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RESONATE

Echoing the Sounds of the City.



Surgeons Girl, CVC, Concrete Jungyals, Hunnybuzz,
Freddie Lewis, Album Reviews + MORE

RESONATE

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Surgeons
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Photo by
RuuMedia.



Editorial.

Winter has well and truly hit Bristol. No longer are festivals, beer gardens and pub drinkers spilling out onto the streets sights of the city. Instead winter coats and outdoor heaters have replaced bucket hats and t-shirts, and hidden, sweaty club floors and dark, dingy venues have now become the hibernation spot for the Bristol music lover.

The joy of Bristol is the merging and blending of different cultures and ideas, specifically for us, musically. This issue aims to showcase how the sound of the city is changing, with different subcultures always ticking away in the various scenes, and blossoming into a colourful, creative cloud over Bristol.

With an uncertain and ever changing climate, this issue of Resonate hopes to bring a tiny sense of joy to people, but to also showcase the diverse music out there. The past two and a half years have been a turbulent time within the music industry, and those hard times aren't fully behind us. If there's ever a time to want to support an ever-growing, cultural landscape it is now. As we always have, this issue covers exciting, new up-and-comers, delves deeper into our city's fantastic musical history and echoes the sounds of the city.

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Millie: To the Resonate team for all their support and trusting me to design another exceptional issue

Rosie: To my friends, the Resonate team and my cardboard cutout of Harry Styles

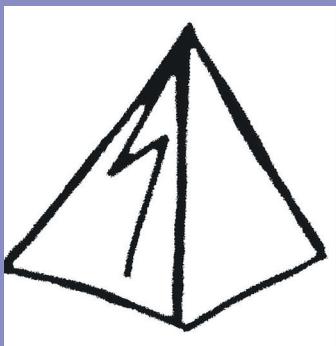
Tom: To everyone who contributed to this issue

Elina: To everyone I've met in Bristol - especially those who've been part of my creative journey



London-based BabyDoubleCup has become a household name in the UK SoundCloud hyperpop scene, yet they're still all but unknown to the general population. She gained popularity through her discussion around the 'ketamine chic' style, the baby sister of 90's heroin chic that meta-ironically merges old online era trends. It's a shame that this niche has engulfed her public persona, as her music is a gorgeous listen. DoubleCup's hypnotising, calm sound is combined with hyper beats is a beautiful combination that shines through in her newest single *CuteButPsycho*, a must-listen if you are into chill bedroom hyperpop tunes.

Babydoublecup



Yes, yes, I know – How can a supergroup consisting of Frank Iero (My Chemical Romance), Travis Stever (Coheed and Cambria), Anthony Green (Circa Survive) and Tucker Rule (Thursday) qualify for our underground segment? The answers lie in their 'if you know, you know' existence – and the charts of today wouldn't dare let you in on this well-kept secret. A classic fusion of energetic post-hardcore, emo and sentimental pop-punk – L.S. Dunes delve into where they excel and beyond. They deliver a nostalgic blast of early 2000s with all of the compounded knowledge and experience two decades amasses. In anticipation of their sophomore release *Past Lives*, we have only the whirlwind singles of *Permanent Rebellion* and *Bombsquad* to whet our appetites. My taste buds are tingling, I'm growing hurriedly more impatient for my main course and I have no doubt in my mind I will be satisfied once it arrives.

L.S. Dunes



Since stepping out in front of an audience last year, Bible Club have been drenching venues in Bristol and their native Southampton in sound and sweat. They breathe life into the stagnated Bristol hipster art-rock/post-punk scene with stomping, diesel-engine hard rock breakdowns, and washy shoegaze overtones – all set to tsunami levels. Over the last few months, Bible Club have been drip-feeding us releases. Debut single *Mr Lizard* features Godzilla-stomp breakdowns and screeching, off-beat, stucka bomber guitar lines. Follow-up *Ford Capri* takes a slightly more cerebral approach, opening with a compound time guitar riff that leads into a quirky, bouncing disco beat. However, it's not long til the song crescendoes to a fizzing, pounding cacophony that places the listener in a hot-rod speeding through the California Desert. Bible Club is a band for those who feel Bristol's post-punk scene could use a little more sweat and fuzz.

Bible Club



Lagos based producer DJ CORA has gone stratospheric recently due to his infectious rhythms and unique, light-hearted take on dance music. Cruise as a genre has exploded in popularity over the past year, taking Nigeria and social media by storm. The official audio of DJ CORA's song *YEYE Beat* has been used in over 15,000 videos on Tik Tok and as one of cruise music's most popular up and comers, his influence on Nigeria's modern dance music culture is undeniable. His productions consist of anything from Nollywood samples, to direct rips of voice notes from his WhatsApp. It's this no holds barred attitude towards sample selection that gives his music such a recognisable sonic signature. If you're looking for tunes that don't take themselves too seriously to spice up your party playlist, you could do worse than having a look through the *Moves x Cruise* EP series.

DJ CORA



Singer-songwriter April from County Kildare in Ireland explores the difficulties of self-doubt and loneliness in her latest single *Distraction*, released in October. The track draws on a multitude of influences with dream-pop-inspired synths and a beat reminiscent of indie-pop artists such as Japanese House and The 1975. However, on track *54321*, more drum and bass-led textures can be heard, drawing on her new love for clubbing and jungle music since moving to London. After her tour with Maltida Mann in March, April has already built an audience of over 100,000 on Spotify with only three songs released. There is no doubt that the singer will grow in popularity and musicianship with each genre-bending offer.

April

fuck

the charts.

An alternative selection giving the spotlight to the latest must-hears that missed the mainstream.

Fuck the charts. Check this.

Curated here at *Resonate*.

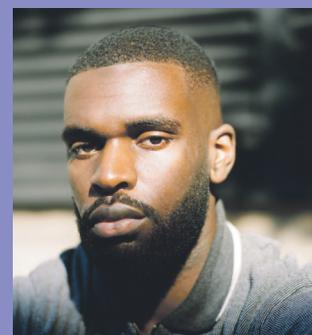
Nueen

Barcelona-based Nacho Pezzati who goes by Nueen, has been making a name for himself in the new-age ambient/dub scene over the last two years. With releases on renowned labels Good Morning Tapes and Quiet Time Tapes, Nueen's music continues to develop to offer some of the most interesting combinations of experimental ambient and dub techno, all brought together with crisp production. On his latest album *Diagrams of Thought*, there is an eeriness and uneasy element to the whole album. The addition of blissed-out synths gives the album a warm, sunset element, but this feeling is anchored by deep bass drums and pitched-down vocal samples. With artists like Huerco S, Pontiac Streater and Nexcyia all contributing to the rise of experimental ambient and dub music, Nueen is an artist at the forefront of this genre.



Bawo

West London rapper Bawo has been releasing music on major platforms since 2019, and to date has over 15 single releases. From his softer take on UK trap and drill to his funkier garage inspired sounds, the diversity in his music is a platform to showcase his deep-rooted talent. He is someone who effortlessly produces music through a multitude of styles to great level of success. Bawo first gained attention through releases on SoundCloud, and his distinctive vocals and high-level production quickly had him noticed in the London rap scene. Consequently, he is now starting to break through to the mainstream. His most notable single called *Starts With A Text* is about the simple exchanges between two people who are romantically interested in each other and is a perfect example of the dynamic way Bawo produces his music.



Joe T Johnson

Bristol native Joe T. Johnson's September release *This Town* is a nod to suburban life, perfect for anyone who's grown up just outside the city. Coming off the back of his hip-swinging indie-tune *Twist* and a headline show at Crofters Rights, *This Town* feels like a step-forward for the English rocker. A striking blend of his love for ska and the city with the 'pub-rock' of Bristol's neighboring villages, *This Town* speaks to those who feel just outside of what's happening. Opening with an ominous descending riff, then building on this motif with production reminding me of Phill Spector and his classic 60s *Wall of Sound*, Johnson echoes on top with lyrics "walking in the dark, with no one else around." Almost ska-punk and perfect for lovers of The Specials and Madness, *This Town* is a promising tune that sees the Bristol artist rally the small-town troops.



Deijuvhs

It's no great revelation that the past few years has seen a plethora of music released for angsty teens. Blink-182 have run out of money and reunited, MGK has questionably revived a host of 2000's alternative trends and *When We Were Young* is the Warped Tour revival that all ex-emo's wish they could attend. However, if you're an angsty teen (or alternatively an angsty adult) and all this mainstream stuff isn't bringing anything new into your world, Deijuvhs is for you. Rather than regurgitating 20-year-old alt tropes without bringing anything new to the table, Deijuvhs have found a harmonious path between punk, ravey breaks, and the quintessential London sounds of drill and grime. This is all wrapped up with a DIY attitude that even the snobbiest of gatekeepers can't deny. He's still underground in every sense of the word, allowing for his experimentation to escape the boundaries of label and genre. This is best seen in his new EP, *Perpetual State of Boredom*, which will leave you anything but bored.



Chappaqua Wrestling

The indie-rock revival scene is as unexpected as it is needed. Giants such as Sea Girls, The Snuts, and Sam Fender are just some examples that make you believe guitars are very much cool again. Chappaqua Wrestling formed in 2018 by songwriters Jake Mac and Charlie Wood, and in the space of four years they've managed to craft a unique and signature sound that blends grunge, britpop, and shoegaze together. Their tracks often feature thrashing drums, overdrive-soaked guitars and infectious vocal melodies that work hand in glove with well-penned lyrics. With support from BBC Radio 1, support from BBC Radio 6 and being invited to play a session at Abbey Road, the band are well and truly on the rise, and one to check out for sure.



CVC.

Words by Finch Evans.

Hailing from the sleepy hamlet of Church Village, Pontypridd from which they take their name (CVC stands for Church Village Collective), CVC have been dousing the Welsh capital and surrounding areas with their flamboyant and celebratory take on 70's inspired pop-rock for several years now. However, as the pandemic dragged the curtain down on their exuberant live shows, CVC put their heads together and, as well as finding new management, recorded heaps of new songs.

When the country reopened, CVC burst straight from the gates into two years of relentless touring and festival appearances, as well as the release of their *Reel to Reel* EP. I caught up with Franchesco Orsi (vocals), David Basse (vocals and guitar), and Elliot Bradfield (vocals and guitar) as they take a well-earned break between their triumphant homecoming gig at Sŵn Festival in Cardiff and the writing of their debut album *Get Real* set for release in January.

So it's been a massive couple of years for CVC. How've you found it?

Franchesco: It's been great! I think we've been in a bit of a bubble to be honest.

David: We haven't really had time to think. Before the management, we were booking all the gigs and interviews and doing all that shit ourselves. But now, we've got to a point where we have people who can do that for us, so we can just concentrate on drinking beer and writing songs – things like that. The main thing that's changed for me is my attention is not split between music and promotion. My focus is mainly on music now, which is a great help.

Despite the step up in professionalism and getting new management, the music you've been releasing was self-recorded in a bedroom studio, right?

D: Yeah, we did that in Elliot's house during lockdown while the rest of his flatmates went home and we had the house to ourselves. It started as just us doing demos, but then we thought, "they sound alright; they sound good enough to release." So that's how that happened.

Elliot: I mean, they do sound a bit sloppy and rough around the edges due to how we recorded them. We didn't really know what the fuck we were doing or why we were doing it. It just kind of happened there and then. Somehow, we managed to get it done after a few months of sitting in the park drinking beers. If you remember, in lockdown it was absolutely bangin' weather. For a few days, we wanted to do nothing other than sit in the park in the warm and play footy with the boys and girls and everyone in between! It was a good time with fond memories.

During lockdown, a lot of the band's old material disappeared from the internet. What was the thinking behind that?

D: We just wanted a fresh start, that's the bottom line.

F: We had band members leave, members join, and a different view of songwriting, so we were like, let's start afresh. Out with the old, in with the new.

D: And it was after lockdown, so it was a perfect time to start again.

F: I dunno, there might be a use for those old tracks like *Mortgage Anthem*. We still play that one live a lot, but right now, we're just focusing on new stuff.





CVC.
CVC.
CVC.
CVC.



So, how familiar will the album sound to people who've seen your live shows?

D: I dunno, maybe two or three songs they won't have heard will be on the album. If you've been to see us play once, you've probably heard half the album. We don't play every song, but it's just as good, if not better!

E: I think the way we play the songs live is quite different to how they were crafted when we made the album. So it'll be a nice little treat for everyone whose seen them live to hear them all on the album. When we were making the album, we were just trying to make the coolest thing we could, so we haven't been able to pull some of them off live.

The singles from *Reel to Reel* were released along with live versions on YouTube, where you could hear the difference between the record and how they'd be played live.

F: It's like two different songs!

D: Many bands sound the same live as in the studio, but that doesn't really work for us. We'd need a 30-piece band! Some of these tracks had like 80 layers, so it was a good challenge for us musically to try and choose the six parts between us to replicate. As Elliot said, it's good to hear it in a real way and a *Get Real* way!

Since lockdown, you seem to have been super busy with tours and festival dates...

D: Yeah, it kind of exploded after the album got announced. The management came on board and told us we needed to build our profile and bashed us on a load of gigs in the summer. They also helped us get our music mixed and mastered and get the music videos made.

F: From playing Cardiff 60 times a year to playing all around the country has been a massive achievement and a massive adjustment for us. We love it, it's class!

E: Also, it's been a big learning curve doing things like spending all day on the road to Glasgow and back for the sake of a show. We're still getting used to it, and I think we'll always be getting used to it. We don't want it to end, We're just getting started!

You recently had a huge homecoming show at Sŵn Fest. How was that?

F: It was nerve-racking at the start with the power going out. We posted a behind the scenes video, and Elliot's face was like a rabbit in the headlights. But Sŵn Festival was class!

E: Best gig we've done this year?

F: I think it might be the best we've ever done. I loved it.

E: Yeah, I mean Truck Fest has a special place in my heart because I wasn't expecting anyone to be there. We were playing after Yard Act, and everyone was just going nuts. It was like a moment of unexpected bliss. But Sŵn Fest was up there as well.

D: I feel like Sŵn is one of the events Cardiff takes seriously. It's more prestigious than other festivals in the city, and the one everyone wants to play. This year they had a lot of acts from outside Wales which is great because I think Sŵn used to be very Cardiff-centric. That's what a festival should be about, all kinds of people from all walks of life blasting their tunes for everybody else.



International Students:

Words by Ayushi Nathwani.

After deciding music was something I wanted to pursue, my first thought was to get out of Kenya and move somewhere with an active music scene. Of course, the UK was one of the first places that came to mind. With such a wide variety of musical styles that thrive in little pockets around the country, it seemed like the perfect option. Many other young people like me travel to the UK solely to pursue career paths they couldn't in their home countries. Cities like London, Bristol and Manchester boast a wide variety of opportunities for people looking for a career in music. But are these opportunities really open to everyone?

Any foreigners studying on Student Route Visas are extremely limited in the musical endeavours in which they are allowed to embark. UK regulations only allow visa students to work 20 per week if studying at undergraduate level or above, and they don't allow international students to perform live in front of a paying audience. On top of that, visa students cannot monetise their music by releasing it on streaming platforms like Spotify or Apple Music. These restrictive rules make it nearly impossible for up-and-coming artists to promote themselves with the hope of being scouted by potential employers.

One student expressed their frustration, saying that they once viewed London as "the centre of music in Europe" but has since become "exclusive". Another student explained they were forced to turn down several jobs in the music sector due to not reaching the requirements needed for the student to switch to a work visa. I have also faced some of these issues, as well as issues with the visa process. I missed the first few weeks of my course solely because of the lack of support and information available about the process before applying to the UK. Meanwhile, local students can go out gigging as they please, record and release as many projects as they desire, and are much more likely to be employed in the music industry after finishing their studies as a result.

But even if we push all the stress of finances and job insecurity aside, foreign students have it harder from the moment they set foot in the UK. They must adapt quickly to the new environment and adjust to being away from home and family. New rules to increase healthcare charges for all immigrants have reduced the number of student visas being given out. As a result of these factors, migrants are more likely to suffer mental health problems during their studies.

Is the Music Industry Really an 'Even Playing Field' for Everyone?

With the current visa regulations, it most definitely is not.

With visa students also being charged almost double the tuition fees and earning far less than their British-born peers, will aspiring artists from abroad continue to consider the UK a good option to study music and work? Will people continue to spend their hard-earned money, year after year, on this unbelievably expensive and tiresome visa process just to get here and realise they may have had it better back home? And with regulations changing so rapidly, will the cons of being in the UK as a foreigner soon outweigh the pros?

Even with the new Graduate Visa rules, international students studying in the music sector need more job security after completing their studies. In addition, many employers are less likely to employ foreigners as the company would need to sponsor them while applying for a work visa. Visa students only have the option of relying on social media and digital promotion to market themselves independently. However, due to this digital world still being so unpredictable, it's impossible to consider it a stable source of income even after garnering a large following.

The UK workforce depends largely on immigrants, with foreigners making up 18% of the employed population, but with so many regulations being put in place, the UK is becoming less and less of a viable option for aspiring artists from foreign countries. International students bring so many of our own cultures and influences with us when migrating here, which enhances the rich multicultural environment that makes UK music so interesting. The more countries the UK distances itself from, the less diverse the culture will become. So surely now is the time for the UK to reevaluate it's rules on immigration?

2022: The Renaissance of UK

Words by Lewis Haywood.

The Shamen, Daft Punk and Fat Boy Slim, amongst hundreds of others, were some of the big names that dominated the charts in the 1990s. Often spending weeks in the top ten flying the flag for dance music. Events such as Castlemorten, Fantazia 92 and the free party movement were in full swing, and you could be forgiven for thinking drugs like ecstasy and psychedelics were one of your five a day based on how prevalent they were in the news. It was a time widely regarded as the golden age of raving and club culture. However, all good things must come to an end, and the 2000s and 2010s saw a rapid decline of club music in the charts, as post-Brit pop indie and pop took the lead, and the crackdown by the police on illegal raving and free-spirited drug use stifled the genres that went with it. In 2002 DJ Sonique released her Number One, *It Feels So Good*, and so began a 20-year-long drought of house music at the top of the charts and, more importantly, female DJ representation.

Almost 20 long years later, on the 8th of September 2022, Eliza Rose & Interplanetary Criminal swept the nation with their feel-good summer dance anthem *B.O.T.A (Baddest of Them All)*, which spent a well-deserved two weeks at the coveted number 1 spot as well as a whopping nine weeks in the top ten. A tearful Eliza Rose spoke outside BBC Studios in London, saying: "This is the people's rhythm, and I feel like everyone came together to get this to number 1. This is for the underground!"

Is this a festival season fluke, a TikTok sensation, or is there something far greater bubbling beneath the surface of UK music? A revolution? A renaissance? In the year to date, 26.1% of the singles that have entered the weekly top ten are dance tracks, an almost 80% increase on the genre's share of top ten hits across the whole of last year and nearly three times as high as its share in 2019. The statistics don't lie, and dance music as a genre now holds the second-highest market share, having overtaken rap/hip hop, which boasts the biggest artists in the world and the marketing budgets to match.

With underground dance music exploding into the mainstream charts, it would be difficult for the major labels, publishers and executives to turn a blind eye. Geoff Taylor, Chief Executive of BPI and BRIT Awards & Mercury Prize, said, "Dance is a genre that the UK has long excelled at, so it's gratifying that this renaissance is being powered in part by homegrown talent, including breakthrough artists LF System and Eliza Rose (who as mentioned) have both spent multiple weeks at Number One on the Official Singles Chart this year." Geoff went on to say, "It's also fascinating to see how other genres such as hip-hop and pop are morphing into dance and how the genre has been embraced by global superstars including Drake and Beyoncé."



LF System.



Dance Music?



Eliza Rose.
Eliza Rose.
Eliza Rose.

Geoff Taylor is correct. Drake's new album *Honestly, Nevermind* was a far cry away from his usual R&B, rap and pop stylings. His track *Massive* is a hard, tech-house influenced, five-and-a-half-minute feel-good anthem, which has been accepted with open arms by the dance music community, excited at seeing such a mainstream artist making his move towards the club scene. However, not everyone felt the same way, and some of Drake's fans made sure that their feelings were made clear, with many rushing to social media to vent their frustration and disappointment on Twitter and a barrage of memes began.

In a video seemingly taken from his album release party, Drake addressed the chatter surrounding his album. In a video clip and speaking over the track, *Calling My Name* from *Honestly, Nevermind*, he said: "It's all good if you don't get it yet. It's all good; that's what we do. We wait for you to catch up. We're in here, though. We're caught up already. On to the next. My goodness."

Maybe the industry has caught up, and now it's up to the listeners to choose whether to embrace the renaissance or not. Regardless, house music and all things dance seem like they could be back in the charts and on the radio for years to come.



Drake.



Freddie Lewis.

Photo by Beth Butcher.



Photos by Ruu Media.

Surgeons



Girl.

Words by Jacob Dowdle.

"I think at some points it hinders like you aren't as free as someone who hasn't been trained at all. So I've had to compartmentalise some of those aspects," says Surgeons Girl AKA Sinead, discussing how her conservatory-level piano affects her productions. Her musical training and rich understanding of classical works spill over, somewhat unexpectedly, into her current practice.

"I did these pieces by Debussy called *Images*. They were a collection where each piece is an image where you are given a title, but it's up to the listener to interpret that and figure out the meaning." On her latest release *Sever EP*, Surgeons Girl uses this same concept as inspiration for creating impressive soundscapes and sonic narratives that open the door and carry the listener through the world in which they exist, without imposition. With popular releases on Livity Sound, Mostart, Inside Out Records and most recently on Lapsus, it's clear to see that Sinead is making waves throughout the scene and has no intention of slowing down.

With her esteemed history of study, classical musicianship and visual creation, it can be hard to see the road that has led her to the techno sound she currently represents. She explains, "My sister and I were living in London for my undergrad ... and I just got really into clubbing. I used to go to Fabric all the time, like every weekend, especially on Saturday when it was techno and house." She continues describing the calibre of artists that would perform "I would see so many cool artists, for example, Ricardo Villalobos, he would come on at like 10am and play these crazy sets, it was just insane." Recalling this point in her life, she depicts a pivotal point in her musical journey, "There was this really cool girl playing; I wish I could remember her name. She's probably really famous now. She was playing on a laptop, and it looked like she was just typing, but it sounded amazing. I was like, Why am I studying classical piano? This is what I want to do." The excitement and passion at recalling these memories were written across her face in the same way I imagine it was on those nights in Fabric.

Despite her raving credentials, she most often chooses to scratch her performing itch by opting for live shows in which she recreates her tracks from sequencers and synthesisers, as opposed to DJing. However, in her preparation for live shows, a dilemma can occur: "Sometimes when I write something to perform live, the original version and the version I play out are completely different. Sometimes it feels like I'm just bouncing down stems instead of performing, which makes me think, 'Why am I even doing this one live?'" Because of this, she is making changes in preparation for an upcoming performance at Les Femmes s'en mêlent in Paris, "I've made my new live set-up purposefully small, I'm just using a Digitakt box and a Digitone, so it's more improvisational." Those who have seen the constant stream of jams she uploads to her social media will know just how incredible her improvisational skills are and will look forward to her more stripped-down set-up at future performances.

The influences of her club-playing idols combined with her unique approach to live electronic performance create a complex and mesmerising sonic signature that has made Sinead's music such a staple of the scene since her first release on Livity Sound, *A Violet Sleep EP*, which features her most streamed song on Spotify, *Sympathetic Cycle*. "The idea for it started when I was jamming on my live set-up" she explains, "If you listen back to the original jam I uploaded, it sounds totally different to the released track, but sometimes that just happens."

Ever since her debut on Livity Sound, the debate on how the Surgeons Girl moniker came to be has been quietly contested by the community. "Everyone thinks it's got something to do with the DJ Surgeon, but it's actually a painfully boring story. I was looking through the band Wire's song track list, and there was one track called Surgeon's Girl." She continues by outlining a past creative endeavour whereby she created visuals and uploaded them to a YouTube account of the same name, "So I've sort of been Surgeons Girl from the beginning."

Surgeons Girl. Surgeons Girl. Surgeons Girl.

Before Surgeons Girl, Sinead had success with her previous band, Face + Heel. Through experimentation and performance, Sinead learned and crafted the sound we hear in her recent releases. But despite her quality, there is still a gendered preconception about talents when it comes to music. "In my previous band, I did the production, and my partner Luke wrote the lyrics even though I was singing. It was a funny dynamic. Often blokes would come up to Luke and say, 'the production is amazing,' and he would be like 'it wasn't me it was her.' Then they still wouldn't ask me about the production, but I think that's completely changed".

With increased public awareness of all male lineups, inclusion riders rising in popularity and the idea of gendered creation of music dissolving, we are taking a step in the right direction. There is however a potential for rising inclusivity to be exploited by promoters to portray themselves as more inclusive than they are. In response to the recent push towards equality for women in electronic music, Sinead says, "I still get quite a lot of emails saying 'we're doing an all-female event, will you come and do something?'" She mentions the potential for promoters to start booking women as a way to virtue signal progressiveness rather than booking on merit. "I don't like it, even if it's for a good cause. I don't want to be just considered good as a female, although I do really like to support female causes. I want to be able to hold my own with the men," she continues, "The show I'm doing in Paris (Les Femmes s'en mêlent) has got Chole, Clara 3000, Sophia Cortez and loads more legends, so something like that, where the standard is up there, I'm like 'Yeah I'll be part of that! That's great!'"



Girl. Surgeons Girl.



While the shift towards more inclusive line-ups and opportunities has been massive in recent years, Sinead thinks the presence of female innovators has always been massively influential in electronic music. "We've got amazing female innovators, and the past originators like Daphne Oram, Delia Derbyshire, and Pauline Oliveros. To now, where we've got people like Sarah Davachi, Ulla Straus and Kali Malone. I think seeing so many cool women do such amazing stuff really helps the rest of us."

Sinead's work as a lecturer at BIMM Bristol has no doubt made a lasting impact on the students she has taught. This work to educate aspiring producers, myself included, has cast an ever-growing light on the amazing work of female electronic music innovators across the board.

'Talking Body':

B



Laura Jazmyn.

Since the birth of popular culture different images of how the ideal female body should look have followed women everywhere they go. A generation ago, these ideas would have been placed in front of us through magazines, television, and advertising controlled by big companies with an agenda. However, with the rise of social media and photoshop, the public now hold more power over what is considered 'beautiful'. Because we are constantly bombarded with models and influencers whose bodies are idealised, therefore women are more likely to alter their looks online in an attempt to look 'perfect' as they feel unsatisfied with their appearance. The wide accessibility of the internet also means those with larger followings are more susceptible to trolling and, in some cases, over-sexualised. This is hugely relevant for female musical performers.

Living such high-profile lives, celebrities often absorb the public's opinions, putting pressure on how they act and look. The effects of this have been spoken about for decades but continue to be a big problem in the industry. For example, in her 2020 documentary *Miss Americana*, Taylor Swift spoke about how discussions in the press and the public concerning her weight caused her to "starve just a little bit". Swift then talked about how this caused her to lack the energy and stamina she needed to perform for long strenuous stints on her 1989 world tour, explaining how body image can affect physical health and performance ability.

Around this time, other female artists also shared their two pence on the matter, with Billie Eilish releasing a video for an interlude called *Not My Responsibility*. The track is spoken word and emphasises the public's obsession with her appearance and body despite her young age, eventually ending with the powerful statement, "your opinion of me is not my responsibility". Shortly after this was released, Billie was photographed wearing a tank top and shorts, and the image went viral resulting in internet users body-shaming her. In response to this, Eilish dismissed the comments and encouraged her fans to normalise 'real bodies', which other female artists like Lizzo advocates. In fact, Lizzo coined the term 'body normativity' to bring attention to the lack of diversity and representation in the body positivity movement and told *Vogue* that "the people that this term was created for are not benefiting from it".

Body Image in Popular Culture.

Performers with smaller followings are also affected by this issue. We spoke with singer-songwriter, Laura Jazmyn, to discuss body image and how it can affect those in the music industry. Laura is a second-year Music Business and Vocal Performance student at BIMM, originally from Tredegar in Wales, who combines elements of pop, R&B and indie in her tracks. Being signed to Swansea label SWND Records for the past two years, and studying at BIMM has provided her with the resources to release and perform her music. However, the changing standards within the music industry have placed pressure on her has made her hyper-aware of the standards society places her body on stage and the clothes she wears.

The singer confesses she has constant self-awareness and anxiety, stating that she doesn't trust the way her body looks won't be discussed by her audience. To combat this, Laura makes herself feel confident before a show by picking an outfit that makes her feel stylish and comfortable. This relaxes and focuses her on the performance instead of her appearance. She claims that "stepping back in front of a mirror before going on stage and telling myself I look beautiful helps me to believe in myself and settle my nerves".

Undoubtedly one of the main causes for this kind of insecurity is social media, with discourse surrounding body image so easily visible. Laura comments on how the pressure trolling puts on artists makes her worry that as her platform starts to grow, there could be harsh things said about her online. One story close to Laura is Little Mix's Jesy Nelson, who suffered greatly during her career from criticism about her weight and style that affected her desire to perform. The public nature of these comments has made Laura reluctant to share her images online for fear that she would be on the receiving end of trolling.



Photos by Ania Shrimpton.

In recent years, movements are being made around 'body normativity' and 'fatphobia', with much of this discourse taking place on TikTok. One song that went viral is *Fat Funny Friend* by Maddie Zahm, which expresses her experience of feeling undesirable and overlooked in a body-focused society. The singer's track was met with support from other young people who relate to her lyrics, and this exposure benefitted her career massively. In this respect, social media can be a positive way to lift each other and break down stigmas put in place by society, but there is still a long way to go.

Words by Rosie Burgess.

Concrete Jungyals.

Words by Tommy Elsbury

Inspired, refreshed, and sexy. This is something we all want to feel on the dancefloor, and Concrete Jungyals encapsulate all of this. Cultivating a community of fem and non-binary individuals gathered around their namesake, they're more than just an event group and perhaps even more than a collective.

In recent years, Concrete Jungyals have cemented themselves into Bristol folklore. A beautiful story of love people would struggle to replicate, they care deeply about one another and their output. In a time of political polarisation, each body of work or event in which Concrete Jungyals are involved gifts us a celebration of that love. Music will always be political, but with Concrete Jungyals it runs a little deeper. They invite you to step into their world – and into yourself.

I first caught the self-described 'bad-bitch led' collective through their mid-week residency at The Crofters Rights and immediately gravitated to the combination of local talent and burning bright headliners from across the pond. One such artist is the Minneapolis-based headliner Yasmeenah, who graced the stage for their event entitled 'Last Dance.' It was the inclusivity and friendliness of the event that assured me that although they will only continue to grow, their roots are firmly planted in Bristol.

The collective are proudly genre-fluid, and have always made sure those new to their work don't confuse them as a jungle group. For example you can sometimes hear noughties RnB combined with pulsating garage rhythms, and classic pop given a techno-infused spin. But the collective will always make you bounce with percussive grooves.

I met with gorgeous co-founders Sasha and Tiffany SK, and core member DJ Emmy at The Social, a quaint bar a stone's throw from Crofters Rights. We met at 5pm and, with all of us working or studying, avoided alcohol for sweet mocktails and warm hot chocolates. "It can be a lot," Sasha tells me, "... especially when you have a residency like Crofters, so having each other is really what keeps us going."

"We're in work mode, making sure everyone is safe and having a good time whilst also being surrounded by alcohol," says Emmy, making it clear that it can be difficult working in the night-time economy as community organisers. The burnout is real, but Concrete Jungyals have built trust with their audience, allowing them to take time out over the summer without the worry of hitting pause on their trajectory.

Sitting with the collective 'IRL' is only possible because of their Facebook community, which is where it all started. The group helps to provide a safe online place for fem-identifying and non-binary creatives to ask questions, seek support and ultimately get together in person. The group is a concept that Sasha says she is most proud of. Tiffany and Emmy nod in agreement and point me towards Facebook communities like Bristol Girl as inspiration for a similar platform geared towards Bristol's music scene.

This ethos evolved beautifully onto radio, which I first discovered through their individual mixes, such as Emmy's NOODS radio slot. But Concrete Jungyals are nurturing something bigger than themselves, making sure that "radio allows us to continue the conversation and reconnect with creatives. Especially because at events, it's hard to chat if the music is too loud." Their interviews on the unfortunately now ended SWU.FM, showcased their gender-fluidity and knack for spotting talent.

Concrete Jungyals.
Concrete Jungyals



Photo by Ruu Media.

Tiffany SK, who currently works on marketing for Bristol's Loco Klub, feels that sometimes women's work in the music industry isn't valued enough in terms of pay. Tiffany explained that whilst efficiency and work rate may increase, money sometimes doesn't follow suit. This is something the group have been vocal about on social media, raising awareness around fair pay for female DJs.

"Some people undervalue the brand and book us to diversify their line-up rather than an acknowledgement of our hard work," Tiffany says. It takes collectives like Concrete Jungyals time and effort to partner up on events, on top of developing their craft in a male-dominated industry. "It's great to be seen, but we're going to want loads of money," she continues. The message is clear. If you're going to exploit creatives in the name of diversity, you need a budget. "Don't be afraid to ask or say no," Sasha confirms. Knowing your worth is a message the collective is keen to share with the community. They certainly know theirs and the work that needs to be done.

When I asked the group what advice they had for aspiring DJs and other creatives starting in the industry, it was a firm response from DJ Emmy. "Take things at your own pace. I knew friends living in Bristol when I moved here, but they were working full-time, and for a long while, I felt like I didn't have my people," catching Tiffany and Sasha's eyes as she speaks, "and join courses outside of university or work," Tiffany explains, with the collective pointing towards Saffron's Mix Nights program. For those who don't know, Saffron's Mix Nights program is a course and series of workshops for women, trans, and non-binary beginners wanting to develop as DJs.

Photo by Ruu Media.



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Sasha SK, a music plug for Foundation FM by day, described in their 1020 Radio interview that the facebook group and collective was born from male friends not trusting their music selections. She confirms to me that connecting with and celebrating other like-minded creatives whilst having a growing online platform made her feel less alone, especially during the lockdown. We agree there's no shortcut to finding your rhythm; you must be brave enough to take the plunge and be seen, and Concrete Jungyals are a great example of a group doing this.

Most importantly, Concrete Jungyals want to have fun and take you along for the ride. I first saw DJ Emmy as a resident of Crotch queer night at the Llandoger Trow pub. I would catch the bus to Bristol from our hometown just to feel seen and to hear her playful mixing style. Going to their events and other queer nights at a time when my friends and I were stepping into ourselves as adults was really important.

"That's exactly what we wanted to create, and this has definitely re-inspired us," Sasha replies. It's so important that collectives like Concrete Jungyals exist for young women and non-binary people, as well as POC and other marginalised communities who want to feel good on their terms. If their residency at Crofters was anything to go by, we can only expect bigger and more dynamic events in the future. Concrete Jungyals represent something bigger than themselves, with an audience eager to join them in unison on the dancefloor. So whatever these beautiful women have in store for us, we can't wait.





Promoters:

Words by Lewis Haywood.

Big event promoters are often given a bad image and are sometimes seen as fat cats who swallow up all the ticket money and often financially neglect their artists in return for “exposure”. Some of the largest promoters in the industry, like AEG and Live Nation, are often given negative press around things like artist exclusivity and ticket prices. However, the platform they offer to small emerging artists is integral for them to showcase their talent to those who may not know how to get their foot in the door. However, where is the line between ‘exposure’ and outright greed from many promoters? In 2018 over half of musicians worked unpaid at some point over that year, with 66% of that number believing doing so did not benefit their career (Arts Professional).

Many promoters on a regional level are not big conglomerate companies but instead students, artists themselves and simple music fanatics. A lot of them are below the age of 25. I am one of these student promoters and started my events brand, BrickPhone Audio, during the tail end of the lockdown in May 2021. I established my brand firstly to showcase the house and garage genres I liked in what is sometimes seen as a predominantly drum and bass-focused music scene in Bristol. I did not have savings, nor did I have any help from friends; instead, I used my student loan and money from my part-time job to finance the events.

On my first event, I spent just over £600, which equated to my rent and more. It was a nervous wait to see how I would make this money back. It was only on the day that I surpassed the £600 and made a £43.50 profit. I was ecstatic, I thought I had cracked the secret formula and had to stop myself from quitting my job instantaneously and putting ‘entrepreneur’ into my Instagram bio. As I began to plan event after event, there became an added pressure to make the next one better than the last, booking bigger DJs, bigger venues, and ultimately having bigger budgets. I would find myself dreaming up line-ups and booking the biggest venues, convincing myself my event would sell out. Surely it would... right?

In April 2022, I booked my biggest event to date, where I spent over £1300 of my own money. My student loan, destined to cover my rent, food and bills for the next few months, was lumped into riders, venue hire, artist fees, and promotion. I didn’t see myself as a gambler, as it’s not the same as putting Arsenal to win or backing a horse at the Cheltenham Races because this is an educated risk. I convinced myself that people had to come to this event and that it would sell out. However, on the day, I found that I had only sold around 50 tickets for a 250-capacity venue and that I was now nearly £600 in the hole.



Just 15 minutes before security closed the venue doors, I broke even and made a little bit for myself. £5.20, to be exact. After weeks of stress, money, time and effort, I had only £5.20, just enough for a pint in some Bristol pubs and could only think, was it all worth it? The days before the event, the stress was palpable, I found myself being irritable, often angry at those closest to me, and my attendance at university was nil. Relationships suffered, and I suffered, often hiding away and working myself up into an anxious frenzy, refreshing the ticket page every 30 seconds to see if any of the numbers had changed. This wasn't the high-rolling life of the promoter I initially thought I was getting myself into.

As we come out of the pandemic, entering a cost of living crisis, and the national recession, it is difficult to understand the appeal for new promoters. Artist, venue and agent fees are all getting higher, as well as other costs which need to be accounted for, while ticket holders naturally want ticket prices to remain the same. The margins are getting smaller and smaller, leading to many promoters just concluding; what's the point?

I believe we all need to do our part in supporting our small promoters, so pop along to the small events, donate if possible, buy some merch and if the venue looks a little sparse, put your arm over the promoter and buy them a drink, because they most likely need it.

The Modern Day Gamblers of the Music Industry?



Turbo Island Demolition: An attempt to r Or an attack on Bristol cul

The long-awaited Turbo Island makeover had been on the cards for a while, and the 'renovation' of the popular party spot has been received with mixed reactions.

For some, it was seen as a free-living, weekend utopia; A place for like-minded individuals to gather and share a moment with the city after the clubs have closed. For others, it was seen as a drug-fuelled, crime-infested hell hole, allowing for Bristol's undesirables to congregate and celebrate chaos.

In the heart of Stokes Croft, Turbo Island was at the centre of Bristol's self-proclaimed 'Cultural Quarter', a highly desirable location for students and middle-class workers relocating from other cities. As a result of this, rent prices have risen to the point that many of the residents, some of which have been in the area for multiple generations, can no longer afford to live there. As the demographic of Stokes Croft changes, many of the historic venues and spaces that have shaped the identity of the area remain, though now interspersed with new entrepreneurial opportunities that threaten their existence.

At the core of this battle between modernity and local culture lies Turbo Island, a no man's land without curfew and an apparent sense of lawlessness. Before the renovations on any given Friday or Saturday night, this patch of dirt is awash with an assembly of people from all different walks of life collected around a bonfire. People armed with mini rigs and guitars and music of all different genres could be heard until sunrise when most return home.

Words by Riley Dibling and Kris Griffiths.



Reduce anti-social behaviour?

Culture?

Through gaining an increasingly notorious reputation for regular anti-social behaviour occurrences and drug use, the area and those who congregate around Turbo Island have often been cast in a negative light. Although, for the many homeless and lost people of Bristol, Turbo Island is not a weekend party destination but an integral part of their daily life, identity and community. While unsightly to some, it represented a small patch of freedom in an increasingly sanitised world.

Regardless of your stance on the area, it cannot be denied that Turbo Island has its problems. A police report showed that over 600 violent or sexual offences were reported from the Stokes Croft area between September 2021 and August 2022 – over double that of the neighbouring district Bishopston. Local cafes and establishments have complained the Island has affected their businesses due to anti-social behaviour. Workers from Jamaica Street Studios have said, “Turbo Island is a nightmare” and that they have had to call the fire service around “20 times” over the past year. This has seemingly led to the council making efforts to clean up the image of the area.

This all being said, for many locals, it is an iconic Bristol landmark. Best of Bristol quoted that the demolition was “like tearing down Stonehenge”. Turbo Island is a space where people have been gathering for decades, long before many of the newer neighbouring businesses were established. Such complaints could be seen in the same light as buying a house next to a music venue and then filing noise complaints.

Bristol mayor Marvin Rees said he “welcomed the landowner taking action to prevent further anti-social behaviour”. This statement makes it clear the local authority is against spaces such as Turbo Island, arguing these changes have been made to reduce crime. What must be called into question, however, is whether this action safeguards the most vulnerable of the Island’s inhabitants and whether this action truly reduces the anti-social behaviour. Whether this will have a positive or negative effect on the local community is yet to be seen.

The council’s decision to clean up the Bear Pit a few years ago may shed some light on what the effects could be. The area now looks more desolate after the ‘clean up’ with very little effect on the anti-social behaviour in the Stokes Croft area.

I would say, for the time being, all the other catalysts for anti-social behaviour will remain, and the Turbo Island faithful will simply disperse to another similar space. Regarding the high crime rate, yes, violent crimes are higher than the average residential neighbourhood, but it could be argued this is due to the high volume of legal bars and clubs in the area. Stokes Croft is also in no way the most crime-ridden area in Bristol. Hartcliffe, for example, had over double the violent and sexual crimes reported in the same period.

Taking all this into consideration, it does beg the question - Is this really an attempt to make the area safer? Or is it part of a process to clean up the image of Stokes Croft by removing spaces synonymous with Bristol culture that is considered by some as ‘eye sores’, to appease the newer middle-class residents and attract future developers and businesses?





Modern Day Music.

Photo by @IreneHaceFotos.



It can often feel like women can be isolated in the music industry. Being exposed to issues such as misogyny and intolerance and often being perceived through the male gaze of tastemakers who report on music. For too long, fierce femmes have been fighting an uphill battle to be taken seriously. Lyd Read, a Bristol-based singer-songwriter and frontwoman of up-and-coming indie rock band HUNNY BUZZ, knows this all too well. Although Lyd is the only female in the four-piece band, she dominates the stage with her voice and feminine finesse. With a commanding presence, she occupies front and centre stage, delivering original lyrics with eclectic and sentimental themes.

I had the pleasure of catching up with her over a coffee at her abode in Bristol, the birthplace of most of the band's intimate tunes. She was keen to talk about the issues she's faced and paint me a picture of her experiences as to how women in the industry are treated.

How do you find being the only female in the band?

Being the only female among the three boys in the band isn't something I think about often. Growing up with two older brothers, I've always been used to being the only girl. Summer 2022 has been full of festivals and summer shows, so even squeezing the four of us in a three-person tent at times seemed to be quite normal for me.

At Resonate we love your newest single *Girlfriend in the Band*. What is the meaning behind the song and why is it 'hard for you', as the lyrics suggest?

I wrote *Girlfriend in the Band* after a band rehearsal. I went straight home and had this built-up energy to play guitar alone and explore my thoughts out loud. I remember feeling frustrated as I didn't feel like I was being treated how the other band members were. I felt more like a 'girlfriend', which I am, but I felt a shallowness towards this and less like a musical asset to the band. Certain band stress can affect personal relationships too, and this can then put a strain on everything. The song is about a romantic relationship within a band. It can be challenging and difficult, but at the same time, it's a bond like no other.

And, are there any imbalances within the band being the only woman? Is there anything you would like to change anything about HUNNY BUZZ?

I don't think there is much of an imbalance in relation to the boys and I don't think I could see myself being in a band with anyone else because of the friendships we've made through HUNNY BUZZ. I think HUNNY BUZZ will progress how it's supposed to, and I'm excited to see where it will take us.

Are you concerned about your career with HUNNY BUZZ, whilst being a woman in the public eye?

I think it's important to think about what it means to be a frontwoman in the music industry. I understand I will feel uncomfortable and sexualised compared to my male bandmates. I've encountered this all the way from the age of 16 when I began to attend open mic nights, to the 22 year-old frontwoman I am today. I've grown used to the rudimentary behaviour of a group of men shouting abuse from the bar. I have learned on my musical journey as a female performer that there will be things to deal with such as sexual crowd chants, crude comments, cheers and wolf whistles – and it's sad to have to accept that, but it doesn't stop me from being the performer I am.

It sounds like you have your head in the right place. Can you tell me about anything exciting on the HUNNY BUZZ horizon?

The band are set to release a double-sided single early next year with two tracks, *Deli Man* and *Love Me (Like You Used To)*. In the meantime, we're working on music videos, photoshoots, rehearsing and writing as much as we possibly can. There has been talk about releasing an album in March time and starting fresh with new music for summer 2023 festivals and shows. 2023 is HUNNY BUZZ's time. We are currently planning the next music video for *Love Me (Like You Used To)*, within an outdated and vintage vibe - but that's really all I'm allowed to say! We're looking forward to a similar summer to 2022 and keeping the band busy with local festivals such as playing our favourites, 2000 Trees and Home Farm Fest again. The dream is to play Glastonbury, but who knows what next year will bring.

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Lyd Read.

Words by Maisie Thompson.



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Photos by Aron Mathias-Weston.

If you're unfamiliar with Bubblegum Hypnosis' music such as tracks *Scrambled Eggs* and *USURPER OF THE UNIVERSE*, you can be forgiven for now, but not much longer. Hot off the traction of their first release, 2022's *Burp and Vomit*, and with heels finally firmly dug into Bristol creative scene, it was about time Bubblegum Hypnosis finally exposed the men behind the curtain ahead of their week-long headline tour around the "Toilet Circuit."

The three lads that make up the band are long-time friends, growing up together in Aylesbury, parting ways temporarily to study and work, before finally combining forces once again here in Bristol. I spent the afternoon watching the threesome argue and hurl vicious insults at each other from across a room. The band apparently got out of bed at 3pm, broke into their drummer's house and rushed into his bedroom, further fueling the slanging match.

I really didn't get the feeling that everybody was the best of friends, but then again, who else but your closest could you do that to? The fountains of love overflow as some more venomous slurs and a few liberal splashes of the C-word are never far from any of their tongues.

I'm informed by Viv guitarist and instigator of said chaos, who has incidentally just poured Lemsip into recently recruited drummer Eddie's breakfast bowl of tomato soup (Lemsoup) that, "Bubblegum works because we get each other really well. This is the band's incarnation that has always felt the most correct. The band is a perfect representation of our personalities. We ARE controlled chaos." Behind my hopefully calm and cool exterior, I was in pieces at the shenanigans.

The three-piece are notorious amongst their mainly northern following for pushing the envelope by addressing their heavy musical style in a non-conformist way. Their output is less a specific genre and more theatrical. It's made for pure entertainment as they proudly and continuously proclaim. "I think as we've progressed, we've incorporated a lot more into our sets. The beginning and end of a set are usually not fleshed out," Viv states. "We don't really deep it too much. When you do, that's when things become harder".

I quickly got the impression they thought I was deeping it too much, deflecting questions about everything from politics and culture to the nonsensicalness of their lyrics, fiercely defending a right to create for the sake of it in whatever way they want, and with as much spontaneity as they desire.

"We're not trying to have a message [and] I think that's a blessing. It's anything that opens the potential for more people to enjoy our music because you can take it as whatever you wanna. Though we would rather have fewer dedicated fans than lots of casual ones," Viv asserts. "The art is there for you to enjoy."

Guitarist Kez continues. "We're all pretty weird people. I think that's what's real about us. The music is just the result of us being friends AND musicians. There's music with a reason, to create and deliver messages, but Bubblegum's not like that; it's about having fun." I'm told by lead-singer Eddie. "People come to shows expecting to hear songs and music in a certain way, but we don't play like that."

"I think there's a face to the art and then there's what goes on behind the scenes. It obviously takes quite a lot, but the actual art is more spontaneous and off the cuff," guitarist Kez declares.

Bub Hyp



blegum nosis.



However, despite having several plays on BBC Introducing and moderate streaming interest, Viv doesn't see too much of the industry taking to their music, instead highlighting the fact he thinks it's best to go it alone. "We're not against working within the industry, I just think it's best [for Bubblegum Hypnosis] to go DIY as far as [we] can go. There does come a point where you do need outside help. I guess that might sound like a bit of a contradiction being all "DIY! DIY!" and then saying that, but I guess it'll be kind of a hybrid approach. We are trying to take it seriously man, without taking ourselves too seriously. We want this to be a self-sustaining thing. We don't wanna lose money but we keep our music on those platforms just in case it does hit and we grow."

This scepticism is a feeling shared by the band as a whole. When pushed on how it manifested, the band was quick to glean numerous stories of the usual mistreatment by promoters, sound engineers and a whole array of characters. Namely, their gripe was a lack of returns for their performances.

"They're all just funny memories now," Viv laments as he doubles down on his earlier sentiments, "..but then again, I think that's why maybe I'm so 'it has to be DIY' because the fact of the matter is that when we put our own stuff on, we actually fucking take home some money."

In a contrasting, colliding, collaborating, convoluting kind of way, I can see the hybrid vision Bubblegum Hypnosis has for itself. They see no end to their hilarity, no need for unnecessary formalities and not a single metaphorical box they can't operate outside of – but beyond such a youthful glee lies a calculated workhorse that is dedicated to their art and their business, even if it is the business of fun. At the end of the month, Bubblegum embarks upon a mini tour of England, an endeavour baring testament to their DIY ethos. They implore you to come and find out what's up if you think you're silly and open-minded enough. I wonder if they'll laugh all the way to the bank as they've prophesied?

Words by Kris Griffiths.



There's no such thing as the 'Last Great' Rockstar.

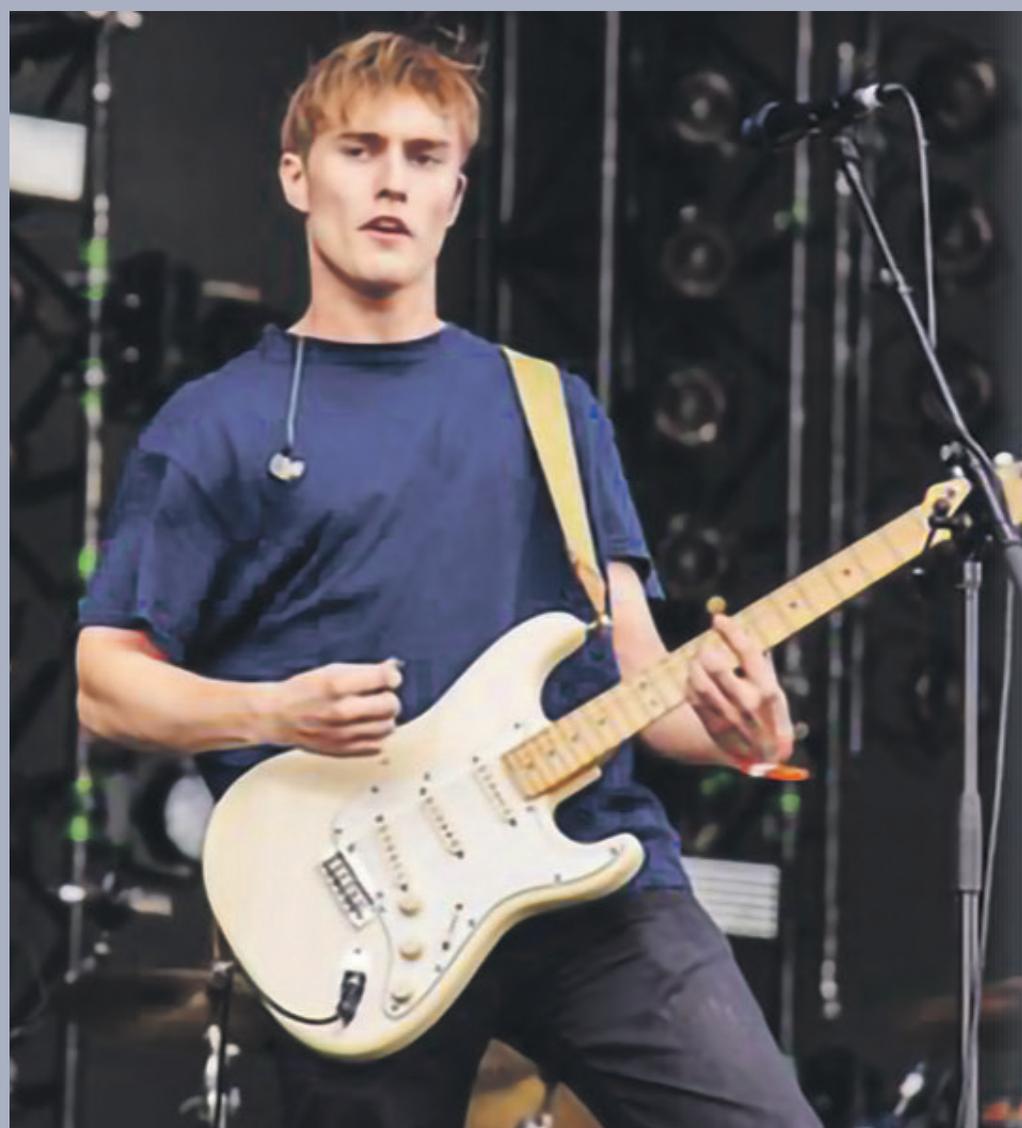
Words by Millie Cottrell.

Rockstars are among the most idolised people in the cultural sphere. They possess the holy trinity of attitude, swagger and sex appeal. There's a real iconography to what they do, so it's no wonder why many bedroom walls are draped in posters eulogising them. You have rockstars that are innovative in breaking the mould like David Bowie, and you have those who simply have the raw attitude of Liam Gallagher. However, when the word "rockstar" is mentioned, the pub round-table discussion of whom might be the last great rockstar is always pertinent.

The conversation surrounding great rockstars is fundamentally cyclical. The same names often crop up; Kurt Cobain, Liam Gallagher and Dave Grohl are some that are at the forefront. They all rose to fame in the 90s and have been dubbed by many loyal fans to be amongst the last great rockstars. A regular theme in research is the fact that they grew up surrounded by guitars in what is perceived to be the golden era of guitar-based music.

Guitars were the primary mode of instrumentation in this era and a symbol of cool for any discerning musician. The term 'sex, drugs and rock & roll', was frequently rolled out and is a term deemed more acceptable in a pre-cancel-culture world. Moving beyond this cliché, being a rockstar in 2022 means you don't need to bathe (or all too often drown) in excess, a notion the public has applied to the term over the years. Rockstars still exist in today's world, and they are seemingly less required to partake in the tropes of that lifestyle or have a bad attitude to find success. Sam Fender leads the way as an example of a modern-day rockstar. He's got talent, looks, and an on-stage presence but also comes across as an affable everyman.

There are many modern-day rock and indie musicians that prove that rockstars still exist but have less need to strap a Les Paul around your neck to prove that fact. The term may have started to describe famous rock musicians, but it's very much evolved to expand its reach. Find me someone who disagrees that Madonna embodies all the traits of a rockstar - boundary-breaking, attitudinal, subversive and excessive.





There are plenty of other non-rock musicians that are also in the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. From pop to jazz musicians and, nowadays, increasingly rappers, the boundary as to what constitutes a rockstar goes beyond the traits that originally defined it. We've always had rockstars in other genres, we just need to acknowledge them more. Bjork's experimental nature and attitude make her more than fit for the title. If you think The Prodigy aren't rockstars take one look at the late Keith Flint on stage and you'll be eating your words.

The last great rockstar term is reductive. We are witnessing great rock stars in our current musical landscape. Artists such as Beabadoobee, Fontaines D.C. and Sports Team are very much keeping the rockstar title alive in guitar music. However, Stormzy proves that rappers can also be just as 'rock n roll'; just look at his iconic headline set at Glastonbury. There's a strong argument that rappers are the new rockstars as many of them mirror the extravagance of rockers in previous eras. There are even many DJs that embody the rockstar characteristics. The 'last great' rockstar is defunct. We will continue to see rockstars appear as new artists who have rockstar-style qualities. Recognising the term is not just defined by guitar music is essential to it progressing and remaining relevant.



Photo by Getty Images.



Concrete Jungyals.

Photo by RuuMedia.



Modern Day Music.

Words by Elina Pekkarinen.

You would be forgiven for thinking that glitchcore, hyperdrill and digicore sound more like Pokemon or something from a Screwfix catalogue than a new music genre. Characterised not only by their maximalist production style but also by their unique aesthetic and, much like hyperpop, these genres found their genesis online because much of this scene, unlike many other genres, isn't tied to a specific location.

Modern Day Music is trying to change that and bring this intensely contemporary electronic music to Bristol. Commonly known as MDM, the collective started as a group of friends who all share the same love for music. They are made up of Freddie Skinz, Lightwurkk, Heyyitsbenji, Pppppawel, Rit, Invalid DK, Farella, Cloudlobby, Nox, Kojo, Abejisama. *Resonate* caught up with them following their first sold-out event as a collective at The Crown to find out more.

Who are MDM?

Heyyitsbenji: Basically, just everyone we hang out and make music with.

Freddie Skinz: It's much more real between us because we were friends first.

Heyyitsbenji: Also, we are all into the same music and part of the same weird internet culture. It definitely brings us together. We would not be friends the same way if weren't into the same music. A lot of it started to pick up over lockdown.

Lightwurkk: That's a big thing. When people were cooped up inside making beats and doing vocals etc. Hyperpop, alternative trap, or whatever you want to call it, was all picking up. The internet was a big part of it because so many people were just chilling online back then. Now, if you look on YouTube, there are so many tutorials on how to learn and to make beats.

Freddie Skinz: Also, Discord is huge in this scene. So many people are just sharing resources.

Heyyitsbenji: So many people make stuff from scratch and share them for free - loops, sample packs etc. I don't think internet culture has ever been this prolific. People just make this stuff for fun.

Amazing, and how would you describe the scene MDM are a part of?

Freddie Skinz: If you ask any artist in the scene, they will probably give you a different answer. It's just such a fresh, new thing, so no one knows what to make of it (yet). I probably would say that we do electronic trap music.

Heyyitsbenji: People in other genres have this worry that if they do something incredibly different, then they will lose listeners. However, this type of music comes from so many different places, which means that the listeners are open-minded. This means you can keep creating and there will be an audience for it as long as what you have made has a level of care put into it.

Lightwurkk: Many listeners and people making the music already make it a very eclectic genre, so it doesn't really matter what you do. You can set your bars whether you want to go extreme or go reserved. For example, in MDM, we got have polar opposites in styles like Farella. Farella does dark and metal-influenced stuff, and then there's my music which is essentially ambient.

Freddie Skinz: Eventually, people will give up on labelling the scene. It is such a dynamic scene already. The umbrella term "hyperpop" includes so many sounds under it.



And you managed to bring all these styles together at your event at The Crown. Can you tell me a bit about the night?

Lightwurkk: It was really spontaneous. It came from me seeking out opportunities via people on the internet because I like their music. I have been into this music for years, so I feel like I can reach out to people with the simple understanding that I actually enjoy their music. It all came from me hitting up people and asking nicely to do a set. I thought as long as I make them feel comfortable here, everything should be okay.

Freddie Skinz: The event also brought us more recognition and people started taking us seriously.

Lightwurkk: Like after the event, when everything had gone very well, and I realised that all the people there were so nice. It was the best feeling ever.

Although much of your music and relationships exist on the internet, you also are based in Bristol. Can you talk a bit about what Bristol means to you as a city and how it affects your art?

Freddie Skinz: Bristol is definitely a hub for new ideas and creativity. I feel like Bristol's society is just somehow ahead of the rest of the UK and is a lot more accepting than most places.

Lightwurkk: Bristol is always fronting different movements and being a kind of rebellious place - whether it's music, art etc.

Freddie Skinz: It works in our favour pushing hyperpop. It's already been done in London, but we definitely have a good opportunity to push it in Bristol. The music that we do resonates a lot with Bristol and the sort of lifestyle we live.

What would you change in the Bristol music scene?

Freddie Skinz: Our only issue probably is that venues won't really take us in. We have a lot of plans, and we will find a way to execute them in Bristol.

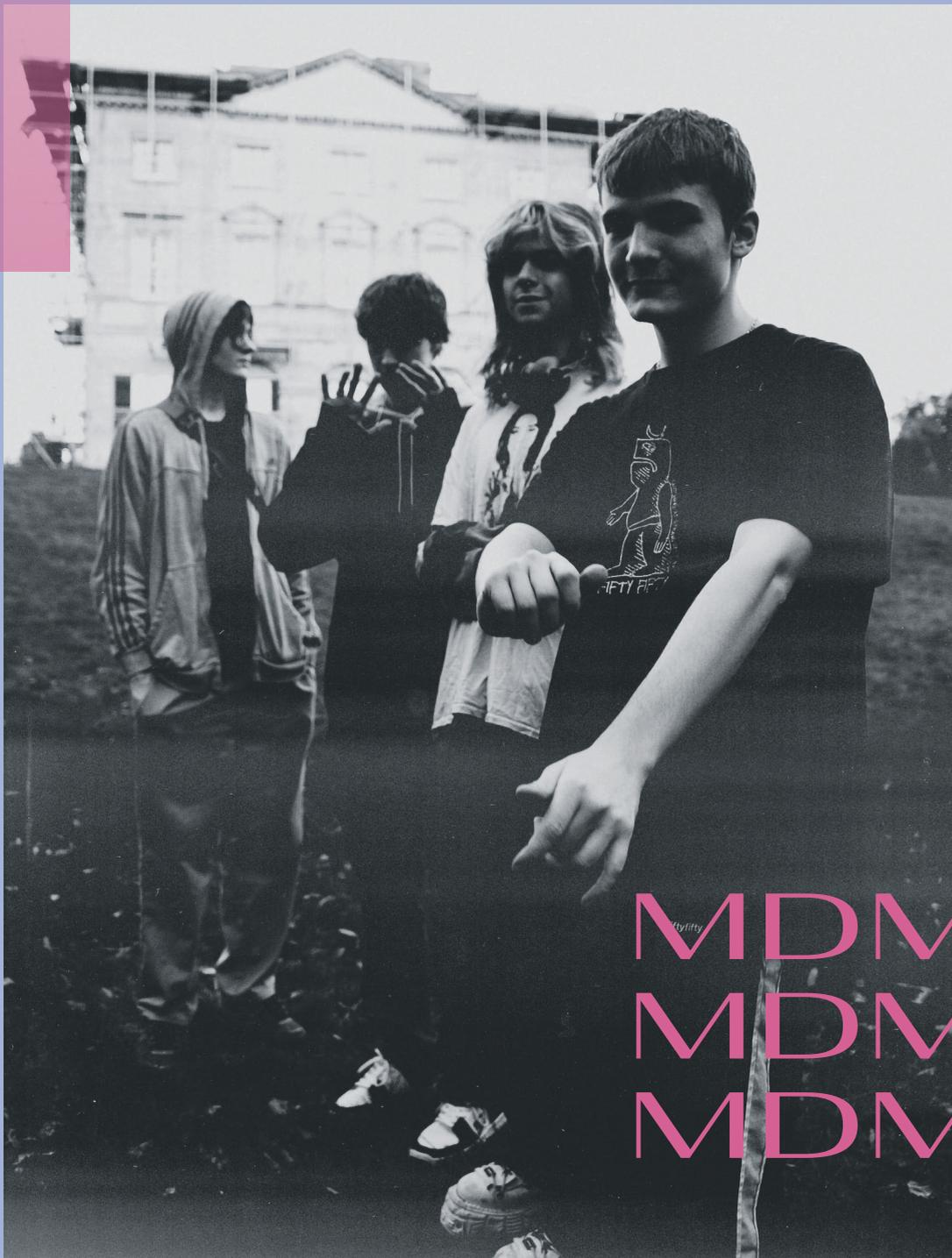
Lightwurkk: Yeah, definitely. They don't really have faith in the ticket sales which I understand because it's a new thing, and the potential might be hard to see.

And finally, what's next for MDM?

Heyyitsbenji: Meet more people, grow, and make more connections.

Freddie Skinz: We are not going to be a one-event wonder. We are planning to do a lot more events and be more consistent in the future with that. Make Bristol a more solidified place for hyperpop.

Lightwurkk: For the future, just keep doing what we do with our events and getting people involved etc. If you are from Bristol and make this sort of music, we probably would be the guys to come to.



MDM.
MDM.
MDM.

The Melvins

Bad Moon Rising

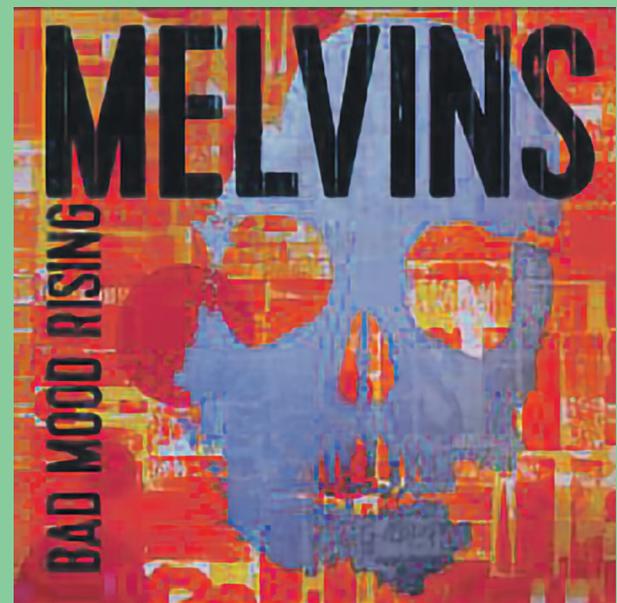
Words by Kris Griffiths

Quick to relinquish the acoustic melodies of 2021's *Five-Legged Dog*, *Bad Moon Rising* oozes with viscous fuzz, gnarled hypnotic riffs and borderline schizophrenic verbiage.

Moving seamlessly between the absurdist soundscapes of *The Receiver* and *Empire State* and the softer and more structured refrains in *It Won't Or It Might*, the album fully immerses the listener. Such duality is captured at its peak in the 14-minute *Mr Dog is Totally Right*. The track is a wretched, drawn-out earworm of a song chock full of bizarre coos and crows from singer Layne Staley-esque. This record is a powerful reintroduction to the quirks that have kept them relevant for nearly two decades.

Always abnormal and never boring, *Never Say Sorry* delivers a dissonant and mesmerising vocal performance soundtracked by body gyrating and endless riffage. While it lacks some of the dressing applied to other areas of the album, it is this song that stands out above the rest. The visceral, ritualistic drubbing Melvins spew across the acetone is of a calibre that most rockers dream of achieving.

To sum up an entire record in one word would often be too troublesome a task. The nuances and individuality of a listening experience too complex to be cheapened by one single descriptor. For *Bad Moon Rising*, however, the word is gnarly. Gnarly from the first dry slap of kick drum to the abrupt ending – a true masterclass in sludge-o-nomics taught in a way that only King Buzzo and Dale Crover can.



6/10

album reviews.



8/10

Loyle Carner

Hugo

Words by Jacob Dowdle

The long-awaited third album by UK's own Loyle Carner sees a departure from his usual smooth and relaxed flow, opting instead to hit us with a more dramatic sound.

The urgency in his voice on tracks like *Nobody Knows (Ladas Road)* and *Plastic* reinforce the lyrics with vivid truth and pain which capture and whisk the listener from their reality into his. The themes throughout are likewise true to life, as LC discusses in detail his battles with identity, relationships, and his inability to control his emotions.

Throughout the track *Polyfilla*, the listener is told stories of regret from his past and how they control his present. The track's namesake (a product used to patch holes in walls) is a clever double entendre as, when combined with the lyrics, clearly draws references to Carner wanting to fill holes in his relationships, as well as to filling physical holes in the walls of his home created by himself. This culminates in a clever production technique where the vocals rapidly move left and right, becoming more chaotic and hard to follow, mirroring how thinking can feel when losing your temper.

However, more poignant moments also come earlier in the tracklist, such as the lyric from *Nobody Knows (Ladas Road)*, "you can't hate the roots of the tree, and not hate the tree, so how can I hate my father, without hating me", highlighting his struggles with confused feelings about his past. This hyper-focus on the not-so-glamorous emotions has always been Carner's strong point, but in this album, he lays himself bare unlike anything else he's made to date.

Arctic Monkeys

The Car

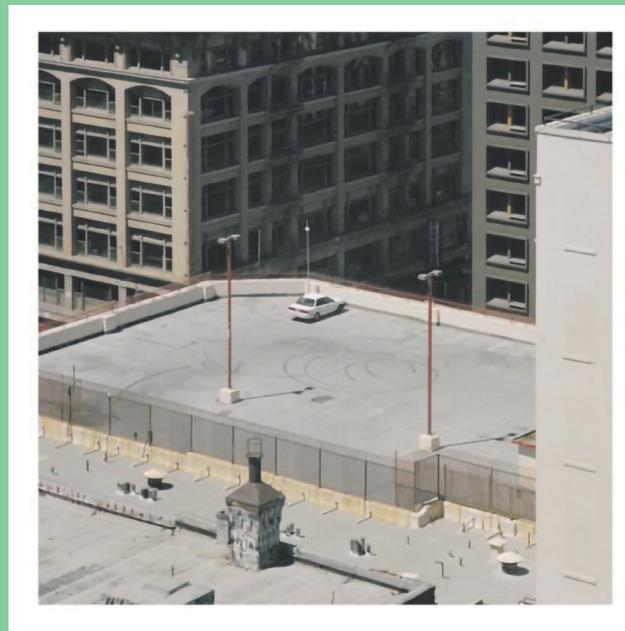
Words by Matt Thomas

Over the past four years the Arctic Monkeys have turned into marmite, either you're onboard with orchestral fused tracks and their quirky lyrical accompaniment or you won't budge from your favourite era of them. Whether it be the 2000's sweaty, indie-rock outfit or the glossy, desert rock tunes of 2013, one thing they've never allowed themselves to do is be pushed by record labels or management. Their sixth studio album was polarising enough, with Alex Turner taking us into space and a different vortex on *Tranquility Base Hotel and Casino*, and I deem this offering to be similar.

There's plenty of positives to be taken away from newest album, 'The Car.' Instrumentally the album is a masterpiece, with tracks such as *Mr Schwartz* and *Jet Skis On The Moat* offering an indie rock tinged orchestral sound that comes just as unexpected to their audience as it is needed. Refined musicianship and fantastic arrangement ideas can be found in abundance. However, maybe the album isn't as well-flowing as their fans would've hoped.

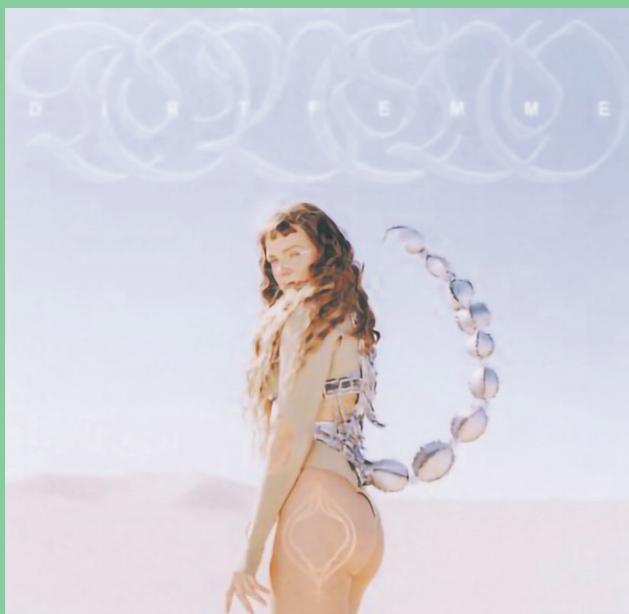
Like most, I was relatively excited for the new AM album after hearing lead-single *There'd Better Be A Mirrorball*. Atmospheric synths ebb and flow between a simple but effective drum beat, a poignant Alex Turner lead vocal lands on top and intricate production ideas craft the perfect glue to hold the track together. However, I do feel that many of the tracks don't live up to the singles high standard and instead offer a clumsy mess of half-finished ideas.

One thing is clear, that Arctic Monkeys have been in a transitional period for quite some time now. This may have not lived up to expectations, but presents a strong foundation for a career that is constantly developing.



6/10

album reviews.



8/10

Tove Lo

Dirt Femme

Words by Charlotte Wicks

Tove Lo's new album *Dirt Femme* is one of her strongest releases to date. The Swedish singer-songwriter manages to blend vulnerability with irresistible pop sensibilities. Opening with *No One Dies From Love*, the synthesizers and the beat in this first song are so catchy creating an earworm that will stick in your head for weeks. Tove Lo never falls short with a catchy dance track. Whilst juxtaposing the upbeat sound with lyrics that display the struggles of love.

Later, *SuburbiaSuburbia* hits the listener with the foretelling of a life she fears, as a 'Stepford wife'. The melodic synths transcend you back to the 80s and with its deeply honest lyrics, it could well be an anthem for the modern woman today, as going 'child-free' is something that is definitely more prevalent in our society, and the pressure to settle down is unshakable in this track.

Ever the introspective type, Tove Lo opened up in an interview where she said she struggled as a teenager with an eating disorder. In *Grapefruit* she showcases her vulnerability as an artist by sharing this story with us. The music video displays her beautiful contemporary dance centered around this story. Through *Dirt Femme*, Tove Lo invites you into the deepest parts of her psyche and creates a cohesive piece of work.

The 1975

Being Funny In A Foreign Language

Words by Eloise Kirton

It's been an entire decade since the notorious British band The 1975 first released their music to the world. Since their *Sex EP* in 2012, extended in 2013 to make their self-titled number-one debut album *The 1975*, they have found colossal success on a global scale.

Frontman Matty Healy is no stranger to satirical self-reflection and irony throughout his lyrics. *Being Funny In a Foreign Language* certainly encompasses the comedic, cynical nature of the previous two albums *Notes On A Conditional Form* and *A Brief Inquiry into Online Relationships*, but with this album comes an unapologetic display of cheerful, confident love songs that showcases yet another layer to their ever altering dynamic.

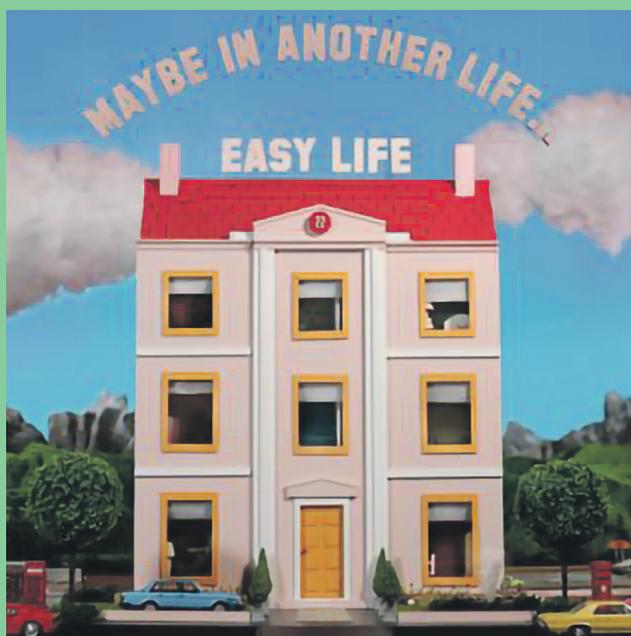
The opening track *The 1975*, as with all the previous albums, serves as a foreshadower. Matty's lyrics on the track range from "I think I've got a boner, But I can't really tell" to "makin' an aesthetic out of not doin well," which certainly sets the scene lyrically for the rest of the album. Lyrically, the album can come across as unconcerned and blasé, but somehow also feels like the most sophisticated release to date. One of the best moments is *All I Need To Hear*, a masterfully written love song in which Healy reveals the ever-addictive vulnerability in his songwriting and scrutinises the clichés of being in love.

For diehard fans of the band's first releases, filled with stories of teenage hook-ups and reckless recreational drug taking, understandably the new album is a long way from what once was the distinguishing aesthetic of The 1975. However, as with all artists, as the individuals' experiences grow, they change from the people they once were and their music changes with them.



6/10

album reviews.



7/10

Easy Life

Maybe In Another Life

Words by Rosie Burgess

With a lot to live up to after their breakthrough debut album *Life's a Beach*, British five-piece Easy Life have released their sophomore offering, *Maybe in Another Life*. The group have found success by blending hip-hop and jazz, with help from lead vocalist Murray Matravers' warm, Mac Miller-like tones.

The record catches the listener's attention with an obscure opener that introduces the title of the album much like a storybook, before merging into the whimsical jazzy intro of *Growing Pains*. This track is an easy listen and offers a cathartic discussion on finding your identity as you grow and change to the backdrop of a repetitive beat. The melody has the potential to grow tiresome but is broken up well by the rap verses, offering a satisfying change in tempo.

The record's lead single, *Dear Miss Holloway* features Brockhampton's Kevin Abstract and amassed over 5 million streams on Spotify before the album's release. With a dreamy instrumental that feels perfectly balanced and a swayable chorus, the track is easily one of the best on the record. *Moral Support* is by far the album's most sincere song with its stripped-back instrumental and soft, almost whispered melody. The uplifting lyricism paired with some captivating harmonies offers a feeling of comfort and contentment in a beautiful ballad of friendship.

Overall, the five-piece's sophomore record feels like a conversation about navigating adulthood and identity in a post-pandemic world, keeping true to their honest themes from *Life's a Beach*. However, as a body of work, *Maybe in Another Life* feels stationary throughout and lacks experimentation.

PVA BLUSH

Words by Finch Evans

To misquote Steve Coogan's Tony Wilson, "the histories of dance and indie music are a double helix when one movement is in its descendancy, the other is ascending" – yet in a double helix there are the moments in which the two strands collide. We've seen these collisions of ravers and rockers in the baggy Madchester explosion of the late '80's and early '90s, and in the indie-sleaze dance rock of acts like the Yeah Yeah Yeahs and LCD Soundsystem in the 2000s and 2010s. This humble Resonate reporter believes that if the strands haven't already intertwined, they're more than likely eyeing each other up for another mighty collision.

Evidence for this can be found in PVA's debut album *BLUSH*. Many songs on the album start off sounding similar to the litany of post-punk records we've been hearing for the last five or so years, with spacious mixes based around one of the vocalist's half-sung, half-spoken esoteric lyrics.

Maybe the drums sound a little more electronic, and there may be a splattering of arpeggiated synth somewhere in there but a couple of seconds into the first track and everything seems to be following the trends of early 2020's indie music. Then the space is filled with screeching, alarm-like synths, and the song erupts into a dark industrial techno groove that evokes the lights of club nights rather than the sticky floors of indie venues.

The dark industrial synths and half-moaned vocal deliveries on this album can suggest a certain animalistic nature to the album. However, *BLUSH's* lyrics go far deeper than pure carnality. The sexuality at the surface level of this album seems to be a mask covering a search for emotional connection. This is beautifully exposed away towards the end of the record when the song Transit finishes with a stripped-back vulnerable moment as Ella Harris and an acoustic guitar heartbreakingly recontextualize the hook of the track.



8/10

Zeal & Ardor @ Trinity Centre

Words by Jacob Dowdle

The converted church Trinity Centre provides as close to a perfect setting as one could find in Bristol for a sold out crowd coming to see one of metal's upcoming stars, Zeal & Ardor. The band had come fresh off of two performances in Bristol including festival ArcTanGent and supporting Meshuggah, so the anticipation to entertain was in the air.

Heriot started the night off strong with a unique blend of sludge metal and industrial music creating a unique atmosphere. With some truly awesome vocal performances by both Jake Packer and Debbie Gough. The set was able to build a degree of energy for themselves and keep it for a strong outing.

Zeal & Ardor then take the stage, a notable change was the lack of backing vocalists Denis Wagner and Marc Obrist that are normally present alongside Manuel Gagneux. The absence was felt unfortunately due to illness but the pre recorded vocals did not take much from the fantastic live performance.

The set starts with the fantastic opener *Church Burns* to set the tone for the night. The set overall was very strong hitting fan favourites such as *Devil Is Fine* and *Blood In The River* to tie the set together, Manuel also uses this as an opportunity to truly engage the crowd in the absence of backup singers creating a truly enjoyable crowd experience. With other live staples such as *Row Row* and *Ship On Fire* coming alongside new hits from the self titled album released earlier this year like *Götterdämmerung* and *Death To The Holy*, the setlist goes from strength to strength with each passing song.

Capping off the set with the ever welcome *Baphomet*, Manuel Gagneux leaves fans with right hand up, left hand down and their metal appetite satiated. We're eager to see where this band goes next and hopefully their return will see them in a larger venue to allow more to experience their fantastic live show.



EC2A @ Green Works

Words by Eloise Kirton

On the outskirts of Bristol on a quiet, unassuming industrial estate in Brislington lies the city's newest warehouse venue, Green Works. Which recently opened its doors, and aims to become one of Bristol's the hottest venues for music, arts, and culture.

Opening in October 2022, the EC2A label takeover was one of the first events to have been held here. EC2A, owned by UK Garage DJ Dr Dubplate, specialises in bringing the best in underground dance music. They have been making movements within the underground dance music scene for a few years now and have regular slots with Keep Hush showcasing artists such as Longeez and Lily Huu.

The EC2A takeover at Green Works was headlined by Interplanetary Criminal B2B Main Phase with Dr Dubplate himself, and EC2A regular A for Alpha opening affairs.

Arriving at the venue, the sold out night was packed from the get-go, and the warehouse was booming with the bassy sounds of UKG pumping out of their crisp Funktion-One soundsystem. The crowd was loose providing high energy through every set. Green works as a venue was compact but perfect for an event of this size. The industrial feeling of the location fit in perfectly with the genre.

The venue unquestionably has the potential to become a great multi-purpose space and we are eager to see what the future holds for Green Works.

Kaleida Wild @ The Exchange

Words by Tommy Elsbury

Kaleida Wild left us with glistening foreheads and beaming smiles on the way home from their October date at the Exchange. The night was a celebration for the genre-fluid band's first birthday, and what a jubilation it was!

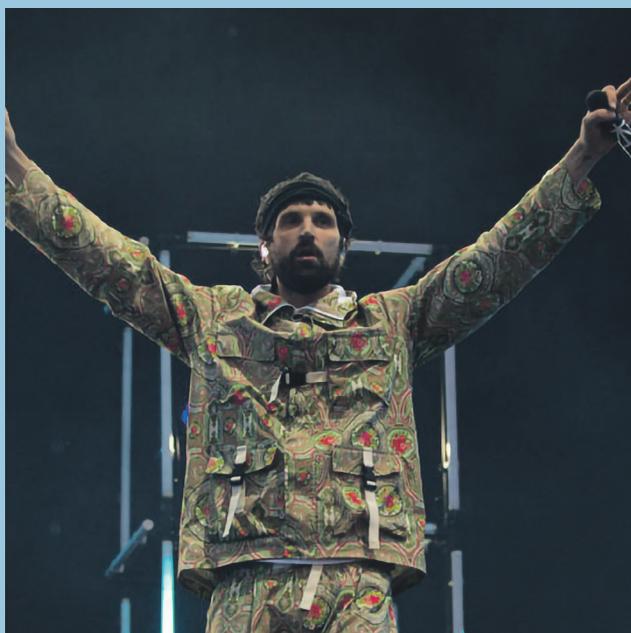
With their funky, feel-good tunes and soulful vocals from lead singer Javier Boisson, Kaleida Wild have cultivated a community of fans and friends who have richly embraced them. In true birthday style, everyone attending grooved with the band until the lights came on.

My first encounter with Kaleida Wild was at their powerhouse event at Crofter's Rights in April and I've been hooked on them ever since! Knowing each time they grace the stage that they'll put on a momentous show. Unsurprisingly, this time round did not disappoint, with bassist Chris Groves (scantily clad in what looked like an ode to Britney Spears) strutting through the crowd back to stage after disappearing into the sea of heads moments before.

The night was soaked in feel-good vibes and was a fantastic showcase of all things camp and funky. With a new EP on the horizon, and a gig supporting Foreign TV at on their UK tour, there is truly nothing stopping Kaleida Wild and the positive energy they bring.



live reviews.



Kasabian @ The Utilita Arena

Words by Matt Thomas

It's strange to think that two years ago, Kasabian was on the verge of collapse. The band that stepped out on stage at the Utilita Arena in Birmingham seemed as complete as ever. Even with a major line-up change. I, like many fans, felt apprehensive about guitarist Serge Pizzorno stepping up to become the lead singer. Any doubts I had were dismissed in the first 10 seconds of seeing them.

Their latest material found its way into their set and helped to craft a complete and engaging performance. New tracks such as *Rocket Fuel* strayed from their established rock stylings by implementing more electronic elements. Still, this change didn't seem to put off anyone, with a barrage of pints that were subsequently slung into their air as chaos ensued. It's no surprise that old classics such as *Club Foot*, *L.S.F* and *Underdog* were as anthemic as ever, the whole arena synchronising with Serge as he flexed his undeniable frontman energy.

We were also treated to quieter moments in the set on tracks such as the pensive *Processed Beats*. Whilst a comparatively stripped-back number compared to other songs, the raucous crowd hung on to every word of this classic track. They closed with *Fire*, which was as boisterous as ever and left the Birmingham crowd singing late into the night as they streamed out of the arena en masse. One thing is for certain, Kasabian are back, they're better than ever and they're here to stay.

Freddie Lewis. Freddie Lewis.

Words by Eloise Kirton.

Freddie Lewis, a Bristol-based singer-songwriter, poet, and performer, is one current artist releasing music on the BIMM record label HUBB Records. Freddie's alt-pop music is lyrically artistic and sparse, with layered beats and guitar working together to provide a solid platform for their crisp, crystal-clear vocals. He has paired releases with B-sides of poetry, intertwining their songwriting and poetic abilities to produce releases that truly reflect their character and persona as an artist.

Since Freddie's first release *Lilac Underpass Mixtape*, and their poetry book *Notes from a Lilac Underpass*, both released last October, they have been playlisted on Spotify's New Music Friday, Our Generation, Fresh Finds and featured as the cover artist of the established Transcend playlist for four months. Freddie has also had support from BBC Radio 1 and 6 Music. We sat down with Freddie to chat with them about the past year of his music career and learn more about their personal journey.

Hey! What have you been up to this year music-wise? I saw you released your singles *Bell Jar* and *The Gallery* over the summer.

So, I had several releases at the start of the year; *Best Dressed Ex*, *Your New Tattoo*, *Coca-Cola*, *Eastville Park*, *Bell Jar* and *The Gallery*. The idea behind those songs was to release the songs with the poems as the B side. I wanted to tell the same story but use a different form. Performing them live is nice because the poem creates a stillness after the songs.

I saw you perform at Glastonbury. How was that experience?

It was maybe the best weekend of the year. I was playing on the Croissant Neuf bandstand in the Greenfields, which was gorgeous. I played three times about mid-afternoon as I was doing acoustic stuff and the area had a high footfall, so lots of people would come and speak to me after the shows, which was lovely. It was a surreal experience, and I really want to again next year. It's just about finding my way in! If anyone's reading this, I want to come back!

Tell me about your journey with writing poetry and how it bleeds into your songwriting.

I call it a mixtape because I felt the record was too short to be an album and because the songs weren't written together. They were all written separately and pieced together. The idea of the poetry book was to make the connection between the songs. So I was like, how can I break it down into themes? So, I did notes on loving, healing, being, blooming and writing, which are things I talk about throughout the project. It helped me explore some of the EP I hadn't previously picked apart, and it meant I could weave songs and ideas together through my poetry.

When did you first start writing poetry?

I started when I was little, but my first published poem was the one at the end of *Growing Pains*, which is the testosterone-themed poem I used to document my voice changes. That was in April 2020, and it was the first time I was like, 'Hey guys! I write poems.'

How long was your first mixtape in the making?

Some songs were written about a year before, and some were written as I made it. But regarding the production process, it was all organised over Zoom as it was done during covid.

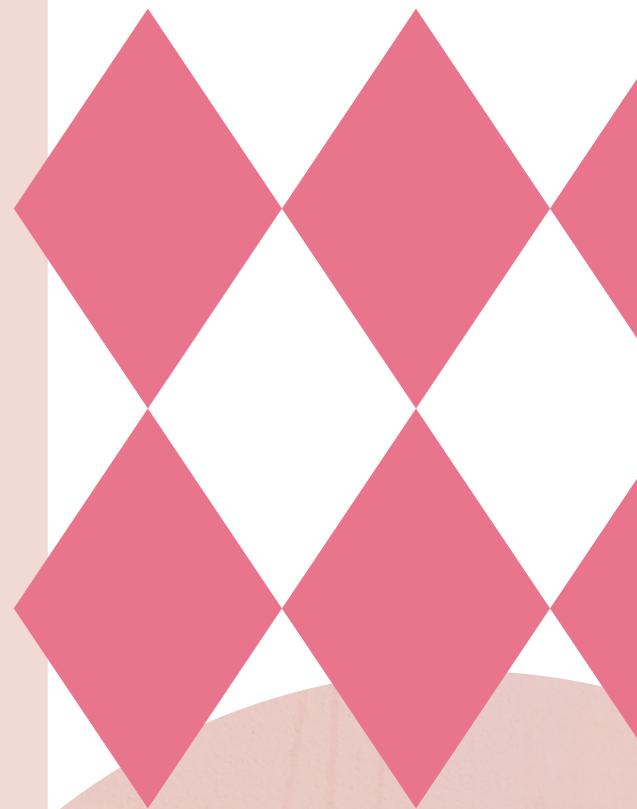
ewis. Freddie Lewis. Freddie Lewis.



BETH BUTCHER



Photos by Beth Butcher.



You are very open online with your experience of being transgender, and you reference your journey through your songs. How important is it to you to include your experiences within your music, and how do you feel this journey has shaped you as an artist?

I feel like it's both important to me and also not important. I include it because it's incidental but also, as a songwriter, you write about things that affect you. Which this obviously does. I wrote a lot about it when I first came out, and now, I'm writing about it from a different place. I feel like it's the new *Growing Pains*. It's about leading with desire, representing yourself, and not worrying about labels. There are some lyrics I don't agree with on my track *Growing Pains* that addresses these themes. I talk about being trapped in my epidermis, which is the outer layer of skin, and I don't really think that's true now. I think it was just a way of me describing it to someone who didn't really know how it felt. Whereas now, I'm writing about being a trans person and what's interesting to me, which is the same way I write about anything else.

In June, you put on an exhibition at Dareshack called *Pale Pink Works of Art*. Can you tell us a bit about it?

Hubb Records gave me a budget for the release of *Bell Jar*. I thought, how can I use that money in a way that's a bit different? So, I got 14 artists, and commissioned them to produce a piece of work around the theme of pale pink. I didn't give them any more information, and if they wanted to know more, I told them that for me, pale pink meant letting go of structure and letting go of the masculinity which I tried to step into. So, we got all these pale pink works of art and put them up around Dareshack and then put on a show. We had 130 people, and it was so cool. I got to put on three really cool support acts, and they all killed it. It was a night of celebrating the work that went into *Bell Jar* and the work of 14 other independent artists.

So, what have you planned for next year regarding shows or releases? Anything you can tell us about?

I'm in a very fun stage now. I decided to chill after having so many shows over the summer and having met so many lovely artists and interesting people. It was really cool to play some new places and have people we knew my songs sing back the words. I told myself I would take the end of the year to write loads. Whereas my last project was bigger and was a combination of lots of songwriting I had previously done, I was conscious that I wanted this next project to feel like a complete connection. I've been speaking to quite a few different producers and coming up with ideas, but it was really nice to write 30-35 songs and be able to pick five I really liked. These are the songs that will tell the story I want to tell.



Freddie Lewis.

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