

it's all happening



# THE GREAT ESCAPE

festival  
special  
2012

# WELCOME

Hello!

We want to let you in on a little secret. We are big fans of The Great Escape. Biiiiig fans. It has everything. Whether you want beautiful, delicate melodies, enormous trembling bass lines, staccato beats or exploratory synths, there'll be a band or musician ready to feed these to your ears in one of the multitude of venues and spaces taking part in this, the biggest European music convention. There have been cries that the daddy of 'this kind of festival', SXSW, has sold its soul, corporate image and hipster scenes replacing that fundamental nucleus of a festival – the music – but Brighton's still got it, and if you haven't found at least one New Favourite Band by the end, you clearly haven't been listening.

In this here 'zine we highlight roughly around 14% of the artists who will be playing the Great Escape and it's fringe The Alternative escape, but that's not all! Oh no. Over the weekend we are going to be busting a gut to cover every guerrilla gig, secret twitter lead, industry convention shenanigan and after-party going - it's a big shout, but someone's got to do it!

Brighton has long been the destination of choice for Brits to 'escape' to, and it's easy to see why, what with the grandeur of the Royal Pavilion, shopping in the Laines, fresh sea air, a thriving university, a bristling music scene, fish'n'chips, and the famous pier, and the country's only Green MP working to ensure it remains this way. Is there a better way to spend the weekend than discovering new music in this seaside town?

Follow us throughout the festival, and after, on @IAH\_music and on facebook, or drop us an email on [music@itsallhappening.co.uk](mailto:music@itsallhappening.co.uk). We'll be tweeting, interviewing, videoing, reviewing, listening and drinking all over the weekend – join us!

See you around,

It's All Happening

P.S Tune-in to Recharged Radio every Monday in May for our TGE special show. We get drunk and talk about some bands! Wahey

it's all happening



Francesca



Dan



John



Among Brothers



Deaf Club



Cut Ribbons



Inland Sea

‘Cos any magazine worth it’s salt needs a famous person writing...

Hello. I’m Jen Long from BBC Introducing on Radio 1 and I will have a stage at Great Escape this year for my Kissability imprint. I started the label less than a year ago, run through the excellent guys at Transgressive. We decided to do something that was fun, and let us shout about the bands we love.

Our first release was brutal Brisbane butchers DZ Deathrays, closely followed by Llanelli heartthrobs **Cut Ribbons** who are currently wrapping up a UK tour supporting Dry The River.

Cut Ribbons will play our stage on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> at Green Door Store just before Australian TEN piece **Inland Sea**. I saw them at BIGSOUND in Brisbane last year and was blown away. With so many members, styles, and influences, they’re a very hard band to pigeonhole, but feel free to stop by and give it a go.

Opening the stage is Cardiff quintet **Among Brothers**. They make a gorgeous racket akin to Efterklang and Anathallo.

And filling the bill are **Deaf Club**, one of the most exciting new acts in British music. Think Beach House calming Warpaint in a wave of heart-sweeping cool. They were our third release on Kissability, and our first sell-out. Let’s do the same with this show.

JEN LONG

Thursday @ Green Door Store, from 7.15pm

Our wonderful contributors

- Dan Piner
- John Leonard
- Francesca Baker
- Michael Baker
- Greta Hoffmann
- Caroline Schmitt
- Katie Stanton

- Jen Long (Radio 1)
- Chris Foster (Pop Noodle)
- Jordan Thomas (Recharged Radio)
- Ellie Coden (Fierce Panda)
- Steven Boniface (Labelled Independent)

# HOTTEST TICKET



Are Alabama Shakes worthy of your time and energy this weekend?

For many last year at The Great Escape it was The Vaccines. 12 months on we can pretty much guarantee the 'hottest ticket in town' accolade is going to **Alabama Shakes**. Every now and then a band comes along that can seem to do no wrong; authentic enough to keep the critics and hipsters happy (they're signed to Rough Trade), but have enough of a pop edge to give them airtime during daytime Radio 1 (currently on the B playlist and rising rapidly), and at the time of writing, a possible number 1 album (Ed – they went in at #3...who is STILL buying Adele's album!?).

Since breaking out in the summer of last year and with the release of their debut EP in September, they've had critics and DJs - Radio 1's Huw Stephens in particular - foaming at the mouth with superlatives. They've taken elements of rock, soul, blues and country, and melded

them together with lead singer Brittany Howard's bluesy / gospel vocal that the Guardian best described as, 'a voice that enters through the pores, not the ears, that freefalls from growl to twisted whimper.'

It's a sound that certainly ticks a lot of boxes and seems destined to carry on satisfying the demand for music influenced by the American south by the British media and public alike.

Having sold out 3 nights at the unconventional Boston Arms in Tufnell Park on their first visit to the UK, it is live that they're said to come into their own. Their sound is given an extra edge live, the music bumped up with the weight of their punk roots (singer and drummer were both in punk bands in their youth), melded together with Howard's presence onstage. As one critic noted, 'she howls, she growls, she croons, she sweats, she drops down on

that dirty stage floor and shreds ... Part of the thrill in watching Howard onstage is that she reacts fully to the surroundings, but mostly, to her own lyrics, as if she's making these confessions for the first time.'

It's certainly an exciting prospect and if all the reviews so far are to be believed, they're a band not likely to disintegrate under the weight of the hype anytime soon. The queue for their Saturday night show at the 650 capacity Komedia is probably starting to form already so get their early, if nothing else, you know they're not likely to be playing venues of this size for much longer. It could be one hell of a way to end the weekend and whether you're there as their biggest fan or just out of pure curiosity, this is a band that seems unlikely to disappoint. JL Saturday 22:00 @Komedia,

# folk

It's a tough time to be an English folk band. If you don't sound like Dry The River (see below) or Mumford & Sons you're doing something wrong, and if you do, you're a rip off. Which may explain why Brighton's very own **Common Tongues**, despite being voted one of Brighton's Top 5 bands, have not yet broken through the musical glass ceiling. With more of a country twang than the aforementioned, the five piece combine gypsy-esque fiddle with strong rhythms and distinctive vocals and multiple harmony layers. The songs are very much tales in their own right, and the claim of being influenced by records that their dads use to own can be heard in the vocals of tracks such as Soldier, Pilot or Fool or the strong structure of debut single Jumping Ships. With an apparently mischievous onstage presence, and BBC Cambridge's claim that there 'is no greater feeling than being licked by Common Tongues,' they could well be the surprise stumble upon band of the festival. FB Saturday 14:00 @ The Queen's Hotel



**A**NYONE WHO HAS seen the album cover of **Dry the River's** debut album *Shallow Bed* speaks volumes as it reflects the music of these five exceptional guys. It's a striking image that reflects the 11 tracks perfectly. In the gloomy grey-green sea the shark is waiting calmly for his prey, just to strike all the harder at the right moment. The songs start off as revelling, sometimes almost introverted tunes up to the point when they explode with energy and pathos without ever sounding incongruous. The interplay of pastoral chorals and classical rock music, of strong metaphors and lead singer Peter Little's high and wistful voice, all that makes their music something so real that one almost wants to embrace it literally. Considering the fact that they only started playing music together in early 2009, their up-to-now oeuvre is remarkable. The quintet self-produced their first EP *The Chambers & Vales* EP in their house in East London, which unleashed a chain reaction and brought them attention, so much so that with their pop up gigs and residencies they almost became the Great Escape 2011's house band. With new album *Shallow Bed* under their wing, they are yet again set to astound the seaside town. GH Friday, 23.15 @ The Corn Exchange



# Música catalana viene a Brighton

Why is that the majority of music we listen to is of English speaking origin? Is it a virtue of closed mindedness, or the result of a simple mathematical equation that means we listen to most what is being put out the most - and that has the biggest marketing budget. We forget the 196-257 (the number differs greatly when googled) of other countries that there are with a creative output. Every year The Great Escape partners with an international promoter to showcase some of their sounds, and this year will be joined by the Institut Rmaon Lull presenting Catalan Sounds – music from Catalonia and the Balearic Islands.

Eight bands have been invited to play to the Great Escape audience, and keen to dismiss preconceptions and dispel fears of a weekend spent with the Vengaboy, we thought we should do some investigating.

Hailing from Barcelona, where they took a career turn from cinema to music, **Mujeres** play a mix of pretty much everything, punk, garage, rock'n'roll, blues, taking the best from each into fast and furious fun package. Having already impressed TGE in 2010, they've

been invited back to play the Prince Albert on Friday at 13:00 and Audio on Saturday at 21:15.

**Me and The Bees** boldly claim to make people happy upon hearing their songs. Their mix of folk and alt-country often manages it. Effectively Eli, Esther, Vero and Carlotto make the world a better place. Let them bring magic to your life at Psychosocial on Friday at 20:00, or in The Hub on Saturday at 6:00.

It's quite likely that for most people, seeing **Seward** play the Prince Albert at 2:00 and 21.15 on Friday will genuinely be the first time they have heard the sextet's music. With no Myspace, Facebook, Twitter, Soundcloud or any of the traditional social media (is that a juxtaposition of terms?) they are somewhat elusive. So much so that we shall have to rely on some words from people who have seen them previously, which include the following: intense, overwhelming, chaotic, strange, histrionic and lunatic. Awesome.

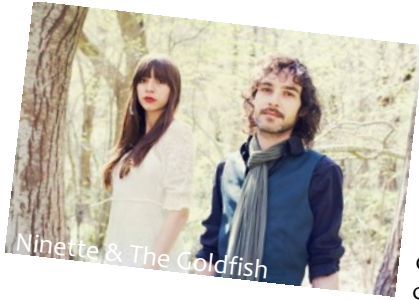
**Ninette & The Goldfish** have a brilliant band name. Ninette & The Goldfish make brilliant music. The pair of them also happen to



look rather brilliant. There is a theme here. Playing Komedia on Thursday at 20:30 and The Hub on Saturday at 20:00, giving you two chances to hear tracks from their recent...brilliant folk rock debut album, *Life In A Bowlfish*.

A band who say they exist to make music for plants, but who also have a sense of humour, claiming to being equally motivated by playing to human vegetables - welcome **Amics del Bosc** (literally Forest's Friends). Hippy hooligans, their psychedelic rockabilly makes just as little sense in Catalan as it does in Spanish, but when executed with such passion, that's rather irrelevant. Playing twice on Saturday, at 17:00 at The Hub, and later at The Prince Albert, 21:15.

If you expect music from what is primarily for many Brits a holiday destination to sound like summer, then **Oso Leone** won't disappoint. With a mismatch medley of sounds, laying their



Ninette & The Goldfish

lucid soft vocals over crashing rock architecture they have captured the Spanish alternative scene, and seek to capture you at Psychosocial on Friday at 19.15pm and The Hub on Saturday at 19:00.

Add together some punk, skipping melodies, kraut rock, epic endings and instrumental cadence and you get **Ferguson**, the young guitar smashing, ginger beer loving quintet who will be playing Blind Tiger at 19:45 on Thursday and Prince Albert at 15:00 on Friday.

**The Suicide of Western Culture** are a duo creating electronic music in the vein of their heroes, Mogwai, Godspeed You Black Emperor and Disco Inferno, using equipment also rooted back in the day, like the TR505 drum machine, along with a convulsing convolution of buttons and pedals. Their lyricless, dark, distorted crunchy electronic pop has garnered the attention of the electronic scene, and resulted in them supporting the likes of Orbital and Cut Copy. Let them brighten your afternoon up at the Prince Albert on Friday at 15:45, or Sticky Mikes Frog Bar on Saturday at 21:15.

The Catalan Sounds Tour of 2012 has already exhibited their wares at SXSW and Canadian Music Week this year. The Great Escape will be by far the best. **FB**

**3 BANDS**  
**5 WORDS**

Three reviews that would fit comfortably in a tweet. **MB**

**The Robbie Boyd Band**

Saturday, 17:00 @ Dome Folk-Pop. High Energy. Great Live.

**Wet Nuns**

Friday, 21:15 @ The Hope Raw Power. Amazing Band Name.

**Sonic Boom Six**

Saturday, 20:45 @ Concorde Dance. Punk. Exciting Live. Catchy.

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Old Queens Head, Angel  
13th June 2012

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# Good time bands

## Swim Deep

For some unadulterated joy and seaside escapism head to see **Swim Deep**, a trio of twenty somethings from Birmingham who don't seem to have noticed the lack of seaside in their local Midlands, creating coastal cruising breezy grunge pop. The very day after this fine festival finishes sees the release of their first single on Chess Club records. Evoking blissful summer days and carefree moments, *King City* is a jaunty insouciant tune, with its simple almost tossed away chorus of 'with the sun on my back it's a

nice day,' drumming footprint, and its fuzzy warmth and thrilling pace it is certainly one to put on repeat. On the surface it's an ode to Jerry Lee Lindberg (the Warpaint bassist), summers lazing on the beach, skating with friends, downing shots and flicking through vinyl (as seen on the video by Marshall Darlings), and its beauty is in realizing that it doesn't need to get any deeper than that. Contentedness never sounded so good. *FB* Friday, 19.15 @ Psychosocial, 21:00 @ The Loft

## Yukon Blonde

If ever a band captured the sound of a moonlit fast drive to the coast, it's **Yukon Blonde**. Bleeding with catchy hooks over a churning bassline, pummelling along as it embeds its way into your brain as the sound of an eternal summer, latest single *Stairway* is a great first introduction to the YB family. Through sophomore album *Tiger Talk* the band flit between arena-esque grandeur and teenage tirelessness, blurring together powerful punk, aggressive pop and expansive country. Rolling with tantivity and rushing with an excess of energy, the live show from these guys should be a shaggy rock dream. *FB* Thursday, 20.30 @ Prince Albert



## Bos Angeles

*Beach Slalom* was one of, if not the, IAH tracks of 2011. It may be all over in 2 minutes and 35 seconds, but **Bos Angeles'** simple and youthful tale of a break-up stirs memories of teenage love and regret that had us hooked from the first listen. From the simple 2 note intro to the frenetic ending it encapsulates everything we love about discovering new bands. There's nothing showy or over-thought, the recording sounds live and unpolished, and it seems to achieve everything it sets out to do

with minimal fuss. The guitar part nods to Johnny Marr, the bassline's got Peter Hook all over it and the hushed almost spoken vocals drift solemnly over proceedings; portraying a real sense of introspection and apology to what is ultimately a post-punk salvo of a track. They may never write anything as good as this again (we obviously hope they do), but *Beach Slalom* is as close to a genuine and honest guitar pop song as we could find in 2011 and we love it. *JL* Thursday, 20.30 @ Bund Tiger





# Curating a show - is it about 'Likes' or your likes?

So, it's that time of year when festival season kicks off and will run through until late October. Chances are you'll go to at least one; these days, you're spoiled for choice. But is this really a good thing? The rise of the 'boutique' festival seems to have been fairly rapid, with upwards of 450 festivals taking place last year, and one begins to wonder if the point of saturation is close. With the need to be 'cool' and go to the latest 2-day extravaganza in a field, is it ceasing to be about the music and more about being in the 'in' crowd?

What does this mean for the bands who have to play the things? With all the doors it has opened, the Internet has brought about the downfall of filters applied to good and bad music and until lately, festivals used to be one of those filters - how could you get on a bill without being good? Every click online takes you to a new band. Many of these bands sound similar... some pretty much identical. All come with rave reviews from such places as BBC Introducing/NME/etc. Many of these bands will go West before the year is out. Many of them play a 'boutique' festival on the way through. But does that prove their worth?

For every 'next big thing' band, there is a 'serious grafter band'. While the 'next big thing' will be chasing some daft dream that got fed to them by someone who (vaguely) remembered when mainstream

music wasn't purely dominated by glorified Saturday night karaoke affairs and record companies actively perused something interesting, rather than simply generic, the grafters will have given up on that a LONG time ago and just settled down to the business of being in a band and seeing where it took them - and enjoying it. In my experience, relaxed bands make the best music.

These days though, the grafters tend to get stuck lower down the bill at festivals while the NBTs get stuck somewhere a lot higher up, despite the fact they probably only formed the previous November. I went to a certain festival in Cornwall last year and was surprised to find the most accomplished and polished acts there stuck on at stupid times of day. One act was The Scratch, the other was La Shark. Both bands are fun, genuinely interesting to watch and musically challenging. The audience (that was there) seemed to think so too. Later on in the evening (when the punters were drunk and merry) came the NBTs. I can vaguely remember one of them... and that was purely because they played right before the headliners, The Subways. And I was sober.

My point here, is that this many festivals are living on borrowed time as they're not built on any substance. Instead of giving an opportunity to showcase the acts who genuinely have something to share with a large audience, the promoters/bookers of such things are just going down the most obvious route of booking

whoever has amassed the best industry quotes in the shortest amount of time on their press release. Come on guys - put some bloody effort in and actually THINK about who you're going to book! If I'm going to hand over my hard earned oyster shells for what is going to be, for the most part, a shot in the dark, I do NOT want to be seeing the same sort of bands that populate 333 on any given Thursday or a band I could turn on XFM to hear. This is why I'm at this bloody thing! I want to see consummate performers who have great music that aren't represented in many other places, not pretty boys and girls who shop in Camden market because it's 'hip' and who XFM tipped for some kind of greatness.

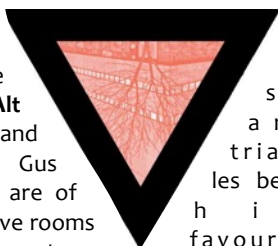
Which brings me to The Alternative Escape. It's quite simple. If you want to put on an event you hand over your cash, you get a stage, you stick on an event and it becomes part of the greater festival. It's due to this patchwork of events that the average punter can wander around and get to see and hear all sorts of bands without any obvious pecking order. It's incredibly liberating. No real agenda apart from a whole bunch of people dedicated to bringing you GOOD music, performed well. So make your way down to the Alternative Escape and explore this huge variety of bands, hand picked because the promoter likes their music. I can guarantee that you won't be disappointed. Also, there's PROPER, NON-SPONSORED fish, chips and ice-cream. Who could want for more?! JT

Three of cool as fuck **TOY** were originally from Joe Lean and the Jing Jang Jong, but (probably to their delight) their past band faded into indie land irrelevance. **TOY**'s sound is fuzzier, less poppy and yet far more irresistible, boasting a Talking Heads nostalgia that makes me want to attend an 80s prom, get rejected, then come home and cry so I can listen to this band to make myself feel better.



The subtle reshuffle, a deeper, meaningful sound, and a friendship with the Horrors seem to be exactly what **TOY** need to start the road to full-blown success. Listen out for *Motoring* – one of the most arresting tunes you'll hear all weekend. **KS Thursday 21:45 @ Pavilion Theatre**

The acapella vocal harmonies between the lead singer of **Alt - J** Joe Newman and keyboardist Gus Unger-Hamilton are of the kind that leave rooms hushed with expectancy, whilst the crashing chords of doom that open *Tessellate* dispel the silence that reigns supreme in so many of the uber cool venues **Alt J** have cast their spell over. Debut album *An Awesome Wave*, out on May 28<sup>th</sup>, is n't written according to any kind of rulebook - if it sounds interesting it seems to go in. Xylophones, castanets and tom toms are all used at various points throughout their live set to add to the layers of sound, on *Tessellate* especially.

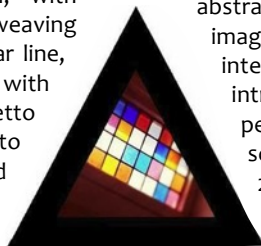


sex and triangles being his favourite shape... obviously.

His delivery is unique, not falsetto, but sometimes heading that way and there are nods to the guitar sounds of Radiohead in their playing. Live *Hand-made* is a beautiful track which floats along with its folk roots and vocal harmonies whilst *Flood of Blood* starts minimally enough, with Newman's vocal weaving around the swirling guitar line, before building again with Unger-Hamilton's falsetto backing adding weight to the xylophone melody and tribal drums. In contrast, with its dense bassline, jabs of la la las and Newman sounding like a

**ALT = J**

bluesman from the 50s, *Breezblocks* is frenetic and triumphant assault on the senses. The last couple of years haven't been short on intelligent, earnest 'indie' music, but where say Wild Beasts skirt the fine line of irritating pretentiousness, **Alt - J** seem more accessible in their own abstractness and imagery, but no less intelligent or intriguing in their performance and sound. **JL Friday, 21.15 @ Blind Tiger**



# SHOPPING LIST

Check out these acts, all with new albums out. MB

## Maximo Park

Although this lot have been pretty quiet since showcasing *Banlieue* in 2010, they are now in the process of building hype for their upcoming album, *The National Health* and as such could very well put on an amazing show.

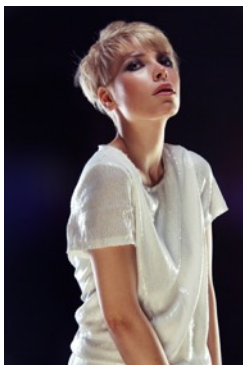
Thursday @ Brighton Dome

## Chew Lips

Now us guys are big fans of Chew Lips and so its not a big shocker that we are looking forward to see them playing. The album is out in September, but until then, listen to new single *Do You Chew?* Ahem, we don't know what you mean Tigs. Friday, 21:00 @ Audio

## Mystery Jets

As one of the biggest, if not the biggest, 'names' on the line up this is a no-brainer- of course we'll recommend them. Can't state how excited we are about hearing some new stuff off their upcoming album, *Radlands*. Thursday, 23:30 @ Corn Exchange



Tigs Chew Lips - makes good music

## The Animal Farm a blast on totalitarian regimes

The Animal Farm produce records, manage artists, run a label, are a booking agency and operate a publishing company. A bit like It's All Happening, they have their fingers in lots of pies, and it's not because they are indecisive (or not only because of that) but because they bloody love music, want to get it in the market in any way possible, and with twenty years experience, have a good idea how to do it. With a huge slice of this year's convention line up being devoted to Doing It Yourself, from the best way to get attention, putting on the ultimate gig, releasing records or making it in the industry, we catch up with them for some words of advice for bands looking to take it to the next level. FB

*'Most of all you need to be great and have something to shout about. You need to be blowing people outta their proverbial socks every time you hit a stage in front of 5 men and a dog. Your songs better be good. And the records you make of them better sound exciting.'*

*'Create relationships. Connect. Get out there and push.'*

*'The belief that one's art has a divine right to be popular is indeed intoxicating. Any assessment of why things ain't happening is believable as long as you don't question the art itself.'*

*'People like good music and good bands. No one can force them to like something they don't like.'*

*'Music is such a cool thing. We can't leave its fate to people on talent shows.'*

*Rather than look for opportunities to gain exposure, look for opportunities to get great at what you do. That way when you do get your shot, you're ready to capitalize on it.*

# DAKOTA BEATS

*"music didn't die with Be Here Now"*

**You've drawn comparisons to Joy Formidable, The Smiths, The Strokes and The Libs. One thing that unites all these bands is that they were somewhat epoch defining. Is that how you see yourselves?**

It's a real honour to be mentioned in the same breathe as bands like these as they all changed music in such a real way for the better. Obviously though with these comparisons comes an internal pressure to not only be the best that we can but stick to our own individuality which means writing what makes us happy and trying to follow our own path. We have more self belief than any band out there; we certainly think we can be the band that changes music from the state it's currently in. There needs to be a band that comes out and breaks the continuation of rubbish music that the vast majority of people are hearing on commercial radio these days and open the door to other bands, whoever that is will be epoch defining and there's no reason at all why that cant be us.

**How was the reception to your limited edition EP?**

The reception to the EP has blown our minds a little. Getting positive feedback is always good but we're really surprised how far the EP has reached and the people who have listened to it and really loved it and believe in us. It was never our intention to release an EP we just wanted to put something out their so people could get a flavour of what we are about. And we think that's what we have achieved. We launched the EP with two shows (Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton and Nambucca, London). Both shows were so exciting and it's really given confidence to know that what we are doing is making people stand up and take notice.

**Tell us about 'Dakota Beats Presents.' Rather than be in competition with other bands like some people seem to, you are actively supporting?**

We support the local music scene in Wolverhampton as much as we can. Our showcase night Dakota Beats Presents was our way to give

bands an opportunity to play in a great venue where they would be treated fairly and supported by us in terms of getting people through the door. The best thing we have got from it is being able to see how many great young bands there are about – there is so much talent from 13 year olds! We are delighted to bring DB Presents to Brighton, we have some of our favourite bands that we have played with over the last six months on the bill and anyone who comes down to the night is in for a real treat.

**Wolverhampton's not well known for it's musical output...?**

Wolverhampton is our local city but we are truly a band from the Black Country and Dudley is the town we would call home. We are very proud of Dudley, Wolverhampton and The Black Country as a whole but its right to say that there has hardly been anything musically creative to come out of it for decades. The problem in our opinion is that the area is stuck in 1995 when it comes to music. People still love Oasis, Blur,

Stone Roses and all the classic bands from that era and it's repeated in the music that comes out of the region. Playing in Wolverhampton can sometimes not just be a matter of having to be a great band, it can also be about changing people's opinion that music didn't die when Be Here Now was released.

**There are more than 300 bands playing over the weekend - why should people come and see you?**

I think people should come to see Dakota Beats because we are a band with a real chance of making a difference to what's going on in this country in

regards to guitar music. We write songs for people to enjoy themselves to and our live shows are full of energy, passion and excitement. It's a great honour to be playing on the weekend along with 300 other bands but we can guarantee that the people who come and watch Dakota Beats go away from the festival talking about us. IAH & DB Saturday, 21:15 @ Volks

Never heard your tunes, but your band name is mental...

#142 - SHABAZZ PALACES, THURS 18.45 @ COALITION

Never heard your tunes, but your band name is mental...

#163 THE FRONT BOTTOMS Sat, 19:30 @ PSYCHOSOCIAL BASEMENT

THE ANIMAL FARM

FRIDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> MAY  
LATEST MUSIC BAR BRIGHTON

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Never heard your tunes, but your band name is mental...  
#11 PIKACHUNES FRI 15:15 @ THE HAUNT

This is the beginning of anything you want...



These are the opening words of **BOY's** debut album, *Mutual Friends*, that somewhat sets a manifesto. **BOY**, that's Valeska and Sonja from Germany, have been making music forever but due to the injustices of life were only recently discovered by a record label.

Nine years separate them, which means they cover and communicate a wide range of feelings and phases, adding authenticity to their delivery. They harmonize perfectly, yet they said in an interview that they are unable to work on a song in the same room because the

way of how they approach the lyrics, the rhythms and art generally are completely different. That might be the reason why it took them two and a half years to be completely happy with every single song.

**BOY's** music is reminiscent of Feist; it feels light and melancholic at the same time. It could be the soundtrack to any situation in your life, it's either happy or sad – however you want it to be. The girls refuse to put a label on their music - they are not leading a very public life, and emphasis lays on their music alone.

The music video to *Little Numbers*, their first nationwide success, films short clips of growing plants, old men playing tennis, the sun tickling their faces, kids playing and jumping around, meaningful glances towards the camera and a whole atmosphere of the beginning of summer, the start of which will surely be this year's Great Escape. Having already fascinated not only Germany and Switzerland, they look set to conquer the UK! **CS Saturday, 21:00 @ Unitarian Church**

**ROB TAYLOR**  
**SOUND & AUDIO**

London based sound engineer  
mail@r-taylor.com

Never heard your tunes, but your band name is mental...  
#44 TRIPPLE NIPPLES THURS, 21:45 @ THE WARREN

Suggestions for when you just want to sit back, relax and be calmly captivated ...

# relax



With an appearance at Glastonbury already under her belt, **Emily & The Woods** is set for big things in 2012. It is no secret that Laura Marling has revived the 'girl with guitar' scene, and Emily is likely to be one of the next female artists to break through. She has already supported Newton Faulkner and Ben Howard, whilst she has also performed on stage with Bombay Bicycle Club. Emily has a strong and emotional voice so don't miss the chance to see her in this intimate venue. DP Saturday, 15.15 @ The Hydrant



Every now and then someone comes along who completely blows you away. **Rae Morris** has a voice that makes people stop and listen. Being a young girl with a small frame, it would be easy for her to be 'lost' on a big stage but, even during potentially difficult support slots for bands such as Noah and the Whale and Bombay Bicycle Club, her incredible voice made people realise they were witnessing a very talented singer. If you don't believe our verdict then perhaps the fact that Rae has recently been signed by Atlantic Records will sway you. DP Friday, 16.30 @ Queens Hotel & 21.15 @ The Warren



The Canadian 6 piece **Slow Down, Molasses** have perfected a layered indie-folk sound. Their slow, haunting melodies will easily fill the two Brighton venues on Thursday and Friday. The band are also playing End of The Road festival in September. Chances are that Slow Down, Molasses are going to have really exploded by this time next year. DP Thursday, 12.00 @ Blind Tiger and Friday, 20.30 @ Prince Albert



and for those times when big bass;lines and banging tunes are all that will cut it

# JUST DO IT



The sound of structured math rock executed with the freedom that allows a groove. Choruses that chime in just as the repetitive beats begin to wear, they combine the best of guitar based dance with anguished indie. The simple finger clicks and hand claps that muscle in amongst the crackling electronic fireworks of their fizzing stage presence make **Tall Ships** an enticingly idiosyncratic live spectacle. *FB* Friday, 1:00 @ Pav Tav & Saturday. 22.15 @ The Horatio

They're called **Fanzine**. We are a fanzine. See the connection? Like Pains of Being Pure of Heart and Yuck, both of whom they have recently toured alongside, Fanzine put the glimmer of synth pop over lyrics telling the tales of errors, trips and slips of life, the undulating melodies and fuzzy reverb combining to create a feeling of gritty romance, as though you're watching a balloon fly to freedom whilst the rain washes overhead. Latest single L.A. has just been released on Best Fit Recordings, and is doused in as much sunshine as its namesake. *FB* Saturday, 20:00 @ Audio

London based trio **The Switch** are indie pop at its finest. Strong guitar riffs combine with cutting vocals that will get you singing and dancing before you even realise it. Lead singer Justin used to be in the same band as Arni Hjorvar of The Vaccines, and The Switch have just as much potential. Regular readers of It's All Happening will know how much we love these guys. Go and see them and, chances are, you will love them too. *DP* Saturday, 20.00 @ Fitzherberts

# The best of



So, once again, The Great Escape has nailed another thrilling line-up! They've spent hours plotting the right balance of both established 'big-uns' and brilliant up-and-coming bands, many of whom are causing a right ol' buzz in the industry at the moment. Just as exciting is the amount of jaw-dropping talent that can exclusively be found on the bill of its sister festival The Alternative Escape...

This year The Alternative Escape boasts more 'ones-to-watch' bands than it ever has before! Some of the UK's most 'in-the-know' tastemakers, promoters and indie labels have shortlisted the bands who are already getting both the industry excited and the media buzzed. The Alternative Escape line-up is packed full of many great acts, some of whom you'll certainly be hearing much more about in the near future but with so many acts on offer, it's tough to know who to mark down as the 'must-sees' in your gig-planners.

So, in no particular order, here are the ten acts we feel you really should make time for this year at The Alternative Escape – we cannot stress how much you NEED to see these amazing acts live. They will make your life complete....

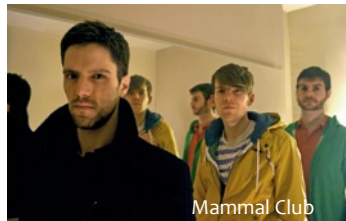
**Worship** Like your guitar bands with a massive drum sound, a double-dollop scoop of pure vocal epicness and then topped off with light sprinkle of well-executed laptop/ synth bass magic? Ooooh, yes please Sir! Expect a fully-unique sound here, large enough to make your tummy rumble and your mouth dry in pure awe of what you're witnessing. The Guardian describe them as 'sounding like a sonic cathedral' . Spot on, that. They've got an absolutely huge sound. Do not miss them, folks! Friday, 22:00, JEAH stage @ LIFE club

**Concrete Knives** Having built up a solid fanbase and finding themselves already pretty established as a serious 'Ones-To-Watch' contender in their home territory of France, this energetic crew make delicious slices of raw indie pop that feature boy/girl vocal leads - should appeal nicely to fans of Johnny Foreigner and Los Campesinos. Expect your hips to wobble-wobble to their upbeat indie rhythms and your noggin' to come out stuck with their

immensely catchy vocal hooks trapped inside of it. Lovely stuff. Friday, 15:10, Black and White Music + Monkeysuit stage @ Volks

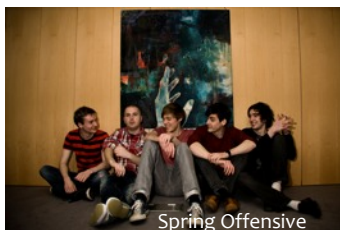
**Mammal Club** This Newcastle trio certainly win this here writer's vote for the most impressive live act at last year's Great Escape, where they performed as a four-piece and fully blew everyone in the room away. Expect to witness extremely well-constructed techy loud/quiet indie riffage, some synth sounds and a vocal style that could sometimes be considered slightly akin to Everything Everything. They are incredible. They are amazing. 'Nuff said! Go and see for yourselves! Friday, 17:30, Amazing Radio Stage @ Queens Hotel

**Saint Saviour** Do you want to hear one of the most enchanting voices you'll hear all year? Yes? Then you simply cannot miss Becky Jones, aka Saint Saviour, whose arty performance in a chapel at TGE last year left jaws left open in sheer amazement. Her voice is totally unique and you may even recognise it from listening to Groove Armada. Come and experience her experimental (yet accessible) and alternative pop music for yourself and you'll see why she's causing a stir right now. Friday, 13:00, JEAH stage @ LIFE club



Mammal Club

**Hymns** How's about seeing a heavier band armed with a passionate, pure and gritty raw sound featuring vocals that can easily snap from a whimper to a growl in a heartbeat? If that's your thing, do come and see the most diverse and interesting post-hardcore(-ish) band you'll come across this year. With a vocal snarl which is more earthy than neat, you'll feel the emotion in every word projected onto you. A band who are fully worth your attention. Friday, 11:00, Alcopop Vs BSM stage @ The Pav Tav



**Spring Offensive** Currently winning over many hearts and minds, this lyrically-engaging guitar outfit is one that this here writer is proud to have worked with. Their extremely dynamic and versatile songwriting style is known to feature brilliantly-executed vocal harmonies over driving rhythms, coupled with a perfect mix of subtle/quirky/loud guitars. With songs are brimmed full of passion and a live set that is simply

incredible you will certainly be thankful you went to see Spring Offensive. Friday, 19:00 JEAH stage @ LIFE club

**Dems** Is this the future of bands we can expect to hear who could be considered to be influenced by electronic and IDM? Let's certainly hope so because this lot are absolutely stunning! Highly worth seeing live to truly 'get' it, this lot are showcasing some gorgeous vocals over minimal IDM beats and subtle guitar sections. With a reputation for being extremely enchanting to witness live they are certainly worth marking into your gig calendar to catch before everyone else does! Friday, 20:00, JEAH stage @ LIFE club

**Gunning For Tamar** Judging from their mammoth glitchy post-hardcore riffs and addictive vocal hooks it's easy to see why this new band are making impressive waves in their scene! One of the louder guitar bands in this list that, if you love your distorted guitars, you really do need to make time for. When you see them live you'll understand exactly why their big drums, big riffs and generally big everything are generating heat. Bring a sports drink and stay hydrated - it might get sweaty! Friday, 15:40, Alcopop Vs BSM stage @ The Pav Tav

**Escapists** This London-based 4-piece really are quite fantastic to witness and have been generating a nice amount of buzz from their well-crafted catchy vocal hooks that will stick in your head for days on end. It's their charm and simplicity that is so refreshing at



the moment. Is this the next big mainstream guitar band in the UK? Quite possibly - come and decide for yourself. Friday, 15:00, JEAH stage @ LIFE club

**Munich** This Brighton-based outfit provide broad anthemic pop rock songs that are both accessible and catchy - certainly suited for those who like a poppier twang to their indie bands! Having supported some very large names indeed recently, some may wonder if it's only a matter of time before it's their turn in the spotlight, so be sure to catch them in an intimate environment now, because they might not be playing these sorts of venues for very long... Friday, 14:10, Black and White Music + Monkeysuit stage @ Volks CF

## CLOCK OPERA CLOCK OPERA CLOCK OPERA CLOCK OPERA CLOCK OPERA CLOCK OPERA CLOCK OPERA

Their sound is something of a digital collage, fusing broken edits, fragmented synths, juxtaposing rhythms and filtered rhymes. From disintegrated forms comes a surprisingly cohesive sound, the multiple nuances and twists creating a compelling rhapsody. Digital output can sometimes be lacking in some of the raw emotion that comes with a guitar as an accessory, but the building blocks of magical memories and real scars merge well for **Clock Opera** creating a twilight zone beauty - one full of disco dynamism.

They join together a thousand sounds of yesteryear in a formation never heard before. If, as the doomsayers say, all that's good in pop music has been before then, why not break it up and rearrange? This is music that is indeed operatic, theatrical and dramatic epic, constituted of minute and intricate patterns. Timeless. FB Friday, 21:00 @ Dome Concert Hall



# The Robbie Boyd Band

It's a lovely sunny Friday in March. We have a rare day off work, and are sitting on the top floor of a gallery in Victoria, watching the world go by and being serenaded by Robbie Boyd. As always, Robbie is nice and chipper, the sunny disposition of his music evidently having its roots in the personality of its creator, despite a hectic schedule of gigs and promotion.

A relentless performer, Robbie can often be found strumming away in Portobello Market, Spitalfields, or King's Cross. You'll be able to spot him – that crowd of people gathering around a sound of warm days and cool nights – he's in there.

'I don't think of myself as a street performer. For me it's all about trying out new things, being a bit experimental, and seeing what works and what gets good feedback and a response. I still haven't exactly figured out my target demographic, so I'm not going to restrict myself. 'It seems to work as well, with gigs sometimes Cafe attracting people 'who had heard me in Portobello about a year ago.'

An urban folk song, rather than one with the usual campestral overtones, it is 'A London

Reminution that tends to get the best response from those Portobello Market fans. 'In fact, I got the greatest compliment the other day. This guy emailed me, saying how him and his girlfriend love A London Reminution, so much so, that he had written his own words and was going to sing it to her as part of a marriage proposal, so could he have the chords??! For a song to have that much meaning to someone...wow, just the biggest compliment.'

Warm and familiar, The Robbie Boyd Band create music that feels like finding a lost momento. Clearly inspired by our fair city, A London Reminution is an observational and gratifying ode based upon daily experiences. Unlike Alaska.

'Ha, this is a good story. I was very lucky to get this song played on BBC Radio 2 by Sir Tim Rice. Last summer he was doing a show about music of the States, and he requested songwriters send in songs about Alaska, it not having much of a music scene itself. It was a strange process, coming from a brief, but most of the time it was just my first ideas and images.'

Following an off putting incident in a school music

lesson, Robbie abandoned his early talent, only returning to music seriously in the last couple of years, having started writing a few years ago. 'It was on my gap year, in Central America; that was the first ever creation of a song that just kind of came from nothing. Myself and a friend were walking down the street and two random guitarists from Utah were improvising and jamming, and I just started singing words over the top, which I'd never done before...then this harmonica wielding patron of a local restaurant came out of nowhere and did a middle eight solo. It was just perfect. Then I started singing poems, and writing music to go with them.'

A sensitive soul to the core, and clearly far more dedicated to his new year's resolutions than most, Robbie has been writing a diary since he was twelve, and it was only recently he discovered that he was even then writing in rhyme. A poet and he didn't...

The line up evolves and revolves, availability and creativity meaning that the live experience and set list is constantly and consistently original and engaging. 'It's nice to

mix it up, have the occasional sax player. Depending on the line up I can choose the songs that sound best with that instrument, so when I played with It's All Happening and Russell was around, we brought back loads of old stuff.' Mighty glad we were too.

Debut album *Autumn's Flown* is out this summer, and if tracks such as *Amsterdam*, *Never Never Land*, *Orion's Belt* and latest single *I Won't Let You Go* sound as good on the new record as they did upstairs in the sunny gallery it will be an enticing and mesmerising piece of spacious folk, with hints of nostalgia for days gone by, but an intensity and directness that keeps it firmly situated in the now.

Robbie Boyd: expect to see him in a street or stadium near you soon. **FB Saturday, 17:00 @ Dome**

## Great Escapes of Yore

Great Escape is the place to fall in love with bands. Here are some that we have discovered at TGE over the years...

**The Joy Formidable** – TGE 2009. As we stumbled in to Revenge, Britain's biggest gay club, we weren't entirely sure what to expect. We definitely didn't expect to end up dancing on top of a penis shaped dance floor whilst watching a blistering sound of layered guitars and captivating vocals. The Joy Formidable entered our lives in style.

**Warpaint** - TGE 2010. Watching a band at the end of a pier always adds a bit of atmosphere to a gig. However, whilst watching Warpaint at Horatio's in 2010 it was clear that the crowd was being treated to a band on the brink of big, big things.

**Katzenjammer** – TGE 2010. In an attempt at repeating The Joy Formidable high we experienced in 2009, we went to see them at The Great Escape again. However, the night was stolen by the band before them: Katzenjammer. A group of Scandinavian girls with a 50s influence, it came somewhat out the blue. Cue a whole lot of dancing. Good times.

**Team Me** – TGE 2011. One of the best things about TGE is walking into a bar or venue in the afternoon and discovering an incredible band. Last year, we were in Above Audio and Team Me blew us away with a great mid afternoon set. This Norwegian band have since has a slight line up change, but a tour that has taken in England, Europe and Japan suggests they are now doing alright for themselves.

**Rachel Sermanni** – TGE 2011. IAH were fortunate enough to bag an interview with Rachel Sermanni at TGE 2011. Her stunning voice and lovely personality led us to then booking her for an IAH gig with us later in the year. It was our first completely sold out show. **DP**



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Photograph by Glenn Harper



# THE MANIC SHINE

Rock band **The Manic Shine** claim to have discovered an illness called 'Sickotrashmusicitis'. Described as the 'chronic feeling of lethargy and nausea when listening to music on mainstream radio', it seems to have only one cure. No prizes for guessing what that might be.

It's a fun quote that does an excellent job of signalling their intentions early - they are looking to bring something different to the table, a true alternative to popular culture. The question is whether The Manic Shine can deliver on that promise.

In a sense they certainly do. Many of the tracks on their latest album *Blindsider* couldn't be further from the playlist material of most mainstream and commercial radio stations, and they're all the better for it even if they won't bust any blocks. The sound of the band is heavily driven by the rhythm section, with the drums and excellent bass guitar parts weave in and out of one another with great skill - this is technically proficient rock as played by skilled musicians, and the lengthy tracks often include musical interludes which arguably outshine the vocal led sections.

The production values on the LP are excellent by any standards, with each of the many musical layers shining through at all the right times, and the more you listen to the album the more you enjoy what's going on underneath but it isn't one that makes a major initial impact.

Live though, highlights include *My Woman* as well as *The Poet and the Lullabye*, which has a marked electronica influence, and the reggae infused, slower *Til Your Pockets Glow* offers a decent change of pace - reminiscent of *Incubus* in their heyday. As we discovered when they played for *IAH* recently, The Manic Shine certainly have found a cure in the form of strong rock, stellar bass playing and well written tunes. An alternative highlight. *SB Friday, 19:00 @*



## COMMON TONGUES GREAT ESCAPE

- 11.05.2012 - 'SOMETHING NOTHING' WEEKENDER, MARWOOD'S CAFE, BRIGHTON
- 12.05.2012 - 'C-MANAGEMENT/CHAOS & BEDLAM', QUEENS HOTEL, BRIGHTON - 2:10PM
- 12.05.2012 - 'SHUGA BUDDHA' ALTERNATIVE ESCAPE FISHBOWL, BRIGHTON - 8:45PM



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**ALTERNATIVE ESCAPE**  
OFFICIALLY PART OF THE GREAT ESCAPE FESTIVAL



Headlining this years Great Escape festival are Australian band **The Temper Trap**. One of the highlights will surely be the performance of *Sweet Disposition* which almost resembles a hymn with its remarkable, punchy and passionate fractions that can sum up what life's all about - a moment, a laugh, a dream, a cry, a kiss, our rights, our wrongs.

Formed in 2005, they seem to have found their niche right away. The Temper Trap might be categorized as a funky variation of indie, the kind that gets a club to dance - not because its the latest disco hit but because masses of people can somehow connect to their style. Surprisingly, that still doesn't make them mainstream in any way which gives reason to hope that more experimental and independent musicians are rewarded for the things that are important to them.

The five indie rockers have much more to give than just a couple of radio friendly mega-hits, that have soundtracked adverts and teen dramas around the world. Listen out for the new songs, including their brand new single *Need Your Love* from their temper Trap album at the Dome on Thursday.

CS Thursday @ Brighton Dome

Never heard your tunes, but your band name is mental...

#182 A WINGED VICTORY FOR THE SULLEN  
FRI, 21:00 @ STMARY'S CHURCH

# THE TEMPER TRAP



**Hatcham Social** return to the fray with a new album, a revamped line-up and a zestily rewired leftfield pop attitude. The band recently released album *About Girls* and new single *Dance With Me* at the start of April. To celebrate the band headed to SXSW in the middle of March and toured the UK for the whole of April, ending with their own London headline show at Cargo, and are now down in Brighton, sharing what they consider to be their party record. The new album *About*

*Girls* sees the band embrace a more guitar heavy sound, which moves away from the synth-dappled sheen of 2009's *You Dig The Tunnel*, *I'll Hide The Soil* and is an album that the band themselves consider to be 'less layered, with more concise and playful lyrics.' EC Friday, 15:00 @ Green Door Store

## Hatcham Social





Amongst many of the exciting newcomers for The Great Escape is the British singer – songwriter **Jack Savoretti**. With a mixture of classic English folk ballads and early 60s Americana influences, his music – which he himself refers to as ‘continental folkabilly’ – has already brought him a long way on the highway to fame. After the great success of his 2011 album *Harder than Easy* and several features of his songs in series such as *One Tree Hill* and *Grey’s Anatomy* great things are to be expected from the

release of his new album *Before the Storm* (out on 28th May 2012).

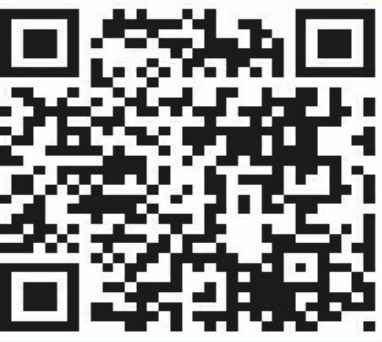
‘It’s going to be a lot more edgy, more dark – and more fun’, Savoretti explains, ‘My music is mostly inspired by travelling, which gives it a sort of hobo or gypsy style. It’s a combination of the many experiences I made while travelling Europe and the States.’ A certain lightness in their music is what he admires in the work of folk heroes like Bob Dylan or Nick Drake: ‘I like music that has a certain open-mindedness and doesn’t get stuck in one direction at some point of the album, music that redefines itself with every note.’

With the album out just in time for the festival season, Jack has big plans for the summer. ‘I’ll be touring the UK and Ireland in June and will be supporting Jools Holland on his tour this winter. It’s all very exciting.’

GH Thursday, 22.15 @ Komedia

# Secret Rivals

## Make Do And Mend (part 2)



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