

SCARED TO DANCE
summer 2010 fanzine



inside!!

£1.50

THE PAINS OF BEING PURE AT HEART

INDIETRACKS FESTIVAL

ALLO DARLIN'

DARREN HAYMAN

STANDARD FARE

BRILLDREAM

BETTY AND THE WEREWOLVES

THE UNDERSTUDIES

ODD BOX RECORDS

MY SECRET WORLD: THE STORY OF SARAH RECORDS

And much, much more...!



introduction

Hello and welcome to the first Scared To Dance fanzine! I got the idea to put together my own zine after DJing at Do You DIY? where Rod Bower had asked me to contribute a page for the all-dayer. It wasn't so much the fanzine itself but looking around the room that day I realised I knew so many people who actively did things themselves. Friends with endless enthusiasm for making music and putting it out themselves, promoters, bloggers and people who just show undying support for what we have here. So here it is, my zine to the world. I hope you have as much fun reading it as I did putting it all together. Enjoy the *Press Play for Songs* by *The Understudies* EP and see you at the club night soon!

Paul Richards

With special thanks to all of the bands who were interviewed, all of our contributors and also to Bree Wright for all the hours of painstaking design.

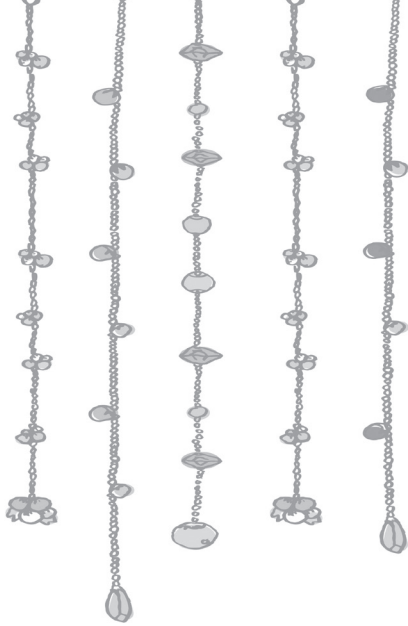
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INTERVIEW #1: *THE PAINS OF BEING PURE AT HEART*

SCARED TO DANCE CHATS TO KIP BERMAN, LEAD SINGER OF THE PAINS OF BEING PURE AT HEART.

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO SINCE YOUR LAST TOUR OF BRITAIN?

Well, since we were last over in December, we had some time to practice and demo a bunch of new songs, toured Japan, New Zealand and Australia and are now on a US tour with Surfer Blood and Hooray for Earth. It's going really great – we're excited to be on the road again, especially with two bands that we really like a lot.

TELLS US MORE ABOUT YOUR NEW SINGLE *SAY NO TO LOVE*.

If you strum an E chord, then an A chord then a B chord then the A chord again, repeat that for about 3 and a half minutes you've got yourself a summertime jam (hopefully). Because we tour a lot, we like to make new music available to people as immediately as possible – it's fun to have new songs to play, and people seem to appreciate that if they come see us again, we're not just going to regurgitate the same set we did 6 months prior.

YOU RECENTLY MADE A VIDEO FOR *HIGHER THAN THE STARS*. HOW DID THAT COME ABOUT? WHY DID THE

VIDEO COME SO LATE AFTER THE RELEASE OF THE SINGLE?

We wanted the video to be a certain way, and then we got all caught up in touring and other stuff, so we never got to finish it in a way that felt right. In the end we'd rather have a video we feel proud of (involving furies) than one that's not really us. Right now we're working on a new video for "Say No to Love" and hopefully that will get done a bit closer to the actual release of the single.

YOU'RE HEADLINING INDIETRACKS FESTIVAL ON THE SUNDAY NIGHT, HAVE YOU BEEN BEFORE?

It's a festival I've really wanted to attend since 2007, and we've wanted to play it but have never been able to make it work out. It caters to the kind of passionate pop that we love, and the people who attend are a lot of our best friends we've met from on tour. So yeah, we're not only looking forward to playing and seeing other bands, but just hanging out with our friends.

WHAT BANDS ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING OVER THE WEEKEND?

There are so many, so if I forget some please forgive me. The Blanche Hudson Weekend, Allo Darlin', Shrag, Love Is



All, Specific Heats, Pooh Sticks, The Primitives and lots more.

WERE YOU SURPRISED BY THE CRITICAL SUCCESSES OF YOUR DEBUT ALBUM AND THE *HIGHER THAN THE STARS* EP? IT'S ALL HAPPENED SO QUICKLY FOR YOU.

Each thing has sort of been a gradual build up from the thing before. While it looks incredibly improbable and dramatic looking back at our start at Peggy's birthday party, to us at least there's never been a sense of "overnight" rags to less raggedy rags. There was the Cloud-berry cd-r, our self-released s/t EP, the Atomic Beat "Kurt Cobain's Cardigan" split 7" w/ The Parallelograms, the "Searching for the Now split 7" w/ Summer Cats, and then the "Everything With You" 7" on Slumberland as well as several tracks for fanzine compilations

(Anorak City, A Layer of Chips, Fog of Ideas). Each of those releases seemed to find some really enthusiastic listeners in the indiepop community, which is all we ever really thought would happen. When we started, we figured we'd have like 12 fans, but they'd be really good fans and that was perfect. Aside from a little road trip to Athens Popfest in 2007 and a very brief mini tour of the UK with the help of The Manhattan Love Suicides, we didn't really experience too many opportunities to play outside of our home town.

But after the record came out, we started getting more opportunities to tour and people started discovering us, which was both completely surprising and wonderful feeling. So many of the bands from which we drew inspiration never got the chance to do half of the things we have in our time together, and while it would



be easy to get bogged down and feel unworthy, I think the most respectful thing to do is just try to appreciate the opportunities you have, make the most of them and continue to work hard. We try to be as upfront about the bands we admire that have influenced our music as possible, so that hopefully through people learning about us, they can also get into Close Lobsters, The Pastels, The Manhattan Love Suicides, Black Tambourine, Rocketship and Exploding Hearts.

I HEAR YOU'RE WORKING ON YOUR NEW LP AT THE MOMENT. WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM IT?

Well, we won't start recording it until we get back to New York, but we're totally excited by the songs. I think a lot can be made of production and all the weird details of making a record, but if you're not excited about the songs, then all the

fancy production in the world won't fix that.

WHO'LL BE RELEASING IT IN THE US AND EUROPE?

We've enjoyed and are grateful to both Mike from Slumberland and Sean from Fortuna Pop! and hope to continue to work with them on the next record. Hopefully they'll want to too... I have to say here that I firmly believe that not every indie is run by great people, nor every major populated by music haters. But both Mike Schulman and Sean Price are two of the most virtuous, hardworking, aesthetically discerning and kind people in music. The fact that Sean lets us stay on his floor, eat his olives and granola when we're in London, and Mike fly's halfway around the world to see us play, despite having a full time job, a lovely wife and a 2 year old baby, never ceases to amaze us.





HOW'S YOUR RECENT TOUR OF THE US WITH SURFER BLOOD GOING? HAVE YOU GOT A FAVOURITE GIG SO FAR?

Ha, we've only played three so far, but we really like both Surfer Blood and Hooray for Earth. It's really fun to tour with bands that are both really good and fun to hang out with. To be honest, even bands you sometimes think are super serious usually turn out to be nice guys/gals when you meet them. Like, today Hooray for Earth "Iced" us during soundcheck. For those that don't know what icing is, it's when you're presented with a Smirnoff Ice (alternative beverage) and you have to take a knee and chug it to prove your worth. This is a tradition among more fraternity types in the US ("lad culture" I believe you call it), but we are happy to appropriate it for our own perverse pleasure.

DO YOU ENJOY TOURING OR DO YOU GET HOMESICK?

I really like touring more than anything. Life at home is cool because I have some really wonderful friends that I like to see, but the chance to travel to new places and meet new people that I'd never get to go to or meet – that's such a once in a lifetime opportunity, that it feels like I've won sort of "life" lottery where I get to do something I love more than anything. I try to just appreciate it 100 percent and do it the best I can.

WHAT BANDS ARE EXCITING YOU AT THE MOMENT?

Too many to name here. Some albums that have come out this year that I've

really liked are (and in no particular order):

Allo Darlin' - Allo Darlin'
 Gemini - Wild Nothing
 Revenger - Knight School,
 The Monitor - Titus Andronicus,
 Spirit Youth - Depreciation Guild,
 Chronosynclastic - The Prids,
 Momo EP - Hooray for Earth,
 Astro Coast - Surfer Blood and
 The World that Never Was - The Secret History



Other bands I'm psyched on a lot, but maybe haven't released an album yet: Yuck, Zaza, Best Coast, Light Asylum, German Measles, The Blanche Hudson Weekend, Dream Diary, Gold Bears.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE REST OF 2010?

Well, we're going to record our album this summer, so that's going to be a lot of fun. Also, we're going to be touring a lot – pretty psyched about everything, especially the chance to finally play Indietracks.

www.thepainsofbeingpureatheart.com



INDIETRACKS FESTIVAL

SCARED TO DANCE CATCH UP WITH
INDIETRACKS ORGANISER STUART MACKAY.

"So what's indie pop, then?" one of the station guards asks me as he watches a bunch of excited festival-goers step off the stream train on the way to Indietracks.

He's one of a team of local volunteers who drive the locomotives, maintain the trains and act as signalmen at the Midland Railway Centre. You might think that having thousands of music fans descend upon this quaint railway would be their worst nightmare, but actually they're delighted to see so many people enjoying the trains. I never know how to describe indie pop, so I dodge the question and point the guard towards one of the carriages where MJ Hibbett is about to enthral passengers with his catchy, acoustic observations.



I never set out to run a festival, it just happened. Back at the beginning of 2007, I had no experience in organising shows and was simply working at the railway restoring steam trains when I had the idea of staging a gig there.

I nervously approached the railway managers about running a small event in April and, luckily, they were incredibly supportive. I printed flyers to hand out at local gigs but although I'd been given flyers many times at shows, for some reason I was too nervous to hand out my own. I thought that everyone would laugh at my suggestion of visiting some old railway in the middle of nowhere to see bands, so I just quickly laid down the flyers and left. I needn't have worried. Word spread, the night sold out really quickly, and the evening was a success. We had to do it again.

Summer was approaching, so I started to think about an all-dayer. Then, I figured that if we were building stages and people were travelling long distances, why not hold it for two days? And that's how, in the summer of 2007, Indietracks became a proper festival.

I have to admit that our first festival was a struggle. I was working full-time restoring trains and trying to do everything else in my spare time. The bands needed convincing that this festival could actually happen, and I was forced to relocate the outdoor stage at the last minute as torrential rain was forecasted. We moved the main stage into a recently built locomotive shed, with a concrete floor that had only set a week previously and a stage I had built myself. Typically, after all that effort, it turned out to be a sunny weekend.



In 2008 we added a small outdoor stage (on a lorry trailer) and, last year, thanks to the support of our partner Elephant Records, we were able to build an even bigger one - and this time it wasn't on the back of a lorry! The partnership with Elephant to celebrate their 20th anniversary also helped us to attract even more people than ever. The Spanish label brought a range of fantastic bands to play the new outdoor stage, including La Casa Azul and Camera Obscura, and a whole host of Spanish indie pop fans followed them over, which gave the festival a distinctly European favour. La Casa Azul even won a special Virtual Festival Critics' Choice award for his headline slot, which saw our main field transformed into a Euro-indie pop disco! We also hosted craft and music workshops for the first time ever in areas such jewellery and bunting making, and how to run your own record label. These proved really popular with both young and old alike, and we're looking forward to running these again this year!

Behind the scenes, everyone involved in running Indietracks is doing it as a hobby. Jobs such as art-work, press releases and festival programmes are all done by the team for the love of it, and I'm still quite surprised at the level of interest that we receive. It's a bit strange to get that sort of attention, but I'm really pleased that my idea has caught people's imagination. Four years ago, combining pop music and locomotives was just a ridiculous dream ... now it's full steam ahead for 2010!

So far we've announced ...

THE PAINS OF BEING PURE AT HEART

THE POOH STICKS / THE PRIMITIVES

LOVE IS ALL / EVERYBODY WAS IN THE FRENCH RESISTANCE...NOW!

Allo Darlin', Ballboy, Be Like Pablo, Betty and The Werewolves, Boy Genius, Burning Hearts, The Blanche Hudson Weekend, The Callas, The Cannanes, The Cavalcade, Cineplexx, Clint Play People, David Tattersall, The Felt Tips, Foxes!, Internet Forever, The Give It Ups, The Hillfields, Jam On Bread, The Just Joans, La La Love You, Lime Chalks, Linda Guilala, The Loves, Mexican Kids at Home, Micktravis, The Middle Ones, The Millipedes, MJ Hibbett & the Validators, Paisley & Charlie, Pale Sunday,



Printed Circuit, The Orchids, Onward Chariots, Sarandon, Secret Shine, Shrag, Springfactory, Slow Club, The Smittens, Socialist Leisure Party, The Specific Heats, Standard Fare, Stars In Coma, Stars of Aviation, The Sunny Street, This Many Boyfriends, Urbantramper, Veronica Falls, White Town, Winston Echo, Yokoko.

Indietracks Festival takes place from Friday 23rd July to Sunday 25th July at the Midland Railway Centre, Butterley, Derbyshire. Visit www.indietracks.co.uk to buy your ticket now!

www.indietracks.co.uk - 23rd - 25th July 2010

INTERVIEW #2: DARREN HAYMAN



Darren Hayman will be guest DJ at the next Scared To Dance night on Sat 31st July

HELLO DARREN! YOU'VE BEEN TOURING AGAIN SINCE THE INCIDENT IN NOTTINGHAM AT THE END OF LAST YEAR [DARREN SUFFERED A FRACTURED SKULL BEING MUGGED AFTER ONE OF HIS GIGS]. HOW'S IT BEEN?

Bearable. I always enjoy my time on stage, but I was a little jumpy as might be expected.

DO YOU STILL DISLIKE TOURING OUTSIDE OF LONDON AND BEING AWAY FROM HOME?

Yep, pretty much. It gets worse as I get older. I think I maybe a little agoraphobic. Nothing specifically to do with the attack although that didn't help, obviously. It's all starting to feel very undignified for a man my age.

YOUR LAST ALBUM PRAM TOWN WAS SEEN AS A RETURN TO FORM BY MANY CRITICS. I'VE READ THAT YOU DON'T READ REVIEWS — DO YOU HAVE A PARTICULAR DISTAIN FOR MUSIC JOURNALISTS?

No I did read the reviews for Pram Town and liked, for the most part, what people had to say. It's nice to be liked, even by critics, and it does help the ego but it isn't the centre of what I do.

YOU'VE SAID IN THE PAST THAT YOUR FORTHCOMING RECORD ESSEX ARMS IS GOING TO BE A "VERY DEPRESSING RECORD" AND IT HAS "A STRONG THEME OF DEATH." WHAT ELSE CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT IT?

I don't know if it's depressing or not. It's supposed to be about beauty and love in unlikely places. It does feature a death (a car crash), its bleak certainly but there is a love story in there.

WILL ESSEX ARMS BE CARRYING ON SOME OF THE SAME THEMES FROM PRAM TOWN? CAN IT BE SEEN AS A SISTER ALBUM?

Well it's a second album in an Essex trilogy although I'm not sure what themes link them other than me thinking about location and my home county. Both are love stories I guess. Both are sort of sliding doors narratives, that is to say what I might have been if I'd stuck around in Essex.

WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES FOR ESSEX ARMS? SCOTT WALKER ONCE SAID HE MAKES EACH RECORD IN THE HOPE TO RAISE ENOUGH MONEY TO MAKE AN-



OTHER. DO YOU SHARE THIS APPROACH?

I suppose. It is tough out there. I currently make less money than ever and as discussed above I am starting to withdraw from playing live which is where people usually make up what they lose on dwindling CD sales. I want it to be good. I want it to matter to at least some people. Outside of that I don't ask for too much.

I WAS RECENTLY AT ONE OF YOUR GIGS AND SOME PEOPLE WERE LAUGHING AT SOME OF YOUR MORE WITTY LYRICS. I FIND THESE MORE TRAGIC AND MOROSE THAN COMEDIC. DOES THAT BOTHER YOU?

It's interesting how audiences act as one and how one audience will laugh at a line that others might recoil from. People do sometimes laugh at odd places but in general I don't mind. I'm trying to use unlikely words in songs and often they jar and amuse.

DO YOU STILL ENJOY PLAYING HEFNER SONGS OR DO YOU SEE IT AS A BURDEN?

I don't mind too much. There are some I never do now, but as long as I switch them around it's ok. My main problem is that I

think a lot of the popular ones aren't very good.

YOU'VE PRETTY MUCH RELEASED EVERY HEFNER SONG. IS THERE ANYTHING LEFT IN THE ARCHIVE?

There are a lot of live tapes. The BBC stuff is proving hard to license. Completely unheard Hefner songs? I can't think of many.

WOULD YOU PLAY AGAIN WITH JACK HAYTER AS YOU DID WHEN YOU TOURED HEFNER SONGS A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO?

Jack is on a lot of Essex Arms and does sometimes appear with me. Although I have no plans to do 'Hefner' songs shows.

YOU RECENTLY PLAYED AT STROKE YOUR BEARD IN LONDON PLAYING JUST THE UKULELE WHICH REMINDED ME OF YOUR BLUEGRASS RECORD. WILL THERE BE ANOTHER HAYMAN, WATKINS, TROUT & LEE RELEASE?

It seems unlikely. I have no objection and the four of us see each other often. Dave's commitments with The Wave Pictures would be the main barrier.

WHAT DOES THE REST OF 2010 HAVE IN STORE FOR YOU?

Trying to finish this album about the Essex Witch Trials and avoiding playing live.

FINALLY, MORSE OR LEWIS?

Morse of course, but Lewis does ok as a make-do.



Darren Hayman & The Secondary Modern



INTERVIEW #3: *ALLO DARLIN'*



HI ELIZABETH! WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO SINCE WE LAST SAW YOU GUEST DJ AT SCARED TO DANCE?

Hey Paul. We've been pretty busy since then, we've just come back from a 10 day tour of the East Coast of the States. We had an awesome time playing shows in New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont and Quebec.

HOW WAS YOUR IN-STORE GIG AT ROUGH TRADE EAST?

It was really cool. Our vinyl copies of the album just arrived before we went on stage so we were really excited to see those. See how the artwork turned out and things. Kind of amazing to see our record on the racks. Although Bill and I were wondering if we would end up in the Oz/NZ section at the back of the store!

THE NEW YORK TIMES HAD SOME VERY NICE THINGS TO SAY ABOUT YOU. HOW WAS NYC POP-FEST?

Yes that was pretty exciting for us. I met the guy from the NY Times after the show but I didn't realize he liked us that much. It was a really great article about indie pop in general I thought – he really captured the kind of DIY spirit and mentioned Cloudberry and WeePOP! which was pretty awesome! The popfest itself was super cool. Our show was really good fun – Gary Olson from the Ladybug Transistor sang Bobby's part on "Dreaming". He was so good I kind of forgot what I was doing because I was just listening to him. I was only there the night we played and the previous night at Cakeshop because we had gigs the other nights. I really loved Pants Yell! and I was sad it was one of their last shows. Still it was cool to see them before they broke up.



YOUR DEBUT ALBUM JUST CAME OUT ON FORTUNA POP! AND IT'S HAD SOME EXCELLENT EARLY REVIEWS. WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES FOR IT?

I think we've already exceeded what we hoped for with this album and this band – anything else is a real bonus. We're kind of amazed at everything that's happened to us. But we are very proud of the album, even though we started recording it just under a year ago and now we know these songs so well it would probably sound very different if we recorded it now.

THE ALBUM IS FULL OF POTENTIAL SINGLES, "IF LONELINESS WAS ART" BEING MY PARTICULAR FAVOURITE. WILL YOU BE RELEASING MORE SINGLES FROM THE ALBUM OR WILL YOUR NEXT RELEASE BE NEW MATERIAL?

"If Loneliness Was Art" is going to be another single, but I think it's just going to be a limited release. We've had a lot of support from 6 Music and Sean at Fortuna Pop! wants to give them more songs to play on the radio, because it will keep up interest in the band and the album. We released "The Polaroid Song" last December and you kind of have to follow up the album with singles to keep momentum going. We will have new material soon but we need to find time to record it first!

YOU'RE PLAYING ON THE FRIDAY NIGHT OF INDIETRACKS IN-BETWEEN VERONICA FALLS AND BAND EVERYBODY WAS IN THE FRENCH RESISTANCE... NOW. WILL YOU BE STICKING AROUND FOR THE WEEKEND TO SEE OTHER BANDS?

Yes we will and we can't wait!

YOU ALL LOOK SO HAPPY WHEN YOU'RE PLAYING ON STAGE WHICH DEFINITELY RUBS OFF ON THE AUDIENCE. DO YOU SECRETLY ALL HATE EACH OTHER AND GO HOURS WITHOUT TALKING ON TOUR, LIKE SIMON & GARFUNKEL?

No! The thing about our band is we were friends before we started playing music together. Of course when you're in each other's faces all the time on tour you need some time apart, but we genuinely get on well and love playing music to-

gether. They're just a really fun bunch of people.

SPEAKING OF PAUL SIMON, YOU PLAYED TWO OF HIS SONGS WHEN YOU DJED FOR US IN APRIL. WAS HE AN INFLUENCE ON YOUR SONGWRITING?

Yes definitely. "My Heart is a Drummer" is meant to be a kind of tribute to him. It even says so in the song, specifically the song "Gracelands". It's pretty daggy to say it but we all grew up with our parents playing "Gracelands" and all that old Simon & Garfunkel stuff, along with The Beach Boys. It kind of sounds like the sunny music of nostalgia to me, and I guess that's a quality we kind of have in our songs, or at least I'm chasing anyway.

WHO WOULD YOU SAY YOUR BIGGEST INFLUENCES ARE?

Well The Beach Boys and Paul Simon, as mentioned above. I know for Paul and Mike it's a lot of stuff like Super Furrries and Yo La Tengo, for me and Bill, The Go-Betweens. Jens Lekman would be my favourite songwriter around at the moment, and has been for years. We all like Buddy Holly a lot. I also really love the comedian Daniel Kitson. Not that he writes songs, but he's an influence!

ARE THERE ANY OTHER BANDS OR SOLO ARTISTS YOU'D LIKE TO COLLABORATE WITH? I HEAR JARVIS COCKER IS A FAN!

Haha. If I'd known as a teenager that one day he would hear our songs I probably would have died. I've never really thought about who we'd like to collaborate with, but it would probably be someone really daggy!

AND FINALLY, WHAT ELSE HAVE YOU GOT PLANNED FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR?

Lots of shows, in the UK, Europe and possibly back to the US later in the year. We really want to get recording the next album but at the same time we don't want to rush it like we did this one – it was cool to do it really fast but it would be better if the band actually knew the songs before we went in to record them! We're playing the End of the Road festival in September, which will finish off the summer. It's going to be a good summer!



INTERVIEW #4: STANDARD FARE

YOUR SINGLE "DANCING" CAUSED QUITE A STIR IN LONDON'S INDIE POP SCENE LAST YEAR (MAKING #3 IN OUR FESTIVE FIFTY). HAVE YOU BEEN SURPRISED HOW THINGS HAVE TAKEN OFF SO QUICKLY?

EMMA: It's been fantastic to be made to feel so welcome by such nice people in the indie pop scene, both across the country and abroad. We've been a band for quite a while; just over 5 years now and we've always enjoyed playing and writing together but in the last year it's all moved up a level. Getting the chance to play so many gigs and having people like the album too has just made it all so exciting for us.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR DEBUT ALBUM *THE NOYELLE BEAT*. WHAT HOPES DO YOU HAVE FOR IT?

DAN: The album's about romance and friendship and all those little things that come between the two. It was released back at the beginning of April and in two months it's far surpassed all the hopes we had for it. When we recorded it, we



didn't think it would be heard by half the people it has, and for their reaction to be positive, is better than we could have imagined. It's given us so much energy for what we're doing.

HOW WAS YOUR TRIP TO THE US AND SXSW?

ANDY: Yeah the US trip was incredible! Really enjoyed playing at SXSW, it was great being asked to play there. Everywhere we walked in Austin music was blaring out of every door we past, lots of people, lots of great bands, and the weather was good too.

WHAT ARE YOUR INFLUENCES? EMMA, DID YOUR MUM'S PREVIOUS BAND POISON GIRLS HAVE A BIG IMPACT ON YOUR WRITING?

EMMA: They're all quite varied really; my influences are bands like Fleetwood Mac, Blondie, Van Morrison and also stuff like the Be Good Tanyas. Yes I remember really liking the way the Poison Girls wrote their songs - always quite upbeat happy music and then more uncompromising lyrics.

DAN: I guess I'm influenced mainly by bands like The Lemonheads, the 100 Broken Windows era Idlewild, and early Green Day. It's generally something that has that urgency about it but that still has a melody tucked away somewhere

Andy: American pop punk was what made me want to start playing the drums, really enjoy Britpop, and just recently been listening to a lot of dance music, which has given me influence on a couple of our new songs.

WHO ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO SEE PLAY AT INDIETRACKS?

EMMA: None of us have been to Indietracks before although we wanted to get there last year. We're really looking forward to it.

DAN: I don't want to build anything up but I'm sure we'll think about doing something a little different. It's a great line-up; I can see us rushing round all weekend trying not to miss anyone! I heard the Mexican Kids at Home are playing, I love their stuff and I've not seen them play for a while, so that'll be really cool.

Andy: Yeah there are loads of bands I'm looking forward to seeing! Really excited about Allo Darlin', I really enjoy their music.

YOU'VE GOT A UK TOUR LINED-UP FOR JULY. WHAT ELSE HAVE YOU GOT PLANNED FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR?

EMMA: Indeed we are, July is going be fun and especially with the festivals we are doing! We are also doing another US tour down the east coast in August and then we are hoping to record the new material we've been working on and we'll just keep playing anywhere we can.

myspace.com/standardfare





INTERVIEW #5: BETTY AND THE WEREWOLVES



HELLO BETTY AND THE WEREWOLVES!
LAURA, TELL US ABOUT YOUR FORTHCOM-
ING DEBUT ALBUM *TEATIME FAVOURITES*.
Hello! Well, we wanted the album to
sound a bit like a tea party with a mad
aunt who serves teacups of gin in her
loveliest china set whilst surrounded by
cats, books and cakes.

WILL THE ALBUM FEATURE YOUR TWO PAST SING-
LES "EUSTON STATION" AND "DAVID CASSIDY"
OR WILL IT BE ALL NEW MATERIAL?

Yes, the two singles will be on it, and our new 7"
"Paper Thin", then eleven other songs - some
that we've played at gigs a lot already, and some
which are completely new, so new that we've only
learnt to play them properly since recording the
album...!

YOU RECENTLY PLAYED AT CAMDEN CRAWL.
HOW DID IT GO?

Ooh, it was lots of fun! We were playing on both
nights so it was quite hectic, but we managed to
escape for a clandestine afternoon of craft on the
second day, where Emily made a bag!

YOU SEEM TO BE FOLLOWING IN A LONG LINE
OF FEMALE DOMINATED GROUPS LIKE THE SHOP
ASSISTANTS AND TALULAH GOSH. WERE THEY
INFLUENCES?

Yes, definitely, as well as bands like Delta 5, Dol-
ly Mixture, Marine Girls. We're influenced a lot
by stories and poetry too - Emily Brontë, Keats
and T.S. Eliot appear in our songs, and some
of our favourite writers pop up in the video for
"Paper Thin" as well.

WHAT ARE YOU LISTENING TO AT THE MOMENT?

Today so far: The Mo-dettes and Je Suis Ani-
mal.

YOU'VE GOT A NEW SINGLE "PAPER THIN" OUT
IN JUNE ON DAMAGED GOODS. THERE'S BEEN A
REAL LACK OF INDIE POP VIDEOS RECENTLY BUT
THANKFULLY YOU'VE MADE ONE. HOW MUCH
FUN DID YOU HAVE SHOOTING IT?

A ridiculous amount of fun. Our friend Char-
lie Phillips made the video and got a group of our
friends to dress up like authors. We filmed most of
it outside - in the cemetery and the park - but then
it got too cold (it was January) and so we smuggled
werewolves and authors into Stoke Newington Li-
brary for the rest of the filming. We had to pretend
that we were there just to borrow books! It was very
daring!

SPEAKING OF BEING ON CAMERA, YOU APPEARED IN
THE FILM 1-2-3-4. HOW DID THAT COME ABOUT?

The director Giles Borg was looking for a band
for one particular scene and got in touch with us
through Damaged Goods. We knew that Giles had
made some Talulah Gosh videos in the past and so
got very excited about it all, and had our fringes
trimmed especially.

IS THIS GOING TO BE YOUR FIRST TRIP TO INDI-
ETRACKS? WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO
THE MOST?

It'll be the first time we've played at Indietracks but
we've been there before. Apart from being excited
about playing there of course, we're really looking
forward to seeing some of the bands on the steam
train - always fun! Emily is also looking forward to
the campsite disco.

WHAT DOES THE REST OF 2010 HAVE IN STORE FOR
YOU?

So "Paper Thin" is out in June (we've said that al-
ready, haven't we?), and our album *Teatime Fa-
vourites* is out in July. As well as Indietracks, we have
some fun gigs coming up in London, Cambridge
and Nottingham. We'll also be doing a live session
for Marc Riley on 6 Music on 5th July.

www.myspace.com/bettyandthewerewolves



INTERVIEW #6: *THE UNDERSTUDIES*

HELLO UNDERSTUDIES! TELL US ABOUT THE SONGS ON THE EP YOU'VE KINDLY DONATED TO THE FANZINE.

BRIAN: The first track is "A Girl I Used to Knock About With" this new recording was produced by Andrew Laidlaw from Lucky Soul who very kindly offered to engineer and produce four songs with us earlier this year. The acoustic versions



of "Wanting vs Getting" and "Flicknives" are taken from a recent radio session we did in Madrid which was pretty amazing. BREE: "If I Come to You" is probably the quietest song we've done and only occasionally gets played live, we like this modest recording of it. BRIAN: They're kind of a quartet of songs about lost and unrequited love.

YOU'VE RECENTLY PLAYED A NUMBER OF GIGS IN SPAIN AND APPEARED ON NATIONAL RADIO. HOW DID THAT COME ABOUT?

BRIAN: Yeah, that was amazing. We played Indietracks last year and there were quite a few Spanish people there because of the Elephant stage. We got an invite from promotor Jorge Fernandez to come and play an Indietracks Presentation that he was organising. We were also invited by Spanish DJ Julio Ruiz to come and do his show, little did we know he's like the John Peel of Spain! Needless to say by the time we got to the BBC-like building

were giggling wrecks. Luckily, Ian Watson of HDIF was on hand to calm us all down and show us the ropes, thanks Ian!

YOU PLAYED WITH DARREN HAYMAN IN LEICES-TER A FEW MONTHS AGO. HOW DID IT GO?

BRIAN: That was great fun too. It's funny how we keep having these little landmark moments which all seem to have started since Indietracks. We're all fans and none of us had the guts to actually say hello so he probably thinks we're a right bunch of anti-socials, which we're really not! He played some great new songs, one about a girl who looks like "the lesbian off Brookside".

I OFTEN HEAR THE TINDERSTICKS IN YOUR MUSIC. ARE THEY A BIG INFLUENCE? AND WHAT OTHER BANDS INFLUENCE YOUR SONGWRITING?

BRIAN: They are one of my favourite bands so I guess they probably will have a little. I think we all individually wear our influences on our sleeves and then they get diluted when we come together and hopefully that makes a good mix. Graeme based his entire bass repertoire for the first six months on Kim Deal and PJ Harvey. One of my all time favourite bands are The Auteurs. I also love girl groups, Motown and early sixties Joe Meekish stuff. There's also The Go-Betweens, The Housemartins... BREE: I really like Emma Pollock's stuff, she always has interesting melodies. And I'd happily die listening to Kurt Wagner's voice of Lambchop, I love how he can sing about the smallest of everyday details with such beauty.

I HEAR YOU'VE GOT A FEW OPTIONS WITH WHICH LABEL TO PUT YOUR RECORDS OUT. WHAT RELEASES DO YOU HAVE IN STORE?

Well, there isn't a bidding war or anything! Just that a few people have said they'd maybe like to put something out with us, which is really nice. So expect an official release soon!

www.myspace.com/wearetheunderstudies



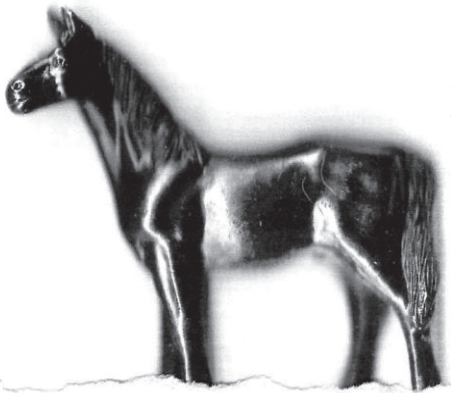
HELLO, WE'RE
 HISSING AT SWANS.
 WE WRITE SONGS, MAKE
 VIDEOS AND LOVE HEAVY
 METAL

Birds



- 20 **Magpie**
Distinctive black and white plumage makes this bird easy to spot.
- 22 **Lapwing**
These may sometimes be seen standing in flocks in fields.
- 23 **Kestrel**
Score for finding any hawk hovering. It will be watching a small animal below, waiting to pounce.
- 24 **Crow**
Often seen on the hard shoulder, looking for food.
- 25 **Ducks flying**
Recognize them by their long, outstretched necks and wide wings. Score for finding ducks or geese.

14



www.myspace.com/hissingatswans



I live in Bristol and felt that it was about time that someone paid tribute to Sarah Records and celebrated the label that existed here 15 years ago – as Sarah’s releases have influenced so many musicians and won such a number of devoted fans worldwide. I wanted this documentary to happen so I decided to make it myself; *My Secret World: The Story of Sarah Records* is a film made by a fan for the fans.

I have been a Sarah fan since I bought Sarah 3 – the Anorak City flexi by Another Sunny Day in the marvellous but long gone Revolver Records. When Sarah’s first compilation Shadow Factory was re-released I turned up at Clare Wadd & Matt Haynes’s (Sarah’s founders) flat one Sunday to buy it because Revolver wasn’t open and I was desperate to hear it.

I remember Matt had to give me change from the electricity meter and explained “We’re not a shop you know!” This compilation remains one of my favourite records as every song is just beautiful and encapsulates everything I love about indie pop from that time.

As well as the music, Sarah’s accompanying literature was poetic, political, angry, passionate and at times very funny. Speaking to Matt recently he explained that they released fanzines with their own catalogue number to stress the importance of their writing and with the belief that a good piece of literature can affect people in the same way that listening to a great piece of music can.

I have already filmed an interview with Clare & Matt aboard the Thekla in Bristol. This is where Sarah celebrated their 100th release and the end of the label so it seemed fitting that they return here to discuss their story. I am also interviewing former Sarah band members to discover the inspiration for their music and their memories of the label and some special guests (to be revealed!) will also appear. I am also in the process of collecting photographs and archive performance footage – any that exists is pretty rare as not many people had access to recording equipment in those days. Some Sarah fans have already sent me footage, photographs and memorabilia but it’s not too late for people to contribute or get involved – the fans are an incredibly important part of Sarah’s story. I will be filming at this years Indietracks and as well as interviewing the bands that have been influenced by Sarah I would like to film short interviews with any fans that have a story to share. This could be anything – a favourite record and why you love it or how you discovered Sarah, everyone’s experiences are unique – please start practising your soundbites! I have also advertised online for fan’s to send in video testimonials as being an independent filmmaker I unfortunately do not have the funds to travel the globe conducting interviews myself!

I plan to premiere *My Secret World: The Story of Sarah Records* this October at the Big Pink Cake weekend in Bristol. I have also had interest from club promoters in London, New York and Boston who would like to feature the doc as part of some special Sarah themed nights and hope to do screenings at some of next years indie pop festivals. I aim to have the documentary available online at the beginning of next year.

To find out more please visit:
www.myspace.com/thestoryofsarahrecords
www.youtube.com/user/StoryofSarahRecords





Dear Scared to Dance!

This is Letter from Tokyo to London.
Thank you for giving me a space to spread my words*
I'm interested in indie club night from Oversea.
I had saw "Scared To Dance" songs list and fall in love so easily <3

What We Love

Go Sailor , Anthony Adverse,
Veronica Falls,Sweater Girls,
Catwalk, Sea Lions,Comet Gain,
The Pastels, Dum Dum Girls,
German Measles, Dream Diary,
Knight School,Marine Girls,
Television Personalities,
The Liechtenstein,
The School, 14 Iced Bears,
The Lodger,The Drums,
Tiger Trap,Delta 5,
The Wake,Josef K,
The Siddeleys, Even As We Speak...
Pains Of Being Pure At Heart,
we cannot put everything!



Twee Grrrls Club is ...

Tokyo based 6 girls DJ group,
making zines and very obsessed
with spinning indie / twee pop
and spread the cultures which
belong to twee.
Inspired by parties like
"Twee As Fuck" in London
and "Part Time Punks" in
Los Angeles,

We had party with...

Vivian Girls , Theoretical Girl,
Neils Children, Sissy Wish and
The Raincoats!

....and we will have party with Slow Club!

-----Playlist of twee grrrls club-----

- Comet Gain - "The Weekend Dreams"
- Klsses - "Bermuda"
- The Lodger - "Nothing Impossible"
- Sweater Girl - "Do The Sweater"
- The School - "I want You back"
- Smile And The Ribbons - "Den Lille Havfrue"
- C:ub 8 - "Western Hospitality"
- Fitness Forever - "Mondo Fitness"
- The Drums - "Forever And Ever Amen"
- Pains Of Being Pure At Heart "Say No To Love"
- Johnny Flynn - "Kentucky Pill"
- Apples - "Theo"
- Sea Lions - "To The Sun"

see you in
tokyo
or london!



[http : // tweegrrrlsclub.blogspot.com](http://tweegrrrlsclub.blogspot.com)
or
join facebook group





ODD BOX RECORDS

by Trevor McCabe



Odd Box Records was born in May 2009. Over the past 14 months the label has released 12 EPs, 3 albums and 6 free download singles. The ethos behind the label is deep rooted in the DIY approach; often releases have home printed sleeves. Musically – the label has an ear for a good tune whilst not being hung up on any one genre. So we've seen killer indie pop (The Kick Inside, The Give It Ups, One Happy Island, The Wednesday Club and The Blanche Hudson Weekend) nestle along side garage rock (The Millipedes and The Humms) and we've seen drone/shoegaze sound represented by Pinkshinyultrablast and Lovelust and on a lo-fi tip we've had Proto Idiot and cult Swedish band The Crack Babies garner releases to date.

The latest release to hit the shops is the fabulous self-titled debut record by One Happy Island. Their knack for a well crafted pop tune has never been better illustrated. The band recently launched the CD at NYC Popfest and played a storming (and sold out) home town show in Boston a few days later.

Releases in the pipeline include a cracking EP by punky upstarts Liars Beware. The beautifully packaged Bunny Hood EP by Birmingham duo Falling and Laughing who describes themselves as "indie pop" or "chord-gazing"! Later in the year Odd Box is delighted to be teaming up with Slumberland Records (USA) to release a new full length LP by the kings of awkward C86 treble busting guitar pop Sarandon and there are more surprises to come including a remix EP by a not yet to be named band!

Odd Box also ventures out and does the occasional spot of gig promotion and in July we have 2 (yes 2!) pre-Indietracks warm up shows. The first is a free RoTa afternoon at the Notting Hill Arts Club on Saturday 17th July – where we have four bands playing including Odd Box favourites from Japan, The Monorals – they will be able support by one of London finest current indie pop bands, The Hillfields and Coventry's songsmiths extradonaire The Sequins and kicking off the afternoon are fuzzy noiseoppers from Denmark – Sock Puppets – who came highly recommended by The Give It Ups! It's gonna be a top afternoon.

The second show happens a few days later on Tuesday 20th July at The Wilmington Arms and we have another amazing four band bill – including the first ever live show from The Blanche Hudson Weekend (who feature Darren and Caroline from The Manhattan Love Suicides). Also playing are the amazing Boy Genius from New York, Insect Guide – who are label mates with The Blanche Hudson Weekend and are one of the best noiseopop bands I've heard in ages. And starting the proceedings is a rare live performance from Micktravis, which the alias given to Jamie Holman, one time leader of Track and Field signees and Peel favourites Tompaulin.

All in all these should be a couple of amazing shows and set the scene for those lucky enough to be heading to Indietracks the following weekend.

For more information on Odd Box releases head over to www.oddboxrecords.com





NOONEDIED'S GUIDE TO DIY

Because you can. We have; you can. Everyone here has been frustrated, hamstrung by the business dominating music and clubs in the past; stymied by the conservatism and laziness of the status quo. They want you to go to certain places and listen to certain things, not because they are particularly good or offer you something new and innovative, quite the opposite. They are intent on not offending anyone and in doing so homogenising what you to hear on record and what you dance to in clubs. We want to be surprised, delighted, challenged. If you haven't been turned off by at least one record on a night out, it means you are unlikely to have heard something new you'll love. Throw off the shackles and demand better. Change the rules. Yeah. It's the DIY ethos.

If generic indie club pseudo dance for a tenner plus four quid for a plastic bottle of warm lager doesn't quite grab the balls like it once did when you were 18, then find a pub with an upstairs room and hire it. Want to play soul music from 1971 mixed with a little Philly disco? Why the hell not. Come up with a great name- we find it's best to get drunk and slur words, catchphrases, insults at each other until something sticks. Promote what you are doing amongst friends. Make posters (it's not tough to do) and you and you will find out pretty quickly if others share your passions. Still going ahead? Now you have your own club. Dance to what you want to hear and not what some lazy sod thinks is popular.

Want to release a song recorded at home with your band? Great; create a record label. Give your new label a great name- we find it's best to get drunk and slur words, catchphrases, insults at each other until something sticks. Promote your song. Get it on the net- take some photos; use a friend with web experience to do the website and there you have it. The fanzines/blogs love your bands first release? Time for an EP. If it goes well, then help your friend's band do the same thing. Now you are technically the head of a record label with a stable of artists.

Celebrate, everyone, because DIY works simply as it is not for everyone. It celebrates differences and idiosyncrasies; it embraces diversity and challenges you to hear something different. Dance baby dance, give new bands a chance. Play by your own rules and the game is all the more fun...

www.noonedied.co.uk



BRILLDREAM

Well hello, I've been asked by that nice Paul from Scared To Dance to turn you lot on to some new and exciting bands. Now, this is no mean feat, I know exactly how on the ball you lot are when it comes to new music and artists, but dash it I'll give it a jolly good go.

For all the arguments about what is "twee" and our mutual love for all things saturated in mind fizzing NOISE, its always nice to hear some fresh cute music. Can we call it cute? Good. Noo Joisey's **WHEN I WAS 12**

are a minty clean breath of fresh air. Wilfully silly, their brand of pop is sugary without being saccharine. Think Au Revoir Simone. Think Rose Melberg. Yes, their indie-folk is THAT good.

"Make Believe Hearts" could be an excitable Softies. With lines like "sometimes you like to smoke a cigarette/not around me/because I'll have an asthma attack" and "Nobody knows I cry when it snows" it's hard not to swoon.

"S for Subway" is feather soft road movie of a song. Full of ice cream and pizza and love metaphor, it would take a heart of stone not to be charmed. Love songs rarely come more honest or warming. Just lovely.

"Oh Telephone Wires!" is a ballad – A FUCKING BALLAD! – about growing up and growing out of that certain someone. Heartbreaking nostalgia-noir.

"Black Cat/White Picket Fence" is ridiculously lovely. It's like a song sung by snow-siren, child like and grown up at the same time. It's a bit scary how good this band could be.

www.myspace.com/wheniwas12

Right, lets not mess around, **BOURGEOIS HEROES** are brilliant. Hailing form New England, the somehow take all of your favourite records and put them through some sort of amazing B&S/Pulp filter. Sophisticated, clever indie pop is go. It's like someone has designed a band for listening to on the bus. Effing marvelous.

"The Boy at the Record Store" is a proper old fashioned character song, musically invoking everyone from The Beatles via B&S, Ballboy and Roy Orbison. It even has a girl spoken word bit. It's like a music loving librarians wet dream.

"I Wanna Be Nice to You" sounds all the world like a jam between The Doors and The Beach Boys gone twee. Try and listening without giving it a bit of a Ringo hair shake during the chorus. I challenge you!

bourgeoisheroes.bandcamp.com





With an opening salvo such as “We aim for the hearts, not the charts!”, you would be forgiven for falling in love with **FIRST AID KIT** without even hearing them. Your ears, however, are in for a real treat.

Hailing from Stockholm, you would however be forgiven for thinking they are actually from somewhere in south USA. It’s the kind of two voice-two guitar (or uke or banjo) music that fills venues and souls in the same way that, say, Gillian Welch does. Folky with a very slight sleepy haze, the young ladies blend harmonies that ring true around dwarf the sum of their parts. Delicate without being dainty, it’s a sound as smooth as glass.

“Hard Believer” as pretty enough little strum along then without warning, around the minute, it drops down a little with the downbeat “love is rough/time is tough” refrain the suddenly **SOARS** out of the blimmin’ room with its harmonal blend. It’s enough to send your daydreams into the stratosphere. Heatstoppingly lovely, it makes the coda “its one life/and it’s this life/and its beautiful” make so much sense.

www.myspace.com/thisisfirstaidkit

OK, what if I told you there was this band, right? And this band sounded like a cross between the Ramones and The Beach Boys? That suggested a fizzy Pavement or a more together Daniel Johnston? A band that sounded like **POBPAH**’s little brothers or distant relations to the **Buzcocks**? A group that churned out fantastically highly cranked up garage pop?



FIRST AID KIT

The Jesus and Mary Chain snogging with Bowie? A band that had big fat hooks hidden carefully between ocean size sheets of fuzz and frolics? Well then, dear friend, let me introduce you to the joy of **SMITH WESTERNS**.

The Chicago four piece are one of those bands that put their heart into their music. It sounds endearingly ramshackle to the point of amateur. But make no mistake; there is real, real talent here. “Dreams” is the sound of early Orange Juice covered by a **CBGB** band. Can we coin the phrase Chime-punk? Because that is what this is. A love song of the **Buzcocks** variety, with chunky riffs hidden under the tinkling guitar only adding to the sheer, unabashed joy of the chorus.

“Girl in Love” is glam rock, but good glam rock. More glittery than sleazy, with the hand-on-hips vocal fighting to death with the Bolan stomp and fuzzed up guitars. It’s the sound of being 15 placed delicately on to leopard-skin vinyl.

www.myspace.com/smithwesterns

Anyway, there’s all this gubbings and more at brilldream.blogspot.com. Have a great Indietracks, won’t you?

Shaun Brilldream

LIVE REVIEW

SLOW CLUB

**DROWNED
IN SOUND**

Slow Club
1st June 2010
KOKO, London



It's funny. I'd always written off Slow Club as a pretty standard but pleasant folk rock duo. Y'know, nice acoustic guitars, nice interplaying male-female vocal lines, that sort of thing. Maybe to the casual listener that's what they'll remain, after all you'd think that there is only so much two people can achieve with a couple of guitars, a floor tom and a tambourine. Tonight's show is a display in making the most of what you've got, though not before things are beefed up.

With the introduction of a full-on, proper, bona-fide backing band there are new furrows to be ploughed and it presents a chance to spread their wings into far more than just their finely constructed ditties which are, as ever, simple, effective and brimful of trademark harmonies. Oomph is not a quality that is necessary to introduce but the additional rhythm section clout helps a livewire start as a brand new, high energy song that is both punchy and powerful gets an airing. With the exit of the extra members proceedings are toned down significantly and the ever-charming duo rattle through much of debut *Yeah So*, with "Trophy Room" and "Because We're Dead" noted highs.

Although we may not be talking Damascene proportions, revelatory every aspect is. Despite the vastness and heightened expanse of KOKO, Rebecca and Charles take up a risky move towards the end of the set. Both step the few yards to the very front of the stage, to play unplugged, serenading us all. Now, though I'm certain the people in the fourth or whatever-the-hell-it-is balcony might have struggled to pick up the more delicate parts of "Wild Blue Milk", the song resonates as a whole a great deal further than any single chord or two-part harmony could.

Things could only ever really close on one song and one song alone. The prospect of Slow Club writing anything that could improve on "Giving Up on Love" is most, if not all of the way to zilch. I'll stick my neck on the line and say it will never happen – with it they have set the bar unreachably high and into the heavens. It is everything that a pop song should be – snappy, breathless and joyously giddy – and everyone in the vicinity thinks likewise, exerting their bodies as much as they feel comfortable which, in truth, could be more. There is an encore, but that'll be conveniently wiped from the memory, as the first ending was so perfect that not a note more was needed.

Luke Slater is the News Editor at Drowned in Sound.
www.drownedinsound.com

Photo: John Stanley Austin



LIVE REVIEW

SLEIGH BELLS

Sleigh Bells/Teenagersintokyo/Speakowire
24th May 2010
The Jericho Tavern, Oxford



Oxford bands are all about the quality, not the quantity. There aren't that many bands that "make it big" from the city of dreaming spires, but those that do have a certain undefinable quality about them - Supergrass, Radiohead, Foals; they've all got the X factor. **SPEAKOWIRE**, though only a handful of gigs in to their career, sadly don't. I want to like them, I do. They want me to like them, I can tell. We're both trying hard but I just think we're too different. They like playing awkward basslines over arpeggiated synths and cheap beats with Kate Bush on vocals. Happily, **TEENAGERSINTOKYO** make that easy enough. They're a 5 piece from Australia but they sound like they could have stepped off of the yacht in the "Rio" video, they're so slick and eighties, baby. Samantha Lim's vocals are a little grating over time but the band have managed to write some decent pop songs such as "End it Tonight" and perform them with conviction. Guitarist Sophie McGinn is particularly eye-catching as she casually tosses off one new-wave guitar line after another.

But it's **SLEIGH BELLS** we're here for and it's Sleigh Bells we want to see in this sweltering, tiny venue. Deciding on an inverse ratio between the amount of band members and the loudness of the songs, it's just the two of them: guitarist/writer/producer Derek E. Miller and vocalist Alexis Krauss. Apparently meeting when Miller served Alexis and her mother at a restaurant, they've managed to create one of the most distinctive albums of 2010 - punishing beats, noisy synths, guitars that sound like an enraged jet engine, yet all kept (barely) in check by Alexis' honey sweet vocals. Before they start, she's casually waiting in the audience and chatting to those around her. As soon as Derek's ready to go, she leaps on stage as the almost-industrial beats of "Tell 'em" start and Derek's guitar attempts to throttle him. Now let's get one thing straight: most of the music is on backing tape. *But it doesn't matter.* Sleigh Bells need to be loud and they need to sound great - if they attempted to do everything between the two of them, how would Alexis throw herself around the stage, in to the audience, in to mid-air? Hell, Derek isn't even on stage for some of the songs. "Infinity Guitars" is a highlight; tossed away early on but with one of the loudest climaxes this side of some lame German metal band. The entire album gets a showing apart from "Run the Heart" with the loudest cheers reserved for "Crown on the Ground" and encore "Rill Rill".

Once dissected, Sleigh Bells are a band with little-to-no lyrical prowess, jumping around to a tape. But that's to miss the visceral joy of the songs and the performance, not to mention the charisma of Alexis on stage. Blast the album as loud as you can, go see them this summer and don't even wonder if they'll be around next year.

Matt Paradise is an Oxford-based DJ





SHOW ME WISHES WORTH MORE THAN THESE

by jennifer reiter from *colour me pop*

Cake Shop, New York City, June 2008

A steaming hot early evening, just like those in your adopted home of Miami. I noticed you straight away - tall and dark-haired with big black plastic frames. We were both watching Joe B. as The Foxgloves, the first performer of NYC Popfest 2008. I was giddy from meeting transatlantic friends, from seeing Cats on Fire comb their hair, and from the energy of the swarm of assembled popkids from around the world.

Upstairs we sat in the back of the room on the couches by the records, bottles of water lukewarm, beers even warmer. We watched Sean do his nonchalant networking

amongst the indiepop elite who had quietly assembled while Marianthi wrung her hands, badly wanting to tell [Amy] Linton what a hero she was. You egged her on; you have no problem talking to indiepop legends. I remember seeing a picture of you and Harvey Williams, envious that you'd met him and also impressed at your typography design skills.

We had to go outside. It was stifling indoors from the heat and from the excitement of the first night. You finally speak directly to me. 'Are you English?' I laughed; I was flattered by the assumption and I loved your accent. 'No, I'm Jennifer from Chicago!' Anna pulled her knee socks up and that was the first night I met you.

Miami, September 2008

It's always summer in Miami. Will the hurricane get us? I don't care! I want all-night indiepop gossip with you. My work conference is cancelled but my plane ticket isn't. At the airport you call to ask me what I want on my pizza. 'Papa John's! It's the best!' I'm not convinced but maybe it's the best one can do in Miami.

You seemed nervous when I got to yours and I thought it was cute. Papa John's goes down surprisingly well even in the humidity while I have regular Coke and you have Diet. Your records are lined up in boxes underneath your desk. Look at all those zines! We cover your bed in Woosh and This Almighty Pop. And oh, the records! Heaven Records and the smell and feel of flexis. Your collection of letters from indiepop legends (real and under-the-radar ones) from every corner of the earth is unmatched. Then there are the set lists and the dedications, the posters and the endless emails from fans and forgotten musicians. I'm awed but not intimidated, just thrilled to be in your electric presence.

It is hard to find a pub - any pub - that isn't a bar for tourists. We find an Irish pub and football is on. Peru must be playing! We share some intense stories that leave me breathless and heavy-hearted at times. It could all fall apart but you hold me together. I trust you incredibly and I know that I can rely on your friendship. Sing me Talulah Gosh at the bus stop! Your Amelia Fletcher impression leaves me in stitches.





We've got electric guitars in our hearts and I really do want to know what popkids wear in the sea. We go to the beach and attempt to ask the sand that very question but the Atlantic Ocean keeps erasing our eternal query. Where is Johnny Dee when you need him?

Miami, December 2008

You're a model for your newspaper! When you take me out to an art show, I get my picture taken for some Miami street fashion blog. You say that people can't stop looking at my legs. That's ok. We are not afraid to (Fall in Love With) Fashion Victims.

Visas. We both know a little something about visa trouble. Love and relationships? We'll never figure them out but we'll never give up. 'I drew the Eiffel Tower upon her dress, so we could see the world...' That's why you're My Favorite and I believe in you. Wouldn't it be brilliant to hop from city to city, country to country together, visiting friends, DJing at gigs, dancing at Popfests? For now, play me the songs you've just received from Bonne Idée. 'Jennifer, Jennifer Jennifer,' you admonish me when I don't know one of the dozens of indiepop groups from the 80s or early 90s who barely put together a demo tape. Go ahead and play them for me too!

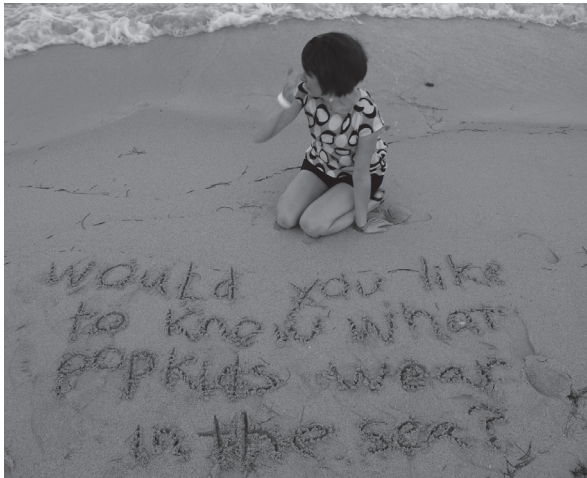
You've reached 100 singles but next come splits. The first one will feature Chicago's best (and only?) indiepop group, Very Truly Yours. You do have exquisite taste! Your collection of set lists and indiepop love letters is growing and so is my fondness for you. It's quite remarkable that we've only known each other for this one year and yet we've shared stories of travel, of secret crushes, of conquests, and plenty of Papa John's pizza.



Miami, March 2009

You've got your papers and I've got mine. I'm moving to the UK next month and my heart is heavy knowing that I will no longer be able to visit my dear friend after a relatively quick 3-hour flight. I step out of the airport and breathe in that rich, humid Miami air, fed by so many beautiful tropical plants. You're not Mexican but I paid a good price for a special record for you as a gift for your birthday. I know how much you cherish your records and I love listening to them with you. I'll miss the smell of your Glade plug-in, the scent always the same.

In the car we play a 'best of' Cloudberry CD that you made for Bianca. That song by Je Suis Animal makes me swoon and wrenches my heart every time. Bianca makes me miss my flight and I'm in tears but you take me to the beach for a few hours before my late-night flight. I guess popkids at the sea just wear jeans and Chuck Taylors.





Hamburg, October 2009

It's autumn in Germany and Hamburg is about to be hit by an indiepop tidal wave. Friends from the UK and other parts of Germany and you from Miami (via Berlin and Stockholm) are descending upon this historic port of a city. Somehow I found a burrito; I can barely find them in London. The Sunny Street are soundchecking and suddenly I'm being given a hug so big I can barely breathe. We meet in Europe! You are surrounded by many with an appreciation for the perfection of an indiepop 7 inch single. You hold court as a tip-top indiepop DJ, only giving the reins over to Matthew and then Jörg who keeps us dancing until nearly 6am. The Airfields, The Wake, The Siddeleys, Moscow Olympics, They Go Boom!! We could dance to these songs in your bedroom but isn't it a revelation to do it in a room full of international popkids until the small hours of Saturday night?

The next night the shoegaze band is good enough but the gossip is better. We have so much to catch up on in person. Everyone loves hearing your stories; everyone wants to know what you're releasing next. But I want to know who's pretty and I want to know who you're going to fall in love with. In the back-room of a bar on two couches we later trade wish lists for the upcoming London Popfest. It's months away but we need this to look forward to, to wish for.

We trade some German words on the boat ride the next day and I wish it could take us all to our own indiepop island where it's warm, we can dance all night, everyone has good hair, and nobody needs a visa. When I have to go to Lübeck, life feels so incredibly unfair. I'm Lost Without You Here.

London, February 2010

Somehow you forgive me for leaving you sitting at Heathrow by yourself early Thursday morning. Your records were mailed here already and your one small duffel bag is full of Daniel's shoes. We eat and gossip and buy essentials. I have to leave you to get to Walthamstow and I need to collect Laura. That night we get to see Joe B. again together but this time accompanied by the beautiful dulcet tones of Pam Berry. The Fruli flows but the night buses take too long to get us home.

We always end up talking about girls at the pub. We miss The Shield Around the K but cannot miss Dolly Mixture. Do you remember when you sent Colin copies of Where Are the Supremes Tonight? for Half My Heart Beats? There are so many Swedes here and I know your heart is bursting.

The next night you DJ and get interviewed by the Spanish fanzine writers. One of them flies across the floor on his back to JAMC and you soon follow him to the floor, slipping in everyone's beer. I love that Chefs song! We eat spaghetti carbonara while William Jones tells us how much of a crush he had on the sparkling Debsey. Ian plays us 'I Get So Sentimental' and I'm already wanting to press rewind so that your London days don't come to an end.

Indietracks, Derby, July 2010

We know what bands we want to see (Pale Sunday! The Felt Tips!) but we don't know what will unfold. We know that she'll be there and that he won't be. We're going to DJ together at HDIF the night before. I'm going to have to play Monty, you know. But who is going to play McCarthy? I don't really care. Because together we'll win the war that's still to be won and nothing will stop us and our [indiepop] dream.

For Roque.





CHASING THE CHERRYADE RUSH

There's lots to like about the indie pop scene, but the thing I love the most about these get together is the sense of belonging. It's a warm feeling, like climbing into bed on a freezing cold night to be next to someone you love. An enveloping feeling. I also think, looking around at all you beautiful and fascinating people, "Why can't real life be like this? Why can't all these people live in my town?" But of course, this IS real life. And this IS our town.

I first got the sense of almost family-like belonging at a B&S night in Manchester called Kissing Just for Practice. When I went, it wasn't too long after my Dad had died. I felt a bit lost and badly needed to get out and about again, and this looked interesting. So I went on my own, and I stood on my own... and I danced and drank and met lots of exciting, brilliant people.

I was dancing away happily when the floor cleared (for what I originally thought was a scuffle) to reveal a blind girl swaying to the music, her eyes closed, mouthing the words and with a huge grin on her face I knew I had found something special.

It's a cliché I know, but that night really did change my life.

Because we're a funny bunch aren't we? There's not really a place for people with a Walkman containing a tape with Joy Division on one side and The Beach Boys on the other, but fit we must. Because as important and as ace as the bands are, it's YOU that makes this scene what it is. One of my favourite characters in the whole Factory Records story (a tale which I genuinely find more romantic than Romeo and Juliet) is John the Postman, a bloke who would jump on stage at the sight of a neglected mic to scream the words to "Louie, Louie" through it, a man Tony Wilson describes as "a fan unable to merely spectate." There is a touch of John the Postman in all of us I think. With that spirit in mind I put on Camera Obscura in Shrewsbury once. It was a disaster. 12 people turned up and we lost shed loads of money. But everyone of those 12 people still holds that night to their heart. This is important I think, that even if it all goes wrong, we do SOMETHING.

It's us who set up the labels, the nights, the gigs; who make badges and send postcards; who swap tapes and write fanzines and blogs. It's us that travel up and down the country and all over the world to stand in a tiny, smelly room above a pub to get that feeling – that belonging... that cherryade rush all over again. That's why I set up Brilldream. I wanted to be part of this. Part of a scene full of people who keep fighting their way out of normal society, people who continue to inspire each other, people who want to escape together.

So look around you this weekend. Breathe it in deep. So deep that the drudgery of Monday morning at work can't touch you. Wrap it around you like a blanket. Memories fade, but some feelings last forever.

Shaun Brilldream



MY LOVE FOR JULIAN BARNES

Simply put - I love him more than any other British writer... ever.

I had no idea of who he was, what set of narrative styles, writing techniques and schools of thought people usually ascribed to him when I first picked up "Love, etc..." (Probably driven by my first case of seriously crushed heart) almost 12 years ago and so, with a clean slate, entered the work of one of my most adored writers.

I'll say he's the quiet type. I'll also say there's a lot of pleasure to be had just in appreciating how very intelligent and sensible the man behind those words you're reading really is. For all that formalist analyses are worth I'll just say he doesn't deal in the sensational storyline, the gripping mystery or even the poetic character. He's just about the good thinking producing the good word.

That is where, to me, the pleasure of reading him comes from - from realising I have in front of me someone whose brain functions better than mine. Someone whose clarity of thought I would one day love to achieve but, ultimately, must admit - will probably always fall short of.

The first of his books I read, "Love, etc..." is, I believe, a good example of how elegantly he explores some of his favourite themes:

- How our civilized, well-educated and "polished" morals can offer no refuge against feelings we rationally want to discard like jealousy or possessiveness towards others.
- How frail and "amateuristic" our work of breaking apart and arranging our life memories into the little bits that we weave in our autobiographies really is.

If you decide to give him a shot, be warned: don't expect the instant rewards, the emotional rollercoaster or the TV-like dynamisms you might find in some other popular writers. If you'll allow me the wordplay: he's much more about friction than fiction. I'll just say that the end result of that friction is, to me, more beautiful than what any other author I've met in the English language is able to produce.

(A final word of warning: his 2 last books are a bit like Morrissey's last albums - not really what I've grown up to love)

Leonardo



THE WOODEN COAT HANGER

As the old saying goes "you can tell a lot by a man from his shoes" the same can be said for the state of his wardrobe. Nothing is less sartorial or damaging to the nature of a gentleman, rouge or bounder than having a plastic coat hanger. Not only is this crass item the object to which you will hang everything from a work outfit to the clothes for the latest social party, but it is also the first thing which is presented to you in the morning and night. If you wish to give yourself a better start to the day, and take your clothes to another level, the only option is that of a wooden coat hanger. This item will effortlessly make any garment seem more important and more elegant. The coat hanger is not just a method of keeping your clothes hung up; it is a way of keeping a continuous motif of well presentable quality and elegance which will blend with the rest of your wardrobe, no matter what style your clothes are. So why pick a wooden one, you may ask? Why is it that a classic wooden wardrobe looks better than any form of modernist furniture? The simple answer is that it resonates a time of craftsmanship, and something classically stylish. Any style of clothes in a wooden wardrobe look impressive and the wardrobe itself looks great in any home. This is the same philosophy towards the wooden coat hanger. What it denotes is far more than just a method of holding up a shirt or trousers, the connotations are that of a time when cheap, plastic and completely soulless objects were not common in the home, and a person's wardrobe was as much a part of presenting their self, as the clothes they wear. The wooden coat hanger will therefore give yourself and your clothes the perfect addition of sartorial excellence.

Greg Kingcott

why i love election night

For those of you who slept through May you should be aware the UK had a general election. Before polling day there was a grave threat to the way elections are run in this country. I'm not talking about postal ballots or under registration of people in urban centres or the fact that the system is biased toward the Tories. I am referring to the fact that lots of local authorities were planning to hold off counting results until the next day.

Why would they do this? Those in favour pointed to cost savings, the difficulties of ensuring postal votes were valid and the fact that holding a recount at 4am when those counting the votes are longing for bed. These are all valid reasons but they can't compete against the sheer excitement of polling night as a political spectacle.

Seeing weary MPs clamber on to the stage at 2am trying to hold back tears in the knowledge of their loss is political theatre at its finest. I'm too young to remember the Portillo moment of 1997 but this year threw up some great moments. Jacqui Smith holding back tears in Redditch, Lembit Öpik clearly at a loss as to why he's lost Montgomeryshire and in my own constituency of Tooting seeing the smug grin wiped off the face of a candidate who thought he could buy the election was a beautiful moment which would not have been so sweet if it happened the next day.

Then there's the televised accompaniment to election night. Long shows stretching over so many hours with so little to say for so long should not be such fun. Seeing David Dimbleby raise a quizzical eyebrow at a result that does not match expectations is a lovely sight. Then there's the token academic with 2 results in trying desperately to extrapolate to the whole country and later so many statistics flying around with no one really sure what any of them mean. And then, sometime in the morning suddenly being able to spot a narrative, a story of the election and divine some sense of meaning from 650 disparate results. That's the real moment of genius. It didn't happen this year of course but seeing Dimbleby a man in his 70s broadcast for what seemed like 80 hours straight almost made up for it.

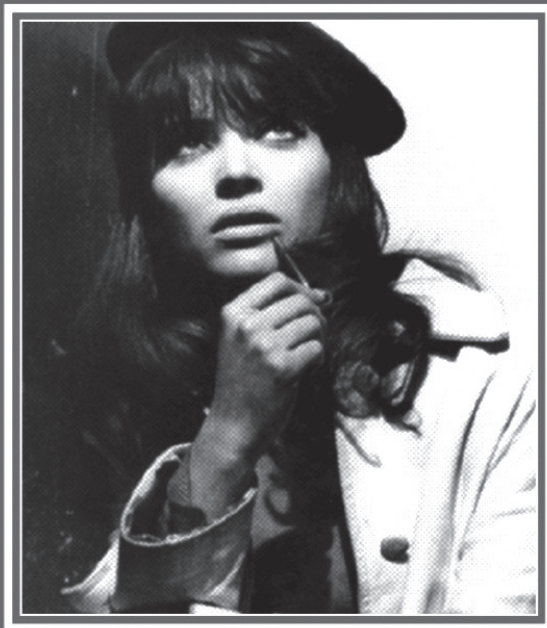
Oh, but you can keep Jeremy Vine and his graphics. That's not at all necessary.

Sean Carrigan

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SCARED TO DANCE



INDIE POP CLUB NIGHT

Saturday 31st July www.scaredtodance.co.uk
Free before 10PM King's Cross Social Club
£3.00 after 10PM 2 Britannia St
9PM 'till 2AM London

Guest DJ: Darren Hayman
Post-Indietracks Special