NOW THEN IS A FREE MAGAZINE FOR PEOPLE IN MANCHESTER.

We aim to cultivate choice, voice and responsibility by providing a platform for independent art, trade, music, writing and local news. We support Manchester’s economy by only working with independent traders, community groups, charities and local government.

Almost all articles published in this magazine are written by members of the community, not professionals. If you don’t like what you read or have something that needs to be said, get in touch. Your opinions make Now Then what it is.

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EDITORIAL.

After the relief of publishing issue 1, here we are at the
next hurdle – the difficult second magazine.

The response from you, the reader, has been better
than we could have imagined and we feel that
this issue presents a similarly stimulating array of
contributions. In issue 2 we have a healthy mix of
historical and contemporary glances at the city, along
with all our regular sections across food, literature,
music and theatre.

A key section missing from issue 1 was Filmreel, which
will now be a regular in the magazine, kicked off here
by Screen Stockport founder Joseph Barratt.

This month’s artwork is provided by our resident
designer Jones, who is taking a bow to move onto
other projects having steered the Now Then ship
since its Sheffield inception nearly five years ago.

Our next live outing is to curate a stage at the
inaugural Shebeen Festival, so come and say hello,
but also keep an eye out for news of our launch event
proper during 2013.

As ever, your feedback and contribution is crucial to
us.

See you in the new year and enjoy the read.

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Our Pick Of The Bunch.
On Thursday 15th November Manchester elected its first ever female Labour MP. 94 years after the suffrage movement led by Mancunian Emily Pankhurst resulted in the Representation of the People Act being passed, granting votes to women over 30. What will this slow change mean for Manchester and its people amidst the greatest recession in living memory, worsening rates of child poverty and the largest level of political apathy since the Second World War? Will Lucy Powell make any radical changes in a city where Labour have ruled for 70 years?

When I interviewed Powell a month before the by-election she seemed quietly confident that within four weeks she would have her seat in Westminster. This wasn’t going to be anywhere near the closely contested race raging across the Atlantic; this was always going to be Labour’s win, no matter the candidate put forward. A combination of Tory induced mass de-industrialisation which left most of the city centre impoverished and a City Council where Labour now hold 86 of the 96 seats has created a political cocoon into which no other party can break. However, this self-assurance does not appear to result in a lack of ideas or desire to close the huge gaps in equality from Powell. Her passions lie around youth unemployment, making the economy work for everyone and engaging people with politics, particularly at a young age.

In a recent interview with the MEN she stated: “We need an economy that works for everyone in Manchester, not just for those at the top. That means taking on the energy companies and the banks so that ordinary people don’t pay the price of their greed.”

She added: “Under this Tory-Lib Dem government, unemployment among women has increased by 30 per cent in Manchester Central since the election and long-term youth unemployment has risen by the same; while many people are taking part-time jobs or very short-term contracts.”

Whether these concerns translate into investment and policy change will only be measurable with time and no amount of speculation can determine whether these issues will be faced up to, but for a while maybe we should let our new MP warm her seat on the green benches of Westminster and prove to the electorate she has been listening.

During my interviews with the other main candidates in the run up to the by-election, there was a feeling of resignation that Powell would become our next elected official no matter the amount of digital debate the Pirate Party could evoke, or outraged headlines the Lib-Dems could muster. The candidate for the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition, Alex Davidson, summed up their attitude: “When I’ve been knocking on doors people have said ‘we used to vote Labour and now we don’t vote.'”

The problem is that these candidates did not just have to convince people to listen to their policies and cross their box on the ballot; they had to convince people to vote. Manchester Central historically has the lowest voter turnout in the country, with 18 per cent of the electorate turning out to vote in the recent by-election.

In the end 11,507 people voted for Powell, nearly a 70 per cent majority of all votes cast, but the real fight was in getting Labour voters to turn out to vote among freezing temperatures and darkening nights. From Clayton to Moss Side, Powell and her team have been banging on doors, training new grassroots community organisers and talking to people who are entirely disengaged with politics, solidly for seven months. Consequently this could turn out to be the lasting legacy of the by-election for Lucy Powell.

One of the biggest criticisms many have of Powell are her close connections to the Labour Party leadership, maintained by running Ed Miliband’s successful leadership campaign and acting as his Chief of Staff before her selection in April. Despite this overtly comfortable relationship, her networks may prove beneficial to Manchester; like it or not we could well need Labour as much as they need us.

In a statistical sense Manchester’s business community, new digital economy and highly-skilled section of the workforce are riding out the recession much better than most British cities. However, most of the city’s population is still reliant on low paid and insecure work or a shrinking welfare state, as they have been since the early 1990s. In order to be an independent or minority party MP would have struggled to fight for continuing investment as the sole voice living standards have ceased to rise. An independent or minority party MP would have struggled to fight for continuing investment as the sole voice in Parliament among 252 Labour and 360 Coalition MPs and certainly would have found working with the Labour-led City Council an uphill battle.

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Powell’s experience and connections should enable her to manage this political with ease, after all “social relations involving authority or power” are the true sum of politics’ parts.

MULE is a Manchester based non-profit independent media project, looking to promote social justice by getting out the news and views you won’t find elsewhere, from the rainy city and beyond. They are currently recruiting volunteers for various roles, from editors and writers to campaigners. Keep an eye on the MULE website and social media pages for more information.

manchestermule.com
It’s difficult to ignore the seeds of pessimism blowing carelessly around our soggy island at present.

Open most tabloids and you’ll find tales of woe or discontent germinating in their cracks and columns, spilling like toxic slicks into the National Imagination. I’ve read irresponsible journalists brand my generation as the Lost One; mentally undernourished, academically stunted and on the verge of withering into insignificance like their Jurassic namesakes. Fuelled only by a meagre diet of daytime TV and Job Seeker’s Allowance, stumbling aimlessly around the wilderesses of YouTube, it’s a distorted image of youth energy on the verge of intellectual annihilation. As an artist hoping to carve a career two years into a proposed seven of slashed UK funding, it’d be all too easy to get swept up in the pandemic of negativity and nay-saying. But I refuse, because that’s not the world I aspire to live in.

Ironically, 2012 was the ‘Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations’ according to the EU Commission Initiative, whose aim is to eliminate ideological obstacles and stimulate the circulation of information. For the UN it was ‘International Year of Cooperatives’ to increase awareness of the socio-economic benefits of collaborative enterprises. Since 2007 the EU has funded arts projects that dissolve barriers, create discourse and encourage international networking such as Cultural Capitals, FACT, Wake Up, Imagine 2020 and Robots & Avatars. These schemes focus on reciprocal partnerships that broaden perspective and are benefitted by creative thinking. Relevantly, 2013 will be the ‘European Year of Citizens’, with freedom of mobility at its heart enabling anyone, especially artists, to travel with support to generate more alternative capital (non-financial social assets). Ann Branch, Head of Unit at the Directorate General for Education and Culture, is campaigning an as of yet unconfirmed ‘Creative Europe’ scheme (2014-2020) to further assist art groups in a number of ways, the most radical being to train banks to judge creative organisations with freedom of mobility at its heart enabling anyone, especially artists, to travel with support to generate more alternative capital (non-financial social assets).

Presently, what global players are propagating is that we need to support each other locally and globally in times of economic strain as solutions self-replenishes with a strong rolling momentum, hopping back and forth between tectonic plates with a powerful message not of ‘Do It Yourself’ but ‘Do It Together’.

Manchester was a pivotal site for the application of a game-changing co-operative ethos during the Industrial Revolution. Back then, the city was famously branded as “hell on earth” by Friedrich Engels and working classes slaved for pittance in nightmarish conditions. In 1844, a group of deprived weavers and artisans from Rochdale clubbed together to buy food and supplies they couldn’t afford independently. Fortifying themselves against hard times, they set an ethical world standard. A statue of Robert Owen (social reformer and one of the founders of what would become the Co-operative Group) stands at the bottom of Balloon Street outside the company HQ in tribute to this philosophy. His impact on Manchester and an era’s mindset was immense. The Co-op’s colossal and wholly eco-friendly building, One Angel Square, stands now on what is to become the ambitious NOMA district.

Un-Convention is another venture that binds an inclusive grassroots network. In this case its focus is the music industry. Having hosted its 39th event in November in Manchester, celebrating the rich legacy of Moss Side and Hulme, they specifically celebrate underground histories and marginal but essential subcultures in music. By doing so they utilise real and relevant experience for long-term investments in culture, opposed entirely to transient and unstable mainstream trends. Their 41st and 42nd conventions this year took place in Brazil and Australia, illustrating a rapid proactivity since their first event held in Salford in 2008. The company expands and self-replenishes with a strong rolling momentum, hopping back and forth between tectonic plates with a powerful message not of ‘Do It Yourself’ but ‘Do It Together’.

Thankfully, due to the digital shift travel isn’t as core to mobility and some have harnessed technologies with more immediate results. Culturehub, founded in 2009 by the Seoul Institute of the Arts (Korea) and La Mama (New York), is a prime initiative that unites six artists across the world. This year they reside in Italy, Lebanon, Portugal, New York, Korea and the Netherlands and connect via video link-ups to co-create in tandem. Currently represented in the UK by Baba Israel, hip hop artist and Artistic Director of Contact Theatre (Manchester), they use ‘telepresence’ to merge events across the world. The results are spliced hybrid mash ups of incredible energy and potency. Culturehub is a catalytic platform for directors, musicians, performers and VJs to exchange and showcase ideas across a vast field.

culturefund.eu
culturehub.org
europe.org.uk
unconventionhub.org
co-operative.coop
‘HILBERT’S CURVE’ EXHIBITION, CAFE #9, SHEFFIELD.
Upon arriving in Manchester during the 1950s to work for The Guardian, novelist Michael Frayn asked where in the city one could expect to find the artists’ quarter - he was answered with a peel of laughter. But proof that there was indeed a haven for artists back then can be found at the Venetian Gothic Memorial Hall on Albert Square. The layers of paint that had obscured it for years have now all but vanished and in the doorway of this listed building you can clearly see a sign for one of the Manchester branches of the Kardomah Café.

The Kardomah Cafés originated in Edwardian times and garnered a reputation amongst the bohemian as the place to be seen. In fact, it was so popular a place that the Welsh branch of Kardomah became the meeting point for Dylan Thomas and the eponymous ‘Kardomah Gang’, a gathering of painters, writers, artists and musicians who met regularly in the Swansea café.

Opening from around 1929 onwards, our own little Lost Generation could be found here. It was in one of the Manchester Kardomahs that William Turner and L S Lowry would meet to famously not talk about Lowry’s work. It was at the Piccadilly Gardens branch of the chain (later a Lyons) that Lowry, in 1957, opened a letter from a 13 year old girl asking him for artistic advice. Lowry looked up from the page only to see a bus heading to the same town as noted in the letter, so he boarded the bus and paid her a visit. The unlikely pair struck up an avuncular relationship and the girl, herself named Lowry, became the eventual heir to his estate.

There were at least three of these cafés in Manchester, with one at St Ann’s Square that had a large Arabic following, the one at Albert Square, and a final one at Piccadilly Gardens that was architecturally ornate and Moorish in style.

The cafés welcomed those who perhaps did not feel welcome elsewhere, be that down to sex, religion or ethnicity. Over the years the cafés kept up with the times and by the 1960s, just prior to their demise, they were the haunts of many young Mods.

During the peak of their popularity the cafés were always busy but were treated with more of a grandeur than we grant coffee shops today; they were a night out for many customers and so they would dress in best hats and gloves and sit around waiting to be seen as they ate herring roe on toast and listened to live jazz.

The plush interiors of the London and Manchester branches were the work of Sir Misha Black, who is perhaps better known for designing the City of Westminster street signs, the 1978 London Transport moquette (those iconic geometric orange and black seat covers) and co-founding the Design Research Unit, a consultancy specialising in architecture, industrial design and graphics.

The Kardomah chain was founded in Liverpool and predominantly based in the UK but a handful made their way to Paris, Sydney and even a fictional Kardomah can be seen in Brief Encounter as the location of the lovers’ tryst.

After the Kardomahs were closed and Manchester began to welcome and celebrate urban street culture, these dark cafés of yesterday were forgotten as Manchester pointed an ashamed finger at itself as a city that was living behind closed doors. The City Council focussed on investing in public spaces and encouraging urban culture and street life in line with its arts and culture strategy. Couple this with the eventual smoking ban and Manchester became a city living very much outdoors, but Kardomah’s ghost is still here and it’s pointing out the glaringly obvious oversights in our ‘cafe culture’, and our reluctance to utilise the three most obvious urban spaces for café life in the city, besides that wonderful street level car park on Aytoun Street; the three Kardomah sites in Albert Square, St Ann’s Square and Piccadilly Gardens. Before cafe culture Kardomah already had the locations nailed.

These were beat clubs before beat. Coffee shops before Starbucks. Café culture before Canal Street.

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GOOD BEER GUIDE 2012
Hello, my name’s Richard and I’m a bus user. I’ve been using buses for about 30 years, sometimes up to four or five a day. I’m not proud of that, but I know with your help, I can get clean. Thank you.

By way of ‘getting clean’, I have recently bought a bike. I used to cycle a lot in my youth. I had a BMX, as did most children growing up in the 1980s. I then graduated on to a racer at the age of 13. This bike quickly became a very close chum. I decked it out with a speedometer, fluorescent strips, mud guards and of course lights. I would ride the great and extensive country lanes of Cheshire, pack sandwiches and a book and, when in need of respite, find a suitable spot, prop the old steed against a five bar gate, and inhale the bucolic perfumes, which would range from the most dreadful bovine effluvia to hints of primrose, jostling with mown grass. I would munch on my salami cob, read a few pages of Plato’s Republic, then sink into adolescent reverie in the shade of an oak, the distant hum of a tractor just masking the sinister reports of shotgun fire.

I would literally ride around all day. I would cover miles, and with incipient pubescent bravado precluding me from any true sense of perspective, I was excused from the facts of danger. I mean, I was careful and knew that, if a lorry were to hit me, I would undoubtedly be a footnote in tomorrow’s paper. At the age of 14 or 15, whilst studying for my GCSEs (I used to record all my notes to cassette and listen to them on my Walkman whilst riding, hoping information would stick), I approached 50 mph when I rocketed down the hill of the A538 from Wilmslow to Manchester Airport. 50 mph! No helmet, tears in my eyes, barely appreciating the peril threatening my flimsy carcass. But that was then.

Yesterday I was almost knocked off my bicycle by some Ostrogoth posing as a motorist. She was trying to break the sound barrier in a Datsun Sunny whilst turning a corner, half a nanometre north of my front wheel. Git. I have been cycling – if not solidly, then with some enthusiasm – for the past three months and that was my first narrow squeak. Pretty good going I think. At present I live in Cheadle (a small backwater province of equatorial Manchester) and the bus services are, in a word: kak. And in a sentence, can send you priapic with rage. But they are still necessary sometimes.

Are they? I think a bike could be used as an alternative to all forms of transport if your heart, mind, lungs and legs are in it with you. I’m still a novice really. Fitness levels down, stomach like a quilt, anxiety levitating off the charts and after a couple of miles my mouth becomes so dry it’s as if I’m self-embalming. Along with mild lumbar, carpal tunnel syndrome and Dhobie itch, I’m not the most athletic of riders; a distant howl from the lithe, hairless boy who used to keep up with traffic.

In this, my latest incarnation of Miguel Indurain, I didn’t really know how much stuff you – or at least, I – needed to take. Even for a modest distance of say ten or twelve miles, my panniers bulge like a pair of Hottentot buttocks in a hula skirt. Waterproofs, jumpers, tarns of water, notebooks, lights, spare hosiery, inner tubes, wrenches, the BBC History Magazine and a selection of emollients. All this, coupled with my unholy mass of 18 stone and a ferocious headwind, I’m lucky to make the end of the driveway by sundown.

But when I do and am finally moving, it’s really quite lovely. Progression under your own steam is very rewarding. Passing the stationary and turgid buses as they wait for new drivers can be so satisfying that you can barely contain shouting, “You fools, you mad fools!” as you bomb it past. But you don’t, as you’ve got to stay vigilant for the madwoman in the Datsun who’s trying to kill you!

Herein lies the last section: The Highway Code. It is to be observed by every road user. Even those small, green tractors issued by the council to trim the verges have to display number plates. So, cyclists, if you only observe just one rule, let it be this: USE LIGHTS WHEN IT’S DARK! And, yes, this includes the crepuscular gloom of dawn and dusk. And, motorists, remember cyclists do not have a protective steel cage around them. Even though some of them deserve to be in a steel cage, it’s not your job to mete out punishment by nudging them under a bus. If respect is shown and given on both sides, a safer and more pleasant trip you will have. But whatever you do and however you behave, be extremely wary of registration plate BNB 262Y. She’ll kill us all!
At this time of year there is only one thing better than getting together with friends and family to share food and drink. And that’s getting together with friends and family to share food and drink that you’ve lovingly created.

Here’s a few ideas for treats as gifts or fancies to share around the table. And for lubrication? A selection of our favourite ales from our favourite local breweries.

Enjoy the season – get fat, get merry, get warm!

Many thanks to Hickson and Black’s and Trove for supplying fabulous fayre for our festive hamper.

WATER BISCUITS.

A simple but tasty accompaniment to cheese, these crackers can be spruced up by adding any favourite spice or flavour.

2 cups plain flour
4 tbsp butter
½ tsp salt
Water to mix

Sift the flour and salt into a basin and rub into butter then mix with water to a smooth paste. Turn onto a floured board and knead until quite smooth. Roll out very thinly and cut into round biscuits with a cutter. Bake in a moderate oven until crisp on a greased baking sheet.

ALE RECOMMENDATIONS.

Wreckless – Red Willow 4.8%
Aromatic Pale Ale. Hoppy with peach and citrus tones. A good starting point for the session.

Decadence – Marble 8.7%
Imperial Russian Stout. Creamy, bitter chocolate, roasted nuts. A smooth finish but well worth considering as your end game.

Underworld – Brightside 4.4%
Porter Ale. Similarities to a stout but with a lighter body, this wintry ale goes well with game meats, cheese, nuts. You’ll have to hit the pub for this one as they haven’t released it in bottle form yet.
MRS BLACK’S RED ONION MARMALADE.
1kg red onions (prepared weight)
2 tbsp olive oil
10g garlic (minced/finely chopped)
160ml red wine vinegar
20ml balsamic vinegar
125g Demerara sugar
125g soft dark brown sugar
5-10g peppercorns (in muslin bag suspended in pan)
2 bay leaves
Thyme - pref. fresh, about 1 tsp chopped (otherwise dried)
Juice of ½ lime
2-3 pinches cayenne pepper
2 tsp salt
• Slice onions finely.
• Heat the olive oil in a large heavy-bottomed saucepan, and soften
  the onions slowly for 15-20 mins.
• Add half the Demerara sugar and stir well.
• Increase the heat and allow the onions to caramelize, being careful
  not to let them burn.
• Reduce the heat and add remaining ingredients, stir to dissolve
  the sugar.
• Allow to simmer, stirring frequently, until most of the liquid
  evaporates and the mixture is syrupy.
• Check the seasoning and then spoon into hot, sterilised jars and
  cover whilst still hot.
• Makes approx 4x 250g jars.
• Store in a cool dry place and allow to mature for 4-6 weeks.
• Refrigerate after opening.

TRIPLE CHOCOLATE GINGERBREAD TIFFIN.
200g dark 70% chocolate
100g milk chocolate
100g white chocolate
150g butter
200g gingerbread biscuits
4 bulbs stem ginger
1 tbsp stem ginger syrup
• Grease and line a 10” brownie tin with cling film.
• Melt the dark chocolate and butter together in a large bowl and
  melt the other two types of chocolate in two separate small bowls.
• Break up the biscuits into small chunks, chop the ginger finely and
  add to the dark chocolate and butter mixture with the syrup.
• Stir until thoroughly coated and pour the mixture into the tin,
  spreading it out into the corners.
• Pour the milk chocolate evenly over the top and use the tip of a
  knife to gently mingle it into the biscuit mixture.
• Drizzle on the white chocolate and carefully mingle it, creating a
  marbled effect.
• Tap the tin a few times sharply on the worktop to make sure the
  mixture is even and there are no gaps.
• Leave to set in the fridge for a couple of hours then turn out onto
  a board to cut into slices or bite-sized chunks with a hot knife.
• Return pieces to the fridge for a few minutes if you are packaging
  them.
• Lovely presented in brown greaseproof bags and ribbon.
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Dear reader,

In the absence of an immense mastery of some startlingly modern and urgent contemporary canon, I’ve gathered a handful of commands, wishes and pleas, from the magnificent expanse of friends who comprise my narrow world. I imagined - don’t ask me why - that such a thing might give the illusion of movement to a page, and that this might, in some way, encourage you. In any case, here it is, and in general, good luck.

Alabaster Deplume.

DOUBLE NEGATIVE.

It wouldn’t be vaseline-lensed and soft focus.
It wouldn’t be the thick, impasto sex of lovers.
It wouldn’t be the arms-everywhere, giggling-on-the-way-down fucking of a one-night stand.
It wouldn’t be awkward though.
I would know where to put my hands, mouth, heart in our rubbing and scraping of souls.
Scrubbed raw, and picking at scabs for absolution.
I would be hoping for some wondrous centrifugal or alchemic fluke from the rustic distillation of us.
It would be pouring sweat-borne secrets from pore to grimy pore for peace and sleep, to make a double negative of our sadness.

Sally Jenkinson.

TREYARNON BAY BLUES.

That’s the sea that comes rolling in
And those are the waves that come rolling too
Weeping hush hush at my window
Weeping salt and sand
Be it for the wonder in me that wonders where to be
Or be it for the salt in my heart that makes me me
I’ll never love a sound
Like the sound of that sound
That’s the sound that drags me out my window
And drags me out to sea
That’s the sound that drags me out myself
And drags me back to sleep
Weeping hush hush at my window
Weeping salt and sand
That’s the sea that comes rolling in
And those are the waves that come rolling too

Mon Merttens.
YOU CAN’T SEE THROUGH ANOTHER MAN’S EYELIDS (THE ADVICE POEM).

I know my own height,
I know my own knees and they’re dirty,
I know my own mind and it’s broken and the gaps let in light like a disco ball,
sometimes I speak of the things that I see
using puppetry, tea leaves and lies:
1. Don’t cut off your face to spite someone else’s face.
2. Don’t cut off your face.
3. A boiled sweet pause in someone else’s mouth doesn’t mean its time for you to speak.
4. You are probably not as ugly as you think you are,
you are a generous buffet of crisps.
5. The minimum fill line on a kettle ... is real!
Kettles break,
so do hearts so don’t eat too much butter or fall in love with a koala, they’re not what you think they are.
When a koala breaks your heart, try to know someone from Yorkshire who’ll feed you tea and elasticate your socks.
6. Don’t be mean to fumbling frogs,
the wet effort they put into punch lines.
Frogs can fly when you don’t make them feel self conscious about it.
7. Romanticize the repetitive clunk.
8. Give your pets a heroic aura.
9. Some kids got done for saying the word azure,
some kids get done for swearing,
I come from a town where the barmaids have tits
and the fella’s are homophobic, but in nice way:
“you’re weird and you’re short and yer Mam tells me your gay but I knew your Da, and he was witty and so are you, you’re alright you love, you are. Weird hair”.
10. If you’re working class you inherit anger.
If you’re middle class you inherit embarrassment.
And a house.
11. The meek men have inherited the girth.
12. The fight for sexual equality isn’t between women and men,
it’s between people and knobheads.
13. You can’t be everyone’s cup’a’soup. Some people don’t even like cheese.
14. If I could I’d stay in that moment where the tennis ball reaches it’s height
and takes a breath
before remembering to fall ...
inside that beat sunset feels like acceptance.
15. Unsolicited advice can make you sound like a tool.

Jackie Hagan.

---

I SHOULD LIKE.

I should like to be
A thought.
Even un-named,
Unspoken.
Not taught,
Nor known.
Still real. And
Between clamours
They could pass
A moment of themselves
In me.
I’d be
Of them,
Their longing.
Their having,
Be a place
But a little
Easier where
To stand.
O yes,
I should like to be a thought,
And not a man.

Angus Fairbairn.
Urban planning is a controversial concept, one that is tied in with ideas of utopia and dystopia. It is retrospectively celebrated in the wide thoroughfares of Paris and contemporarily condemned in the concrete nightmares of Brasilia. Some even argue that you can’t plan a town, not in the over-arching sense, and that you have to accept the bad buildings along with the good; or, as Robert Hughes once put it, “like flowers, we need the shit of others for nutrients”.

It is this topic that is being addressed in a new series of historical film screenings and debates by the Manchester Modernist Society, in partnership with Manchester Art Gallery. The first of these was A City Speaks, a 1947 film commissioned by the Manchester Corporation to explain how local government works. The film was a particularly apt choice for the first in this new partnership, as it combines an artistic sense of filmmaking with a planner’s eye for detail. The film takes us through the history of Manchester as a Roman settlement up to the 1940s, before explaining the workings of public services and local government. It ends by laying out what the Manchester Corporation planned to do in order to improve Manchester, largely through wholesale destruction of slums and the mass relocation of people to the city outskirts. It is an informational film, a piece of propaganda and an artwork.

What I took from this film was its sense of confidence and purpose; that Manchester was a great city and it was becoming greater. Centralised planning, driven by mass democratic participation, would lead to a better life for its citizens. It gives an insight into the reasoning behind these ideas, and one can better understand the planning mistakes of the past by empathising with the planners of the time. They saw the problems of slums and cramped living and decided that a radical solution was needed. Yes, they ignored citizens’ attachment to place and history, but perhaps this was because it had not been tried in Manchester before, rather than through callousness.

But whereas we have since gained a greater care for the feelings of the individual, I came away from the screening with a sense that we have lost something perhaps just as important. We watched a film full of hope for a brighter tomorrow, something that is sadly lacking today. Several times during the film the audience (myself included) laughed out loud, because such bold-faced optimism seems rather funny now. We immediately assume anyone promising a better tomorrow is a liar or a fool.

I was hoping that more time could be spent discussing how we could learn from the optimism of the past, but this subject was hardly touched on in the debate. Perhaps that was the idea – to start the audience thinking, rather than to necessarily debate the subject then and there – but it would have been welcomed, at least from my perspective. As it turned out, I was left feeling a bit hopeless as to whether we can ever come together collectively to make things better.

The film itself was made by Paul Rothe, and features some at-the-time innovative cinematic techniques. The moving graphics, hand-produced, are striking, and the opening flyover of Manchester gives a real sense of the power and beauty of the city. But where Rothe really succeeded is in delivering a feel for the people that make up Manchester, which he did by cutting together footage of street life, boxing, carnivals and cavorting in rapid succession. While the filmmaking itself might be less important than the social history it documents, it is still a fascinating and beautiful piece of work.

As Manchester Modernist member Steve Millington stated in his opening address, the purpose of this film series is “to reinvestigate the 20th century landscape”. I have thought about the film a lot in the days since I saw it, and so in that sense it has achieved its purpose. But what the screening lacked was some sense of learning from that past, of engaging with optimism and adding it to our contemporary understanding. We need to be sceptical, but not cynical. The commentary given by the Modernists was informative, but it mostly focussed on the filmmaking technique rather than the ideas of urban planning and development. Perhaps at the next screening this will be different, and either way I recommend attending if this subject is one you are at all interested in.

The screenings are free and occur on the third Thursday of the month.
manchestergalleries.org
manchestermodernistsociety.org
Jones and I first met quite a few years ago at the opening of a graffiti exhibition. Since then he has carved out a niche for himself. Readers will no doubt be aware of his work on this magazine in his role as chief designer and art director since it started life in Sheffield in April 2008, as well as flyer and poster designs for Tinnitus and Sheffield Techno Institute, vinyl artwork for artists in Sheffield and Manchester, a large-scale single line drawing at this year’s Uncivilisation Festival, and more recently his Mind Out project, part of Sheffield’s Festival of the Mind.

Jones and I exchange emails frequently, talking techno and seeking design advice from the other, but rarely do we meet in person. It seemed fitting to conduct the interview in our usual manner of communicating.

Do you class yourself as a graphic designer, fine artist, illustrator or something else?
I’m not very good at classifications. It depends on what I’m working on, and what it ends up being. Art on product becomes design.

Who or what did you admire when you were starting out?
William Blake. Austin Osman Spare. Mosques and cathedrals. Obviously Escher. Charles Rennie Mackintosh once wrote “everything that leaves my hand should be beautiful.”

Who or what inspires you currently?
Origami. The Victorians; engineering and architecture. Matthew Shlian; paper engineering. Margaret Wertheim; crochet work coral to mathematical formulae.

Currently your studio is in a metal storage yard, and previously you were based in an old scissors factory. Is location important to the way you work?
It definitely makes a difference. Industrial space puts me in the right headspace for the work I do. It definitely seems to inform the things that end up getting made in the studio. Being around Sheffield history, and in the manufacturing buildings of that history, is massively important to me.

When you took your first steps did you have a clear idea of the sort of work you wanted to take on? Did you always intend to work alone?
When I started, it was firmly DIY or nothing. Now, as the projects get larger and more complicated, other people have to be involved. Photographers, coders and engineers are my favourite people, and are greatly responsible for the success of big installations. I’ve been restoring methods of making artwork since I started. At the moment that amounts to a giant pile of battered screenprint gear and a Vandercook SP20 proofing press, found rusting in a London squat. The end game is being able to produce as much of my own work as humanly possible.

When I started out, I was trying – sometimes without realising – to do the work I thought other people would like, as opposed to what I wanted to do. Now everything I do is heartfelt. I make pennies in comparison to some of the big installers. Some kind of entirely immersive environment – patterns extending over every surface, floor and ceiling. A train station or a place of worship maybe. What is your dream project?
What is the best piece of advice you’ve been given?
Never work for nowt, but if tha do, do it for thasen.

A lot of your work is based around patterns, rigid structures and linearity. Do you think in such a way, or do you develop ideas in a much more chaotic, intuitive fashion?
Everything is definitely born from chaos. I might have an obsessive way I construct and work, but to offset that I use deliberately messy production methods like spraypaint, print production that errors beautifully – anything I can to strike a balance between order and disorder, and make it obvious that there’s been a human involved.

Are there any routines and rituals in the way you work?
Java/Mocha blend from Polliards. Constant music. Battles with the cat.

Do you ever crave group dynamics, or is the commitment to doing it all yourself stronger and more rewarding?
A lot of my best ideas get refined talking to others, particularly non-visual types. They’ll listen to me rant on about a subject, and reply with something off-key. Often they don’t realise what they’ve sparked in my brain. This is a job though. Hard work needs to get put in to get good results, and I find working in collaboration becomes procrastination rather than product.

Many accomplished artists and designers have no formal training. There is something to admire in the ‘have a go’ attitude which can lead to unexpected and stunning results. As a creative who has not walked the conventional path of studying a degree in a design or arts-based subject, would you agree?
I’m surrounded by people with academic degrees who don’t work in the field they are qualified in. There’s been many times I’ve kicked myself for doing things the long way, but I’m comfortable with where I’ve ended up. With making things it’s not really about the piece of paper you’ve got; it’s about the work you’ve completed. Being the ‘naive designer’ has always made me push myself to learn what others have been taught, and I plan for this never to stop.

What is the best piece of advice you’ve been given?
Never work for nowt, but if tha do, do it for thasen.

What medium would you love to work in but haven’t had the chance?
I can’t wait to get started with the letterpress properly. Physical print making is an art in itself. But I’d also love to get hold of some big fucking lasers and make huge things out of brass.

What is your dream project?
Some kind of entirely immersive environment – patterns extending over every surface, floor and ceiling. A train station or a place of worship maybe. Denver Airport.

What advice would you give to someone thinking of pursuing a career in art or design?
Work out what you want to do and stick at it. Be prepared to live on toast and noodles on occasion.

Photographers featured:
Andy Brown, Nathan Gibson, Theodore Simpson, Ben Randall.

Thanks to:
James Folkes, Tom Whiston, Chris Godley, James Griffiths, Sara Hill.
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Have a very, very Merry Christmas
WHY MUSIC?
DENIS JONES.

Our ears are the first sense to inform us of the world around. It’s commonly agreed that they are developed within 20 weeks of gestation. The importance of this is to link the child with its most common sounds; its mother’s and father’s voices. But considering the array of sounds we are exposed to it makes me wonder where our taste and opinions of music are dictated. How much of our personal preference and musical leaning is shaped by our experiences? We must have each begun the attachment of musical and environmental sounds to our mood even before we knew these things existed.

In a small community in Kerala, India, Hindu Brahmins have passed down unwritten forms of song from father to son for centuries in what they call the ‘God of Fire’ ritual. This song – or language, as it should be considered – is unique when analysed in linguistic terms. Experts have found no other links to existing languages, but find solid comparisons to birdsong of the area. Does this mean that early human civilisations of India mimicked birdsong, which led to the formation of language? Is our language just a complex, evolved version of this fire ritual from Kerala?

There are a few parallels between birdsong and human language. Both have instinctive calls; an instinct to sing or talk. Complex structures are learned by each, which leads to cultural transition and regional dialects. Sub-song in young birds can be likened to human infants babbling. Of course, as a music lover I like the suggestion that song came before language, not in an attempt to elevate the importance of music but to emphasise the significance of oral traditions as opposed to written. I think this is why music will always be integral to humanity.

The cultural phenomena that separate us upright monkeys from the other more slouched variety are spoken and gestural language and its later written forms. It is these complex structures that give the basis for the modern world. If we are to consider music as a language, it is unlike all other forms of language, spoken or scribed.

Music is unique in the sense that it needs no special classes or tuition. I think if you were to sit a total novice in front of a piano for long enough they would produce some kind of music which is pleasing to them. This would resonate some kind of idea to a particular listener who would relate the music to some abstract idea or mood, thus giving it purpose and justification. I think this is why music can become the connection between people who share no linguistic or cultural understanding.

So is music the universal language that existed before the Tower of Babel? I suspect not, but in an age where music is everywhere and exploited for its mesmerising and manipulative qualities, our obvious appetites for it have made us bloated by bad background music and slick advertising campaigns coaxing us into endless consumerism. Have we become musically suspicious and have we truly forgotten why we all seek music?

In modern times, music has predominantly become a solitary pursuit, with personal music players and home stereo systems allowing us each to enjoy music in our own time; where musical communities are formed in cyber space, with the help of consolidation and trending mechanisms. I wonder if we will ever move back to a time where the shared experience of music was not about sitting in a concert hall politely applauding and lauding the technical abilities of a few, but banging on some skins, striking some strings and singing in communities to reach a level of catatonic bliss that might galvanise communities, not separate them into sub-genres? Music should be about bringing people together through the physicality of sound and the impulsive reactions it creates.

These are some things that arise as I ponder music and my reasons for pursuing it. But in this act of possible over-analysis, am I missing the point and ignoring my human reflex to this thing so fundamental to the human story? Or is it not just another human desire to make sense of things we don’t fully understand?

So tonight I will put myself in a room with some people I don’t know and dance to music for pleasure as my brain gushes with dopamine while silence is broken. Much the same as a chocoholic would, salivating at the whiff of Mr Wonka’s distant factory being wafted on the wind.
AMANDA PALMER.

24TH OCTOBER.
MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL.
REVIEWER – STEFANIE ELRICK.

The entity known as Amanda Palmer is a powerhouse of energy. This gig in Manchester Cathedral confirmed it. In her rise to power as Queen of Queer she’s championed a mix of circus, punk and love-sick ballads so sharp they’ll make your eyes water and give your eardrums paper cuts. Most fans met her snarling breed of bleeding heart cabaret via The Dresden Dolls, a caustic cacophony of piano, percussion and her unmistakable screeching, beseeching vocals. She’s never been subtle (or always in tune) but that was the crux of her brusque bare-all charm. Now she’s notably more controlled vocally and wields all her instruments with gusto and grace.

Starting above the colossal 13+ piece ensemble, she appeared, spotlighted, singing Olde Englishe canticle ‘The Wind That Shakes The Barley’. The spell of an unearthly a cappella was broken by crashing straight into ‘Smile (Pictures Or It Didn’t Happen)’ with brass, strings, guitars, drums and piano stomping like a manic musical militia in one electric opening of a night. Later she crooned her way through boozey jazz number ‘St James’ Infirmary Blues’ with the Horndog Brass Band of Edinburgh. For ‘Bottom Feeder’, Palmer leapt out into the arms of her adoring congregation, trailing a gigantic silk shift from her jacket and covering half of the audience in a sea of rippling fabric while elegantly crowd surfing. During ‘Missed Me’ the whole of her backing band, Grand Theft Orchestra, froze sporadically in Brechtian tableau to swap instruments and then boasted just how musically ambidextrous they all are.

Unfortunately, there was just so much going on; so many guest musicians, changes of tempo and props to co-ordinate that the gig struggled to build momentum. It felt at points like a school play and in the longer pauses you expected an interval for ice cream or a toilet break. It occasionally felt disjointed and hotchpotch, as moods and characters were unceremoniously dropped, making it difficult to sustain any atmosphere previously invoked.

To Amanda and her GTO’s credit, everything they did they did brilliantly. It was admirable to see her involving so many other performers in her bid to create a musical platform for others. The RNCM supplied a string section and an über fan played keyboards in the hyper bouncy feel-good finale. It was difficult not to feel your cockles warming at such a display of inclusion and enthusiasm. But for me nothing topped the spine-tingling simplicity of Amanda playing ‘The Bed Song’ alone on her piano and actually taking herself seriously. She excels in creating unforgettable live ‘moments’, but this gig only illuminated the fact that her talent is most potent without the gimmicks.

EFTERKLANG.

29TH OCTOBER.
THE BRIDGEWATER HALL.
REVIEWER – SIMON BRAY.

Three years ago, Efterklang played at the Deaf Institute on Halloween, each dressed in full costume and each very merry, apparently an event they’re keen to forget. Tonight’s affair, however, is a more formal occasion, and one I doubt many of its witnesses will forget for a long time to come.

Opener John Grant offers a collection of tongue-in-cheek piano ballads and, accompanied by piano virtuoso Chris Pemberton, Grant’s relatively simple songs do well to captivate the audience in such a large hall as his warm, full voice fills the space. There’s a tendency to resort to obnoxious buzz synth noodling during some tracks, which does accentuate the sombre and delicate mood he otherwise creates, but somehow they just feel out of place.

The prospect of watching one of the most innovative and exciting bands around accompanied by a 35-piece orchestra was always one to get the juices flowing. Performing tracks from their latest offering, Piramida, Efterklang are looking to realise songs that found their humble beginnings as sound recordings taken from an abandoned Russian mining village in the Arctic Circle. Efterklang have always been a collective entity, tonight accompanied not only by Peter Broderick and a three-piece female choir, but also the Northern Sinfonia, conducted by André de Ridder, who take on the task of performing Daniel Bjarnason’s orchestral arrangements.

The fact that Efterklang can look at home in a venue of The Bridgewater Hall’s magnitude with a ‘backing band’ of this size tells you almost all you need to know. Somehow, they make it feel warm and intimate, as if this is where they belong. The acoustics offer the resonance and space required to allow this music to breathe and feel alive. However, a space such as this can be unforgiving, and each and every note counts, but Efterklang are considered in their approach. Each texture and gesture is there for a reason and takes you along with it. Crowd favourite ‘The Ghost’ offers a groove that brings smiles to faces across the stage and even permits Mr Broderick reason for some ‘dad dancing’ at the back.

As the orchestra segue into a delicate and swiriling interlude, you come to appreciate that there really aren’t many bands in the world that could realise their music in this way. As frontman Clausen himself decides to take a seat in the front row, it’s clear that he of all people appreciates the spectacle unfolding before us. The final hurrah is an orchestral rendition of ‘Modern Drift’, greeted with a standing ovation. There’s a feeling about the room that tonight we have witnessed something extremely special.
DEATH GRIPS.

6TH NOVEMBER.
SOUND CONTROL.
REVIEWER – DAVE FIRTH.

As the American people cast their historic vote between illegal drone attacks and inevitable war with Iran (spoiler for those of you who haven’t seen the next four years: we get both), a queue was forming in Manchester for our very own vulgar display of Yankee aggression. Death Grips, who tore a hole through Islington Mill last year, returned to the city with two new albums hanging from their belts like bloody scalps.

In hindsight, it would have been wise to stay in the pub until Wet Nuns had finished. Their Black Sabbath informed blues rock sounds nothing like anything I’ve never heard before. Please pardon my grammatical lapse, but this two-piece is a double negative that refuses to affirm. To be fair to Now Wave, who have a rather dubious track record of curating cohesive line-ups, I understand the band they had originally pencilled in couldn’t make it. However, anyone involved in Manchester music (or who at least attended Fat Out Fest), could easily name a dozen local bands more suited to the occasion.

Death Grips announced themselves with a rumble of sub-bass and a cacophony of drums, and from thereafter never lightened up. Song followed song with no attempt at familiar chit chat between, no pause for breath. On stage MC Ride is a contorted mass of muscle and flailing arms, a twisting conduit of menacing telluric currents. This is music as catharsis; angry and disillusioned, a willing surrender to the inner demons that society demands we deny or suppress.

Death Grips shows are more akin to early hardcore gigs than to the collective head nod of modern hip hop. Zach Hill’s drums are mesmerising and brutal, leading regular transitions between musical styles and steadily cranking up heat. The venue’s choking of the volume (as always, blame the yuppie neighbours) deprived the onslaught of some of its power. Those who ventured towards the stage, however, were soon consumed by a heaving mass of foul smelling flesh which expanded each tune like a venereal disease. Tracks from their first album drew the wildest response from the crowd – and not, I suspect, because they’d had longer to learn the lyrics. Tonight’s gig never quite reached the fever pitch of their visit to Islington Mill last year, but they always rock hard, and are a welcome breath of dirty air in an overly sanitised world of electronic music. Whether or not you bought into their recent sado-masochistic hate affair with the major labels, you’d be well advised to catch this band live at some point before they get locked away.

WAREHOUSE PROJECT.

9TH NOVEMBER.
VICTORIA WAREHOUSE.
REVIEWER – IAN PENNINGTON.

“Who goes to the Warehouse Project early on?” I wonder while treading the sodden, mid-evening Trafford pavements. Judging by the exposed floor space for raindrop-shaped spotlights to aim at during Lapalux’s set, it’s not many. Which is a contrast to the numbers pouring in by the midnight midpoint. In fairness, Brainfeeder signee Lapalux’s lusciously compiled samples err on the side of downtempo sways, but that could be the echoing Room One brickwork talking.

DJ Shadow, on the other hand, is awarded a primetime slot en route to Flying Lotus’s headlining spectacle by reputation. But, save the inevitable hand raising moment as ‘Organ Donor’ is churned out, his luminous self-aggrandising 3D face map appears a little hollow when he’s elevated above worthier producers – tech house merchants Martyn and Pearson Sound, for example – before losing grip of his record collection to the tune of an unplanned pause.

But this is by the by; the gathered masses, grinning like Cheshire cats, are here for FlyLo. Entering several thousand heads with basslines that don’t fill your ears so much as excavate tunnels to find extra room inside your vibrating skull, Flying Lotus becomes engulfed by a forcefield of lasers then backed by the Until The Quiet Comes short film by Kahlil Joseph, which accompanied this year’s album of the same name. The visual spectacle shifts as often as the music and it may seem as if he’s furiously channel hopping at times; the sonic distance between a cosmic dance command ‘Do The Astral Plane’ and a Gameboy throwback ‘Putty Boy Strut’ is vast, but it’s this variety that maintains the IDM purveyor’s attention.

On hearing the final notes of an unplanned pause.

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On hearing the final notes of an unplanned pause.
BROWN BROGUES.

When Wigan’s garage punk two-piece Brown Brogues crawled out from whatever cold and furious rock they were hiding under, the musical landscape of modern Manchester changed. Angry, scuzzed up and oh-so-loud, Brown Brogues brought a live show to the city that seemed to kick start a generation. Now, three years on and following a string of blistering vinyl releases, two tours of the US and a UK tour with The Kills, Brown Brogues are about to release their debut album, packed full of the blues tinged garage that has earned them every accolade going. Echo laden, distorted tirades from vocalist Mark Vernon (who can also be recognised as producer Eagle Nose on releases from PINS and Base Ventura) fizz on up from his mutliated guitar sound while drummer Ben Mather beats the living daylights from his stripped back three-piece drum kit. It’s a sound as addictive as it is unsettling.

brownbrogues.co.uk

RECOMMENDED BY MCR SCENEWIPE AND NOW THEN.

CHILLY GONZALEZ.
2ND DECEMBER / RNCM / £13 ADV.

The Canadian pianist, producer and songwriter brings his special solo show to the intimate surrounds of the Carol Nash Recital Room. A Grammy-nominated musician stripped back to his humble best to perform tracks from his stunning collections Solo Piano and Solo Piano II.

YEASAYER.
3RD DECEMBER / ACADEMY 2 / £15 ADV.

Oozing that je ne sais quoi that Brooklyn buzz bands seem to pump through their veins, Yeasayer are touring with a unique stage design in tow. Imagine a nascent version of Amon Tobin visuals, but with catchy numbers from the leftfield of indie pop.

THIS IS THE KIT.
5TH DECEMBER / NIGHT & DAY CAFÉ / £6 ADV.

Finger-picked folkly ditties championed far and wide but notably on Rob Da Bank’s Folk Off compilation. Simple yet effective songwriting.

STEALING SHEEP.
8TH DECEMBER / DEAF INSTITUTE / £7 ADV.

Merseyside trio Stealing Sheep belong in a class of their own. Ritualistic drumming, flourishes of psychedelia and spine-tingling harmonies lavishly coat masterfully crafted folk songs that explore lyrical worlds of the surreal and the poignant.

TROJAN MEASURE.
15TH DECEMBER / Q Cavern / £5 OTD.

A night of deep house, cosmic disco and Detroit techno, including the warped minds behind the Arthouse clubnight and the Data Trace label.

SHEBEEN FESTIVAL.
16TH DECEMBER / VARIOUS VENUES / £8-£10.

We at Now Then have dusted off our promoter hats to curate a venue for the eclectic and innovative all-dayer, Shebeen Festival. It’s taking place in venues along Wilmslow Road. We’re at: Trof Fallowfield and present our picks from hip hop and electronica with Jason Singh (P37), The Age Of Glass, Acrobat; From The Kites Of San Quentin, Forged Motif, Beatsum, $?, KA/VAN, (murmur). MOF DJs and more TBC.

DELIA DERBYSHIRE DAY 2013.
12TH JANUARY / BAND ON THE WALL / £10-£12.

One for electronic music historians. Film, discussion, VJs, DJs and live performances dedicated to the music production pioneer and original Doctor Who theme composer. Ailís Ní Ríain, caro c (FKA caro snatch) and Naomi Kashiwagi will all keep Derbyshire’s spirit alive through shows inspired by footage in the University of Manchester’s archives.

RECOMMENDED MP3.

AMANAPLAN.
SOMETHING DIFFERENT.

Ex-Cats In Paris frontman and multi-instrumentalist Michael Watson returns with new solo material. Think R&B indie and you’re a little bit closer to a sound that will just keep giving you the slip.

amanaplan.bandcamp.com/track/something-different

WORDS BY SAM ALDER.

Manchester Scenewipe is an online magazine featuring music news, reviews, gig listings and exclusive live video performances from the city of Manchester. Every month they present a free entry live showcase at Fuel in Withington, featuring their new music tips from the area.

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### December 2012

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### 2013

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GALLOPS.

YOUR SINCERELY, DR. HARDCORE.

BLOOD AND BISCUITS.

REVIEWER – FRED OXBY.

For many, it has been a long wait for Gallops’ first full-length studio album. In fact, it’s quite surprising for a group who have been in the public eye for so long, having already played major festivals throughout the UK for a good couple of years and also been thoroughly ballyhooed by the likes of the BBC. Although not much of the material on the album is new, it’s fair to say that a full release from Gallops has been highly anticipated. So what have the Welsh quartet served up for us?

Yours sincerely, Dr. Hardcore comes in the form of ten tracks, some of which will already be known to Gallops fans. Opener ‘Astaroth’ starts well, enticing you in with a great synth line straight out of Blade Runner and some chirps and bleeps for good measure. Highlights include the jerky but groovy ‘Window FX’ and the frenetic ‘Hongliday’, which gathers pace and drive amidst the relentless percussion and riffage before dropping into a frankly epic piece of hard rock. Harmonically, Gallops walk a fine line between bleak 80s synth work and classic rock noodling. Dare I say it, some of the licks, were they not in unconventional time signatures (almost a given on this record), are reminiscent of Iron Maiden and the like. I don’t have a problem with this as such, but after a while I must confess to finding it all a bit grating.

Afrobeat has clearly not been lost on these guys either, with some of the rhythms plucked straight out of the Fela Kuti repertoire, like on ‘Skyworth’, which also features the trademark harmonised arpeggios framing the music. Gallops are clinical in their precision, driving the music forward with impressively crisp grooves and overdriven instruments.

Musically, this album is immersive and satisfying. Drummer Dave Morait deserves credit for the way he plays, maintaining driving, dynamic rhythms throughout this record. It’s very technical but also reserved and precise, never feeling flashy. The overall cocktail, however, lacks real depth beyond the adept musicianship. I do like the melodic aspect of the group, reigned in so as to not overcomplicate the music, but on the other we have music that lacks the spark that Gallops obviously have the potential to harness. It won’t distract me from other records for very long, but Yours Sincerely, Dr. Hardcore is definitely worth a listen, and I don’t believe this is the last we’ll hear of Gallops.

UMBERTO.

NIGHT HAS A THOUSAND SCREAMS.

ROCK ACTION.

REVIEWER – PAUL ROBSON.

“This year at the Glasgow Film Festival Umberto did a performance along to the film pieces... we met after the show and asked if he had any plans to release that music,” says Stuart Braithwaite of Mogwai, and it is fortunate for us that he asked. Electronic music is too often labelled as being cold, mechanical and robotic, but not the work of Umberto. Multi-instrumentalist Matt Hills manages to create minimal compositions that crackle with emotion. Since 2009 he has released the albums From The Grave and Prophecy Of The Black Widow, highlighting an affection for the film soundtracks of John Carpenter, John Williams and Vangelis. Umberto’s latest release continues in a similar vein, but he still manages to infuse his music with a sense of vitality and intensity.

Night Has A Thousand Screams is based around the 1983 thriller Pieces, which is about a killer who steals the body parts of female students after he has murdered them. This may well be a grotesque concept for an album, but Umberto has been able to combine moments of dread with sections of haunting beauty.

Opening track ‘Boston, 1942’ at first shimmers with soft tones before being ripped apart by a sequence of harsh drones and buzzes. This simple technique immediately lends the music a sense of anxiety. ‘Opening Titles’ and ‘The Investigation’ are also heightened by the introduction of a strong percussive beat and gentle vocal noises. The method of combining soft and hard sounds is what gives the record a sinister and menacing quality. While it loses some consistency towards the end, particularly on ‘Paralysed’, this doesn’t detract from the rest of album.

Earlier this year the band Chromatics released the record Kill For Love, which can also be seen as somewhat of an homage to 1980s film soundtracks. But where Kill For Love is vast and sprawling, Night Has A Thousand Screams is tight and compact. Because Umberto has stayed close to the film’s narrative, he has given the music an emotional arch which is more palatable for the listener. With the overriding use of 70s and 80s synths, some may accuse Umberto of being a throwback, but he is far from it. Music composed with such fondness and attention to detail should be congratulated.
From the moment you hear the ominous chimes, itchy television static and suppressed bleeps of ‘Radio Tune’, you can tell that this EP will be a solemn journey into pensive sobriety. Enter at your peril, but listeners comfortable with Concrete Moniker’s or Baptists & Bootleggers’ less accessible output will find rewards within this found sounds and field recordings project by contemporary classical composer Larry Goves.

‘Victoria To Maidstone’ grants levity of thought as its recorded rail track shuffles drift out of focus, transporting the listener to that same scenario; sat amid the bustle but blocking it out, eyes glazing over and consciousness lapsing. But even in relatively cleansing sopor there is a daunting leer. For ‘Filakr’, an ambient sepia is interrupted by a weeping cello lilting in resignation then in turn knocked for six by a digital grandfather clock’s sudden pangs of paranoia. By this point, the unsettling final track’s operatic chaos in a teacup should come as no surprise.

Liverpool four-piece Ninetails certainly know how to play, their musicianship bursting forth on this latest offering of proggy math pop tunes. Opener ‘Maybe We’ drifts for three minutes until it settles into a luscious dream pop track that’s very enjoyable indeed. ‘Body Clock’ offers more urgency, with a focused and textured opening reminiscent of Alt-J.

They’re at their best when they form something approaching a coherent song structure, demonstrated in highlight track ‘Rawdon Fever’, which glistens and pops in all the right places. The fourth track, ‘Boxed In’, is an elegant piece of ambience that acts nicely as a change of pace. Final track, ‘Mama Aniseed’, starts promisingly, but ends up meandering through ideas. There’s an awful lot of ideas floating around here, maybe too many, and although the more ambient elements are enjoyable, they’d be well advised to focus on the songs and leave the ambient noodling aside.

The record has a ‘local lad’ feel all over it. Reminiscent of the Deltasonic records by groups like The Coral and The Zutons. Granted, these bands are from Liverpool, but in the bigger picture Meadow, like these acts, possess that down to earth, warm, casual feel. Nothing too challenging musically or lyrically, although with the soft, rounded edges and lacklustre harmonies I would guess that these guys weren’t trying to make us squirm or think too hard.

A pedestrian groove to ‘Bus Stop Strangers’ is catchy and upbeat, but the music tends to react sympathetically with its lyrics, meandering through without too much question. Perhaps there is a need for mellow, melodic ditties like these. After the grinding delirium of a Saturday night, Sunday morning inevitably follows and velocity, intensity or indeed intrinsic thought can certainly be kept at bay by records such as this.
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"I never, ever had the ambition to be a musician," insists Jason Singh, who finds himself in the enviable position of being able to handpick the musical projects he follows – from touring India with a mouth harpist named Rais Khan to a new band named Open Souls with Polar Bear drummer Seb Rochford, via collaborations with jazz saxophonist Shabaka Hutchings and with sarod player Soumik Datta.

It all began with a simple desire to play music for its own sake, growing up not far from London's Brick Lane during the 1980s. "I've always had an extreme passion for rhythm and sound – it's usually been beats, then sound and patterns within sound – that's from an early age, two or three years old. Then later on, the kids I grew up with – everybody beatboxed, but nobody said it was beatboxing. We just all made sounds."

Not many have pursued and developed the skill with the same dedication as Singh, so it's no wonder that he's in demand. His is a rare ability: fine-tuned to vocalise from the most delicate of pin-drop sounds to seemingly uncontrolled basslines. Only seemingly, because he aims for control in his performances. "Ninety per cent of my practice is without technology. I've seen so many beatboxers who're set to fail because their set is based around technology," Singh labels himself a beatboxer and vocal sculptor. Neither are truly satisfactory descriptions, but they illustrate the vast distance between musical styles he has covered during his time recording and performing.

At one end of the spectrum there's Singh's solo beatboxing, which began in earnest as filler between performers at a Band On The Wall night named Spellbound. He'd moved to Stretford in 1993 and some years later played percussion with a band named Nashini, taking the mic during intervals to perform snappy skits. Singh's breakthrough moment arose from teaching work where he performed an impromptu gig with Nitin Sawhney, whom he'd met in another capacity as a fledgling journalist for radio stations and publications such as City Life. "I did interviews with Nitin, but he never really knew me as a musician. So when he heard me beatboxing at this workshop we did in Australia, he was like 'Oh I didn't know you were a musician!' I was doing turntable cuts then dropped some beats and he asked if I wanted to do a gig, so it escalated from there."

Singh's most impassioned replies involve his roles as pedagogue for the next generation. From past DJing and beatboxing workshops at the Contact Theatre to a workshop at last month's London Jazz Festival, Singh's core motivation is to pass on his varied explorations. "There's been no plan or strategy behind anything of this," he reminds me. "But the education side is paramount to what I do for me because experience is pointless just to hold onto and only share through performance."

"I did a workshop in India working with two young lads who wanted to learn beatboxing techniques. They've gone onto set up a group called Boxy Turvy, performed on MTV, done stuff with Shlomo. I think they're part of his Vocal Orchestra now. This is the thing – you don't know where this stuff goes. You can inspire someone at a gig, but inspiring somebody through education is a completely different thing because so many kids are told they can't do that or they shouldn't do that or play your fucking Xbox, as opposed to doing something more creative."

Therein lies the distinction Singh makes between ambitions to be a musician and instead making music to explore his surroundings. London's Victoria and Albert Museum picked up on this after he applied for their Supersonic residency programme. "That was an amazing opportunity. You had to propose a project, so I said: 'I'm really interested in vessels, my body as a vessel, architecture and how sound is manipulated within these vessels. I wanted to explore these relationships through the Middle Eastern collection and I'm inspired by Islamic and Sufi poetry. It was just tick, tick, tick for everything. They were like, 'That's brilliant! What do you want to do and how would you do it?'"

Other projects gained coverage on BBC4 documentary Imagine last year, looking at The Lost Music of Rajasthan. One of the featured music organisations had established a seven-year project, with which Singh was involved. The filming period across Rajasthan International Folk Festival marked the tail-end of those seven years, at which time Singh began making music with mouth harpist Rais Khan, their debut show being screened on the programme to illustrate synchronicity of styles old and new. "We did this 20 minute slot and people went bonkers. They'd never heard the instrument in that context. We were doing drum and bass and crazy dubstep lines – all with this little metal harp."

Singh's work with cinema aims towards the more tranquil side of his musical spectrum. He may bemoan prior luck with film score projects – many fizzled out before completion – but his perseverance has been rewarded. "I've always had desires to make a vocal, beatboxing score to a film. I've picked films but they've never happened."

A live set drawing on the Private Paradise exhibition at Whitworth Art Gallery in August 2011 displayed the potential multisensory appeal of his compositions. Soon after, Singh soundtracked a Quay Brothers film, Street Of Crocodiles, with violinist Olivia Moore at a Now Then show and a different short will follow this December for our Shebeen Festival stage.

But his biggest film work arrived through Cornerhouse's Micro Commissions scheme. Following tentative work on a film project in 2010 that was shelved, the BFI suggested he score a film they'd been planning to re-issue named Drifters, a 1929 John Grierson silent documentary about the impact of technology on the fishing industry. Ever the teacher, even Singh was taken aback by the film's notoriety. "When I performed it at the Cornerhouse, all these film students turned up and asked me about John Grierson – and I shit myself! I never went into it researching Grierson. It was solely about the footage because I get freaked out by hype, I focus just on the material I'm working with, regardless of its history or previous interpretations. Then this guy at the end was like, 'I worked with Grierson... and he would've loved this.' It was mad; absolutely insane."

Jason Singh is in Manchester during December for a Freedom From Torture show at Band On The Wall (Monday 10th), another Drifters rendition at Cornerhouse (Tuesday 11th) and a special AV show for Now Then at Trof Fallowfield for Shebeen Festival (Sunday 16th).

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FOR THE RECORDS.
DOCUMENTING RECORDED MUSIC.
JOSEPH BARRATT.

Over the last 30 years, independent record stores have been finding it hard to cope with the challenges brought about by the digital revolution. A telling example of this is the record store culture portrayed in the Hollywood film *High Fidelity*. It is currently being laid bare by a number of independent documentary filmmakers. Jeanie Finlay’s *Sound It Out* tells the story of the only record store left in Teesside, following the lives of the obsessive, reclusive and compulsive customers that frequent the store on a regular basis. The documentary is completely grounded within one store, creating a strong sense of isolation whilst also feeling somewhat homely and familiar. The film lacks the vibrancy and eclecticism that most record collectors would associate with their craft, but what it lacks in energy and vigour it makes up for in charm and heart, becoming the official film for Record Store Day 2011.

*Pip Piper’s Last Shop Standing*, a documentary about the rise, fall and rebirth of independent record stores, stands diametrically opposed to *Sound It Out* in both style and content. Jumping from one interview to the next, the film has a frenetic energy about it that captures the love, passion and excitement people feel towards record stores. The documentary is mainly seen through the eyes of famous musicians including Paul Weller, Johnny Marr and Clint Boon but also gives record stores from Birmingham to Bristol, Cardiff to Chesterfield and Swansea to Sheffield a chance to take centre stage. Whilst the film is very slick and polished, it takes on the tough task of representing a movement across the whole of the country and so at times seems somewhat of a blur. But it gives a fantastic overview of the plight of record stores and has rightly been named the official film for Record Store Day 2012.

Both *Sound It Out* and *Last Shop Standing* are peppered with funny anecdotes and insightful reflections throughout, making both films very easy to relate to and enjoyable to watch.

*Helpyourself Manchester*, made by the Castles Built in Sand collective, is a documentary which looks outside of the shops and instead focuses on the urban subculture of independent DIY music in Manchester. Specifically, the film looks at how a community grew, flowered and fragmented whilst striving to make music and put on gigs in an incredibly collaborative and grassroots way. The film lacks a strong, pulsating narrative like *Last Shop Standing* but possesses a quality which makes it endearing and strangely hypnotic. The fly-on-the-wall shooting style invokes a natural curiosity and gives the film a strong sense of intimacy. Running at a different pace to the previous documentaries, *Helpyourself Manchester* is an honest depiction of the work which went into sustaining an alternative independent music scene in Manchester, shown through the lens of the people who made it a reality.

This independent movement and DIY ethic is equally documented across the Atlantic and landed in Vancouver, BC, with the documentary *Hicks on Sticks*. The film follows a team of two bands and four skateboarders who embark on a life-changing tour through the mountains of Western Canada in 1999. Like *Dogtown and Z-Boys* before it, *Hicks on Sticks* has been tipped for great things and, most importantly, has the ability to inspire a younger generation by exposing them to skateboarding and music they wouldn’t have otherwise witnessed.

All of these documentaries explore a refreshing cross-section of music and independence, giving an incredible insight into how communities operating outside of the mainstream struggle to adapt when faced with corporate competition and the challenges presented by modern technology. These films are ultimately must-sees for anyone who has ever fought for a passion, a dream or an idea you’ve believed in against all odds.

FUTURE ARTISTS FILM AND MEDIA FESTIVAL.

1ST – 4TH NOVEMBER.
JOSEPH BARRATT.

“There has never been a better time to be in Manchester.” The words of creative director Sue Woodward OBE at this year’s Future Artists Film and Media Festival reflect a city that is undergoing some major changes to its landscape and is emerging at the forefront of digital innovation and technology.

For anyone who lives and works in the city, it’s pretty hard not to notice the change. From the demolition of the old BBC on Oxford Road to the creation of the brand new MediaCityUK in Salford Quays, we’re a city in transition from one generation to the next. New sectors are being created at a rapid pace to keep up with the rate of technology and whilst economies all over the world are fighting over the value of the Euro, the Pound and the Dollar, Sue is advocating the value of a different kind of currency: content.

The home for people who make, move or manipulate content locally or globally is The Sharp Project in Manchester, overseen by Sue as director. 200,000 square feet of empty warehouse space has been transformed into a new home for creative entrepreneurs, where collaboration is key and business is not corporate but co-operative. This change to the media industry is what inspired Mark Ashmore to create Future Artists. He realised that the democratisation of technology was levelling the playing field and, as a result, we as filmmakers, artists and creatives needed to make the most of it. The Future Artists Film and Media Festival was created to explore new ways of storytelling through showcasing a wide range of interesting speakers and screenings.

The festival also introduced people to Distriify, one of the most effective and innovative ways of sharing content online. Its founder, Peter Gerard, came to talk about how he, as an independent filmmaker, had been frustrated by traditional distribution and therefore decided to take things into his own hands. Distriify was born, becoming the ‘revolution in distribution’ for independent filmmakers.

Like Future Artists, the grassroots ethic of creating a new space to share content with an audience was what inspired me to start Screen Stockport Film Festival two years ago. Empowering young filmmakers by giving them the opportunity to share work they’ve produced on a mobile phone in a cinema environment has become part of a new creative movement in the North West which is starting to gather a lot of pace.

The age of being passive consumers is gone. Many people now are active bloggers, tweeters and YouTubers, however living in a society where it’s just as easy to be a creator as it is to be a consumer is only truly effective if we have the right supportive infrastructure and accessible spaces within our cities to share our work. Luckily, Manchester is leading the way.
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Collier Street in Salford after dark on a misty October evening is a little haunting. If you’ve never been there before and your first experience of a 100-year-old pub is standing outside with a group of strangers in the dark, surrounded by derelict buildings, being screamed at by a very burly tattooed landlord for hanging around in the cold, before being invited in to be regaled by tales of murdered punters being turned into kerosene, it’s downright terrifying.

But don’t worry - this isn’t your average night at The Eagle. It’s just the premise of the House of Orphans and Working Progress produced play, Lamp Oil: A Haunted Tale for Halloween. The premise is thus: the gathered audience (that’s you and me) is there to see a play but, before it starts, one of the regularly drunkenly reveals some rather dark secrets about the pub’s past – and then all hell breaks loose.

Now that the play’s run is over, House of Orphans and Working Progress surely won’t mind some of Lamp Oil’s secrets being revealed. It really was experience-based theatre at its best, with an interesting mix of reality and surrealism. The production actually began outside with the audience becoming unwitting characters in the play itself, as punters arriving at The Eagle Inn to see a Halloween play put on by two very amateur dramatists.

Once inside, pints in hand, a few of the pub’s dark secrets are brought to light – that in times past the inn was used by The Fraternity of the Lamplight as a place to murder drinkers and turn them into lamp oil. Of course, the current landlord does his best to convince the audience that these are just the ramblings of the local alcoholic but as everyone moves from the bar into a back room to see the Halloween play they have come for, misgivings remain. The next thing everyone knows, all the lights in the pub have gone out and there’s all manner of horrific screams and shouts outside. From there, the audience is rushed around the pub from room to room and even outside into the beer garden to try to find out where these noises are coming from, and then the Fraternity of the Lamplight appears to claim its next victim.

Such an interactive performance was so interesting. The level of involvement required of the people in attendance was certainly unexpected. It turns the concept of ‘audience’ on its head and, by the end, you’re not even sure who’s an actor and who’s just there for a fun night out. This was the perfect play to stage on Halloween, and in the perfect setting, so I for one cannot wait to see what Working Progress and House of Orphans come up with next. Roll on, next Halloween.

**LAMP OIL: A HAUNTED TALE FOR HALLOWEEN.**

**29TH OCTOBER.**

**THE EAGLE INN.**

**REVIEWER – SARAH ADIE.**

There’s a reason why the Lass O’Gowrie won Best Entertainment Pub in the Great British Pub Awards and that’s a commitment to fine theatre.

December sees the latest of the Lass’ famed sitcom adaptations, The Good Life. directed by Braine Edge who breathes new life into episodes including the Christmas Special ‘Silly, But It’s Fun’ – exactly what this production promises to be. Then they have the Mary Chase comedy drama about Elwood P Dowd and his invisible rabbit friend, Harvey, as the debut production of Yer Maun Productions.

Both serve as aperitifs for the banquet that is **Mid Winter Lass Fest**. Organiser Gareth Kavanagh says, “We must be the only pub in the country that looks forward to January. Every year I think we can’t possibly top what we’ve achieved previously, only this time I think we have.”

The festival started in July 2010 to keep the Charles Street pub busy in a traditionally quiet month, paving the way for the Greater Manchester Fringe Festival which began this year. However, as much as the organisers enjoyed working with other venues, they felt proud of Lass Fest in its own right so moved it to January. It’s not just the dedicated upstairs theatre space that gets used but the entire ground floor. "It’s a bonkers idea on the face of it, but given the pub is pretty quiet in the first two weeks of January, the real question is: ‘why not?’” Festival co-runner Lisa Connor adds, “We really believe in the power of theatre in unorthodox spaces. We want to demystify the whole idea of going to the theatre.” You certainly won’t have to worry about taking your drinks in.

Promising a mix of commissioned and invited pieces the festival kicks off with classic TV nostalgia, a black comedy dubbed as ‘strangers waiting for a train’). So you get a superb balance and a programme which I think genuinely is unique to the Lass.

There are so many fun with adaptations and revivals whilst Lisa does some fantastic work with new writers (including Off To Do A Killing, a black comedy dubbed as ‘strangers waiting for a train’). So you get a superb balance and a programme which I think genuinely is unique to the Lass.

**MID WINTER LASS FEST.**

**2ND JANUARY – 3RD FEBRUARY.**

**PREVIEWER – SEAN MASON.**

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There’s a reason why the Lass O’Gowrie won Best Entertainment Pub in the Great British Pub Awards and that’s a commitment to fine theatre.

December sees the latest of the Lass’ famed sitcom adaptations, The Good Life. directed by Braine Edge who breathes new life into episodes including the Christmas Special ‘Silly, But It’s Fun’ – exactly what this production promises to be. Then they have the Mary Chase comedy drama about Elwood P Dowd and his invisible rabbit friend, Harvey, as the debut production of Yer Maun Productions.

Both serve as aperitifs for the banquet that is **Mid Winter Lass Fest**. Organiser Gareth Kavanagh says, “We must be the only pub in the country that looks forward to January. Every year I think we can’t possibly top what we’ve achieved previously, only this time I think we have.”

The festival started in July 2010 to keep the Charles Street pub busy in a traditionally quiet month, paving the way for the Greater Manchester Fringe Festival which began this year. However, as much as the organisers enjoyed working with other venues, they felt proud of Lass Fest in its own right so moved it to January. It’s not just the dedicated upstairs theatre space that gets used but the entire ground floor. “It’s a bonkers idea on the face of it, but given the pub is pretty quiet in the first two weeks of January, the real question is: ‘why not?’” Festival co-runner Lisa Connor adds, “We really believe in the power of theatre in unorthodox spaces. We want to demystify the whole idea of going to the theatre.” You certainly won’t have to worry about taking your drinks in.

Promising a mix of commissioned and invited pieces the festival kicks off with classic TV nostalgia, a black comedy dubbed as ‘strangers waiting for a train’). So you get a superb balance and a programme which I think genuinely is unique to the Lass.

There are so many fun with adaptations and revivals whilst Lisa does some fantastic work with new writers (including Off To Do A Killing, a black comedy dubbed as ‘strangers waiting for a train’). So you get a superb balance and a programme which I think genuinely is unique to the Lass.
The next Video Jam is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 29th January, a date chosen to mark the exact one year anniversary of their first audio visual mélange. If you didn’t make it along to Antwerp Mansion nearly a year ago – or to any of the subsequent shows – then allow me to explain. First of all, local short filmmakers are asked to submit a production timed at roughly five to ten minutes, which is then paired with one of the participating audio acts who will provide a soundtrack to the images, either prepared or improvised.

The thought and energy that goes into these shows is in itself deserving of the healthy audiences they have thus far attracted. Video Jam’s team creates a speakeasy café environment from scratch, welcoming spectators to lounge in front of a makeshift screen fashioned from a large sheet, while musicians and poets perform their score. If that sounds ramshackle, then it is charmingly so.

Films are often produced by local students or amateur filmmakers looking to share their direction and camera work, but don’t let this put you off. Animations, photographic montages, public information spots, horror stories and abstract vanity projects are all intriguing in their own way and while soundtracks may not fit cohesively on first glance, the project is evidence if any is required that your viewing experience and interpretation of moving pictures can be influenced by sounds. Any film scoring expectations you have are best left in a blockbuster peddling cinema multiplex.

Memorable performances have ranged from styles as diverse as opera singing to folkly ditties, 11-guitar post-rock improv to spoken word narration, rambling instrumental babbles to glitchy electronica.

They’ve worked with Blank Media Collective as part of their Projector Series and are looking to expand and venture further afield, while retaining Antwerp Mansion jaunts as the linchpin. The new year begins with a new venue and city – Islington Mill in Salford.

David Shrigley uses his loaf.
CORNERHOUSE / BAKERIE.

A few months ago I bought two cards. One for a friend reeling from a recent breakup and one for a friend celebrating his birthday. They both deserved a laugh, I thought, and seeing as though these cards had made me laugh like a drain I thought they would serve their purpose.

A few weeks later someone I know advised me check out a fella named David Shrigley. “You’ll bloody love it,” they said.

When I punched his name into Google and hit return the two same images from the cards I had brought weeks before pounced onto the screen and slapped me across the face in much the same way they had done when I first saw them.

I spent the rest of the evening scrawling through this artist’s crude illustrations of our degenerate society. I haven’t laughed so hard for a long time. Now I’m not going to invite you all into my house one by one to gaze on the stockpile of book-marked Shrigley images but, have no fear. David Shrigley is exhibiting his work at the Cornerhouse until 6th January.

The exhibition takes up three whole floors beginning with a series of new sculptures and try-out pieces. The second floor is a trove brimming over with Shrigley’s dysfunctional line drawings. Further upstairs you can imitate, animate or act out in the workshop. Or just take forty winks in the nap station.

That’s not all. In conjunction with Bakerie in the Northern Quarter David Shrigley is producing an Anti-Psychotic Brain Bread. I know. Don’t ask. Just take my word for it, they’re bloody tasty. Signed, sealed and delivered by Shrigley himself, these loaves won’t last long. Only a baker’s dozen will be produced each week until the exhibition leaves town for good.

DAVID SHRIGLEY USES HIS LOAF.
CORNERHOUSE / BAKERIE.

VIDEO JAM.

VIDEOJAM.WORDPRESS.ORG.

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CENTrE.
have to say hats off to this sagacious street vendor. With business acumen as sharp as that I
taken a stockpile from a shop on Oldham Street and was selling
“This is a free magazine,” Ian said. Turns out a savvy wayfarer had
came just two days after launch. Ian received a text from a friend
being picked up and read with zeal. My favourite example of this
It’s all made worthwhile, however, when you see it on the street,
Needless to say Ian and I have had one heck of a job.
endless worry of the launch – will it? Won’t it? The cold numbing
into the toil here. The bitter months fretting over cost margins, the
Putting out a free magazine like Now Then is not cheap. I won’t go

WHO SAYS THERE’S NO MONEY IN PRINT PUBLICATION?
VARIous LOCATIONS.

WOWIE ZOWIE.
107 MANCHESTER ROAD, M21.
WOWIEZOWIE-ONLINE.COM

Step off Manchester Road and set coordinates for the 20th Century. Wowie Zowie is a time machine; a Tardis whose interior boutique holds many vintage treasures. The name tells half the story; it’s the title of a song by avant-garde overlords Frank Zappa and The Mothers of Invention, whose raison d’être is to think outside of the box and colour outside of the lines.

Run by designer Jen and former independent record label owner Goff, the shop has a deservedly strong reputation for quality knitwear, flower power furnishings, throwback rarities, selected psychedelic vinyl and even a raft of David Shrigley merch – since before he became the latest craze.

They are also co-hosting a stage at Fuel for Shebeen Festival this month, inviting Paddy Steer, John Stammers and Bridget Hayden to perform some tunes.

KAGYU LING BUDDHIST CENTRE.
45 MANOR ROAD, M21.

Set in a large detached house by Chorlton Water Park, the Kagyu Ling was the first Buddhist centre founded in Manchester. The calm, spacious dwelling and its surrounding gardens offer sanctuary for the busy city mind. Their weekly meditation classes, which run on Wednesdays and Saturdays, follow the Karma Kagyu tradition of Buddhism. These classes alone are good reason to visit but also the volunteers and residents have done much to include themselves within the community. They encourage many different groups and individuals to house events here and invite the public along to participate with an overwhelmingly gracious hospitality. With book readings, community walks, discussion groups and other such life-affirming activities they manage to maintain a strong sense of wellbeing and mindfulness, available for anyone interested, illuminated in the heart of a boggling, neon metropolis.

OUT HOUSE MCR.
OUTHOUSEMCR.THECOLOURINGBOX.CO.UK.

Ever wondered why the central reservation on Stevenson Square lives a chameleonic existence? I say chameleonic, but it’s the reservation that dictates the colour scheme. The project is named Out House MCR, is supported by neighbouring art materials supplier Fred Aldous and operates on a seasonal rotation, inviting distinct designers to adorn the walls and serve as a totemic beacon of the city’s vibrant street art.

Recently Anthony Hopkins and Amy Winehouse have been staring out onto Lever Street but the creations of contributing artists haven’t been limited to celeb portraits. Whether using stencils or spray painting freehand, murals have so far been produced by the likes of Hammo, Tankpetrol, himHallows, Eightbit, The Pern and Dan Birkbeck. Have a wander over to Stevenson Square to keep an eye out for fresh designs.

UMAMI – JAPANESE SUSHI NOODLE BAR RESTAURANT.
147-153 OXFORD ROAD.

Keep this one quiet. Please. When my brain is scrambled, frazzled or fried. When my bones ache with the cold. When I need solitude. Or just when I’m feeling peckish. I venture onto Oxford Road, sink down a flight of stairs hidden safely in the midst of travel agents and takeaway shop fronts and retreat into this little food hall for a hot bowl of ramen noodles and a plate of gyoza dumplings served up with a pot of fragrant jasmine tea.

A subterranean hideaway, it’s hard to believe that just above your head hoards of students litter the streets in silly costumes, buses and taxis constantly threaten your life, rain flies from every direction and dampens your spirits. But all of this is forgotten in a little noodle bar called Umami.

THE VINYL COUNTDOWN:
RECORD AUCTION AND CURIOSITY SWAP SHOPPE.
VARIous LOCATIONS.

A kinky apparition of some 50s betterware aven party. Manchester’s very own Lee Gorton hosts a night of pandemic vinylphilic celebration. Dance to your favourite 7-inch, groove to your granny’s golden hits and then flog ‘em all in a bidding war frenzy. At the end of the night you might be going home with a collection of records from bands you’ve never heard before. You might lose a few vinyls of bands you’ve heard too much. You might choose to avoid the exchanging of vinyl and other such curios altogether. Either or, the Vinyl Countdown always promises to be a bloody good debacle.

The next one is held on the 16th December at Fuel as part of Shebeen Festival. So, records in hand, get yourself down – it promises to be a belter!
THIS IS YOUR CITY.

CHORLTON.

CITY CENTRE.

WILMSLOW ROAD.

HEATON MOOR.

HILLGATE.

1. THE OUTSTANDING BREWING CO.
2. MARBLE BEERS
3. APOTHECA
4. TROF NQ
5. WR AUDIO
6. THE WHIM WHAM CAFE
7. GORILLA
8. THE FONT NWS
9. THE EIGHTH DAY SHOP & CAFE
10. DEAF INSTITUTE
11. THE SALUTATION
12. MANCHESTER ACADEMY 1, 2, 3 & CLUB
13. THE HILLARY STEP
14. Wowie Zowie
15. BATTERY PARK JUICE BAR
16. ELECTRIK
17. THE GALLERY
18. ÉPICERIE LUDO
19. ON THE CORNER
20. ESCAPE BAR
21. THE FONT FALLOWFIELD
22. TROF FALLOWFIELD
23. FUEL CAFE BAR
24. POKUSEVSKI’S DELI
25. AGAPANTHUS INTERIORS
26. MIDI SEQUENCING TUITION

[●] SHEEBEN FESTIVAL 2012 VENUES
[●] REAL ALE HOUSES & BREWERIES