



DIRGE

2023

DIRGE

noun!

a lament for the dead,
especially one forming
part of a funeral rite.

Happy Birthday to Dirge, Happy Birthday
to Dirge. Happy Birthday dear Dirgey.
Happy Birthday to Dirge! Hip hip Hooray!



Well, your favourite North East music publication has been
going for two years now. Who would have thought it?
Certainly not me! And I couldn't have done it without YOU
my dear reader. Yes, I mean YOU!

We have a new seaman aboard the good ship Dirge. It's Will
Farr from 'Fresh on The Net' bringing the occasional 'to the
point' music review, so stay tuned! Also we have returning
reviewers in the form of that mad lad Rob from North East
punks 'Specky Cult' and Mr 'Gig Up North' himself Dan
Humble!

We've lost a lot of 20th century icons already this year.
I'm afraid the obituaries is jam packed again this issue
(Rick Buckler pun not intended). David Lynch, Denis Law
and Marianne Faithful to name but three, not to mention
poor Paul Danan from Hollyoaks.

Let's try not get all maudlin though, eh? There's still plenty
to be thankful for. Including loads of intense North East
gigs coming up, some of which you can find in our What's
On segment, and loads of new releases to enjoy (or not!)

Roz.

APPEARING SOMEWHERE INSIDE...

NOSFERATU

TOO FAR NORTH

COUNT IN FIVES

MR BIGFOOT

LOS COYOTE MEN

CONNY PLANK

MILLION YEARS

LYTHE WIRE

OUTRI

MUSICAL URBAN MYTHS

ROOM 101 WITH STU SMITH

GERMAN CINEMA

PERFECT CHICKEN

IT'S ONLY WORDS WITH SPARKS

THE BRIAN JONESTOWN MASSACRE

NAME THAT NORTH EAST STAR!

DIRGE POP CHARTS

SNAKES WITH TITS

DIRGE FAMILY COACH TRIP

BABY
WANTS
TO READ
DIRGE!



@dirgemag



darlodirge@gmail.com



facebook.com/darlodirge

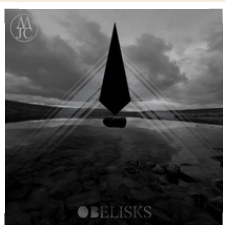
THE LAIR OF LOCAL

This is a local page for **local** music. We'll have no trouble **here!**



MIDNIGHT JAZZ CLUB - OBELISKS

I've been a fan of this band for a little while now so I was excited to hear this EP. And it is awesome. The band are an instrumental rock/ prog-rock quartet with song-writing ability to rival anyone. This 3-track (24+ minute) EP drips with epic staccato guitars overlaid with beautifully evil lead melodies and is tighter than a tubby Texan's trigger grip. The rhythm section unleashes itself perfectly before taking aim and joyously exploding again.



The tracks dive and soar effortlessly through changes of timing and tempo. At times primal in a very focussed way, at times glossier than the inside of a tin of Ronseal wood gloss (no other makes are available) the entire EP flashes by, such is it's ability to hold the attention. I thought they would struggle to capture their fearsome live sound in the studio, but I was wrong. Think Tool/Jesus Lizard/QOTSA but more spooky. **D.H.**

89/100

[instagram.com/midjazzclub](https://www.instagram.com/midjazzclub)

SNAKES WITH TITS - TANGENTS

Upon hearing the opening bars of track one 'Slo' I thought I'd accidentally put on mid 1970's Genesis. A euphoric cascade of Mellotron (or similar string machine) eventually makes way for one of the best opening songs on an E.P from a North East band I've heard for a while.

On 'Ophidiophobia' things get a bit grittier, with two slightly distorted guitars (read that in a Uiv Stanshall voice) and a prolonged pseudo-doom introduction which turned out to be the entire song owing to it being a blooming instrumental!

I reviewed 'Tyranny' the other month so I'll not say much else about it other than so far, the E.P has a very smooth, cohesive flow in terms of track listing.

Phwoar, the next track on the E.P is entitled 'Garage Pasty' I could just smash one of those in right now. Ginsters are my favourite! It's a very effective showcase of Shell's voice.



The E.P bows out gracefully with 'The Dark' which I've also given a glowing review recently. An excellent ditty with an engaging, alluring introduction. I will also add this time that there are some well placed cymbal crashes and some sensual slide guitar. **4.1/5**

[instagram.com/snakeswithtitsband](https://www.instagram.com/snakeswithtitsband)

COMPRESSION SESSION - CRAWLING THE WALLS

A snare drum intro Buddy Rich would have been proud of (okay maybe not that jazzy) invites some quintessential Comp Sesh guitar work courtesy of Mr Smith with definite shades of Bernard Albrecht! It sounds like Dan the drummer is on vocal duties this time, and he does a sterling job with the snarls. Crawling is probably their heaviest, most anarchic and frenetic of their recent recordings with plenty of the Comp Sesh facets we are used to, such as the time signature changes. Another goodie, if not the strongest of their recent releases.

3.8/5

[instagram.com/compressionsessionband](https://www.instagram.com/compressionsessionband)

MIDDLE MANAGEMENT - INFLUENCER INFLUENZA

It's a weirdly funky one this, with a hint of The Monster Mash creeping in at times. And you can't get much creepier than influencers can you? They just have that 'icky' vibe about them, don't they?

'Influencer Influenza' is essentially carried along by quirky little stabs here and there happening in the mix as opposed to a strong melodic hook. My favourite element of the track is (predictably) the keyboards which I always listen out for in songs I'm sent. It shall be accompanied by a video which releases on March 7th, so keep your eyes peeled! **3.9/5**

[instagram.com/middlemanagemnt](https://www.instagram.com/middlemanagemnt)

MAX GAVINS - NORTH EAST LEGEND

You have to be a pretty well esteemed rapper to claim 'legend' status these days. So with this in mind, is Max Gavins' right to claim this accolade or is he simply a legend in his own mind? Let's investigate...

To begin with, the flutey synth motif in the instrumental is a bit overpowering in the mix, overshadowing his barz and his quasi-melodic chorus delivery somewhat. Lyrically, he's more than competent, a good mix of humour and own trumpet blowing cock sureness.

On reading the press release I was interested to see that Max had previously been known as Suus, a name which I recognised from watching Don't Flop Rap Battles back in the day. I was prompted to rewatch a few of his old battles, which I enjoyed.

The really busy synth/flute sound does get a bit annoying by the end, I have to admit. I'd like to hear Max again on a different beat because I'm not sure of the 'legend' angle just yet. **3.3/5**

[instagram.com/maxgavinsmusic](https://www.instagram.com/maxgavinsmusic)

SPECKY CULT - CATCH 22

The Cult have created their most rounded single release to date with 'Catch 22'. The production is better, the video is well made and it's also the most catchy (22). Think The Levellers having tantric sex with Debbie Harry while wearing a Halloween mask, on Poppers, at the zoo, during a solar eclipse **3.8/5**

[instagram.com/speckycult_music](https://www.instagram.com/speckycult_music)

SHANNON PEARL - WOLVES

Shannon has deviated from type somewhat here and chosen to write about her favourite football team Wolverhampton Wanderers.

No, hang on. That's fake news.

Ms. Pearl appears to have gravitated from Witch Pop to Witch Rock with her new release. Big drums, big guitars (and her usual BIG vocals) adorn 'Wolves'. Comfortingly, Shannon's lyrics are as archaic and esoteric as we have come to expect.

I believe every artist should experiment and make progressions in their musical sound, otherwise what's the point? I do prefer Shannon's more earthy, electronic, ambient stuff but this is a decent listen too. Wolves is released upon the new moon on March 29th. Awooooooooooooo! **3.8/5**

[instagram.com/shannoninthewild](https://www.instagram.com/shannoninthewild)

BELOVED ALICE - WINTER'S TALE

We're still in the throes of Winter aren't we? Well it definitely feels that way, so I surmise this new one by 'Beloved Alice' all the way from Newcastle is still relevant before Spring starts to creep in! The intro certainly smacks you in the face. There is a lot of space in the mix which allows Alison's vocals to be heard crystal clear.



The chorus is suitably anthemic, although I think Alison's hook would have been more effective if the vocals had stayed fully centralised rather than double tracked and sent to the left and right. An enjoyable listen! **3.9/5**

[facebook.com/belovedalice](https://www.facebook.com/belovedalice)

CARL GREEN IN PARTICULAR - MUNDANITY & MUSTARD

Quirky, unpretentious and idiosyncratic, (sometimes bordering on Vaudeville) with a myriad of contrasting musical flavaz to please the lugs of the listener. Carl Green has engineered a fun, self aware record, a hill top beacon of originality overlooking a fog saturated North East valley, which is woefully occupied by Catfish & The Bottlemen devotees.

The EP is certainly one to be listened to in its entirety. There is no real stand out song. Not that this is a bad thing, the tracks synergise and complement each other to create a mood, rather than having one standout BIG song. The ditties are all delightfully timed, long enough to get the musical themes across but short enough not to get boring (other regional musical artists, take note).

My favourite tune from the EP is a toss up between 'Cherish The Mundane' (those Vaudeville vibes) and AI - XYZ which (no sarcasm intended here) sounds like a track from The Chuckle Brothers seminal 1995 album 'To Me To You', an album which I hold with great fondness in my heart and one that is begging for a Record Store Day vinyl release. Speaking of albums, apparently Carl has one due later in the year, so stay tuned for that, yeah? **4/5**

[instagram.com/cargreeninparticular](https://www.instagram.com/cargreeninparticular)



BENEFITS - CONSTANT NOISE

I'm finding Kingsley's voice rather soothing these days. Also, I notice myself pondering his lyrics more intently without the incessant shouting. Parts of the album sound like something a Hare Krishna would put on the CD player at meditation classes to 'get you in the zone'. Others, bona fide electro funk fests complete with hard bars by 'Shakk'.

Some of the lyrics, while maintaining an able and highly inventive use of wordplay and vocabulary are starting to show signs of repetition, making it hard to envisage where the band can go next in terms of lyrical progression.

Benefits have certainly reincarnated themselves both musically and stylistically following their debut album 'Nails' but the stark messages Kingsley portray are largely his usual tried and tested observations about perceived negative aspects of British society. Bennies could start to write songs about love or whatever they wanted, but they'd become 'just another band', devoid of their U.S.P.

If their third album flops (which I hope it doesn't as I've grown quite fond of 'em) at least the dulcet toned Sir Kingsley of Hall should be able to forge a successful career on the audiobook narrator's circuit. **4/5**

[instagram.com/benefitsuk](https://www.instagram.com/benefitsuk)

MR BIGFOOT - HOW DO YOU DO?

I'm fine thanks, lads. And you? The Teesside foursome have crafted a short and sweet rock n roll tune with 'How Do You Do'. It clocks in at a mere 1 minute 47 seconds and is produced with lots of punch. Is it the bands best output so far? Probably not, but it does come complete with a fun video that you can find on YouTube, so go and have a watch. **3.7/5**



[instagram.com/mrbigfootuk](https://www.instagram.com/mrbigfootuk)

VOODOO BLACK EXORCIST - THE GHOST OF SUSAN ATKINS

Being new to this band I approached The Ghost of Susan Atkins with an open mind, not sure of what to expect.

The first couple of listens I got a NIN, Sister Machine Gun vibe. The vocals (that aren't very high in the mix) have a Dave Gahan quality which certainly isn't to be sniffed at. I liked this new one from U.B.E and could definitely hear it on an electronic radio station. I think the biggest compliment I can give is it was over too quickly. I wanted more, and that's a definite positive!

I would give 'Atkins' the tag line - 'This is the David Fincher end credit music he didn't know he needed.' **R.G.**

[instagram.com/machinemusicroz](https://www.instagram.com/machinemusicroz)

SUPER BURNER - ONE LAST TIME

Oooooooo matron, that's a pounding drum beat! It's hard to pin this one down. It's rocky, dancey and poppy, produced to a high standard and the synths are a nice touch. Burn baby burn! **3.9/5**

[@thesuperburner](https://www.instagram.com/thesuperburner)

RICKY CLARKE - EVERY DAY

Ricky's knocked out a decent bit of Dylan infused folk with 'Every Day'. Stripped back and to the point, lyrically and musically. **3.7/5**

[instagram.com/rickyleeclark](https://www.instagram.com/rickyleeclark)

TEN WORD REVIEWS

SICK ROBOT - FILTERED AIR

Peterlee's hardworking electronic producer has dropped another excellent, glitchy release.

HAT SHOP - DO YOUR DREAMS STILL CHASE YOU?

Atmospheric and dreamy sounds. Could be on an AIR album!

FERAL NORTH - GOOD LIFE

Energetic. The most abrupt ending in the history of music.

SET YOUR SIGHTS - DARK IN HERE

Melodic pop-punk with an edge. Satisfying arpeggiated guitar riffs.

AMI LEIGH - THE RAVEN

Decent, but not quite as good as The Strangers song.

TO CARRY WARFARE SUNWARD - PAST PRESENT MOMENTS (DEMO)

Formerly 'Mojave Desert Star' or simply Dan to his mates, TCWS sent me a series of demos of his new stuff. He's sent me some songs in the past and they're really inventive, mixing samples and acoustic bits and bobs (in a funky way) to great effect. 'Past Present Moments' is a continuation of these elements. Mixed & mastered at Shabby Road Studios in Bishop Auckland. I await the finished tracks with baited breath.

[tocarrywarfaresunward.bandcamp.com](https://www.bandcamp.com/tocarrywarfaresunward)



DIRGE POP CHARTS



1.) MIDNIGHT JAZZ CLUB - OBELISKS 🏆

2.) SNAKES WITH TITS - TANGENTS

3.) BENEFITS - CONSTANT NOISE

CARL GREEN - MUNDANITY & MUSTARD

4.) MIDDLE MGMT - INFLUENCER INFLUENZA

BELOVED ALICE - WINTER'S TALE

SUPER BURNER - ONE LAST TIME

5.) SPECKY CULT - CATCH 22

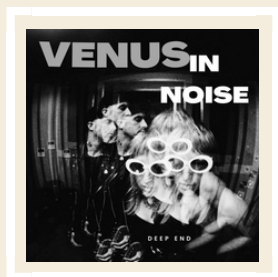
SHANNON PEARL - WOLVES

#DIRGEOFFICIALCHARTS

BILLBOARD 100

VENUS IN NOISE - DEEP END

Venus in Noise are a "two-piece noise band from London", which, as everyone knows, is one of the hardest jobs in the world. This is reflected in the one minute and twelve seconds of music they've found time in their busy schedules to produce for this single, "Deep End". It will take you longer to read this review than to listen to the track, so stop reading now.



It's an objectively well-made piece of electroclash, and my good friends Strange Flesh picked it for Fresh on the Net's 'Eclectic Picks' in January. To my old meat ears, it sounds like something I might have heard before on International DeeJay Gigolo Records circa 2003, which means it doesn't excite me or stand out particularly. However, I'd rather listen to this than most of the guff I'm sent. **W.F.**

[instagram.com/venusinnoise](https://www.instagram.com/venusinnoise)

MANHEALTH

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**SPENNYMOOR
BLYTH
DARLINGTON**

[MANHEALTH.ORG.UK/PEER-SUPPORT-GROUPS](https://www.manhealth.org.uk/peer-support-groups)

RAIN IS FINE, BUT NO THUNDERSTORMS PLEASE.



I'VE ALWAYS **ENJOYED** COACH TRIPS. THERE ARE A COUPLE OF REASONS FOR THIS. THEY'RE CHEAP, GENERALLY **CHEERFUL**, RELATIVELY CONVENIENT AND MOST OF ALL THEY'RE JUST SO MUCH FUN IN AN IRONIC WAY. AND WHAT'S **BETTER** THAN IRONIC FUN? I'VE HAD SO MANY LAUGHS ON COACH **TRIPS**, MAINLY FOR THE **WRONG** REASONS BUT A LAUGH IS A LAUGH! ON MY MOST RECENT JAUNT, MY TWO ELDEST CHILDREN JOINED ME ON A TRIP TO **ONE** OF THE CLASSIC MUSICAL CITIES - **LIVERPOOL**! LET'S FIND OUT HOW IT **WENT**!

Davey and I woke up early on the day of departure, the excitement was just too much, so we headed to town to catch the Caledonian Express to the home of The Beatles! For sustenance we purchased what was to become the first of many fast food purchases of the weekend, a Greggs sausage bun. Really hit the spot! We made ourselves comfortable on the coach and adorned our ears with headphones due to the rather loud Geordie women at the back of the bus talking about their favourite flavours of crisps.



Davey at Macca's old gaffe



Holly and Dave at Strawberry Field

We arrived in the fair city about 2pm, with the rest of the day to enjoy the sights and sounds of the iconic streets. We dropped our bags off at 'The Adelphi' our home for the night, a large yet shabby hotel that is in need of a facelift. We quickly had our first Maccies of the day then headed to The World Museum, a great attraction for all ages (I'd recommend the Ancient Egypt exhibition, complete with a slew of Mummies.)

A pleasant walk to Albert Dock followed. We couldn't have asked for better weather as the sun shimmered on the Mersey whilst a talented troubadour played Beatles covers on his guitar next to the Fab Four statue. The Cavern Club was next on our list. It cost £12.50 for us just to get in and it was absolute hell, so we fled from there to Burger King and then back to our digs. The following day was a great value for money 3 hour Beatles tour (£7.50). I never knew so many famous people came from Toxteth! Lots of photo opportunities and more lovely weather! **4.5/5**



Yours truly at Penny Lane



JOINING DIRGE FOR OUR
SECOND BIRTHDAY EDITION
OF COUNT IN FIVES IS **JADE**
MIA BROADHEAD FROM
PUNKY THREESOME DINKY
BOSSETTI!



[instagram.com/dinkybossetti21](https://www.instagram.com/dinkybossetti21)

THE REPLACEMENTS – LET IT BE (1984)

The Replacements mean everything to me. They've been my favourite band since I was a kid & have gotten me through so much. It's no exaggeration to say I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for them. They had this loveable drunken loser thing going on that I fully embraced pre-transition. But to write & play songs this well, you need to know what you're doing before you hit the bottle. That's what I didn't get. Until I found sobriety. This record has 3 throwaway tracks & is still perfect. That somehow says a lot about them.



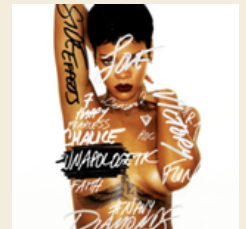
BABES IN TOYLAND – FONTANELLE (1992)

Probably the biggest influence on what I wanna bring to Dinky Bossetti. Kat Bjelland was an untouchable frontwoman, switching between a witch's cackle & howl & little-girl-lost in a schizophrenic second. The press tried to build a feud between her & Courtney Love which is what men love to do, pit women up against each other. It's the same kind of misogyny that claimed Kurt Cobain must have written the wonderful 'Live Through This.' But listen to 'Pretty On The Inside.' There's clear progression there. And jeez, who wasn't influenced by Kurt back then?! I've met Babes' drummer Lori a few times & she's just the coolest.



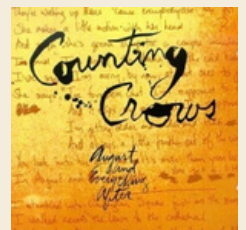
RIHANNA – UNAPOLOGETIC (2012)

Rihanna is my Queen. I've seen her live 18 times & if she ever tours again I'll quit everything, rob a bank & follow her around the world. She's everything; talented, beautiful, fiercely intelligent, funny, courageous. And she doesn't give a shit what people think. Forget the genre, she's the ultimate Rock Star. My first ever tattoo was a lyric from 'Diamonds,' "I choose to be happy," which I got on the 1st anniversary of starting hormones.



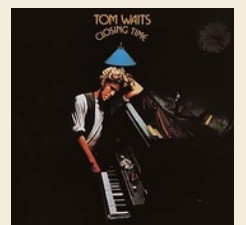
COUNTING CROWS – AUGUST & EVERYTHING AFTER (1993)

My experience buying this record led to me writing a novel in a previous existence. I remember vividly walking from my childhood dead-end, middle-of-nowhere village to the nearest record store a couple of miles away. It was a sweltering summer's day, I could feel the sweat & dust on my neck as I crossed the narrow country roads to relocate the path. I eagerly bought the CD - foregoing my usual excited, awkward, chatter to the cool guy who worked at the store - & hurried home. I thought the disc was faulty because there was ten seconds of silence. I was crushed. Then the opening notes of 'Round Here' filled my room. I still hear those notes in the same way. Magical. One of the most underrated bands & simply incredible live.



TOM WAITS – CLOSING TIME (1973)

Just a perfect record. I could have put Damien Rice in here as a favourite 'singer-songwriter,' but couldn't leave this out. Just listen to it, drunk or stoned or stone cold sober. Late at night. On your own. Listen & breathe it in. Feel it. Live it. I like his later records but for some reason he decided to sing like Rolf The Dog after the earlier stuff. His voice is so incredibly soulful on this. Wise beyond his years. Immaculate.





STORY TIME

THE TIME TRAVELLING ADVENTURES OF SNAKES WITH TITS

North Shields



1977 - Shellie and Scott met while working as Redcoats at Butlins in Scarborough. Disheartened by the mundane existence of the role while being Inspired by the punk movement and after discovering a mysterious portal during the knobbly knees contest, they transported through time to **2006** and started a psychedelic dub crossover Beach Boys cover band called Dub Only Knows. This concept didn't work particularly well so they transported further back to gain more inspiration with a view to setting up another project in the future. This era is now known as The Redcoat Redemption and they don't like to mention it.

1871 - Kim escaped from her role as a lion tamer from a circus and found herself transported through a hall of mirrors to a post pandemic/apocalyptic coastal town called North Shields where the frontman of a popular noisy boyband from Bristol was performing a DJ set. Shellie had now transported again to this location having a vague recollection of spotting Scott at a Procul Harum gig in **1967** after too many magic truffles. She found herself on a slippery dance floor and met Kim by chance. Kim told Shellie that she had always aspired to be a drummer. Perplexed, Shellie explained that after the truffles she had a visitation from the ghost of a man called Steve Irwin who morphed into an archaeologist named Indiana Jones, telling her she was destined to form a band called 'Snakes With Tits' and that she would know when she met each member.



In their confused and now gin-soaked state, the gang headed outside for a cigarette to try and work out what year it was whilst doing an impromptu extended acapella version of "I've Been Loving You Too Long" by Otis Redding, a circumstance which only reinforced the strange feeling they'd already met in a previous timeline. They asked a reveller what year it was...

It was now **2021**. Their time travelling days were far from over. They had to find Scott. **1993** - After navigating the apocalypse Shellie and Kim found themselves at a Smashing Pumpkins gig. Lo and behold Scott was on stage shredding as if his life depended on it. This was their moment. Shellie and Kim abducted Scott while backstage and bundled him into a wheelbarrow.

Snakes With Tits were born! **2024** - The Wheelbarrow hit 1.21 gigawatts and the time travelling trio were propelled through time and space, clinging on for dear life. They found themselves at a roller derby where Ben, a guitar slinging time lord with wheels for feet exclaimed "Ah, you've arrived! Welcome home! I can join you, but I have travelled too far, this must be the last stop on your journey". And from there SNAKES WITH TITS were together and Radgewave Mamgaze was born. "Snakes With Tits will return in... Snakes With Tits: Year of the Snake" - Definitely based on factual events! **SWT**.



Snakes With Tits (Photo by Andi Talbot)



'Tangents' the debut EP by Snakes With Tits is available to stream now, complemented I believe by a limited run of Compact Discs.

[instagram.com/snakeswithtitsband](https://www.instagram.com/snakeswithtitsband)

GERMAN PRODUCTION MAESTRO KONRAD PLANK HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN THE MAKING OF SOME AMAZING ALBUMS! HERE'RE SOME OF MY ALL TIME FAVES!



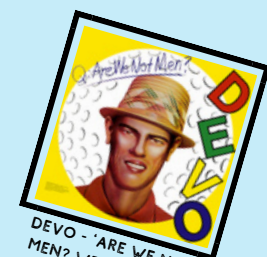
HARMONIA - 'DELUXE'
(1975)



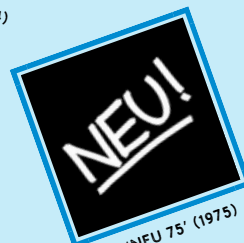
KILLING JOKE -
'HAI' (1982)



KRAFTWERK -
AUTOBAHN (1974)



DEVO - 'ARE WE NOT
MEN? WE ARE DEVO'
(1978)



NEU! 'NEU 75' (1975)



ULTRAVOX - VIENNA
(1981)



EURYTHMICS - IN THE
GARDEN (1981)



When is an open mic not an open mic? When it's The **Hive**!

A couple of **Darlo** lads are unleashing a brand new musicians get together at the town's Forum venue. It begins next month and Matthew **Taylor**, one of its co-promoters and long time member of the music scene in Darlo is really trying to get a BUZZ going! (Sorry!)

"**The** aim that we're trying to realise is a whole room of people playing the music - it'd be great as it means the 'non-musical' element of the crowd actually get to be involved too."

Taylor, formerly of Darlington **indie** rock bad boys 'Alcohololidays' and hopes that the 'The Hive' acts as a regular **monthly** hub where musicians can meet like-minded creatives.

"The **concept** will hopefully work towards successfully blurring the lines between audience and performer whilst still keeping the performance listenable".

The inaugural 'Hive' takes place at 6.30 on Thursday **April** 10th. So get down and see what **it's** all about.

Your Stage Awaits

Unique participatory music
event with top quality acts

The
Forum



10th April 2025 - 6:30pm

live music venue
cafe/bar
car park at the rear
Borough Rd, Darlington DL1 1SG

THE HIVE

WHAT'S ON - MARCH & APRIL

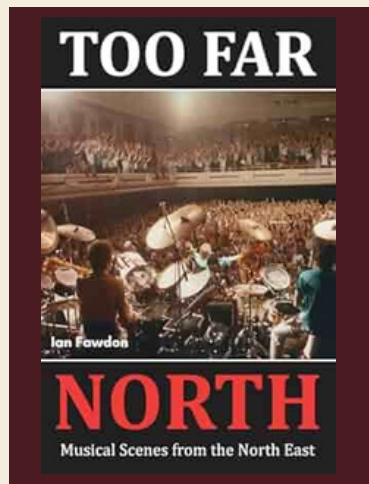
DIRGE'S TOP PICKS FOR THE COMING MONTHS

- 08/03 ROSALIE CUNNINGHAM, THE CLUNY 2, TOON
- 15/03 DOPETHRONE/SLOMATICs, LUBBER FIEND, TOON
- 22/03 BOY LATEX - LUCIFER RISING, STAR & SHADOW, TOON
- 23/03 DILETTANTE, THE CLUNY 2, TOON
- 23/03 GREAT DECEIVERS, THE GLOBE, TOON
- 28/03 GOLDEN AGE/CEILING DEMONS, NEU BAR, STOCKTON
- 28/03 THE LOFT, THE CLUNY 2, TOON
- 28/03 BLACKHEART ORCHESTRA, THE FORUM, DARLO
- 04/04 PROUD MARY, KU BAR, STOCKTON
- 05/04 AELIUS FESTIVAL, VARIOUS, TOON
- 10/04 THE HIVE MUSICIANS EVENING, THE FORUM, DARLO
- 11/04 SUNDERLAND IS ELECTRIC, SHIP ISIS, SUNDERLAND
- 17/04 HAWKWIND, GLASS HOUSE, GATESHEAD
- 19/04 PRIMAL SCREAM, CITY HALL, TOON

INTERVIEW IAN FAWDON

AUTHOR

I WAS RECENTLY SENT A COPY OF 'TOO FAR NORTH' A HISTORY OF THE MUSICAL LANDSCAPE OF NORTH EAST ENGLAND OVER THE YEARS. I ASKED IAN THE WRITER TO ANSWER A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT IT!



The book is very well researched. How long did the preparation and subsequent writing take?

It took me 12 months to meet and interview the various artists and write the book. It then took another 11 months for it to be published.

Who would you say are the stand out North East bands of all time?

There are so many stand out bands from this region. The Animals were the first and achieved number one singles in the UK and the US. Lindisfarne in the '70s were, believe it or not, touted as the next Beatles and produced some fantastic songs and very successful albums. I was told that the Fog on the Tyne album was only outsold in the UK by Simon and Garfunkel's Greatest Hits album in 1972. In the 1980's Kitchenware Records, based in Newcastle, signed up four great north east bands in Prefab Sprout, The Kane Gang, Martin Stephenson and the Daintees and Hurrah! For me that was a creative high point for this region. So, loads of great bands, and it's still happening.

The book comes across as a passion project, is that how it started out?

I have always had a bias towards north east bands and felt there hadn't been a book written about the various scenes that had occurred up here and that maybe it was a story that needed telling. I therefore set out to look at each scene right up to the current scene in Sunderland, ending up with the highly talented Nadine Shah, from Whitburn.

What do you think of today's scene in the North East?

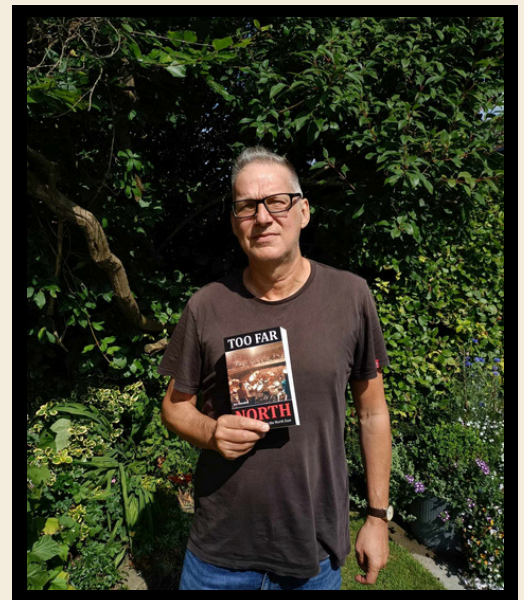
It seems to be really vibrant at the moment. With the aforementioned scene in Sunderland it seems that the bands themselves are at the forefront and one of the key driving forces for the city's economic resurgence and that may actually be a first in the UK. Great bands like Field Music, The Futureheads and Frankie and the Heartstrings are opening venues, recording studios and leading the initiative to get Sunderland recognised with Music City status. This seems to be inspiring exciting new acts like Swindled, House Proud and Patrick Gosling. It's also refreshing that less glamorous (not that Sunderland is necessarily glamorous!) places like Peterlee are producing exciting music from bands such as Marginal Gains and Fast Blood. Middlesbrough is also doing its bit producing great punky sounds from Benefits and Onlooker. So, all in all, it's really happening up here and generally the scenes appear to be self-sustaining and community based.

Have you any plans to write more books in the future?

Yes, I have written my next book about the greatest rock singer you've never heard. That is Ian Lowery, who was born in Hartlepool and grew up in Peterlee. Ian is a long lost and underappreciated musical treasure and his story is one of exciting highs, self-sabotage, crushing lows and tragedy but also one of great, great music.

When do you think North East music was at its strongest? Its 'hey day' ?

I will fudge this and say it's had a number of 'hey days'. In the '60s the music scene was very exciting. People had money in their pockets and music clubs opened from Whitley Bay to Spennymoor and South Shields to Middlesbrough which would be packed out most days of the week. However, despite The Animals became one of the most successful bands in the world there was precious little success for any of the other bands who followed them, of which there were many. The reason for this may have been that The Animals tended to release what were effectively cover songs and the other bands copied this approach at a time when The Beatles and The Stones were writing their own stuff. The only songwriter of note at the time in this region was Alan Hull in a band called The Chosen Few. He would then crop up in Lindisfarne.



Lindisfarne are seen as a leading folk band but in reality the North East has been a recognised hotbed for folk music for over 150 years and folk clubs continue to exist up and down our region to this day.

The North East heavy metal bands of the late '70s and early '80s were a big part of a movement called the New Wave of British Heavy Metal which also spawned Iron Maiden and Def Leppard. Raven and Venom, in particular, have been quoted by massive bands like Metallica and Anthrax as major influences on them. Both Raven and Venom actually took those bands out on early tours in the US as their support bands. So, plenty of 'hey days' to choose from.

'Too Far North' is available to buy now and is priced at £14.99.

LYTHE WIRE 🎂

WE JOIN TEES MUSIC SCENE ENTHUSIAST AND PROLIFIC GIG GOER MAL LYTHE AS HE TAKES US THROUGH HIS RECENT CONCERT EXPERIENCES AND WHAT'S COMING UP IN THE FUTURE!

Hello my loyal Malcoholics! I sure hope you are all smashing 2025. I've obviously started the year with a bunch of music gigs. **Perfect Chicken** have entered 2025 with a bang, with the release of their debut album and a launch gig in Boro. I think the chicken boys have quite a year ahead of them. I had a friend drive me through Lazenby (home of the chicken) for some sightseeing. Apparently, you can't even get a bus there! Independent Venue Week has been and gone, and I went to two gigs - **Mouses/Gaydar** and **Gallus**, both in Stockton. I was going to do more but I'm hitting 40, ya know! **The Purnells** supported Gallus and played loads of new tunes, they all sound like bangers. Now for some sad news, **Komparrison** are calling it a day. You're going to hear the words "they started as an acoustic duo" a lot from me. But yes, good luck to them and smash that last gig! Oh, and **Jasper Hodges** played a blinder at Café Etch. That lad is going to be huge!



The Purnells

And now for some non-music related stuff - next month I will be heading over to Saltburn for Valley of Light in Valley Gardens. I got a little preview of the installations recently when I was invited to **Whippet Up's** creative headquarters. That was proper nice and also dead fun. It's going to be lit. Thanks for reading and I'll see ya at the front. **M.L**

(Life begins at 40, Mal. Have a great birthday! **Roz.**)

facebook.com/lytheweekend

REVIEW



NOSFERATU

The old time 'Universal' logo prior to the opening credits was a nice touch. By that point I'd donned my studio headphones to be able to experience the nuances of the stereo **soundtrack**. I'd seen this movie previously at the Cineworld theatre in Middlesbrough which has since closed its doors (sorry Mal!) but I was rather high at the time and didn't absorb it as much as I probably **could** have. So for the repeat viewing I opted to watch it on my **television**.

Colour wise, it's **gloomy** and monochrome, as you would expect from an Eggers production. The sets and locations are sumptuous and pleasing to the **Gothic** eye with some gorgeous shots of rural Eastern Europe.

There are a few visually **striking** moments in the film, most notably the approach of Count Orlok's horse drawn carriage and when we see Bill Skarsgaard for the first time. He cuts an imposing figure (Skarsgaard is 6' 3") with what is apparently a very accomplished local **Romanian** accent. The heavy, Darth Vader-esque breathing and long, protracted sentences do tend to verge on the **comedic** from time to time sucking you out of the atmosphere some what.



Minging!

To the folk dissing Nozzy's **tash**, it was actually true to the physical appearance of Stoker's original **inspiration** Ulad (The Impaler) Tepes. Although, in fairness, Dracula and Nosferatu are two different narratives so I would have preferred the 'classic' look, as seen in other Nosferatu **portrayals**. Orlok doesn't come across as suave and sophisticated like his **Dracula** counterparts, he's undead in the true sense of the word, a repellent, **rotting** body inhabited by maggots, demonstrated when Jonathon attempts, rather pathetically, to kill the naked vamp in his cryptlike daytime man cave.

The **score** is lush and the sound design is high end as you would expect, understated but impacting, maintaining a pervading sense of unease throughout. Overall, slightly **disappointing** but still worth a squirt.

3.9/5

NOSFERATU ITERATIONS SKILLS MATRIX (N.I.S.M) (ORLOKS OUT OF 5)

MOVIE	MUSIC	ATMOS	MONSTER	CAST	STORY	TOTAL ORLOKS
NOSFERATU - EINE SYMphonIE DES GRAuens (1922)	n/a					15
NOSFERATU - DER PHANTOM DER NACHT (1979)						20
SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE (2000)						16
NOSFERATU (2024)						13



The balaclava sporting bad boys released their debut album last month. 'Pecking Order' contains nine songs and is a real mission statement for what they're all about.



Lazenby's finest are so anti-the status quo that they've coined their own flipping genre! 'Reg Rock', short for Regressive Rock. Am I to think that the chicken lads are not great fans of supergroups such as YES and Emerson Lake and Palmer? Surely not? Well, anyway, Cock Rock is already a thing or that would have been ideal!

[instagram.com/perfectchickentheband](https://www.instagram.com/perfectchickentheband)

A NATION RISING RELEASE SOPHOMORE ALBUM

By the time you read this, DIRGE regular **ANR** will have released his second album.

"Stories Of Gold And Lead is 13 tracks of retro-rock goodness and it sounds massive. featuring the singles Like Nobody's Watching, Gone, Waiting For The World To Notice and The Raptor."

It's available on all the usual platforms and keep an eye out for a possible **CD** release in the near future!

[instagram.com/anationrisingmusic](https://www.instagram.com/anationrisingmusic)

The chickens were roasting again tonight as they brought their chaotic brand of looniness to **Unit 41** in Middlesbrough. As the expectant crowd gathered like some kind of crowd-shaped fox the feathered ones opened the show with ... a slideshow.

In true, fun poultry-style the show was a mirthful journey into the fantasy world of **Perfect Chicken** stocks and shares, Bouril and Mick Hucknall. Of course there were technical difficulties and arguments between the presenters and a Q&A which was all Q's and no A's.

The lecture was an amusing pre-cursor to the energetic, domesticated fowl trio flying the coop only to come bounding back into the room to tear through the new album plus some extras. Dressed as always in their balaclavas and boiler suits, the hot hens belted out such crowd pleasers as Hog, Parmo, Comet and Fuck U.

I think I managed a full house on my **Perfect Chicken** bingo card tonight... Messiness? Yep. Rolling around on the floor? Check. Fake fights in the audience? You betcha. Various problems with instruments and microphones? Of course. Smiles all round? You betta believe it.

And in the blink of an eye almost 20 golden song-eggs were laid and the birds were gone.

We rolled out into the cold Boro air laughing over the song about wanting to fight in the car park and with a thank you to **Industrial Coast** for hosting the evening, we flocked off. **D.H.**

[INSTAGRAM.COM/PERFECTCHICKENTHEBAND](https://www.instagram.com/perfectchickentheband)



NAME THAT NORTH EAST STAR! ★

#COMPETITION!

I have cunningly disguised this North East arts personality as that bloke from Wizzard!

Who is it under the beard and gags? Correct answers will be put into a hat and drawn in a couple of weeks. Simply message me on any of my socials or send your answer to darlodirge@gmail.com and you could win a **DIRGE** badge! Rack your brains and be the envy of your mates when you rock up with that exclusive **DIRGE** adornment!



Maybe Make It Right
Vacuum Boots
That Girl Suicide
Do Rainbows Have Ends
#1 Lucky Kitty
Fudge
Days, Weeks and Moths
When Jokers Attack
Anemone
Nevertheless
Pish
Don't Let Me Get in Your Way
You Think I'm Joking?
Wait a Minute
Nightbird
Forgotten Graves
A Word
Servo
Supersonic



Depending on your view point The Brian Jonestown Massacre could be the most criminally underrated band of the last 30 or so years or in fact the total opposite.

I fall somewhere between the two **parties**. The main Songwriter and face of the group **Anton** Newcombe has penned around 20 albums to date, some more well known than others. I don't attest to have listened to all of them, I'm more of a 'singles' guy, but there's no doubt he's written some devilishly well crafted songs over the **years**. We saw the man himself briefly in The Mile Castle prior to the gig and he was sinking the gins back by the look of it. And why the hell not? Davey got his photo taken at the bar with him which was a really nice moment.

We missed the opening act but got there just in time for the first few **bars** of 'Maybe Make it Right'. The set list spanned most of the time they've been in existence, ranging from 'Spacegirl and Other Favorites' to songs from their **newest** album 'The Future is Your Past'.

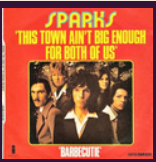
There were essentially **three** rhythm guitarists on stage, and ultimately playing the same thing. Sometimes the keyboard player would join in on guitars too when he didn't have anything else to do. You couldn't **really** hear rhythm guitarist #1 but I think he was more interested in pretending he was Paul Kantner from **Jefferson** Airplane to really care.

Newcombe commented **between** songs how they were off to Ireland next but he'd rather stay up North because he likes it so much, and also mentioned something about **Wetherspoons** which got a resounding laugh from the Toon **audience**.

Would I see them again in a hurry? **Sure**, I'd go to the next tour if Davey would like to but possibly not on my own initiative. I've seen some really raucous, high energy, singalong bands in Newcastle like The Stranglers, Ocean Colour Scene and Kula Shaker that I'd rank a lot higher in my list of top Toon gigs. B.J.M have a unique **aura** about them but their songs can tend to **sound** similar, with parts of the set getting a wee bit boring. Maybe that's just because I'm not a mega fan so I don't know all their songs. The ones I did know like 'Anemone', '**Pish**' and 'Nevertheless' I enjoyed immensely. Then it was off for a sub standard Mini Mart sandwich and a pleasant sleep at Easy **Hotel**, Newcastle. Rock'n'roll!

4/5





SPARKS - THIS TOWN AIN'T BIG ENOUGH FOR THE BOTH OF US

Zoo time is she and you time
The mammals are your favourite type,
and you want her tonight.
Heartbeat, increasing heartbeat
You hear the thunder of stampeding rhinos, elephants and
tacky tigers.
This town ain't big enough for the both of us!
And it ain't me who's gonna leave!

Flying, domestic flying
And when the stewardess is near, do not show any fear.
Heartbeat, increasing heartbeat
You are a khaki-coloured bombardier
It's Hiroshima that you're nearing.
This town ain't big enough for both of us!
And it ain't me who's gonna leave!

Daily, except for Sunday
You dawdle in to the café where you meet her each day.
Heartbeat, increasing heartbeat
As 20 cannibals have hold of you
They need their protein just like you do
This town ain't big enough for the both of us!
And it ain't me who's gonna leave!

Shower, another shower
You got to look your best for her, and be clean everywhere.
Heartbeat, increasing heartbeat
The rain is pouring on the foreign
Town, the bullets cannot cut you down.
This town ain't big enough for the both of us!
And it ain't me who's gonna leave!
Census, the latest census
There'll be more girls who live in town, though not enough
to go round.

Heartbeat, increasing heartbeat.
You know that this town isn't big enough
Not big enough for both of us!
This town isn't big enough
Not big enough for both of us
And I ain't gonna leave!



I BUMPED INTO THE MILLION YEARS LADS IN BLOCKBUSTER VIDEO, SO WE DECIDED ON A BIT OF A Q&A SESH.

If Million Years was a film what film would it be and who would star in it?

It would be Alfred Hitchcock's 'The Birds' to complement our song of the same name. Haven't a clue about casting... Joe Pasquale would be in there somewhere though!

What's the most embarrassing on stage fail a band member has suffered?

At a recent gig, Jim referred to the band name as 'we're Durham'... nope... we are FROM Durham 😂

Have you any pre gig rituals that you all have to follow?

Jim - Lots of energy drinks and coke (cola) and a few pints too.

Uncle Scuff - A nice hot bath.

What's more satisfying for you, recording or gigs?

Love gigs...The writing process is cool, but seeing people smile and the interaction with the crowd is a thing of beauty.



What do you think music will sound like in a million years?

Just like Bill and Ted, in a million years our music will shape the world and form civilizations. 'Be excellent to each other'. That or music will be played by mutants with sticks and stones after a nuclear war...

Thanks, boys. Enjoy the film!

INTERVIEW

MR BIGFOOT

I CHANCED UPON 'HAIRY YETI-GRUNGE' ACT 'MR BIGFOOT' IN A LOCAL GAY BATH HOUSE. I TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASK THE LADS SOME INCISIVE QUESTIONS!

How's life in Mr Bigfoot?

Always a good time with these guys. I've always said it's risky to make a band with your mates but you should always make mates with your band.

I see you're making a music video for your new single 'How Do You Do?' Any local acting talent featured or was it all in house?

With the music video, we employed local talent, David Rodgers to be the "question mark guy". He's an up and comer in the acting scene and definitely not one to miss.

You make all your records yourself. What are the positives of that and what are the drawbacks? (If any)

With doing all the records ourselves, it's a double edged sword. On the one hand we get to take our time and get it to exactly how we want but, on the other hand we're stuck in the "Is this good enough or are we just sick of editing?"

Your new single is for 'all the socially awkward folk out there'. What is your most awkward social moment?

Once our bassist was MIA right after a gig. Just wondered off somewhere. An hour later we found him looking like he'd been through a war zone. Turns out our lactose intolerant pal had decided to eat a whole 12 inch pizza and as a result was stuck in the loo the whole time.

Thanks, lads! And good luck for 2025! Roz.



[instagram.com/mrbigfootuk](https://www.instagram.com/mrbigfootuk)

How Do You Do? Is out now!

MUSICAL URBAN MYTHS

BOLLOCKS!

JOHN LENNON CLAIMS TO HAVE 'BURIED PAUL' AT THE END OF STRAWBERRY FIELDS FOREVER.

With The Beatles being the most well known band of all time, there are also some well known and enduring urban myths surrounding them, not least the 'Paul is Dead' theory which I will cover properly next time. One instance in the perpetuation of this myth is that Lennon says 'I buried Paul' at the end of 'Strawberry Fields Forever', when in fact he actually mutters 'cranberry sauce'. Close but no cigar, all you conspiracy theorists out there!



NOSH

SANDHU'S

4/5

I've been a Harrowgate Hill resident for most of my life, so I can remember the heady days of Eric's Fish Bar on the corner of North Road and Thompson Street, which later became Jazz's Fish Bar. Jazz's was where I experienced a battered cheeseburger for the first time. It was revelatory.

I've consumed them for nearly 30 years. So when it closed it truly was the end of an era. Sandhu's however, its replacement is keeping the battered burger concept very much alive. Large portions with a cracking taste.

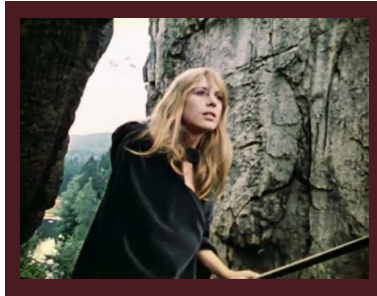


BOY LATEX TO PERFORM LIVE RE-SCORE OF KENNETH ANGER'S 'LUCIFER RISING'

Kenneth Anger's 1972 underground short film *Lucifer Rising* has been re-scored and will be performed live at The Star and Shadow Cinema by Newcastle Noise duo 'Boy **Latex**' as part of The Tyne Valley Film Festival.

I'm really interested to see how this turns out as the original score by Bobby **Beausoleil** (which was recorded in prison) is a very laid back, dreamy and psychedelic affair potentially making the re-score a rather altered change of tone.

Tickets are pay as you feel (£3, £5 & £10) with the event taking place on **Saturday** March 22nd, beginning at 8pm.



Marianne Faithfull (RIP) in *Lucifer Rising*

[instagram.com/boy_latex](https://www.instagram.com/boy_latex)

OBITUARIES

DENIS LAW (Footballer) 1940 - 2025

PAUL DANAN (Actor) 1946 - 2025

WAYNE OSMOND (The Osmonds) 1951 - 2025

DAVID LYNCH (Director) 1946 - 2025

JOHNNIE WALKER (DJ) 1945 - 2025

SAM MOORE (Soul Man) 1935 - 2025

PETER YARROW (Songwriter) 1938 - 2025

HORST JANSON (Captain Kronos) 1935 - 2025

JOHN SYKES (Guitarist) 1959 - 2025

MARIANNE FAITHFULL (60's Icon) 1946 - 2025

BRIAN MURPHY (Actor) 1932 - 2025

MIKE RATLEDGE (Keyboardist) 1943 - 2025

RICK BUCKLER (Drummer) 1955 - 2025

MICHELLE TRACHTENBERG (Actor) 1985 - 2025

GENE HACKMAN (Actor) 1930 - 2025

DAVID JOHANSEN (Singer) 1950 - 2025

ROBERTA FLACK (Singer) 1937 - 2025

ANGIE STONE (Singer) 1961 - 2025

HENRY KELLY (Game Show Host) 1946 - 2025

JOEY MOLLAND (Guitarist) 1947 - 2025

ROY AYERS (Musician) 1940 - 2025

BRIAN JAMES (Guitarist) 1955 - 2025

REVIEW

BY ROB GLOVER

**LOS
COYOTE MEN**

**ENGINE ROOM
S'LAND**

I've been invited to see '**Los Coyote Men**' a number of times but, alas, life has managed to get in the way, so en-route to tonight's gig I was looking forward to seeing what the word was all about.

We arrived at the venue which was the super cool (and sold out) **Engine Room**. Who sells out gigs on a Wednesday in January? Maybe a bit of foreshadowing of what was to come. The audience was made up of the great and the good of the Tyneside music scene, which says a lot about how highly regarded these guys are.

Los Coyote Men are high energy garage punk, psychobilly and rock n roll, all rolled into a crazy ball. They dress as Mexican wrestlers and it just works. The band were in and amongst the audience a lot and the crowd seemed to be having as good a time as the band clearly were.



In terms of **Los Coyote Men**'s sound, it's like the bits you love from The Cramps, a bit of proto-punk, lots of The Stooges in a cool way, and in no way copying The Hives but clearly drinking from the same well.

Their set was like being punched in the face with a whole lot of catchy riffs. My highlights were 'Primitive Urge', 'All Action Man' and 'Monkey Glands' which had a groove and then a little bit more groove with a cherry on top.

All and all, these guys are a night out and then some. **R.G**

loscoyotemen.bandcamp.com

ROOM 101

IN THIS STRAND WE ASK BANDS AND ARTISTS WHAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO BANISH FROM THE WORLD FOREVER AND PUT INTO THE INFAMOUS ROOM 101.

THIS MONTH IT'S...

STU FROM COMPRESSION SESSION!

5- Snow.



White Shite.

4- Bag pipes.



Like chewing tin foil! I can just about put up with them at say, Edinburgh Castle with my fingers in my ears but out of context, it's a grating cacophony created by people in stupid clothes! Get them extradited to the depths of the DIRGE dust bins!

3- Pointy guitars.



Hideous spiky monstrosities that need consigning straight to the doldrums of the DIRGE dumpster. A waste of natural resources that achieve nothing but a visual migraine and chronic back pain!

2- Condiments in bags.



Sauce in sachets..No! Guaranteed to get all over your hands if indeed you can gain access at all. The only liquid that should come in a bag is blood!

1- Sellotape.



Never had a good time with the stuff. Not user friendly in so many ways. Only ever use it for wrapping gifts, which incidentally, would be number 6 in this list if there were a number 6!



Hi, Stu! George Orwell here.
Thanks for your picks!
More **Room 101** next time!

[instagram.com.compressionband](https://www.instagram.com/compressionband)

HUGH CORNWELL NOSFERATU



A RETROSPECTIVE

An album that often gets overlooked by post-punk and goth music lovers alike, Hugh's 1979 album is a real dark freakshow featuring some eccentric collaborations and guests including Robert & Mark Mothersbaugh from Devo and fellow ex pub-rocker Ian Dury.

In fact this dark humoured and gloomy album was a team effort between Cornwell and Robert Williams, the drummer from Captain Beefheart's band (who later appeared on Judge Judy as part of the classic 'Lydon Vs Williams episode').



Nosferatu was recorded in Los Angeles and London, Robert Williams said at the time -

"We spent daylight hours sleeping and worked throughout the night, very much like vampires."

The album is a bit stark at times, but the overall atmosphere and dystopian and supernatural themes more than make up for the slightly challenging listen. Go check it out!

Coincidentally, Hugh has just announced a November tour in which he and his band will be playing the album in full. He appears at Boiler Shop in Newcastle on November 22nd and is joined by The Courettes.

INTERVIEW

[Instagram.com/outri_bass](https://www.instagram.com/outri_bass)

OUTRI

OUTRI, AKA IAN
PATERSON TELLS US
WHY HE'S ALL ABOUT
THE BASS.



Tell Dirge a bit about your musical background, the highs, the lows.

A recent review called me a 'musical magpie,' which is actually a much nicer way of saying 'jack of all trades'! However, the flipside of that is I've been enormously lucky in the past 25 years to have played all sorts of genres (jazz, folk, funk, pop, electronica), in all sorts of ensembles (theatre pit bands, classical orchestras, big bands, jazz quartets) and with so many great north east musicians who have challenged and pushed me musically.

Recent musical highs have included writing a full album and then recording it live in front of a studio audience with Slowlight Quartet, and recording two albums with HAV (an ambient-folk trio whose impact looms large on my OUTRI material). Less recent highs (pre-kids!) have included playing Glastonbury, performing live on Radio 4 on the 'Loose Ends' show and various tours of the UK and Europe (pre-Brexit when it was still easy to do for small bands).

Lows have included losing my mind playing for panto a few years running and playing too many wedding & function gigs to drunk and uninterested punters!

You've made the rather unorthodox decision of using solely your bass guitar and voice to make your music as 'OUTRI', how did that come about?

Great question! It all happened very organically from a number of different elements slowly converging. Firstly I realised that original music was where a lot of my passion for playing lies and alongside that the musicians that I really admire, in whatever genre, are the ones who are just doing their own original material, come what may, and ploughing their own path. Secondly I've done so much work as a side person for other musicians which often requires you to play to other peoples requirements and maybe 'tone down' your playing a bit that I wanted space to see what my own musical voice was.

And lastly with a family and small kids, finding time to rehearse and write with other musicians is really tricky, so on a purely practical level only needing to find time for myself to practice makes it very easy to make quick progress! The use of vocals alongside the bass has just occurred organically as well. I'm not a singer but being able to sample and manipulate my voice in real time just felt like a cool thing to add into the mix so I started doing it and haven't looked back. I've recently added a drum machine to the live setup so I'm looking forward to exploring that side of things more in the coming months.

What's the story behind the artist name, 'OUTRI'?

It's actually a made up word, meaning the plural of 'outro'. It came out of a recording session with Slowlight Quartet where we were joking about every tune we wrote having an outro and we just pluralised it. I'd been hunting around for a while for a project name that was 'open' and not easily tied to a specific genre and this just really jumped out at me.

What are your plans for 2025?

Absolutely heaps! I'm back in the studio at the end of Jan recording/filming another three live tracks to release slowly across 2025. I'm then intending to record/film a few more solo singles probably in mid June, hopefully with some live visuals being created at the same time (watch this space!). Then in November I'm heading up to The Old Church Studio in Thropton to record a duo album with Harry Bird. He's a fantastic songwriter and long term musical collaborator, the duo is very much inspired by the incredible Jon Hopkins/King Creosote album "Diamond Mine".

WEIMAR CINEMA

FIVE OF THE BEST

I think we can all agree that Germany is the greatest country on earth. Deutschland owns a culture and history so rich and varied that it's so easy to fall in love with the land and its folk. One thing the Germans have always been good at (apart from starting wars, of course!) is making amazing films. Here are five of my favourite early German movies.

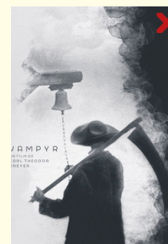
M (1931)

Peter Lorre's breakout role sees him cast as a serial killer of children running rampant on the mean streets of Weimar Berlin. One of the last pictures to be directed by Fritz Lang before the Nazi party came to power, which resulted in Lang's decision to flee to America. 'M' was very much ahead of its time, demonstrating a gritty plot and utilising many new explorations within the newly introduced world of sound in the cinema. An absolute gem!



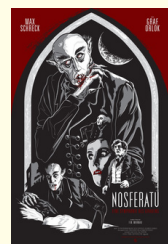
VAMPYR (1932)

Celebrated Danish director Carl Theodor Dreyer created a Gothic masterpiece with this otherworldly, fever-dreamlike tale of vampirism set in rural France. Surreal and magnificently shot with some wonderful set pieces (my favourite being the impish shadows on the walls that have a life of their own). Vampyr truly is a disorienting and discombobulating ode to the strange and fantastical which all Goths simply must see!



NOSFERATU - EINE SYMPHONIE DES GRAUENS (1922)

1922's Nosferatu, featuring the rather marvellously named 'Max Schreck' (Schreck meaning 'terror' in German, and yes that was his birth name!) is the archetypal silent horror movie. Paving the way for so many horror films for years to come (and obviously still influencing film makers today) Nosferatu has a real air of occult mysticism both within the frames and surrounding its production. Look up the film's producer and art director Albin Grau and you'll see what I mean!



THE HANDS OF ORLAC (1924)

The first of two films in this list to feature the iconic Conrad Veidt sees the leading man portraying a famous concert pianist injured following a train crash, unfortunately leading to him having his (much needed) hands amputated! But wait, whilst he was lying in a state of unconsciousness the leading German surgeons of the time managed to successfully transplant a new pair of handies onto the mangled musician. What could possibly go wrong?



THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI (1920)

Probably my favourite film from the list, Conrad Veidt plays Cesare, a somnambulist controlled by the eponymous Dr Caligari. Addressing themes such as the horrors of warfare and mental illness, 'Caligari' truly is a silent mind fuck from first frame to last. It's the perfect movie. A celluloid microcosm of Germany in the 1920's, encapsulating those uncertain and violent times perfectly, yet still relevant today.



DIRGE POSTER



Paul **McCartney**, high. Playing a Sitar whilst wearing Moon **Boots** with a towel on his **head**.