpid pool of 1980s electronica.

Ben Thompson

## Steve Kilbey

★★★★★

*Bespoke Wheels And Winged Heels*

EASY ACTION. CD/DL/LP

**Solo career-spanning compendium of The Church's mainman.**



For his seventieth birthday, Church frontman Steve Kilbey decided

it was finally time to revisit his extensive solo career. Whittling down that career – Kilbey estimates he's released around 100 LPs, although it gets a bit hazy during his worst drug years – is no easy task, but *Bespoke Wheels...* rounds out to 20 tracks stretching from 1986 debut solo LP *Unearthed*, a brace from his mid-'90s Jack Frost collaboration with the late-Go-Between Grant McLennan (*Aviatrix* and the sublime *Providence*), and up to his Kilbey Kennedy collaboration with fellow Australian Martin Kennedy from last year. Down the decades Kilbey has maintained a semi-mystical, often impenetrable free-association approach to lyric writing, and no matter whether solo or with

others, his music retains a lustre that envelops the listener in his dreamlike bubble, eloquently captured on this anthology.

Andy Fye

## Johnny Marr + The Healers

★★★★★

*Boomslang (Deluxe)*

BMG. CD/DL/LP

**Marr belatedly goes Britrock, ably abetted by Zak Starkey and Kula Shaker bassist Alonza Bevan.**



U2 dubbed them 'nurdles', XTC 'ernies', and in post-punk Britain such

bendy, bluesy guitar licks – for it was they – were all but outlawed. So it was ironic that, having seemingly obviated nurdles for good with his breathtakingly original picking in The Smiths, Johnny Marr should succumb to them with a vengeance in 2003. It's obvious why: having diverted into EDM with *Electronic*, Marr was a bystander to rambunctious '90s nurdling by Oasis, The Stones Roses, The Charlatans et al, and here was finally a chance to show a latent Manc nurdle-master at work. Hypnotic riffage over punchy beats on the likes of *The Last Ride* and *Long Gone* fail to break new ground, however, and it's the gentler numbers, such as *Down On The Corner* and *Another Day*, that far better represent Marr's

creative gifts. A touching cover of Dylan's *Don't Think Twice, It's All Right* is among seven extras.

Pat Gilbert

## Phil Manzanera

★★★★★

*50 Years Of Music*

UNIVERSAL. CD

**Roxy Music mainstay's 10 solo albums, plus one rarities collection. Full of overlooked gems.**



At first glance, since 1975's *Diamond Head*, Phil Manzanera's solo career has

done little more than bobble along. Releases have been intermittent, charts have been untroubled and his reluctance to sing has helped keep him invisible. Yet, taken as an enormous, beautifully presented slab where extra tracks abound, it's a revelation. Manzanera's church is broad, whether he's channelling punk on *Remote Control*, trying his hand at a sea shanty on *Big Day* or collaborating with out-there percussionist Charles Hayward of *This Heat* on *After Magritte*. He embraced his Latin American roots, especially on 1999's *Vozero* album, where his vocals suggested there wasn't really a singing issue at all. By the most recent offering here, his 2015 guitarist's travelogue *The Sound Of Blue*, Manzanera is the craftsman he always was,

with added warmth and wisdom.

John Aizlewood

## Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young

★★★★★

*Live At The Fillmore East, 1969*

RHINO. CD/LP

**Previously unheard 8-track recording of September 20, 1969 concert.**



The story is in the title of this double live LP: the date a mere month and two days since they played Woodstock, which was only their second show. It was an almost new band that played two sets that night at the Fillmore East in New York. Yes the crowd knew CSN and Neil Young, but not CSNY; while touring they were still writing songs for their 1970 debut *Déjà Vu*. Two of those songs are in the set: *Stills' 4+20* and *Nash's Our House*, a lovely, intimate performance, alone at the organ, singing to Joni Mitchell in the audience. The rest are now-classics from *CSN* or solo records, including an epic *Down By The River*. Some of the best moments, though, are when you can get past their familiarity and hear the newness of the individual voices creating the harmonies – and also hear how much they seem to enjoy and inspire each other.

Sylvie Simmons



Getting the Fear: '70s-vintage John Cale, an unreliable narrator but prolific creator of greatness, notably (inset, right) 1973's *Paris 1919*.



FILE UNDER...

# Unsettle down

Left to his own devices, John Cale took a while to figure out where he lived. By Jim Irvin.

**S**POOKED AS a child by The Gift, John Cale's claustrophobic tale of a guy posting himself to a lover, with (spoiler!) fatal results, on *White Light/White Heat*, your correspondent developed an early wariness towards The Velvet Underground and Cale's voice. Now I enjoy its chewy languor, rolling like Welsh hills, but for a surprisingly long time I found it unsettling, and gave his 1970s records the swerve while being aware that, stylistically, it was a restless decade for him. Now, a chance to fix the gap in my knowledge.

I enjoyed recent exposure to flawed but addictive 1970 solo debut, *Vintage Violence*, but I knew its country-rock quirkiness dissatisfied Cale, so he'd flipped into avant-garde territory, collaborating with composer Terry Riley on 1971's *Church Of Anthrax*, an album that haunted record libraries in my youth. But I didn't know quickly-written-and-recorded follow-up *The Academy In Peril* (Domino) ★★★, an equally challenging jumble of classical sketches – the piano solos of Brahms and the title track, bristling with clanging chord clusters, the string quartet of Legs Larry At Television Centre, starring former Bonzo, Legs Larry Smith, as a camp TV director (“Watch the cello, love. Mind yer boom!”) – and rock instrumentals, *The Philosopher*, featuring Ronnie Wood, the brief *Days Of Steam* and the bizarre *King Harry*, crafted

around marimba, viola and heavy whispering. It's a composer's showcase, recorded for Reprise while Cale worked in A&R for Warner Brothers, in the age when artistic freedom, and cocaine, were all the rage and there was enough cash to pay for the Royal Philharmonic on a whim. Fascinating, eccentric, hardly a crowd-pleaser.

Much easier going, 1973's engaging *Paris 1919* (Domino) ★★★★★, a concise 31-minute suite, produced with the great Chris Thomas, of nine off-kilter songs, like Hanky Panky Nohow with its repeated line about “elephants that sing to keep the cows that agriculture won't allow”. There's a reggae song called Graham Greene, sung in a broad Welsh accent, that mentions Enoch Powell. The closing *Antarctica Starts Here* is an opaque poem, possibly about a woman's twilight years, that comes out of nowhere and goes nowhere, but is strangely affecting. Oh, and there's a glam-rock stomp called *Macbeth*. It's like random pages stitching themselves together and posing as history, Cale an unreliable narrator reading aloud from a deranged commonplace book. Little Feat and Wilton Felder are among the cast. Though brevity is one of its strengths, it now

comes in expanded CD & 2-LP editions, adding five alternative mixes, outtake *I Must Not Sniff Cocaine*, plus striking new recording, *Fever Dream 2024: You're A Ghost*.

Moving to Island, Cale recalibrated, possibly in response to the recent successes of Lou Reed's *Transformer* and Roxy Music. Indeed, the excellent *Fear* ★★★★★ (Proper/UMR), co-produced with Eno and Phil Manzanera, includes *Gun*, sounding like a cousin to Roxy's *The Bogus Man*, while *Fear Is A Man's Best Friend* would be considered a stone classic if Lou had cut it. A great album. Just five months later came *Slow Dazzle* ★★★★★ (Proper/UMR), yet another bravura collection, with its splendidly queasy *Heartbreak Hotel*, the breezy tribute to Brian, Mr Wilson (“Wales is not like California in any way”), and *The Jeweller*, a spoken-word finale unnervingly like *The Gift*.

Within six months Cale had produced Patti Smith's *Horses* and his own follow-up *Helen Of Troy* ★★★ (Proper/UMR), which he complained was unfinished, but includes such peaks as the rousing first version of *I Keep A Close Watch* (drums Phil Collins), his cover of Jonathan Richman's *Pablo Picasso* and the prowling *Sudden Death* with its pre-echoes of post-punk. This edition restores the original 1975 tracklisting.

In one year, three albums as rewarding as Bowie's 'Berlin' trilogy. Excuse me while I make up for lost time...



“The Academy In Peril is fascinating, eccentric, hardly a crowd-pleaser.”

Ed Thrasher



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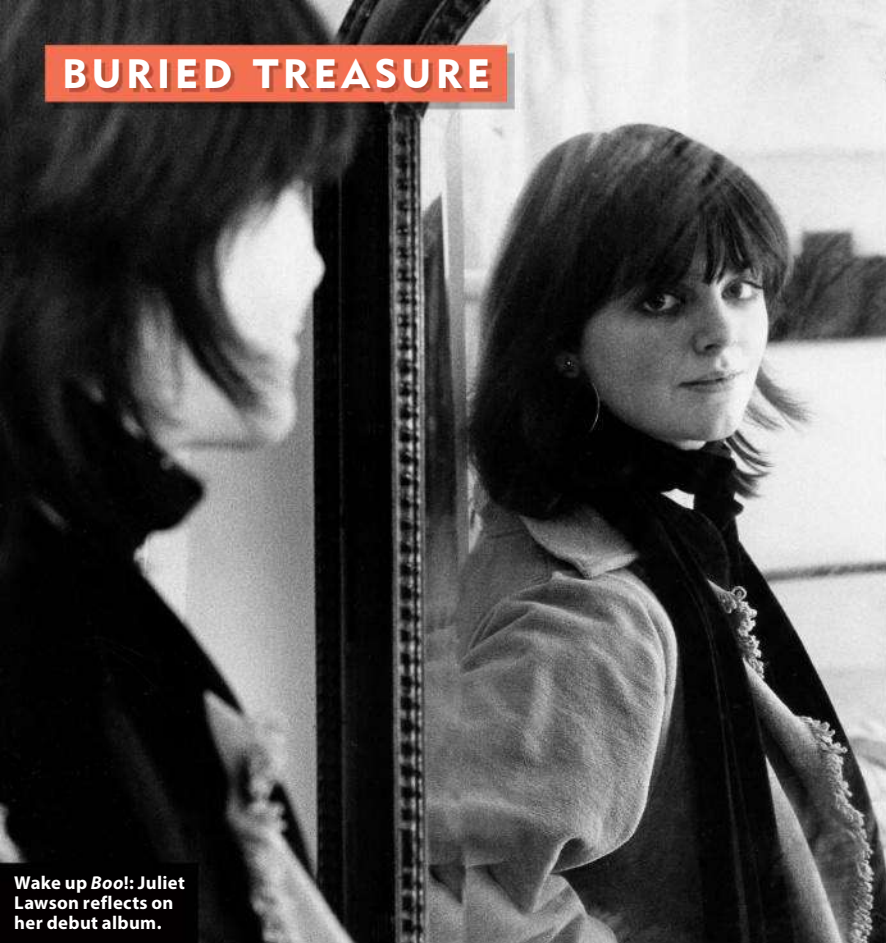
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Wake up Boo!: Juliet Lawson reflects on her debut album.

CREDITS

**Tracks:** Dear Fool/Igloo/Nothing New/I Won't Get My Feet Wet Again/Who Is India?/Let Me Not Put You Down/Only A Week Away/Playing Is No Song/You're So Right, September/The Weeds In The Yard/Rolling Back/Frog In The Jam

**Personnel:** Juliet Lawson (vocals, piano, acoustic guitar, arrangements), Iain Blair (acoustic guitar, electric guitar, arrangements), Bias Boshell (bass, keyboards), Barry De Souza (drums), Lol Coxhill (saxophone), Casey Synge, Dari Lalou, Karen Friedman, Miguel Barradas (backing vocals), Luis Jardine (percussion), Russel Valdez (steel drums), The Hafner String Quartet (strings), Tony Cox (string arrangements)

**Producer:** David Costa, John Hudson (engineer)

**Released:** 1973

**Recorded:** Mayfair Studios, London

**Current availability:** Soul Jazz reissue

troubled piano, with a detour into quotes from King Lear hinting at the singer's secret desire to act. Also curious is Who Is India?, with solo guitar and voice seemingly recorded outdoors declaring, "I wish I could order time" before unbridled howling begins. "I've worked on my voice a lot over the years," says the singer, "but not in those days. I wrote sometimes out of my range, maybe."

Other songs are more direct. The reflective, sweetly pained Rolling Back, with its threadbare talk of hearing the news today and things happening in Lancashire, plus notions of sunny Europe, approximates a meeting of A Day In The Life and Joni's California. Its elegance leavened by Coxhill's antic reeds, The Weeds In The Yard also reflects on time, as the self-harmonising singer wonders, "maybe I owe you a whole lot of something I just haven't got."

"There's something very intuitive and instinctive about the writing," says the singer. "There's no narrative, it's just a whole lot of poems strung together. Somebody likened it to an abstract painting — something you don't have to explain."

She recalls it being released in February '73, coinciding with a gig in Aberdeen, but despite some approving reviews, *Boo* failed to take flight. "I would have liked more recognition," she says, "but I really never thought I belonged, at all. Frog In The Jam is about being a misfit, certainly in the music business. I was too sensitive to what people said... and now, I couldn't give a monkey's!"

Coincidentally, there was a cartoon of a monkey on *Boo*'s cover, though Lawson cannot recall its significance. A second album, which a 1974 issue of Record Mirror named as *Tomfoolery*, went unreleased (Lawson calls it, "a calamity, and how not to make an album").

Busy with life thereafter, she kept on writing, sometimes recording at north London's Pathway studios. Now a painter, she continues to make music.

This month *Boo* is available on a new release on the Soul Jazz label, with two songs added from the Island demo sessions. One, Rincón Da Luna, concerns an Argentine cattle ranch owned by the Bovril company before it was sold in 1971. "Bovril was our family business," she says. "My great-great grandfather was a food scientist in Edinburgh in the 1860s and he invented it for the soldiers in the Boer War."

As for *Boo*, she's pleased it's getting a polish. "It's like listening to a kid sister or a grandchild and I love it unashamedly," she says. "I don't think it's like anything. That always gets my vote."

As told to Ian Harrison

*Boo! The Early Recordings 1971-73* is released on Soul Jazz on October 25. See [www.julietlawson.com](http://www.julietlawson.com) for more information.

# Surprise, Surprise

This month's rediscovered jewel: an abstract painting in folk-rock clothing.

## Juliet Lawson

### Boo

SOUVENIR, 1973

IN 1971, London-born singer-songwriter Juliet Lawson was looking at a five-album deal with Island Records. "I did a wonderful session one afternoon with Paul Samwell-Smith, the first time I'd ever been into a studio," she says today. "Then he left to produce a Carly Simon album in America, and it all fell through..."

Had the Island deal come off, and put her in the company of John and Beverley Martyn, Nick Drake and Fairport Convention, it's likely Lawson's debut album *Boo* would have found itself a celebrated strand in that storied, folk-informed moment of British music. Instead, it sank without trace.

In her early twenties, Lawson says she had only the vaguest notions of making it in music. Having listened to Broadway musicals as a kid, she was fully turned onto music by The Beatles aged 13: her first guitar arrived when she was 15, and her own songs followed. The influence of US singer-songwriters — Carole King, Leonard Cohen and Joni Mitchell among them — completed the picture, as did doomed American-in-Europe Scott Walker. "I used to cry listening to those early Scott Walker albums," she says. "I like orchestras and the emotion that can produce. I was flirting with, I suppose, somewhere between The Beatles and Scott Walker."

With the assistance of her manager and later husband Simon Crocker, she signed with

EMI subsidiary Sovereign and went into Mayfair Studios on South Molton Street in early 1972, with producer and ex-Trees guitarist David Costa. She recalls writing five of the songs in a weekend on a Tascam reel-to-reel, and that "the album went very quickly too, just two or three weeks probably. David Costa had quite a clear-cut vision for it, but nothing was changed in my songs. I enjoyed it but I was intimidated. I remember a feeling like I was fitting in with everybody else, being called in at the last minute to do the vocals, which did jar with me a bit. I didn't really have any input about mixing or anything like that, but it was such a live album that sort of took care of itself."

Also working fast were string arranger Tony Cox and backing vocalists Thunderthighs, who famously furnished the doo-de-dos on Lou Reed's Walk On The Wild Side. Adding saxophone was Lol Coxhill, who was briefly rendered mute by some rogue razor blades lodged in his instrument.

There is little muted about *Boo*, though. Blending the British folk rock and West Coast styles of its era, it's the agreeably wayward sound of a young writer unrestrained by over-thinking, prone to moody introspection and equally at ease with melodious accessibility and more loosened moorings. The latter songs are delicate smash and grabs of intrigue and stimulating confusion: audition-anxiety opener Dear Fool finds percussion rattling and scraping as her voice trills and whirls over



"I used to cry listening to the early Scott Walker albums."

JULIET LAWSON



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Taking you higher: Tina Turner in 1964, arguably already the greatest screamer in the business.



## 10 Ike & Tina Turner The Greatest Hits Of

SUE, 1965

**You say:** "Tina goes places JB had yet to discover in the R&B days." Peter Allen, via e-mail

Between 1961 and 1965, the Turner franchise released seven LPs (four studio, two live and an instrumental set by their musicians, The Kings Of Rhythm), with two singles, *A Fool In Love* and *It's Gonna Work Out Fine*, each selling 1,000,000-plus. Tina is already arguably the greatest screamer in the business – and in a league of her own in laying down the law on *I Idolize You*. If James Brown and Ray Charles monopolise the kudos in the era prior to Motown taking soul mainstream, this all-killer compilation from those early LPs redresses an oversight: the Turners were blazing a trail long before Phil Spector became involved. Combine with Kent's 1966 collection *The Soul Of...* and you are cooking.



### CAST YOUR VOTES...

This month you chose your Top 10 Tina Turner/Ike & Tina LPs. Next month we want your Taylor Swift Top 10. Send selections via Twitter, Facebook, Instagram or e-mail to [mojo@bauermedia.co.uk](mailto:mojo@bauermedia.co.uk) with the subject 'How To Buy Taylor Swift' and we'll print the best comments.



## 4 Tina Turner Private Dancer

CAPITOL, 1984

**You say:** "Designed to be as big as possible, it invents the 'Superstar Mates' genre, even if she wasn't one then." Ian Wade, via Facebook

Don't be deterred by its ubiquity (12 million copies) or production (four sets of producers so, arguably, it's that 1980s sheen that holds it together), this is the template for turning a legend into a stadium-filler. With Tina seemingly washed up, Capitol bet on her adapting to the contemporary scene after hearing her guest slot on the B.E.F.'s 1982 cover of *Ball Of Confusion*. In its wake came the modern music industry, heritage acts, *Live Aid* et al. The buck stops here, then... but listen to that voice on *Let's Stay Together*, to Jeff Beck on the title track, to the feminist payback of *Better Be Good To Me*. A landmark achievement.

# Tina Turner/Ike & Tina

The soul star whose story you just couldn't make up. By David Hutcheon.

**A**S NUMEROUS biographers, film directors and Broadway producers can testify, the Ike & Tina Turner story has everything. Man invents rock'n'roll then discovers perhaps the greatest female vocalist in rock; he turns out to be a louse of the highest order and loses everything to drugs; she ascends to superstardom, defining what second acts in popular music can look like. *A Star Is Born*, eat your heart out.

Born in 1931, in Clarksdale, Mississippi, Izear Turner Jr was 19 when his band, The Kings Of Rhythm, made their initial foray into recording with *Rocket 88*, an R&B chart Number 1 (credited to Jackie Brenston). The fame tore the band apart, and Turner put together another outfit. In her autobiography, *I, Tina*, the then-Anna Mae Bullock described going into a trance on seeing the new Kings Of Rhythm in Brownsville, Tennessee. She soon had a son with the band's saxophonist (in 1958) and made her singing debut on *A Fool In Love*, a Top 30 hit for them in 1960. Ike re-christened her Tina Turner, copyrighting the name so he could replace Bullock if she quit. He also beat her up in order to convince her not to.

Getty, Jeff Kravitz

This set the pattern for the years to come: violence, intimidation and soul music conjured from the darkest corners of the human psyche, road-tested through a relentless work ethic and the sexiest show on legs. They made one of the greatest singles of all time and brought overt African-American sensuality into white homes via TV performances that broke rules and bust taboos; and then Ike discovered drugs – introduced to him, allegedly, by fellow Sun label alumnus Elvis Presley – that could make him work harder and act worse.

When Tina finally walked, she didn't have enough to be able to pay for a hotel room for the night. There was a twist in the tale, however – one that no scriptwriter would have dared submit. When she died, in 2023, aged 83, she had been officially retired for 23 years, had a fortune estimated at \$250 million and had publicly forgiven Ike. It would be good to think that her ex-husband, who fatally overdosed in 2007, aged 76, had also found some peace within himself in his later years.

It really is a story with everything – if only there were a simple way to describe the depths to which it descends and the heights to which it rises – and this is its soundtrack.

**"Ike & Tina made one of the greatest singles ever and brought overt African-American sensuality into white homes."**





**9 Tina Turner**  
Tina Turns The Country On!

UNITED ARTISTS, 1974

**You say:** "From her wilderness years in the 1970s, the Dylan covers in particular are superb." Vinyl Car Booty, via X

Though their fortunes were again on the slide by 1974, Ike was still calling the shots when Tina's solo debut was recorded, though his input was minimal. There's a consequent sense of freedom in the air as Tina interprets Dolly Parton, Kris Kristofferson, Hank Snow and Bob Dylan (Tonight I'll Be Staying Here With You and He Belongs To Me). There's a serious band behind her – including Glen Hardin and James Burton, on a break from Elvis – plus Merry Clayton, Clydie King and Jessie Smith on backing vocals, and plenty of funk in the grooves, but the album was ignored by all potential audiences, and the writing was on the wall.

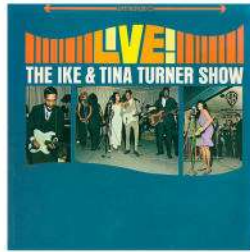


**8 Ike & Tina Turner And The Ikettes**  
Come Together

CAPITOL, 1970

**You say:** "The definitive version of I Want To Take You Higher. Ike may have got higher, but Tina could take you all the way." Lauren II, via Facebook

While the previously abstemious Ike lamented that 1969 was the year he was introduced to cocaine, it was also a pivotal year for the duo musically, their tour supporting the Stones introducing them to rock crowds in the US. Their first LP of the new decade courted this new audience: eight Ike compositions are put in the shade by covers of Honky Tonk Women, I Want To Take You Higher and Come Together, and Tina reclaims her own Janis Joplin-like swagger that would suit her well in the coming years. In an LP that oozes funk, marks are deducted for the hideous Young And Dumb.



**7 Ike & Tina Turner**  
Live! The Ike & Tina Turner Show

WARNER BROS, 1965

**You say:** "60 years old, but you can still smell the sex and sweat in the air that night." Andy Johns, via Blue Sky

Releasing two live sets within two months of each other indicates where Ike identified their strengths after the sound of young America had shifted on its axis in 1964. As an entrée, ...Live (1964) captured the grit of the couple's Revue (Tina is featured vocalist on only three songs, however), but for the full bump'n'grind of two shows recorded in Fort Worth and Dallas, start here (Vol. 2 – Loma, 1966 – completes the picture). The Kings Of Rhythm are in full flight on a risk-free series of R&B covers, and you are regularly reminded just how good the early Ikettes were – especially Venetta Fields, who goes toe to toe with Tina on I Know.



**6 Tina Turner**  
Acid Queen

UNITED ARTISTS, 1975

**You say:** "Proof that Tina was ready to make Private Dancer 10 years before the industry caught up with her." Alice Thomas, via e-mail

Inspired by Tina's role in Ken Russell's Tommy, the last solo album she recorded with Ike is perhaps the most Tina Turner LP of them all. If you want to know why she remained a legend in the depths of a decade's obscurity, it's all here. The first side features rock covers: a re-recording of Pete Townshend's Acid Queen; subtlety aplenty in her reading of Under My Thumb; lust overload in Let's Spend The Night Together; and, by ditching Plant's wham-bam, she transforms Whole Lotta Love into a woman's slow-burning night of passion. Rising to the task, Ike takes control of the second side, with Baby Get It On, one of the duo's best – and funniest – later outings.



**5 Ike & Tina Turner**  
River Deep - Mountain High

LONDON, 1966

**You say:** "So much money, so many egos, and an elite studio band like no other." Phil Sutcliffe, via Facebook

Phil Spector cancelled his retirement after seeing the Turners live, buying them out of their Loma contract in order to record a single he hoped would top You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin'. He repeated his Wagnerian magic on five more tracks, while Ike extravagantly re-cut earlier material with The Kings Of Rhythm and The Ikettes, resulting in a disjointed yet constantly thrilling spectacle, one of the most storied long-players in the pre-album age. When the title track, possibly the greatest 45 of all time, flopped in the States, Spector shelved the LP, though it would be issued in the rest of the world, where (to quote Phil) people were "more appreciative of talent and exciting music".



**3 Ike & Tina Turner**  
Nutbush City Limits

UNITED ARTISTS, 1973

**You say:** "That hit dominates, but Tina is testing the waters as a solo artist." Flash G, via e-mail

The Turners had only two monster hits in the US (three elsewhere), and following up the second, Nutbush City Limits, almost proved their undoing. With Ike losing his own battles – creating the oxygen for a rumour that Marc Bolan plays one of the guitars on Nutbush – Tina steps up as a writer, contributing five songs, including the title track. Once again, however, rejigged previous material (You Are My Sunshine, a de-Spectorfied River Deep, Mountain High) pads out the LP, but at its gritty, funkier best – Fancy Annie; Daily Bread – it should really have kept them in the spotlight. Perhaps it would have done, had their next release not been a collection of gospel standards.



**2 Ike & Tina Turner**  
Live In Paris – Olympia 1971

LIBERTY, 1971

**You say:** "Superb double album, largely responsible for introducing/hyping the duo in France." Ana Leorne, via X

Recorded at L'Olympia while on tour to promote *Workin' Together*, the Turners' sixth live set harnesses a hurricane while showcasing both how far they had come since 1964, and how close they had stayed to their roots. The material is almost entirely covers – and songs they hadn't previously recorded – but they tackle the soul favourites with an enthusiasm that suggests they thought they could make them – even Respect – their own. They certainly do that with the X-rated I've Been Loving You Too Long and this may be the final word on Proud Mary. Introducing it, Tina describes her husband as "a little man with a stone face", which must have stung.



**Ike & Tina Turner**  
Workin' Together

LIBERTY, 1970

**You say:** "Forget the riverboat, this is a steamroller of funk, soul and pop." Sam Frost, via e-mail

The duo's most successful album is also their best, and home to their biggest-selling single (Proud Mary, in both "nice and easy" and "rough" modes). Covers of Get Back and Let It Be (adding new verses even Paul McCartney would have been happy with) complement five Ike tunes (two of them, including the formidable title track, by "Eki Renrut") that suggest – finally – his writing can now both consistently hold its own with the prestigious imports and match Tina's full-throttle performances. The rarely credited musicians in The Kings Of Rhythm, meanwhile, deliver in spades. To quote one of the songs within, provided by Aillene Bullock, Tina's big sister, *Workin' Together* is funkier than a mosquito's tweeter.



There's no shortage of video evidence of Tina's second act, while both Live In '71 and Soul To Soul (recorded in Ghana the same year) catch the duo's stage show at its peak. Mention has to be made of Ike's pre-Tina years – try *A Proper Introduction To Ike Turner/Jackie Brenston* (Proper, 2004) – when The Kings Of Rhythm invented rock'n'roll then disintegrated, leaving Ike as A&R guru and session kingpin for the Sun and Modern labels – he discovered Howlin' Wolf, Bobby Bland and many more. Nor should The Ikettes be overlooked, they were never simply Tina's backing singers: *Can't Sit Down...* (Kent, 2007) compiles their excellent 1964-66 output.





Famous five: rock 'n' roll seditionaries MC5 (from left) Fred 'Sonic' Smith, Dennis Thompson, Wayne Kramer, Rob Tyner, Michael Davis, 1969.



**WHAT WE'VE LEARNT**

- The MC5's hometown break was opening for the Dave Clark Five at Cobo Arena in December 1965 – a gig Kramer calls their “consolation prize” for a scheduled support slot for The Rolling Stones collapsing.
- The MC5's debut single was to be a version of Them's Gloria, but after The Shadows Of Knight – in Tyner's words, “those little rats” – turned the same song into a Top 10 hit, the group decided to switch to another Van Morrison song, I Can Only Give You Everything.
- When The Beatles launched an open call for submissions at Apple Corps, the MC5 submitted a demo that was swiftly rejected.

# Revlon in the head

The trailblazing proto-punks get the raucous history they deserve. By Stephen Thomas Erlewine.

## MC5: An Oral Biography Of Rock's Most Revolutionary Band

★★★★★

Brad Tolinski, Jaan Uhelszki, Ben Edmonds

OMNIBUS. £25

THE STORY of the MC5 – the pioneering Detroit band who blazed a trail that pointed toward punk – is riddled with missed opportunities, bad breaks and self-sabotage. The book that became MC5: An Oral Biography Of Rock's Most Revolutionary Band nearly became a posthumous chapter in that doomed saga. Former Creem editor and MC5 confidante Ben Edmonds started work on a biography way back in 1990, labouring on the project until his death in 2016. Edmonds' Creem colleagues Brad Tolinski and Jaan Uhelszki have turned his research into a finished book every bit as alive as the group itself.

Death nevertheless hangs over this oral history. Founding guitarist Wayne Kramer died earlier this year, followed swiftly by the band's drummer Dennis Thompson and John Sin-

clair, the counter-culture guru who envisioned the group as the conduit for his revolutionary dreams. Their deaths mean that all the major players in the MC5 drama are now gone, their absence lending the book a sense of poignancy that only escalates as the band buckles from dashed dreams and rampant drug abuse.

It's a tragic and perhaps inevitable end for a band that spent its brief life charting unknown territory. A collection of misfits, beatniks and greasers united by their mutual love for The Rolling Stones, the MC5 cut their teeth at teenage record hops. Those early years are brought to vivid life through the testimony of Rob Tyner, the band's lead singer who died in 1991, and Tyner's wife Becky. Rob Tyner's sharp, witty insights are counterbalanced by Kramer's earthiness. Their complementary, sometimes conflicting, accounts are punctuated by Thompson and bassist Michael Davis – Fred 'Sonic' Smith, the group's second guitarist, never delivers a first-person account yet his presence looms large in most stories – capturing the combative chemistry that shone through on stage and record.

That's not the only way the telling of MC5: An Oral Biography mirrors the band's career. Once Sinclair comes on the scene, he overshadows the band he took under his wing, pontificating and philosophising with eloquent profanities. His radical politics shaped the MC5's identity, pushing them

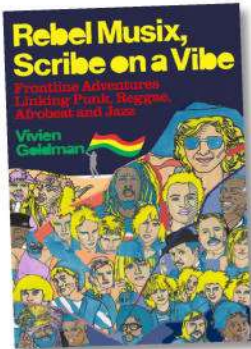
to play a protest concert at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in 1968 that wowed none other than Norman Mailer. His praise in Harper's Magazine was the first step toward securing the band a contract with Elektra Records, who agreed to have their debut, *Kick Out The Jams*, document the MC5 in their native habitat: live on-stage at Detroit's Grande Ballroom.

Soon, the chaos the MC5 courted came crashing down on them, systematically losing the band allies at record labels and causing a permanent rift with Sinclair. MC5: An Oral Biography untangles the web of contradictory stories and enduring grievances, illustrating how the band was simultaneously guided and suffocated by Sinclair. The band's dissolution after the excellent if idiosyncratic *High Time* is dealt

with swiftly: by the time they split, most of the band had descended into heroin addiction. The ugliness of their ending does give this biography's conclusion an unavoidable sourness but the book, like the band itself, soars when it's at its peak.

“Like the MC5 itself, this book soars when it's at its peak.”





**Rebel Musix: Scribe On A Vibe**

★★★★★  
Vivien Goldman  
WHITE RABBIT. £22

Vital collection from one of the UK's foremost music writers.

Writing for the music press during that pivotal era from 1975 to the early '80s, Vivien Goldman forged a path focusing on punk, reggae, Afrobeat and jazz, what she defines now as Rebel Musix – "progressive musical territories seen as the margins". A musician herself, Goldman enables interviewees to open up with deep insight on the creative process, such as John Lydon in the early stages of PiL, or Bob Marley keeping the power of Rastafari as his music goes global. Goldman writes with literary elegance and a political charge, whether she is infiltrating a National Front gig, celebrating The Slits' anarchic she-punk or, more recently, investigating the death of Trinidadian rapper Rebel Sixx. Most moving is her work on Fela Kuti, documenting the tough, brutal life of an extraordinarily spiritual artist, the centrepiece of this essential collection.

Lucy O'Brien

**Brothers**

★★★★★  
Alex Van Halen  
HARPER NON FICTION. £22

Van Halen drummer mourns kid brother Eddie/hangs-up his sticks.



Non-English speaking Dutch émigrés to Pasadena, California in 1962, Alex and Eddie were profoundly close-knit siblings. Brothers details them sharing classical piano lessons, fame and alcoholism, and immortalises their bond, something jeopardised by Eddie moonlighting on Michael Jackson's Beat It ("We had a huge fight," fumes Alex). Jazz clarinettist dad Jan introduced them to booze aged six (Alex) and 12 (Ed), while Alex's first erotic encounter aged 11 and his almost losing Ed to an early-period drugs overdose make sobering reading. Given the well documented animosities, it's surprising that

VH frontman David Lee Roth was the first person Alex called after Ed died from cancer in 2020, but Brothers pays grudging respect to Roth, even as it tars him "a pseudo-intellectual who only knew a lot about one thing: himself." At the book's close Alex writes of Ed: "We still communicate. I'll never say goodbye." He's clearly lost without him.

James McNair

**The Chronicles Of DOOM: Unravelling Rap's Masked Iconoclast**

★★★★★  
S.H. Fernando Jr.  
FABER. £25

Deep dive into the life and music of MF DOOM, the man Q-Tip described as "your favourite rapper's favourite rapper".



Dan Charnas's Dilla Time established a new gold standard for the explication of hip-hop enigmas. While S.H.

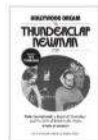
Fernando's determined attempt to shed light on the legend of Daniel Dumile Jr lacks Charnas's writerly polish, it does supply an abundant harvest of fascinating detail. From the exact circumstances of Dumile's birth in the hip-hop Mecca of Hounslow, to the impact of cult leader Dr Malachi Z York's teachings on his Daisy Age rap trio KMD, to the almost biblical spell in the wilderness which followed the violent death of his bandmate and brother Subroc and Elektra's rejection of KMD's controversial second album, Fernando's book does a great job of laying the foundation for its subject's remarkable masked second act. The latter half of the book loses its way slightly in foregrounding DOOM's embrace of the Non-Fungible Token over his remarkable creative evolution, but there is enough of a flavour of this unique talent to keep fans hanging on 'til the last in the hope of a happier ending.

Ben Thompson

**Hollywood Dream: The Thunderclap Newman Story**

★★★★★  
Mark Ian Wilkerson  
THIRD MAN. £20

Detailed account of the short life of the mismatched Something In The Air trio.



As Pete Townshend recalls in his foreword here, the band that he put together in 1969 featuring his

songwriting pal (and driver), drummer/singer John 'Speedy' Keen, eccentric boogie-playing pianist Andy 'Thunderclap' Newman and teenage guitar wonder Jimmy McCulloch constituted a "great adventure" for him. He even reckons elsewhere that the making of their 1969 UK Number 1 was "better than any Who session for me". But Thunderclap Newman weren't built to last and despite making one top-drawer album (1970's Townshend-produced *Hollywood Dream*), they suffered from an inability to properly represent their studio sound live, in addition to perhaps inevitable personality clashes. Keen and Newman didn't get on, neither did Keen and McCulloch, and the centre of this uneasy triumvirate could not hold. Wilkerson admirably tells the tale over more than 400 pages, justly illuminating once again this oft-forgotten group.

Tom Doyle



**Now You're One Of Us: The Incredible Story Of Redd Kross**

★★★★★  
Jeff & Steven McDonald With Dan Epstein  
OMNIBUS. £30

The brothers McDonald narrate their powerpop concern's wild ride through rock.

Partridge Family-loving misfits in the LA hardcore moshpit,

punk-minded Stooges devotees subverting LA's glam-rock orthodoxy, glitter-splattered entertainers upending grunge's plaid-clad pity party... Redd Kross have spent over four decades not fitting in, a theme that's a constant through this giddy tome. Author Epstein keeps the story rolling, training the spotlight on Jeff and Steven, who wax rhapsodic on cult pop-culture, reminisce on police brutality and skinhead violence at Black Flag gigs, and occasionally squabble, entertainingly so, over the details. It gets dark in places – the brothers are unsparingly open about their '80s drug hell, while an underage Steven gets abducted by his older punk-scene lover in one hair-raising plot twist. But *Now You're One Of Us* mostly keeps the emphasis on the brothers' wild and unlikely adventures, delivering a hilarious, engaging page-turner as uplifting as any of their overdriven powerpop anthems.

Stevie Chick

**Sinéad O'Connor: The Last Interview And Other Conversations**

★★★★★  
Introduction by Kristin Hersh  
MELVILLE HOUSE. £13.99

Sinéad in her own words: some key interviews and conversation.



In her compassionate introduction, Kristin Hersh recalls a 2005 backstage encounter with

Sinéad O'Connor in which the latter was deeply uncomfortable with the celebrity spotlight. This collection of interviews, spanning the Irish Times in 1986 to an ABC chat show *The View* in 2021, foregrounds the outspoken, prickly and unbidable O'Connor. "I'm proud to be a troublemaker," she told *Rolling Stone* in 1991. Here are O'Connor's views on child abuse, trauma, the Catholic Church, her children, and why she abandoned the pop world for a more rewarding and sustaining spiritual landscape. These interviews capture her raw testimony behind the headlines, even to the point (as Spin did in 1991) of turning her into a freak show. However, there could be deeper insight into O'Connor as a musician and artist – the reason we loved her in the first place.

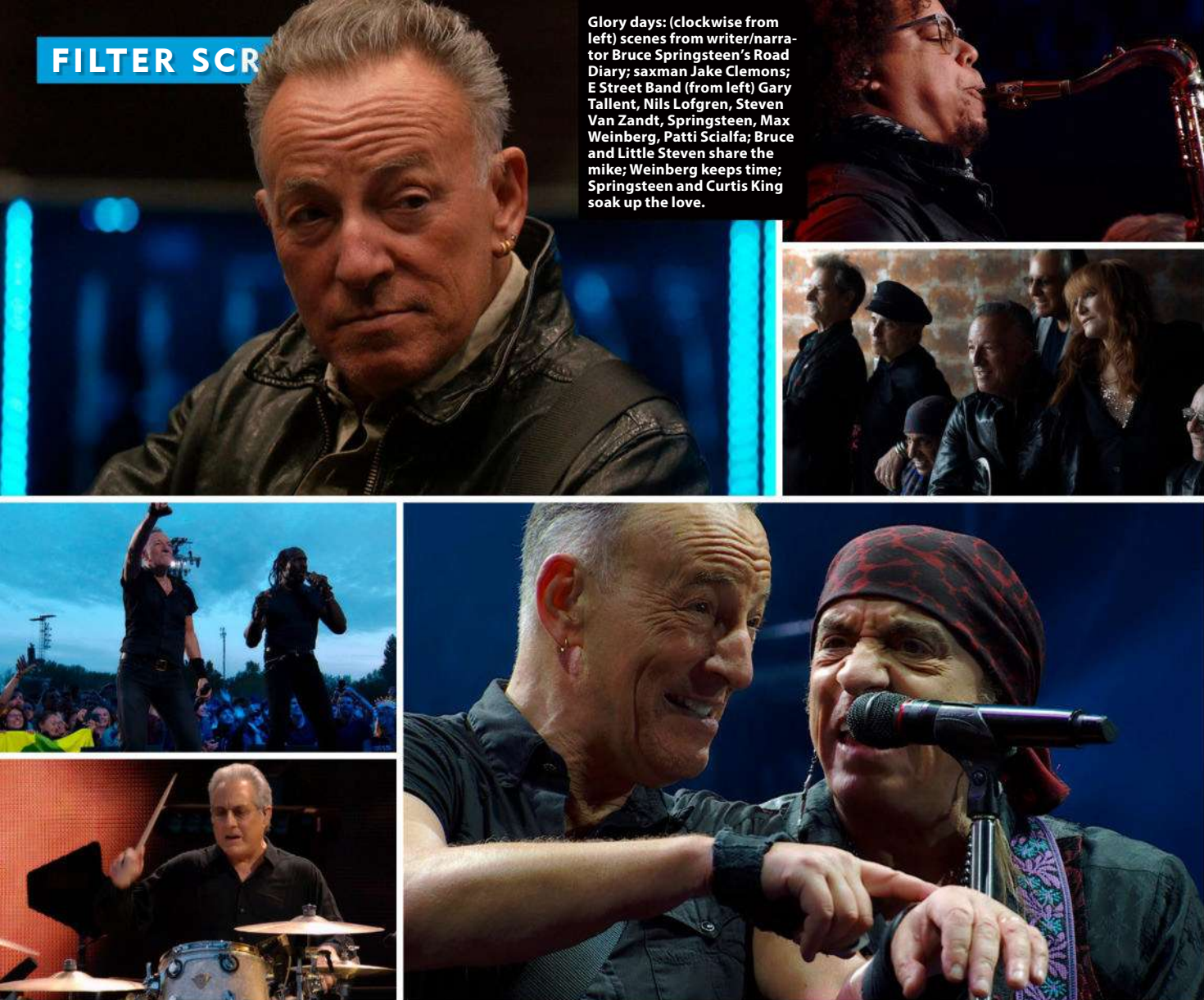
Lucy O'Brien



Three's a crowd: Thunderclap Newman (from left) John 'Speedy' Keen, Andy 'Thunderclap' Newman and Jimmy McCulloch.



Glory days: (clockwise from left) scenes from writer/narrator Bruce Springsteen's *Road Diary*; saxman Jake Clemons; E Street Band (from left) Gary Tallent, Nils Lofgren, Steven Van Zandt, Springsteen, Max Weinberg, Patti Scialfa; Bruce and Little Steven share the mike; Weinberg keeps time; Springsteen and Curtis King soak up the love.



# Soul driver

Measured explication of veteran band's global joust with mortality, written and produced by The Boss himself. **By Mark Cooper.**

## Road Diary: Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band

★★★

Dir: Thom Zimny

DISNEY+ 5

WHEN DIRECTOR/EDITOR Thom Zimny's latest collaboration with Team Springsteen premiered mid-September at the Toronto Film Festival, Patti Scialfa's quiet admission midway through the film that she has multiple myeloma, a blood cancer that attacks the immune system, stole the headlines. A week later, Bruce turned 75. Back in February, Springsteen's 98-year-old mother Adele died and a clip of them dancing to Glenn Miller's *In The Mood* is the coda to this methodical account of the E Street Band's post-Covid world tour. The Boss has been reassessing his work and re-

flecting on "the white hot light of an oncoming train" rushing his way since the loss of bandmates Clarence Clemons and Danny Federici, his 2016 autobiography and 2020's *Letter To You* which confronted the death of George Theiss, Bruce's brother in arms in teenage '60s garage band The Castiles. Hence *Last Man Standing* from that album and The Commodores' elegiac *Nightshift*, from 2022's soul covers album, *Only The Strong Survive*, emerge as constant pivots in the narrative framing the tour's largely pre-millennium setlist.

Zimny's cameras are there when the E Street Band and Springsteen reunite in January 2023 in Red Bank, New Jersey, to begin rehearsing for their first tour in six years. Those first fly-on-the-wall hugs are about as intimate as he gets in a film that shares on method and motivation at the expense of an independent observational eye. When producer Jon Landau explains that Springsteen isn't that keen on rehearsing these days and lone wolf Steven Van Zandt wryly shrugs that he's been appointed MD a mere 40 years late, there's a rare glimpse of

the complicated dynamics that underpin any veteran outfit. Oddly given the title, there's no mention of the bouts with Covid that dogged the band in spring 2023 or the peptic ulcer that forced Springsteen off the road at the end of that summer.

On the plus side, there's copious stage footage as the tour moves from American arenas to European stadiums while the band, the additional brass players and backing singers are on-message talking heads. Thus Nils Lofgren steps forward to explain the rewards of diving deep into a fixed setlist while looking askance at the high jinks of the 2017 tour with its audience signs and song requests.

Springsteen is older than that now and while there's romantic archive glimpses of the band on the road in the '70s, whether in station wagon or bus, he's not about to let us see how his tour party eats, sleeps or travels these days, let alone meditate on the impact of dynamic ticket pricing. Instead, he and his fellow players carefully unlock the process behind multiple on-stage musical epiphanies. Ultimately, writer/narrator Springsteen wants to impart his mission in the face of that runaway train — to bring intensity, to share "life's possibilities", to lift your spirits. Once he was born to run, now The Boss is working on how to endure.

"Springsteen and players unlock the process behind on-stage musical epiphanies."



# SNOWFIST

(1)  
SNOWFIST

(4)  
IN HOLLYWOOD

(3)  
I ONLY CRY ONCE

(5)  
ONE MORE NIGHT

(2)  
15 DAYS

(8)  
CZECH SPEED

(6)  
COLD SIDE OF  
MY PILLOW

(7)  
THANK GOD YOUR IN  
MY WORLD

(9)  
HILSDOWN  
& HILARY

(12)  
MILLION

(13)  
NOBODY'S GONNA  
STEAL OUR DREAM

(10)  
LATE DAY SUN

(11)  
CASH CASTLES

(14)  
MAD LOVE

(16)  
BROKEN BIRD

(17)  
YEAH! DANCIN'

(15)  
FOR THE LONELY  
SOULS AND BURNT OUT  
LOVERS

**The BANK**

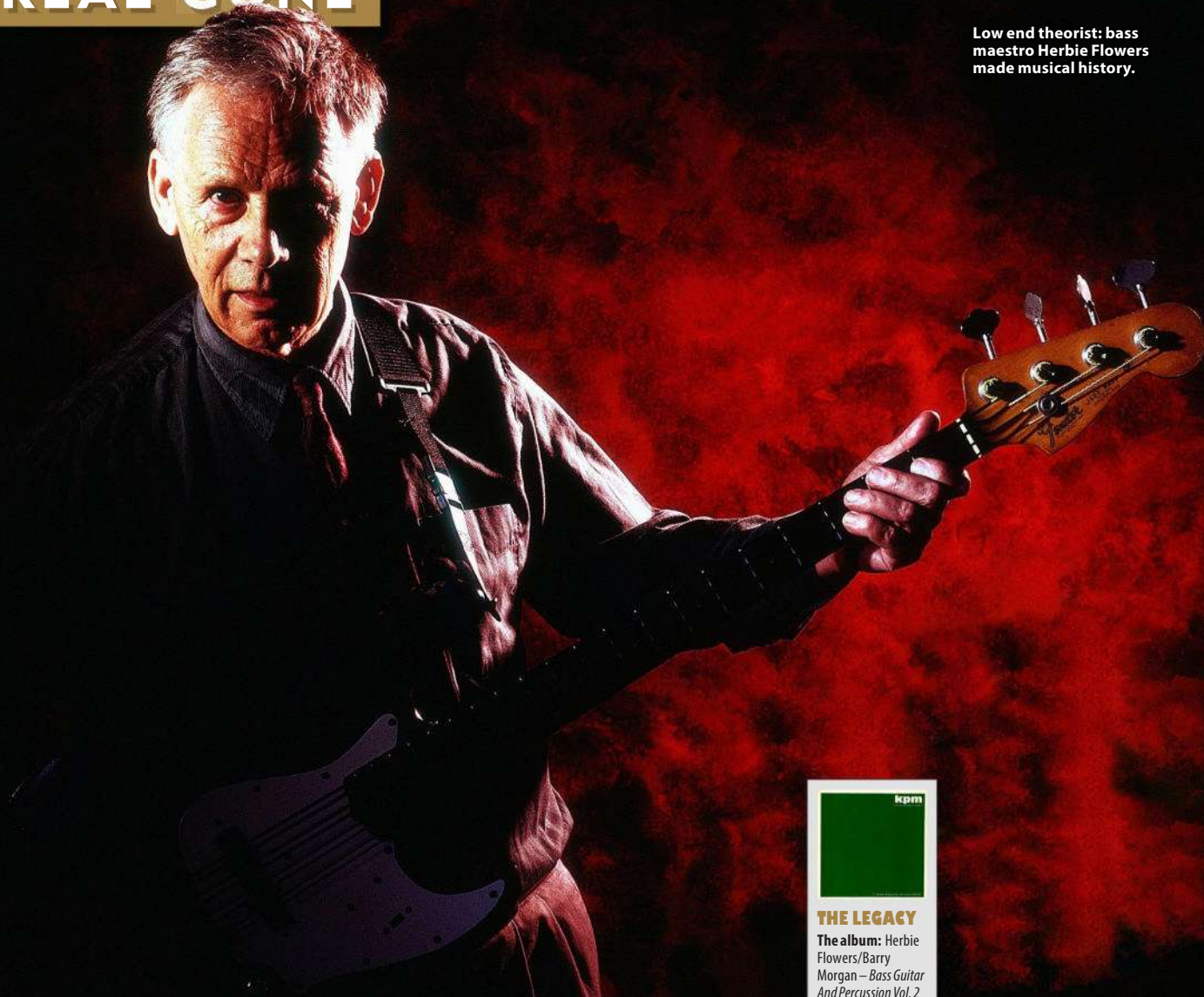
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**DIG  
DEEPER**

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Low end theorist: bass maestro Herbie Flowers made musical history.



## Four Strings Good

Bass master and session legend Herbie Flowers left us on September 5.

HE PLAYED bass lines generations of listeners can recognise in a heartbeat, but session musician Herbie Flowers was no gear fetishist. He said that he'd only ever owned three instruments: a second-hand tuba, an English-made double bass and a Fender Jazz Bass. By such modest means, musical history was made.

Born Brian Flowers in Isleworth on May 19, 1938, he recalled an early encounter with a pair of headphones, and pressing the earpieces close to better hear the low end. He started his national service in the RAF aged 18, where he earned his nickname. He stayed for nine years, playing tuba and then double bass as a bandsman. As a civilian he played jazz and worked on the Queen Elizabeth cruise liner, acquiring an electric bass in New York. Ingrained punctuality and ability to sight read made him suited to London's session world, he said, and from the later 1960s he was immersed in it, coming and going from studios each morning and afternoon, with gigs in the evening.

**“Two notes! It’s supposed to be legendary but it’s bollocks.”**

HERBIE FLOWERS ON WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

What came out of those sessions is bewildering to contemplate, amounting to a secret history and shadow career that’s comparable to names of much greater familiarity. As well as recordings with Bryan Ferry, Cliff Richard, Roger Daltrey, Melanie, Tim Rose, Steve Harley, Camel, Sally Oldfield, Al Kooper, Cat Stevens and all The Beatles except John Lennon, Flowers’ eminent early-’70s credits included Elton John’s *Tumbleweed Connection* and *Madman Across The Water*, Serge Gainsbourg’s *Histoire De Melody Nelson*, Bowie’s self-titled second LP (including 1969’s debut hit *Space Oddity*) and *Diamond Dogs*, and Lou Reed’s *Transformer*. The latter album featured the bassist’s most celebrated creation, the exquisite

two-note ascend/descend that drives *Walk On The Wild Side*, but his mastery of the instrument stunned just as much on Harry Nilsson’s *Jump Into The Fire* and *Rock On* by David Essex, among many others.

As well as doing sessions, Flowers played in bands including C.C.S., the final



### THE LEGACY

**The album:** Herbie Flowers/Barry Morgan – *Bass Guitar And Percussion Vol. 2* (KPM, 1971)

**The sound:** His work with Bowie, Lou and the rest is immense, but to hear Flowers the consummate bassist at the fore? This LP of funky library cues from the famed *KPM 1000 Series* (subtitled ‘Dramatic Activity And Suspense’ and recorded with drummer Barry Morgan) allows him to cut loose with hypnotic minimalism and wild fuzz tones, never playing more than necessary and always aware of the bass’s unique role at the cusp of rhythm and melody. *Movement* (1), incidentally, ended up on *The Sweeney*. *Volume 1*’s lighter themes for grooving offers bass-centric contrast.

line-up of T.Rex and Blue Mink, who scored six UK Top 20 singles from 1969 to ’73. In 1978, he co-founded classical rockers Sky with John Williams: active until 1995, the group reached UK Number 1 with 1980’s *Sky 2* and Number 5 with its single *Toccata*. He also appeared on 1978 huge-seller *Jeff Wayne’s Musical Version Of The War Of The Worlds*, co-wrote Clive Dunn’s 1970 UK Number 1 *Grandad* and represented the UK at the 1979 Eurovision Song Contest with Mr Moonlight, one of numerous solo singles which included *Tuba Smarties* and *Don’t Take My Bass Away*. Though he’d played on hits including The Scaffold’s *Thank U Very Much*, Barry Ryan’s *Eloise* and Tom Jones’s *Delilah*, he questioned why people needed to know exactly what he’d played on. At a one-man show in Edinburgh in 1998, he memorably reflected on his part in *Walk On The Wild Side*:

“Two notes! It’s supposed to be legendary but it’s bollocks.”

In later years, Flowers played jazz, taught bass and worked with young musicians. In 2005 he reflected on his life in the session age to *MOJO*’s Phil Sutcliffe, calling it, “an illustrious life, but a ghostly one because I was always working for somebody else... I can’t believe the glory of it all now.”

Ian Harrison



## Sérgio Mendes

Bossa Nova VIP

BORN 1941

"NOBODY KNEW who I was," Sérgio Mendes would reflect on his New York debut, at Carnegie Hall in November 1962. Such an auspicious start would be an omen, however: within four years his debut American single, Mas Que Nada, would enter the US charts, and the piano player's blend of bossa nova, jazz and pop would make him the most commercially successful Brazilian artist of all time.

The new sound of Rio De Janeiro broke internationally in 1962, with Antônio Carlos Jobim and João Gilberto headlining the Bossa Nova At Carnegie Hall celebration, while Mendes's Sexteto Bossa Rio were further down the bill. A military coup in Brazil in 1964 convinced him to move to California, where he recorded – with little success – for Capitol and Atlantic, but a switch to A&M and a change of direction in 1966 brought instant success. Mendes's new outfit, Brasil '66, combined his driving piano-playing with complex, funky Brazilian rhythms and the airiest of female vocals.

The hip may have decried it as easy-listening but its class was undeniable, and Mendes had his finger on the pulse, covering Buffalo Springfield and Simon & Garfunkel as well as Brazilian composers, and toured twice with Frank Sinatra. A convincing case could be made that his is the definitive version of Bacharach and

David's The Look Of Love, and he could work wonders with the Lennon and McCartney songbook.

Though his fortunes waned in the States after 1970's *Stillness* LP, Mendes remained respected internationally and never stopped working or innovating: his 2006 album *Timeless* featured Erykah Badu, John Legend and Jill Scott, among others, and his final tour included a sold-out appearance at the 2023 EFG London Jazz Festival, almost exactly 61 years to the day after that Carnegie Hall date.

David Hutcheon

## Frankie Beverly

The mastermind of Maze

BORN 1946



RAISED IN East Germantown, Philadelphia, young Frankie Lymon fan Howard Beverly sang in church and joined doo wop act The

Blenders and Gamble & Huff-produced soul group The Butlers. After forming Raw Soul in 1970, he moved to San Francisco and toured with Marvin Gaye, who suggested a name change. As Maze, with the baseball capped, smart-yet-casual Beverly as lead singer, guitarist, keyboardist, songwriter and producer, the band's mellow kind of funk won them five gold-selling US albums from 1977 (the same year Beverly played percussion on Marvin's Got To Give It Up) to 1993, all of them R&B chart Top 10s. Thanks to tracks like Joy And Pain



Renaissance woman: Caterina Valente – star of stage, screen and dancefloor.

and Too Many Games, they were also popular with jazz-funk fans in the UK, where they sold out large venues including Wembley Arena. In 2019, Beyoncé paid tribute by covering Maze's Before I Let Go in a medley with Cameo's Candy. The singer announced his retirement early this year before playing the farewell I Wanna Thank You Tour, which ended in Philly on July 6.

Ian Harrison

## Zoot Money

Hammond-toting R&B hellraiser

BORN 1942



LEADING Bournemouth's first R&B outfit, larger-than-life singer-organist George 'Zoot' Money arrived in London in 1963

to replace Graham Bond in Blues Incorporated. Massive on the R&B circuit, his Big Roll Band (featuring Andy Summers) took Georgie Fame's Flamingo Club residency in January 1964. Signing to Columbia, Zoot released eight singles (including 1966 hit Big Time Operator) and It Should've Been Me. His West Kensington flat was the first place Chas Chandler took

"Zoot Money's West Kensington flat was the first place Chas Chandler took Jimi Hendrix."

Jimi Hendrix, who borrowed his Wandre guitar and clicked with lodger Kathy Etchingham. In psychedelic 1967, Zoot's band became Dantalian's Chariot, releasing Madman Running Through The Fields, splitting after CBS rejected their album. He joined Eric Burdon's New Animals before playing with Peter Green, Kevin Ayers, Steve Marriott and many others. As G.B. Money, Zoot enjoyed a healthy acting career, including Bergerac, The Bill, Coronation Street, Breaking Glass and 1979's Porridge movie.

Kris Needs

## Caterina Valente

Multitalented, multilingual singer/guitarist

BORN 1931

SINGER, DANCER, actress, guitarist, comic – Caterina Valente excelled at them all to such an extent the Italian press dubbed her the female equivalent of Sammy Davis Jr. That may have been underselling her: she was equally at home playing bossa nova with Dean Martin as she was singing rock'n'roll with Bill Haley or scatting with Ella Fitzgerald. Born into an Italian showbiz dynasty living in Paris, she was a stage veteran before the Second World War began. In the 1950s, she registered hits both in Europe and the US in a variety of languages, danced in a string of German musicals and became a popular, regular guest on British and American TV; her biggest UK single being a million-selling version of The Breeze And I (Top 5 in 1955). Having retired from performing in 2001, she died in Switzerland in September, aged 93.

David Hutcheon



Key player: Sérgio Mendes – the most commercially successful Brazilian artist of all time.



Family affair: Tito (left) and Marlon of the Jackson 5, 1970.



## Tito Jackson

Jacksons guitarist  
BORN 1953

KNOWN AS the 'quiet one' of the Jackson family group, the man born Toriano Adaryll Jackson in Gary, Indiana would recall his 10-year-old self secretly borrowing his hard-driving, ambitious father Joe's guitar. When he heard him play, R&B musician and boxer Joe gave his blessing. A blues fan from an early age, Tito recalled playing the music at home before a family band was ever a notion, but autonomy was curtailed when Joe marshalled his sons, including five-year-old Michael, into the Jackson 5 in 1964. Signed to Motown, 1969's *I Want You Back* was their debut US Number 1: they had another three in quick succession, followed by 13 more hit singles and eight chart albums. While Tito sang vocals and played guitar in live shows, the group's recordings featured sessioneers: he was able to play and contribute to songwriting when the band rebranded as The Jacksons and moved to Epic in 1976. He also appeared on recordings by his siblings, Betty Wright, Livin' Proof and the 1985 USA For Africa charity single. Michael, who had begun a simultaneous solo career in 1971 and ascended to hyperfame after

1979's breakthrough *Off The Wall*, left after 1984's *Victory*, and after 1989's *2300 Jackson Street* the remaining brothers splintered. They were inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1997.

In the '90s Tito managed his sons' group 3T and in 2007 was a judge on the BBC celebrity singing gameshow *Just The Two Of Us*. He also returned to playing the blues, releasing belated solo LPs *Tito Time* (2016) and *Under Your Spell* (2021), where Stevie Wonder, George Benson, Big Daddy Kane and Joe Bonamassa all guested. He would rejoin his brothers on occasion, most recently in a touring incarnation of The Jacksons with Marlon and Jackie. They played in Germany five days before Tito died suddenly in New Mexico on September 15.

Ian Harrison

## Roli Mosimann

Swans drummer, producer  
BORN 1955



BORN IN the Swiss canton of Thurgau, Roli Mosimann first came to musical prominence in New York, drumming on the first two Swans albums, where his pummelling

"slave galley" style was key to the band's sound. Subsequently, he collaborated with J.G. Thirlwell in the duo *Wiseblood* and became a producer for artists including *The The*, *Faith No More*, *Celtic Frost*, *That Petrol Emotion* and *The Young Gods* – in demand for the way he used digital and sampling technology to give a new kind of staccato edge to rock intensities. Mosimann's production reputation was based in large part on his extensive studio work with Swiss trio *The Young Gods*, for whom he became a de facto fourth member, creating an innovative machine-rock hybrid – a kind of audio parallel to another bio-mechanical Swiss outlier, H.R. Giger. Mosimann died in hospital in Wrocław in Poland where he'd been treated for lung cancer.

Roy Wilkinson

## Nick Gravenites

Original Blues Brother  
BORN 1938



A TOUGH working-class son of Greek immigrants who'd landed in Chicago, "Nick The Greek" immersed in the African-American subculture in which Southern black musicians brought electrified Delta blues with them from Mississippi. Instrumentally proficient and a fine crooner, he took a harp-blowin' kid named Paul Butterfield under his wing and the duo became the prototype of the Blues Brothers. In the Bay Area he collaborated with guitar god Mike Bloomfield and they founded scorching blues-rockers *The Electric Flag*. He worked with solo Janis Joplin,

post-Janis *Big Brother*, and *Quicksilver Messenger Service*. Compositions included *Buried Alive In The Blues*, *Work Me*, *Lord* and the autobiographical standard *Born In Chicago*: he also produced cannabis classic *One Toke Over The Line* by Brewer & Shipley. Despite his own eclecticism, he derided Butterfield's later work as "blues-ish", remaining a true *Blues Brother* to the end.

Michael Simmons

## Benny Golson

Jazz saxophonist and composer  
BORN 1929

BORN IN Philadelphia, Benny Golson began playing saxophone aged 14, practising with his friend John Coltrane. He carried on for more than 70 years. Influenced by Ben Webster and Lucky Thompson, as a young musician he played with Art Blakey, Earl Bostic and Dizzy Gillespie, among others, and began recording solo in 1957: two years later he co-founded *The Jazztet* with Art Farmer. As well as writing numerous songs that attained standard status – *I Remember Clifford*, his homage to trumpeter Clifford Brown, is the most-covered – he worked in film and TV from the early 1960s, creating cues for shows including *M\*A\*S\*H* and *Mission: Impossible*. He also arranged for artists including Eric Burdon, Peggy Lee and Lou Rawls. Returning to jazz in the 1980s, 2015's final solo album *Horizon Ahead* was, for a player who said he never stopped learning, aptly named. Widely honoured, he died at home in Manhattan, a short cab ride away from where he and other Olympians of jazz were photographed for the celebrated 1958 image dubbed *A Great Day In Harlem*.

Clive Prior



Sax colossus: Benny Golson was an Olympian of jazz.



# JD Souther

Rare singer, songwriter,  
actor

BORN 1945

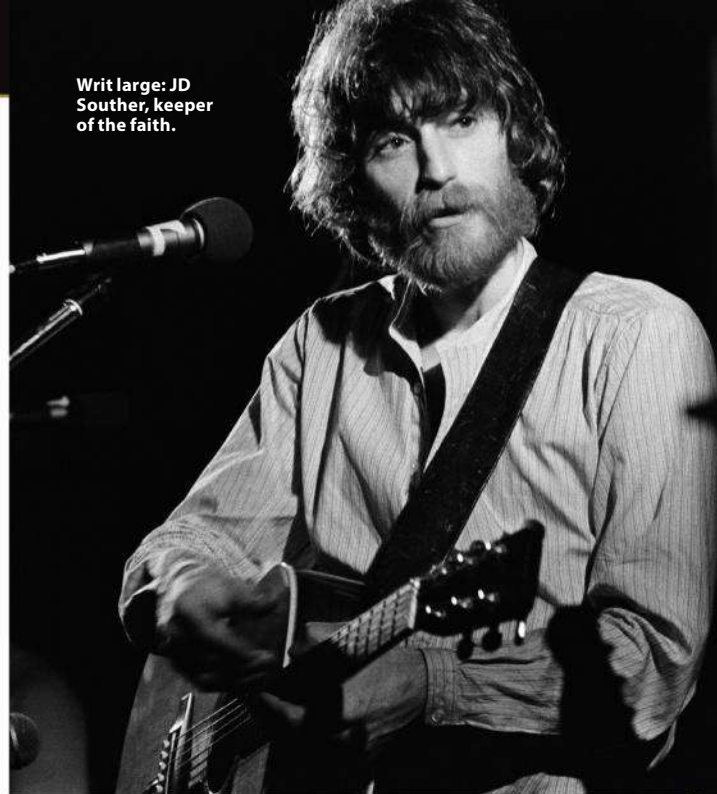
"I WAS YOUNG and stupid and riding around Hollywood on a motorcycle," JD Souther told MOJO in early 2022, talking about his salad days as a songwriter among the likes of the Eagles, Jackson Browne and Judee Sill, as the late '60s slid into the '70s. "None of us had made any money yet. You have to make yourself feel invulnerable, because you are quite vulnerable."

In the years that followed, Souther and his friends would not only make money but would write a crucial chapter in the development of folk rock in the United States. The albums of the Detroit-born, Texas-raised songwriter were plenty sharp themselves, with his 1974 debut, *John David Souther*, reckoning with love, infidelity, and the faith of the faithless in rich lines. "Well, the family possessions passed on to me/No longer fit in my hand," he

once sang in his assured tenor, capturing the tensions of generational change.

But Souther will invariably linger in folk rock's footnotes as a contentious muse and the songwriter who supplied some of his generation's anthems. When, already married, he stepped out on Judee Sill with Linda Ronstadt, Sill dubbed him an "unrepentant bastard" and penned *Jesus Was A Cross Maker* in his dishonour, a romantic rebuke so cutting and catchy he couldn't help but be proud. Though he almost became an Eagle, he instead helped author several of their irreproachable hits, like *New Kid In Town* and *Best Of My Love*, plus Linda Ronstadt's *Faithless Love*. Years after his country-rock supergroup with Chris Hillman and Richie Furay fizzled, Souther corralled many of his famous friends for the soulful *You're Only Lonely*, his biggest hit under his own name. (Later, he cut *Her Town Too* with James Taylor.)

But sensing there was more to life than rock'n'roll marginalia, Souther left music for some time



Writ large: JD Souther, keeper of the faith.

and successfully pursued a home life and acting, famously as a seasoned record producer in TV drama *Nashville*. Still, Souther was one of the early-'70s generation's

most incisive writers, his work worthy of remembrance whether it was he or his more famous friends delivering it.

Grayson Haver Currin

## THEY ALSO SERVED

DANCER, SINGER AND choreographer **CAT** (below, b. Catherine Glover, 1964) worked with **Prince** from 1987 to 1989. Among her credits was choreographing the U Got The Look video, taking part in the *Sign 'O' The Times* and *LoveSexy* tours, and rapping, at Prince's insistence, on hit single *Alphabet Street*. She also appeared on the withdrawn *Black Album*, though a mooted Prince-produced solo LP did not appear. She later worked with Bomb The Bass's **Tim Simenon**.



BASSIST **DICK DIAMONDE** (b. 1948) co-founded Australian pop group **The Easybeats** in 1964. Born in Hilversum, the Netherlands, Diamonde's family emigrated to Australia when he was four. He formed The Easybeats with fellow emigres including **Harry Vanda** and **George Young**, who later produced AC/DC. The group found international success with 1966 single *Friday On My Mind* before disbanding in 1969. Diamonde rejoined his bandmates for a tour in 1986.

PIANIST AND VOCALIST **SCREAMIN' SCOTT SIMON** (b. 1948) played with rock'n'roll revivalists **Sha Na Na** from 1970 to their

farewell in December 2022. Along the way the band opened for names including The Kinks and the Dead, played at the invitation of Lennon and Yoko, and had their own US TV show. Simon also co-wrote the song *Sandy* for the *Grease* OST, played with **Chuck E Weiss**, and released solo LP *Transmissions From Space* in 1981.

GIUITARIST **RISE KAGONA** (b. 1962) played with Zimbabwean '80s pop contenders the **Bhundu Boys**. Success at home was followed by international attention: championed by Andy Kershaw and John Peel, the group signed to Warner Bros and supported Madonna at Wembley in 1987. Wider success was not to be and, beset by problems, the group splintered in the '90s. Kagona later collaborated with **Champion Doug Veitch** and died in his adopted home of Scotland.

R&B SINGER-DRUMMER **SIMON FOX** (below, b. 1949) was an art student and played in bands in Birmingham before joining hard rockers **Hackensack**. He graduated to Bill Nelson's **Be-Bop Deluxe** in 1974. After



four studio albums and 1976 singles chart entry *Ships In The Night*, the band split in 1978. Fox later played with **Trevor Rabin, Blazer Blazer, The Pretty Things** and post-ELO project the **Orkestra**.

DRUMMER **ROGER PALM** (b. 1949) played on early **ABBA** sessions, following stints in Swedish bands the **Gimmicks** and later the **Beatmakers**. In 1970 he became a session drummer, playing on a Benny Andersson-produced single by Anni-Frid Lyngstad as **Frida** in 1971. When they became **ABBA**, Palm followed, his most famous credits including *Mamma Mia*, *Dancing Queen* and *Take A Chance On Me*.

TRAILBLAZING BLACK British actor **CLEO SYLVESTRE** (b. 1945) recorded a version of Phil Spector's *To Know Him Is To Love Him* with **The Rolling Stones** in 1964. A teenage regular at London's Marquee, she met Mick Jagger at a blues night and skipped school to do the session. She later found success on-stage, becoming the first black woman to play a leading role at the National Theatre, and on TV, playing *Melanie Harper* on *Crossroads*, among much else.

DRUMMER **KENNY HYSLOP**'s (b. 1951) brief but significant

tenure with **Simple Minds** began in 1981, having previously played in **Slik** with **Midge Ure** and on the **Skids** album *Joy*. A fan of funk and soul, Hyslop came up with a riff upon which *Promised You A Miracle* was based. Though he left Simple Minds before the hit song was released, he appeared in the videos for previous singles *Love Song* and *Sweat In Bullet*.

POP ARTIST **DEREK BOSHIER** (b. 1937) was, like his peers *David Hockney* and *Peter Blake*, interested in the role of music as part of commercial culture. Suitably, in 1979, his old Central Saint Martins student *Joe Strummer* commissioned him to design **The Clash**'s *2nd Song Book*, and the same year he co-designed the sleeve for **David Bowie**'s *Lodger* (in 1983 his art was used for the cover of *Let's Dance*). He also worked with **The Pretty Things** and inspired early *Roxy Music* with his 1962 painting *Rethink/Re-Entry*.



SINGER **DANIELLE MOORE** (b. 1972) was the frontwoman of UK electronic act **Crazy P**. Growing up near Manchester and a regular at the *Hacienda*, she was invited to join *Crazy P* – formed in Nottingham as **Crazy Penis** – in 2002. Known for her

energetic stage presence, she made seven albums with the band, their latest *Age Of The Ego* arriving in 2019. She was also a DJ.

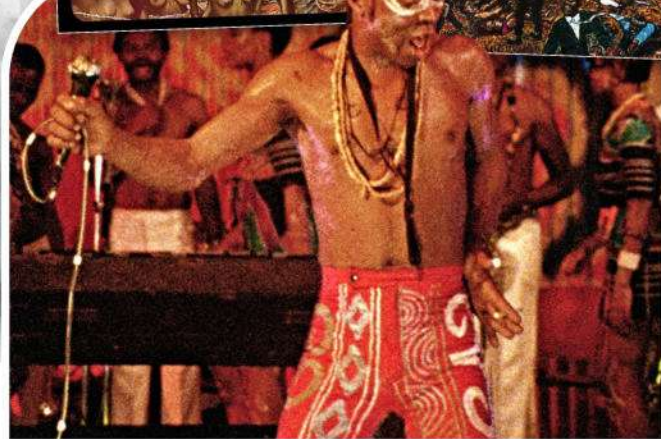
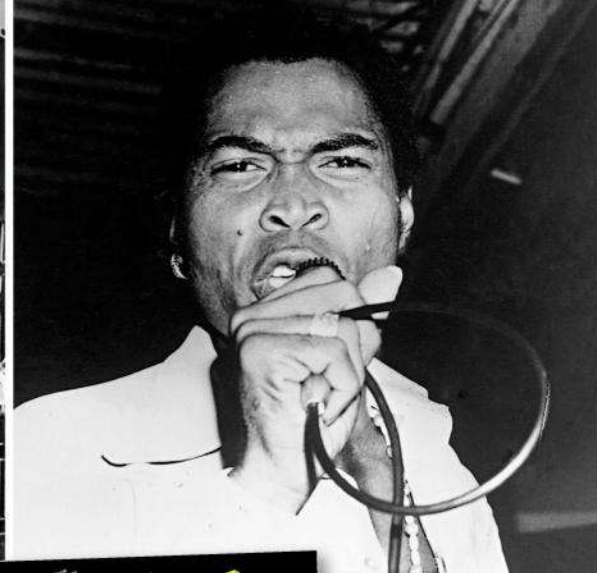
SONGWRITER, SINGER AND artist **BILLY EDD WHEELER** (b. 1932) recorded solo but found greater acclaim as a composer. As well as co-writing the *Johnny and June Carter Cash* hit *Johnny and Coward Of The County* for **Kenny Rogers**, his songs were covered by **Elvis**, **Neil Young**, **Judy Collins**, the **Jefferson Airplane** and many more. He also wrote plays and books, all with an Appalachian bent.

**JOHNNY THUNDER** (below, b. 1931) was best known for his 1963 hit *Loop De Loop*. Born *Leeroy Hamilton* in Florida, he moved to New York in the 1950s, performing with **The Drifters** and **The Ink Spots**, and singing backing vocals for **Dionne Warwick**. After 45s under the name

*Gil Hamilton*, he recorded *Loop De Loop* as *Johnny Thunder* and hit *US Number 4*. His 1968 track *I'm Alive* was a favourite of *Bob Dylan* and was recently used in an advert for *Samsung*.

Jenny Bulley, Chris Catchpole and Ian Harrison





**King of the Afrobeat:** (clockwise from above) Fela Kuti (top, centre) is released from Alagbon Close police station, 1974; Kuti performing at the Africa Shrine, Lagos; pivotal Kuti LPs *Expensive Shit* (1975) and *Kalakuta Show* (1976); Fela on-stage in 1974.

## NOVEMBER 1974 ...the state wages war on Fela Kuti

**NOVEMBER 23** Afrobeat trailblazer Fela Kuti was a relentless thorn in the side of the military government of Nigeria. As well as naming his donkey after head of state General Yakubu Gowon, he'd recently condemned post-colonial corruption on 1973's landmark LP *Gentleman*. Today, the authorities took revenge when the Nigerian army attacked Kuti's HQ in the Lagos suburb of Surulere. A force of 60 men armed with machetes descended on the commune of free love, music and weed-smoking on the pretext of locating a kidnapped woman. "They beat the hell out of me," Kuti later recalled.

Born in 1938 when Nigeria was a British colony, he was used to taking the hard road. Rather than studying medicine, as his parents had planned, he played highlife with his group Koola Lobitos in London at the turn of the '60s. In 1969 the band played in the US, where the radical tenor of the times and its emphasis on black consciousness, as well as the piledriving funk of James Brown, had a huge effect. Back in Lagos, Kuti re-imagined his group, soon renamed Afrika 70, and set up the club that would be dubbed the Africa Shrine in the old Empire Hotel.

1974 was to prove a pivotal year. In April

the police raided his house, hoping to find marijuana and imprison this troublesome radical. Not finding any, the law returned in May just as Kuti and band were about to leave for a tour of Cameroon and planted an incriminating joint. Kuti quickly swallowed it, reportedly with a gulp of whisky.

Kuti was then hauled off to the crowded cells at the Alagbon Close police station, home of the Nigerian Criminal Investigation Department. The inmates referred to the cells as the Kalakuta Republic, which was said to refer to India's notorious Black Hole of Calcutta, or local slang for 'rascal'. While the cops waited for nature to take its course and bag their evidence, Kuti switched his stool sample with a drug-free substitute provided by fellow inmates, and was freed on bail.

"I gave them a nice, clean shit," Kuti later

told Vivien Goldman, adding that he found a kind of parallel society in jail, with its own authorities and administration. "I told [the inmates] I would rename my house Kalakuta Republic," he went on, "not knowing I was bringing real trouble and confusion on my head..."

Soon the *Alagbon Close* and *Expensive Shit* albums, both welters of polyrhythms, horns and keyboards underpinning broadsides in Yoruba and pidgin English, would give his side of the story. Affronted by his defiance, in November the police came again.

The Kalakuta Republic was protected by a 10-foot-high barbed wire fence with guards at the entrance. In 2003 compendium *Fela: From West Africa To West Broadway*, eyewitness John Collins later recalled, "scores of riot police in blue shirts, tin hats and wicker basket shields were attacking Fela's heavy concrete and barbed-wire fence with axes. Fela and his people were on the flat roof of the two-story Kalakuta throwing down anything and everything they could lay their hands on..."

Kuti was beaten badly, spending three days under police guard in hospital. After his lawyer succeeded in getting bail, the crowd accompanying his return to the Kalakuta

**"They beat the hell out of me."**

**FELA KUTI**



Republic was estimated at 10,000: Collins recalls him playing the Shrine that very night, with a bandaged head and his arm in a sling.

As before, he turned the trauma into constructive art. Wrapped in Lemi Ghariokwu's graphic cover painting – where bestial police beat the people as tear gas canisters fly – *Kalakuta Show's* title song, an Afrobeat earthmover with an accusing sax lead line, puts it bluntly: "5am/One day/November 23/The whole thing change... Dem make sure dem use tear gas, baton and bullet... Everybody dey run/Look head dem break/Look blood him dey flow..." Similarly accusatory, *Zombie* followed in 1976.

While overt harassment ceased for a while, a worse clash was to come. In February 1977, 1,000 soldiers razed the Kalakuta Republic to the ground and viciously beat Kuti and his followers. They also threw his educator/activist mother Funmilayo from a window: she died the following year.

Indomitable, Kuti continued to record prolifically into his fifties, with albums including *Sorrow, Tears And Blood* and *Original Sufferhead* serving as bulletins from the frontlines. In 1997 he succumbed to Aids, a disease he denied existed, though his incendiary message of liberation and musical freedom continues to inspire.

"When about 15 policemen turn their gun butts and hit you on the head and you don't have a single scratch... that is power," Kuti told NME's Len Brown in 1986. "I have physically experienced death... and came back."

Ian Harrison



Grand finale: Nico releases *The End...* in 1974.

## Nico contemplates The End

**NOVEMBER 18** Nico records a John Peel session, including a sub-zero version of The Doors' *The End*. The song appears on her new album *The End...* Out this month, it features Brian Eno, Phil Manzanera and producer John Cale, with whom Nico reunited at a gig in London in June. It's her first LP since 1970's *Desertshore*. "So much time has been wasted," she tells Nick Kent. "I must work now. I can't go on as before" (she also calls Cale, "a dirty old man. He is so... married"). On December 13 she supports Tangerine Dream at Reims Cathedral. For the rest of the decade, she appears in films directed by her partner Philippe Garrel: her next album is 1981's *Drama Of Exile*.

### ALSO ON!



#### MOTT NOT

**3** Mott The Hoople's last 45 Saturday Gigs peaks at UK Number 41. A UK tour scheduled to begin on November 10 is cancelled, and in December singer Ian Hunter (above) quits to work with guitarist Mick Ronson.

#### FLOYD TOUR

**4** Pink Floyd begin a tour at the Edinburgh Usher Hall. The setlist features all of *The Dark Side Of The Moon* and Syd Barrett lament Shine On You Crazy Diamond. Released on the 14th, comp *Syd Barrett* collects Syd's two solo LPs. In August, Syd attempted a final session at Abbey Road, but to no avail.

#### DURY ROUGHS IT

**15** Led by Ian Dury, Kilburn And The High Roads release their debut 45 Rough Kids. The band don't last, but Dury makes it big with The Blockheads in 1977. Rough Kids is later covered by Madness, Wreckless Eric and Pearl Harbour.

#### BLAM BLAM PICKETT

**21** Wilson Pickett is arrested in the Catskills after firing a gun into The Sley Brothers' motel room while on a hunting trip. In 1975 he pleads guilty to reckless endangerment.

#### GOODBYE NICK

**25** Nick Drake dies from an overdose of prescription drugs at his family home in Tanworth-in-Arden. Largely unknown in his lifetime, his three LPs will come to be regarded as classics.

### TOP TEN

#### UK SINGLES NOVEMBER 17

- 1** GONNA MAKE YOU A STAR DAVID ESSEX CBS
- 2** KILLER QUEEN QUEEN EMI
- 3** YOU'RE THE FIRST, THE LAST, MY EVERYTHING BARRY WHITE 20TH CENTURY
- 4** (HEY THERE) LONELY GIRL EDDIE HOLMAN ABC
- 5** EVERYTHING I OWN KEN BOOTHE TROJAN
- 6** PEPPER BOX THE PEPPERS SPARK
- 7** NO HONESTLY LYNSEY DE PAUL JET
- 8** JUKE BOX JIVE THE RUBETTES POLYDOR
- 9** LET'S PUT IT ALL TOGETHER THE STYLISTICS AVCO
- 10** ALL OF ME LOVES ALL OF YOU BAY CITY ROLLERS BELL



Crowning glory: Lynsey de Paul hits Number 7.



Beatle's about: John Lennon and Elton John join forces at Madison Square Garden, New York, 1974.

## LENNON'S LAST GIG

**NOVEMBER 28** John Lennon joins Elton John on-stage at Madison Square Garden for three songs, having lost a bet that recent 45 Whatever Gets You Thru The Night would not be a hit. In his last public live performance, Lennon plays the hit, Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds and I Saw Her Standing There. Elton and Lennon have contributed to Ringo's

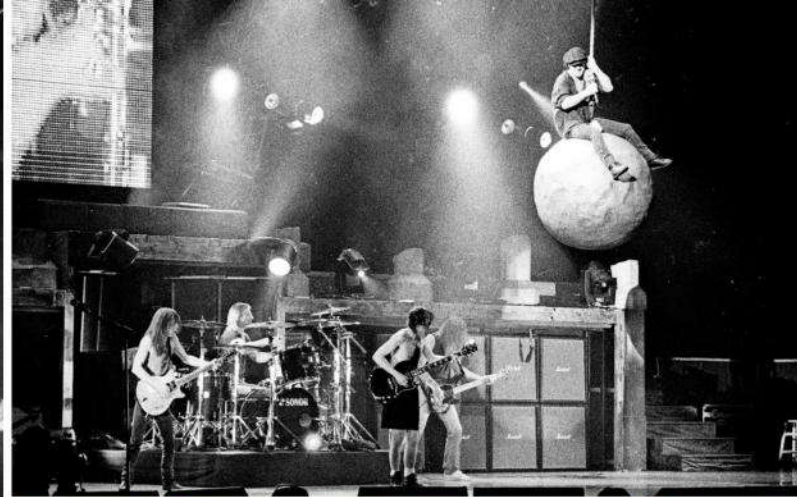
*Goodnight Vienna*, which is out this month. On November 2, George Harrison's North American tour, the first ex-Beatle US jaunt, began in Vancouver. Ravi Shankar supports. This month, Paul McCartney & Wings chart with *Junior's Farm*: on November 13 McCartney appears on ITV's *This Is Your Life* in honour of his boxer pal and *Band On The Run* cover star John Conteh.

### AD ARCHIVE 1974



A bendy action figure of the famed American stunt rider? Yes please. Don't forget his latest album, where he advises you not to take drugs.





On-stage antics: (clockwise from top left) George Clinton steps down from the mothership; AC/DC busting balls in 1996; Judas Priest's Rob Halford revs up, 1979; Throbbing Gristle used Macca's gear for ...*Funk Greats*; the real Mick Taylor.

Strange: only on streaming services, not on CD/vinyl. Is this the

Mick Taylor who used to play with the Stones in their prime? The music sounds a little bit different from his other albums.

*Klaus-Peter Finke, Germany*

**MOJO says:** We asked a representative who confirmed that this is certainly not the Stones' Mick Taylor, so don't bother if the real Mick is what you're after.

## HELP MOJO

I was fascinated to read that Squeeze's early demos were recorded on a 4-track owned by The Only Ones' Peter Perrett (MOJO 369). Are there any other good examples of notable musicians helping each other out with gear? There must be.

*Jon Hamer, via e-mail*

**MOJO says:** A good example is the tale of Paul McCartney lending Throbbing Gristle a 16-track tape recorder to record 1979's infamous *20 Jazz Funk Greats*. A connection existed because TG's Peter 'Sleazy' Christopherson worked on the cover of Wings' *Venus And Mars* when he was employed at design studio Hipgnosis. "We borrowed his 16-track from Mull of Kintyre, his island," the late Genesis P-Orridge told journalist Alan Licht in 2009. "It had mould, moss and stuff on it." Rod Argent, meanwhile, recalled using John Lennon's mellotron when The Zombies were recording *Odessey And Oracle* at Abbey Road. Anyone got any other good instances?

## CONTACT MOJO

Have you got a challenging musical question for the MOJO Brains Trust? E-mail [askmojo@bauermedia.co.uk](mailto:askmojo@bauermedia.co.uk) and we'll help untangle your trickiest puzzles.

# Who came on stage riding what?

Come with us as we answer your rock-related questions and lay uncertainties to rest.

Rob Halford is known for riding on-stage on a Harley-Davidson at Judas Priest gigs, and in 1970 Leonard Cohen rode a horse on-stage at a festival in Aix-en-Provence in France. Who else has done this, and did anyone go further?

*Paul Reilly, via e-mail*

**MOJO says:** They may travel between gigs on tourbuses, jets or limos, but arriving and then moving about on-stage via novel conveyances is a popular rock notion. Lana Del Rey motored to her slot at this year's Coachella festival at the head of a long line of motorbikes, while Lauryn Hill and Divine, on occasion, made do with just one. Those who've made their stage entrance on horses, meanwhile, include Shania Twain, Lil Nas X and country star Tanya Tucker, who became the first singer to put the Grand Ole Opry's hallowed stage at risk of being manure'd when she rode Friesian stallion Lauwe The Magnificent onto it in June 2023. Ziplines are also popular – see high-wire acts Kiss, Robbie Williams and Lady Gaga – as are coffins, as Screaming Lord Sutch and Screamin' Jay Hawkins spookishly proved. As for getting inventive, some of MOJO's favourite alternatives to simply walking include Brian Johnson clinging to a wrecking ball on AC/DC's *Ballbreaker* tour in 1996, Freddie Mercury being carried on the shoulders of both Superman and Darth Vader in 1979, George Clinton emerging from the Parliament/Funkadelic mothership that descended from venue roofs, Peter Gabriel riding a Segway for Games Without Frontiers in 2003, Mick Jagger singing from a cherry-picker above the crowd at a 1981 Stones

show in Philadelphia, and Kurt Cobain being wheeled on-stage at Reading 1992 in a wheelchair and hospital gown, addressing rumours of an ill-health no-show. A particularly admirable example, though, has to be the case of late blues and folk singer-guitarist 'Spider' John Koerner, who sometimes bounced on-stage on a pogo stick. Who's seen similarly unorthodox rock transports of delight? Let us know!

## MORE NAMED LP SIDES

**Re: Who named their album sides (MOJO 371)?** The Smashing Pumpkins also named the two sides of their magnum opus, *Mellon Collie And The Infinite Sadness*. Disc one was named 'Dawn To Dusk', and disc two was named 'Twilight To Starlight'.

*Damien Lavizzo, via e-mail*

**MOJO says:** It was two CDs but it still counts, we reckon! Thanks also to Philip Duce of Wigston for pointing out that The Soft Machine *Volume Two*'s sides are called, respectively, 'Rivmic Melodies' and 'Esther's No Job'. Other examples include the 'Night Side' and 'Day Side' of Joe Jackson's *Night And Day*, the 'Fast Side' and 'Slow Side' of Rod Stewart's *Foot Loose & Fancy Free* and *A Night On The Town*, the (subtitled) 'The Easy Side' and 'The Difficult Side' of Todd Rundgren's *Hermit Of Mink Hollow*, and Extreme's double LP *III Sides To Every Story* being split into 'Yours', 'Mine' and 'And The Truth.' And how could we miss the Small Faces' *Ogdens' Nut Gone Flake*, whose second side is billed as 'Happiness Stan'?

## WHICH MICK TAYLOR?

By chance I discovered an album by Mick Taylor called *Wild Ride* from May 2024 on Apple Music.







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**ANSWERS**

**MOJO 371**

**Across:** 1 Joan Armatrading, 8 Zilch, 9 Brown Acid, 11 AM, 13 LL, 14 Da Capo, 16 Zulus, 18 Soo, 19 Rush, 21 DNA, 22 UFO, 23 Heroic, 24 Newsstand, 26 Cult, 27 On, 29 SPK, 30 Bonny, 31 Blackest, 33 INXS, 36 Scat, 38 Racey, 40 EB, 42 Old, 43 Sponge, 45 Ogres, 46 Rhapsody, 47 Axemen, 48 Del, 49 Can, 50 Snob, 52 Draft, 53 Close To You, 54 Golden Years, 55 Theatrics, 58 I Can See Clearly Now, 60 Mark E Smith, 61 October.

**Down:** 1 Jazz A-Gogo, 2 All Mod Cons, 3 Al Hazan, 4 Mob, 5 Toots, 6 Amnesia, 7 Nail, 10 Clouds Taste Metallic, 12 Mu, 15 Ace, 17 Lawal, 19 Rockin' On, 20 Solex, 23 Hat, 25 Sacrosanct, 28 Nyce, 31 BT, 32 Eddie Cochran, 34 Steel Pulse, 35 Pachinko, 37 A Boy Named Sue, 39 ELP, 41 Tractor Beam, 44 Golden Hair, 48 Dry, 51 Baduizm, 56 Ringo, 57 Flat, 59 Woe.

**Anagram:** Brian Jones

**ACROSS**

- 1 See photoclue A (8,3,7)
- 2 Prince Buster song for heading into the unknown (3,4,6)
- 11 ---- City Four, -deth or Banton (4)
- 13 AKA a crew member (6)
- 15 Canterbury prog act - just what the doctor ordered (8,6)
- 18 Reni's unrecorded band The ---- (3)
- 20 Bread work on their annals in '72 (5)
- 21 Jazzer Don Ellis in poetic, Japanese mood (5)
- 22 "You say we're fantastic/But still we don't head the bill." (Kate Bush) (3)
- 23 Prefab Sprout's debut - with Cronos from Venom's brother Graham on drums (5)
- 25 Brrr, it's Eddy Grant's label (3)
- 26 Lambert, Hendricks & Ross, caught in a rainstorm (10)
- 28 Reggae big seller, *1000 Volts Of----* (4)
- 29 Definite article used by Headcoats (4)
- 30 Merle Haggard LP featuring Jesus, Take A Hold (3)
- 32 Barry Hogan's fondly remembered festival (1,1,1)
- 34 Björk's got mail (4)
- 35 Art Blakey, pieced together in 1961 (6)
- 36 She had Eurovision success with Boom Bang-A-Bang (4)
- 39 The last Replacements LP to feature Bob Stinson (3)
- 40 Post-rockers Fridge's third (3)
- 41 The Boo Radleys rise from the dead? (7)
- 42 A country radio and TV bash held in Louisiana (7)
- 43 Slipknot's home state and second LP (4)
- 44 Frontman with The Monochrome Set (3)
- 45 Bryan Adams' 1984 breakthrough LP (8)
- 46 AKA Berry, Buck, Mills and Stipe (1,1,1)
- 47 Deke Leonard's Welsh rockers (3)
- 48 The Smiths' posthumous live LP (4)
- 50 Song title shared by The Monkees and Charles Aznavour (3)
- 51 Pet Shop Boys LP featuring their cover of Go West (4)
- 52 Exotica singer --- Sumac (3)
- 53 Ye Medieval-Progge ensemble who enjoyed Midnight Mushrooms (7)
- 55 Blues voice Ms. James (4)
- 56 She debuted with 1995's *Pieces Of You* (5)
- 59 The Primitives' biggest hit (5)
- 61 See photoclue B (5)
- 62 London venue for Bob Marley & The Wailers' 1975 live LP (6)
- 63 The Jam's second number one single (5)

**DOWN**

- 1 Gershwin-penned jazz standard (1, 9)
- 2 The madness Hawkwind warned of in 1976 (6)
- 3 AKA Family Man, reggae drummer (5, 8)
- 4 Elvis Costello's devilish label (3)
- 5 Bacharach and David hit for Dionne Warwick and Cilla Black (6,3,3,1,5)
- 6 Fragile opening salvo from the Traveling Wilburys (6,4,4)
- 7 Library music label of note (3)
- 8 Time of Bob Seger's Moves (5)
- 10 Players in the Gulag Orkestar (6)
- 12 Lightning Seeds feel their second LP (5)
- 14 Paper strip on covetable Japanese LP releases (3)
- 16 Michael Head gets around the rules? (8)
- 17 Florence + The Machine, feeling peckish in 2018 (6)
- 19 Fujiya & Miyagi taking a pause (2)
- 20 UK imprint who signed the Stones (5)
- 24 Madness, emphatic on LP two (10)
- 27 See photoclue C (5, 7)
- 31 Enter the arena with roots reggae band The ----- (10)
- 33 Staffordshire rockers who said, *You Are The Music ... We're Just The Band* (7)
- 37 Stevie Wonder song subtitled (Everything's Alright) (7)
- 38 Graffiti notable who's designed for Blur (6)
- 43 Siouxsie & The Banshees' Middle Eastern song (6)
- 49 Randy California's group (6)
- 54 Sadie, Eyes or even a M.F. (4)
- 57 The Alan Parsons Project reflect on gender roles (3)
- 58 Yann Tiersen's side-project (3)
- 60 UK label, home to The Verve, Auteurs, Smashing Pumpkins, etc (3)

Getty (3)





By royal appointment: King Crimson's final form (from left) Jakko Jakszyk, Pat Mastelotto, Robert Fripp, Gavin Harrison, Tony Levin, Mel Collins, Jeremy Stacey.

# Jakko Jakszyk and King Crimson

It began with a blown mind in Watford, and faded to silence in Tokyo.

## HELLO SEPTEMBER 2013

King Crimson was about the third concert I saw, at Watford Town Hall [on July 15, 1971]. I was 13. A mate had played me 21st Century Schizoid Man and it completely freaked me out. I left thinking that somehow my life had changed.

Later I worked with [King Crimson co-founder] Peter Sinfield, and in 2002 there was the idea of ex-King Crimson members playing the older material [as the 21st Century Schizoid Band]. They didn't have a singer or someone to play Robert [Fripp]'s guitar parts and Pete said, "Well, I know this guy..." – that's how I ended up, ironically, being the only non-King Crimson member.

It was a bit of a nightmare, but it became a bonding thing with Robert, who became like my own personal Samaritan I could phone up. That's how I got to know him. [Ex-Crimson drummer] Ian Wallace had tragically died, and I organised, with his wife, a memorial for him in London. I sang Islands. After that Robert invited me to his house for lunch. About a year later, we recorded these improvisations, which he gave me on a hard drive, and said, "I'm sure you'll think of something to do with these." That became an album called *A Scarcity Of Miracles*.

Then, a year after he'd announced publicly that he'd retired from the music industry, my mobile rang and it was Robert. I was standing outside my house in Berkhamsted, about to

put my key in the front door. He said he's re-forming King Crimson, and would I like to be the lead singer and second guitarist?

We did a load of pre-rehearsal, apart and together. Gavin [Harrison] started writing all these very complicated parts for three drummers, like a jigsaw. We did some rehearsals at Elstree, in the round. I think it finally hit me on one of the big sound-stages, you walked in and thought, Fuck, that looks incredible. The very first show we did was in a really wacky looking venue called The Egg in Albany, upstate New York. I'm trying to be a grown-up professional, but there's a 13-year-old boy in me going, What the fuck?! *This is insane*. And it really came to a head when we did the encore of ...Schizoid Man. It was really overwhelming. I'm singing and playing with Robert Fripp and Tony Levin... it was a defining, extraordinary moment.

## GOODBYE DECEMBER 8 2021

We were the longest surviving line-up, and we'd do two tours a year. It was just getting bigger. Then, of course, Covid came and the whole world was weird. Special visas, no standard commercial flights, everything was more costly. Nothing was said directly, but I remember the last show we did in America was in Washington DC [on September 11]... Robert won't touch a drink until the end of a tour, but we were corralled into the green room and had our glasses charged with champagne, and he proposed a toast, "To the completion of King Crimson touring North America." I thought, What does that mean? Are we completely done?

We had to abandon going to Australia, and in Japan they were very, very strict, with 10 days alone in your hotel room. That made the end of the tour – and King Crimson, as it turned out – particularly surreal. At the end of a show Robert would always stay on-stage a bit longer than everybody else, but at the last show [at Tokyo's Bunkamura Orchard Hall] he stayed on for ages, like he was looking at everyone in the auditorium. Then he bowed. There's a very poignant picture of us walking off-stage. Robert wrote something afterwards ("King Crimson's final notes of Starless, the last note of this Completion Tour in Japan, moved from sound to silence at 21:04").

There wasn't much of an aftershow. The next day Tony was so upset I couldn't talk to him. We wrote to each other afterwards, instead. And that was kind of it. I was quite gutted, but... it's Robert's band. I was never under the illusion that I was anything other than a conduit for that.

We've been recording a studio album of the newer material that we co-wrote – Robert's not contributing at the moment – but exactly what that will become is anyone's guess. I've written a book [Who's The Boy With The Lovely Hair?] which covers a wide range – identity, my adoptive parents, how I'd gone from being a kid thinking about being in bands like King Crimson, and then ending up in King Crimson. Which was like the maddest childhood dream, and it came true.

As told to Ian Harrison

*Who's The Boy With The Lovely Hair? The Unlikely Memoir of Jakko M Jakszyk* is published by Kingmaker Publishing.



"Robert stayed on-stage for ages... then he bowed."

JAKKO JAKSZYK



Schizoid behaviour: Jakszyk and Fripp preparing to play; (left) Jakko today.





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