

TRUST The DOC



Edition 113: 28th February 2026

BROUGHT TO YOU BY TRUST THE DOC MEDIA



THE HOTTEST NEWS FROM THE GRASSROOTS SCENE:

- **ARTS COUNCIL FUNDS OUR PROJECT WITH MAYFIELD**
- **DEL OWUSU'S INTERVIEW WITH CORY WONG**
- **NEW MUSIC OF SOUND SINGLE AND VIDEO**
- **REVIEWS OF OVER 50 NEW INDEPENDENT RELEASES**
- **NEW SINGLES BY THUNDERCAT, MISO EXTRA & MORE**
- **ROSA LAUNCHES EXCITING APP TO CONNECT FANS**
- **NEIL ON WHAT IT TAKES TO BE ON THE MEDIA RADAR**
- **SARAH McQUAID ANNOUNCES NEW TOUR DATES**
- **SHERRY EXPLORES THE ENIGMA OF TEMPER CITY**
- **JOSEPH HASSAN McCARRON ON HIS INDUSTRY JOURNEY**
- **OUR THOUGHTS ON THE MONTH THAT HAS JUST BEEN**

INTRODUCTION:

What a difference a month makes as, bar one word, Esther Phillips sang to us some half a century ago! February may be the shortest month of the year but it has been one that brought about welcome news.

The month got off to a good start when we received the news that Arts Council England has agreed to fund The Portsmouth Hub; an exciting project we are collaborating on with Mayfield Records. Read more on Page 3.

It has also been a month where we have been able to make a little bit of much-needed extra cash to keep the business moving forward at a time when things were looking dicey for us. Now we can also take the time we need to launch and market our new online course and our shop, two areas of the business with the potential to make us some money of our own that is not dependent upon obtaining grants.

In this edition, fantastic guest writers Del Owusu - musician, broadcaster, blogger and Fresh on the Net head honcho - with an an interview (with Cory Wong) and Joseph Hassan McCarron - recent MA Music Business postgraduate from our ICMP class, now working for LIberty PR - bring some added quality and informative writing to the party.

February saw more amazing new music coming at us from different directions so there are more than 50 new releases across the genres reviewed in Part 2 plus articles by both of us in Part 3. So plenty to read and, as we keep on saying, 'New Music Never Sleeps'!

NEIL MARCH & SHERRY SAHAYARAJ

28th February 2026

[Instagram](#); [BlueSky](#); [Facebook](#); [Threads](#); [TikTok](#); [X Logos by PaulFCook](#)

PART ONE: NEWS & INFORMATION

- Arts Council Funding For New Project (Page 3)
- Music Of Sound: New Single Is Released (Page 4)
- Sarah McQuaid Spring Tour (Page 5)
- New App Connecting Fans At Gigs (Page 8)
- Thundercat/Miso Extra etc. New Releases (Page 9)
- Trust The Doc Radio Update (Page 10)
- Fresh On The Net Faves Reviews by Sherry & Neil (Page 11)

PART TWO: REVIEWS OF NEW MUSIC

- Albums & EPs (Page 11)
- Pop Noodles (Page 12)
- Alt Rock & Indie (Page 14)
- Beats, Rhythms & Rhymes (Page 17)
- Soulful Sensibilities (Page 18)
- Club Culture (Page 19)
- Singer-Songwriters (Page 20)
- Synthematic (Page 20)
- Electronic & Ambient (Page 22)
- Contemporary Classical & Sound Art (Page 22)
- Jazz & International Journeys (Page 23)
- Folk & Country Fare (Page 24)

PART THREE: OTHER COMMENTARIES

- Interview: Cory Wong (by Del Owusu) (Page 25)
- What Does It Take To Get On The Media's Radar: (Page 28)
- The Journey So Far Of Joseph Hassan McCarron (Page 33)
- Music Review: The Enigma Of Temper City (Page 36)
- And Finally ... - Neil & Sherry with the last word (Page 38)
- Ends (Page 40)

PART ONE: NEWS AND INFORMATION: EDITION 112

ARTS COUNCIL FUNDING FOR NEW PROJECT !!!!

After months of applications and revised applications, Arts Council England have agreed a grant for the joint Mayfield Records/Trust The Doc Media project **The Portsmouth Hub**. This is fantastic news and paves the way for a cohort of bands or artists to benefit from a combination of live dates, recording and rehearsal time and music industry education.

The project revolves around the new hub Mayfield Records have constructed in the centre of Portsmouth to house their recording and rehearsal studios and a small venue. The cohort will get some free recording and rehearsal time, have music released on the Mayfield label and play live at the new venue. Trust The Doc Media will be primarily responsible for providing a programme of educational workshops to arm the artists with knowledge and experience of the

music industry but we will also help organise and market the live events.

Mayfield Records and Trust The Doc Media released the following statement: 'Mayfield Records are thrilled to announce that we have received confirmation of an Arts Council England grant to work alongside our friends from Trust The Doc Media on an exciting new project. The Portsmouth Hub will benefit a significant group of aspiring music artists with opportunities in the live and studio space plus a music industry education programme. We will be announcing further details in the near future. Our thanks to Arts Council England and to others whose support has been crucial - Portsmouth Creates and Portsmouth City Council'. Look out for more news as the project gets underway.



MUSIC OF SOUND: NEW SINGLE AND VIDEO



[The] Music Of Sound's new single ***Tyche*** is out on Monochrome Motif Records. The single was released on 20th February. It has also benefitted from daily airplay on Michelle Ward's Eat My Brunch show on Phoenix FM and repeat plays by Del Owusu on The Songbird Sessions on Exile FM. Naturally we have been playing it on our own radio show too. The single also received a wonderful, eloquent review in **Tony Hardy's** amazing ***Fifty3Fridays***. Read the edition, which also includes Fresh on the Net, Alan Dreezer and The Trusted [here](#).

Big thanks as ever to the amazing **Serge Wenus** who added to his most popular, engaged [playlist](#) as soon as

it was available. Serge's followers are much more aligned than those who follow mainstream pop-oriented playlists and we get far more direct engagement as a consequence.

Tyche is available to download from the Monochrome Motif [Bandcamp](#) pages or to stream on [Spotify](#) and all the usual platforms. The video was filmed and directed by **Del Owusu** on location in London's Docklands and edited by Sherry. Check it out [here](#).

As Sherin (Sherry) explains: 'The song references the Greek Goddess of Chance and Uncertainty. It was written in a week when some of our friends turned out to be facing some

serious demons. It is a reminder that you don't always see the turmoil people go through and keep to themselves'.

Neil adds: 'There's a line that reads *I never knew/How it all looks to you/Surrounded and yet so alone*

which sums up how we were feeling. We (TTD Media) are just coming out of what's been a challenging time for all of us but things seem to finally be looking up for us as a business in 2026 and that is obviously good news for us as a band too'.

SARAH McQUAID ANNOUNCES SPRING TOUR DATES



Singer-Songwriter and TTD favourite **Sarah McQuaid** has released details of her upcoming tour. The artist who we have frequently called 'the hardest working woman in independent music' recently returned from an

extensive tour. She is also working on a new album which is exciting news. The tour dates, including those that have already taken place, are:

FEB-MAR 2026 - EU

Feb 19 HORN-BAD MEINBERG, DE: KulturBad Meinberg

Feb 20 VOLKMARSEN-EHRINGEN, DE: Das Steinwerk (Kulturverein Kellerkonzerte)
 Feb 21 SUHL, DE: Kulturbaustelle
 Feb 22 BOXBERG-UNTERSCHÜPF, DE: Kulturkirche Oberschüpf
 Feb 24 NEUWIED, DE: Restaurant Zur Reithalle (Folk On The Rhine)
 Feb 26 TÜBINGEN, DE: House Show @Niemaier's
 Feb 27 VILLINGEN-SCHWENNINGEN, DE: Folk Club Villingen
 Mar 1 ZWICKAU, DE: Projekt 46
 Mar 4 MEPPEN, DE: Cafe Koppelschleuse
 Mar 6 OBERNDORF, DE: KOMBÜSE 53° Nord
 Mar 7 BAD DOBERAN, DE: Kornhaus Bad Doberan
 Mar 8 POSTFELD, DE: KulturZentrum Alte Meierei am See
 Mar 12 AABENRAA, DK: Koncerter på Damms Gaard
 Mar 13 SYKE-BARRIEN, DE: Wassermühle Barrien in Syke (Kulturinitiative Rüttelschuh)
 Mar 14 WESTEREMDEN, NL: Roodehaan
 Mar 15 ALMELO, NL: PopupPodium Almelo
 Mar 18 HÜRTH, DE: Löhrrerhof
 Mar 19 DORSTEN, DE: Cornelia Funke Baumhaus
 Mar 20 BOCHUM, DE: Bochumer Kulturrat
 Mar 21 HERZOGENRATH, DE: Soziokulturelles Zentrum Klösterchen
 Mar 22 SINT WILLEBRORD, NL: Huiskamerconcerten Willebrord
 Mar 27 COSWIG/ANHALT, DE: Simonetti Haus
 Mar 28 PUDERBACH, DE: Alter Bahnhof Puderbach

APR-JUL 2026 - UK

Apr 8 TEIGNMOUTH: Pavilions Teignmouth
 Apr 9 UPTON CROSS: Sterts Sturrock Studio
 Apr 10 BRIDPORT Town Hall
 Apr 11 DEVORAN Acoustic Sessions
 Apr 12 CASTLE CARY: Caryford Community Hall
 Apr 15 LLANELLI: Ffwrnes - Stiwdio Stepni
 Apr 18 WETHERAL Village Community Hall
 Apr 19 COVENTRY: Albany Theatre Studio
 Apr 22 PONTYCLUN: Llantrisant Folk Club
 Apr 24 LINTON Village Hall
 Apr 25 ASTON ON CLUN Village Hall
 Apr 26 HUDDERSFIELD: Northern Quarter
 Apr 29 SHEFFIELD: The Lantern Theatre
 Apr 30 SKIPTON Town Hall
 May 1 HELMSLEY Arts Centre
 May 2 LEIGH Film Factory
 May 3 STAINDROP: Scarth Hall
 May 6 MOFFAT Theatre

May 8 CARLOPS Village Hall
May 9 EDINBURGH: Stockbridge Music Hub
May 10 OBAN: The Rockfield Centre
May 12 TOBERMORY: An Tobar
May 14 ISLE OF LISMORE Public Hall
May 15 DRUMNADROCHIT: Craigmonie Centre
May 16 GAIRLOCH: West Coast Arts @Gairloch Community Hall
May 17 ALTASS: Rosehall Village Hall
May 19 NAIRN: The Little Theatre
May 21 KELSO: Eckford Village Hall
May 22 KIRKBY LONSDALE: The Stage at St Mary's Church
May 23 KIRKBY FLEETHAM: Stapleton House
May 24 SOUTHWELL: The HopBarn
May 25 TONBRIDGE: Shires Oast @ The Hop Farm
Jun 2 FALMOUTH: The Poly
Jun 3 GLOUCESTER: The Folk of Gloucester
Jun 4 LAUNCESTON Folk Club
Jun 5 CREDITON Arts Centre
Jun 6 CAERLEON Arts
Jun 12 WESTWARD HO!: Holy Trinity Church
Jun 19 PARRACOMBE Village Hall
Jul 2 TORQUAY: Fougou Music
Jul 3 MUCH WENLOCK: The Edge Arts Centre
Jul 4 GARTHORPE: Live Music Garthorpe
Jul 5 TADDINGTON: Bramwell Memorial Institute
Jul 10 NORLEY Village Hall
Jul 11 BURNHAM DEEPDALE: Deepdale Live Music

Visit Sarah's website - albums, and videos including a
<https://sarahmcquaid.com> - for 10-minute video intro to Sarah and
details of all tour dates, all her her music.



NEW APP CONNECTING FANS THROUGH GIGS



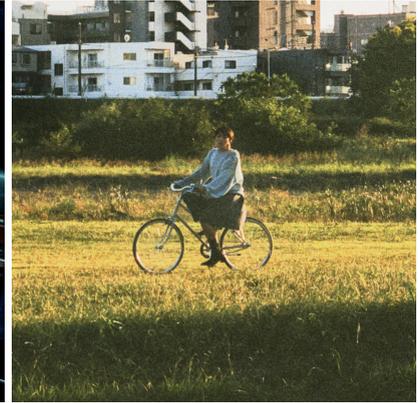
Another amazing alumnus of the ICMP MA Music Business course that Neil teaches on and Sherry was a student for, **Rosa Benameur** has developed an exciting new app.

Rosa says 'NEVER GO TO SHOWS ALONE EVER AGAIN. Feel the music. Find your people. Introducing In The Crowd - the app that connects you

with fellow music lovers at live shows and festivals. Discover who's around you, share the vibe, and make every concert unforgettable. Join the community. Live the music. Meet your crowd'.

We are hoping to persuade Rosa to write an article about In The Crowd for the next edition of Trust The Doc.

THUNDERCAT/MISO EXTRA/PINK PANTHERESS ... !!!!



Our friends at **Plugged In PR** continuously bring us some top quality tracks for our radio show and this journal. This month has seen not one but two new singles by the astonishingly talented **Thundercat**. The first was his collaboration with **Lil Yachty** on ***I Did This To Myself***, a deliciously dirty funk riff and some goose-bumping chords and falsetto vocals carrying us off into a soulful Funk-Hop masterpiece. Now he has a new solo track out called ***She Knows Too Much***, a collaboration with **Mac Miller**. The bass/synth riff nods to Stevie Wonder's *I Wish* but the vibe is a hybrid of drawling rap and sweet harmonised singing. Thundercat's new album follows soon. We can't wait.

Meanwhile, a mouth watering collaboration sees **MJ Cole** teaming up with **Pink Pantheress** on a track called ***Still Sincere*** that places Pink Pantheress's highly distinctive voice

and melodic style playing off against a mix of Garage-style beat and cinematic synths and dreamy figures.

Another artist who has received much praise in TTD is **Miso Extra**. We reviewed ***Right Here*** in Ed 112 and it sees the Synthpop and Future Pop princess on fine form, following straight on from the excellent *Earcandy* album of 2025. As our review noted, it has a subtle Reggae infusion mixing in with her buzzing, buoyant and bright Pop sensibilities.

All these tracks have been or will be getting some proper rotation on the Trust The Doc Radio show (with Neil) on Exile FM and no doubt will be heard on Del's Songbird Sessions show too; a reminder that, while both shows put grassroots music at the top of the agenda, we also take joy in playing some of the best current music by established artists too.

TRUST THE DOC RADIO: UPDATE



The [Trust The Doc Radio Show](#) goes out to a lovely, lively and engaged audience every Saturday at 5PM UK time and mixes the best current grassroots artists with the best established ones plus some fun features that get the audience involved and enable Neil to play some classics. The two hours always fly by.

Time every Saturday on <https://exilefm> or catch the podcast over the ensuing 7 days on <https://exilefm.com/podcasts/trust-the-doc-radio-47>. Also please like, follow and stream the [Trust The Doc New Music Playlist](#) on Spotify which we keep updating with tracks that are on our radio show playlist (if available to stream) [here](#).

If you aren't familiar with the show, come and check it out at 5PM UK

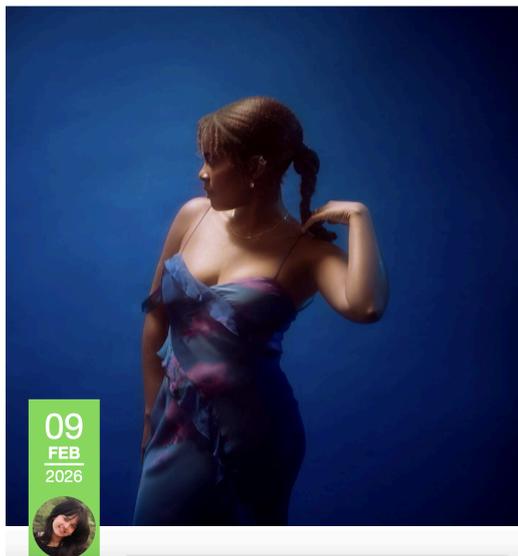


SHERRY & NEIL REVIEW FRESH ON THE NET FAVES

Monday 7th February saw **Sherry** and **Neil** writing the reviews for the **Fresh on the Net Faves** as voted for by the platform's readers at the Listening Post. Neil declared it to be the

strongest week he could recall in just over eight years as a moderator and reviews writer. You can read their reviews [here](#).

FRESH FAVES: BATCH 597

A photograph showing the torso of a person wearing a dark blue, possibly sequined or shimmering, outfit. The background is dark. In the top left corner, there is a green box with the text '09 FEB 2026' and a small circular profile picture of a woman. Below this, it says 'by Sherry' and 'comments'. To the right, there is a white box with the title 'ARTISTS AT A GLANCE' and a list of artist names in two columns.

ARTISTS AT A GLANCE	
AKI REMALLY	KUNLÉ
AMA ADEM	NOT NOT COOL
BERENICE	PAUL TAYLOR
CHISARA AGOR	TEMM
EVA LAYNE AND THE DOLLS	THE HAPPY SOMETHINGS

PART TWO: REVIEWS OF NEW MUSIC

ALBUMS & EPs



The ever-consistent London composer [Madil Hardis](#) has a new 6-track EP which is soundtrack music for **Adrian Hernandez's** film about a St Louis housewife who gained notoriety in the early 20th Century for allegedly channelling a 17th Century spirit via a Ouija board. **Patience** (also the film's title) blends delicate, evocative piano

playing with bursts of striking ambient sound. So the style is essentially contemporary classical, albeit infused with subtle jazz infusions. All the tracks are short; either just under or over two minutes each. The title track kicks things off with long semi-breves in piano chords, mostly minor, before synth strings drift into the mix,

sonically prominent but disappearing just as quickly. After this, the mood changes with more single notes and a major key feel. The single note figure continues but in minor key on ***Inside The House*** and there are some delicious dissonances here too. Again synth strings suddenly rise to the fore later in the track. Then we have ***Three In The Room***, dreamier but with great dynamic contrasts between the competing figures on the piano.

Doubts And Believing begins soft and dreamy on the piano before a terrifying sound like an aeroplane engine rips its way across the mix.

Seance is more classical in style with a slow ostinato in the left hand and prominent chords in the right. More synths buzz into focus, reinforcing the harmonic language and there is a quasi-Baroque sensibility about the semi-quaver figures that ensue in the piano track. Some ghostly synth voices rise to the fore in the final stretch. A lot packed into such a short piece. It ends with a few profound chords. Then we are into the final track ***Two As One***. More long chords and slowly wandering left hand figures take us off into the ether, rounding off a dark, brooding EP full of invention, surprise and contrasts.

POP NOODLES



From Toronto, Canada comes [Kunlé](#) and the song ***Ilé L'abò***. Built around a mid-tempo groove and a mainly three chord pattern with mellow piano, light-textured guitar and Kunlé's warm, appealing voice, this is a heartwarming track that builds in terms of intensity and arrangement. The melody is instantly engaging and the harmonies are sweet and add to the emotional impact of the track.

London's [Ama Adem](#) brings to mind some interesting influences on ***Skin In The Game***. Her agile, appealing voice dances dexterously around a mainly four chord ascending chord pattern and syncopated beat with prominent handclaps. There are elements that remind me of a young Gabrielle but her range and technique are way beyond that with even a hint of Deniece Williams about her upper range. The melody will grab you instantly and, as the track develops,

we get to hear not just her vocal agility but her extensive range too.

It is difficult to know where to review the new single by Londoner [Chisara Agor](#). Like all their music, ***And I Fell To Earth*** blends a lot of flavours. Some Gospel, some Soul, some syncopated beats and Chisara's platinum voice bathed in beautiful harmonies. What matters though is that this is another characteristically inventive, intense and invigorating track that once again reinforces their originality as an artist, writer and singer, not to mention multi-disciplinary performer with a string of commissions from some of the world's leading arts institutions.

[Temm](#) brings a slow-burning intensity on ***Surrender***. Based around single piano chords and a gradually



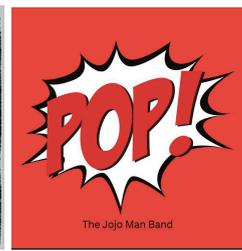
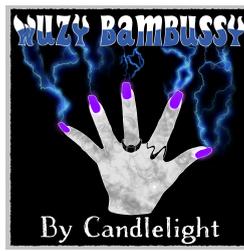
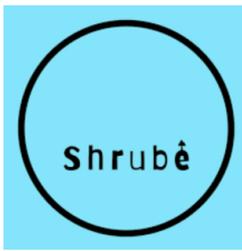
A mouth watering collaboration between Norwich artists [Maya Law](#) and [Freya Roy](#) brings us ***Tall Tales*** and, judging by the various posts and pics on social media, they have had a blast working together. A booming half-time beat accompanies rich

developing arrangement of sounds, both musical and ambient, while the female voice gives an expressive performance and delivers a melody that has shades of Christina Perri and a touch of Adele about it. Emotionally impactful and skillfully written and produced ballad pop topped off by an engaging vocal performance.

It is always good news when there is a new track by [Olivia Miceli](#). ***Friday The 13th*** is a triplet time slice of cinematic Pop with busy percussion, swirling synth strings, high register tinkling piano and Olivia's yearning, emotionally powerful vocals, bathed in harmonies, delivering a memorable hook. The ending is the icing on the cake too.

vocals and harmonies before the beat picks up and, with a solid root bass, piano chords and various sounds dancing around the mix, their voices combine to deliver an infectious, invigorating slice of energetic Pop.

ALT ROCK & INDIE



Ooh new music from [The Happy Somethings](#). Hot on the heels of *Meanwhile* comes *Heaven Is Divine*. No, don't worry. The Happys haven't suddenly gone all evangelical on us! This is another track that reminds us of their Beatles influence among other things. Joy leads the line vocally but with lovely harmonies from Happy and Jolly. The song is particularly built around a striking figure that appears to descend in semi-tones although the chord changes are more nuanced than that. There is a breezy, almost summery aura to the track and, like all their recordings, it is highly distinctive and full of melodic cheer.

The new single by [Shrube](#), the duo project of **Blokeacola** and a long-time friend, is *Wind Up*. This is more in classic BC psych pop territory, his distinctive vocal accompanied by shimmering slow to mid tempo strummed guitars with some clever changes while some intense ambient sounds permeate the mix. Plenty of instrumental interplay and a slightly dark atmosphere (apart from the child's voice at the end). All topped off by a great melody. Also

check out the imaginative instrumental *Flat Battery*.

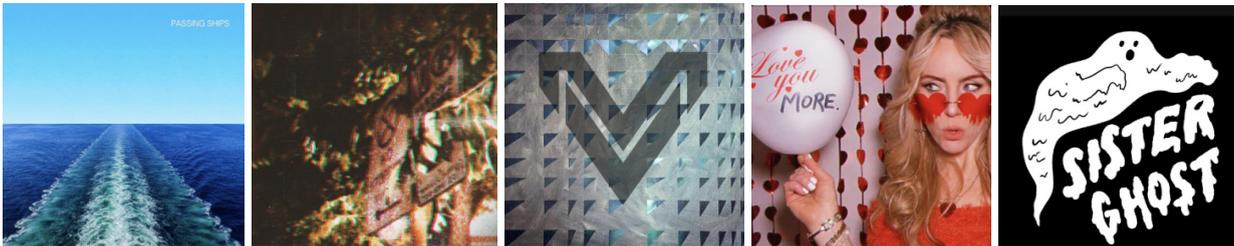
The new single by [Wuzy Bambussy](#) is *By Candlelight* and, as Nikolai's email explains, it blends folky verses (arpeggio acoustic guitar and Kat's yearning voice being the two most prominent features) with a bouncy Glam-inspired chorus. The triplet time feel is perfect and the meaty bass tones and beat complement the fuzzy guitar and staccato keys while Kat's vocal performance is rangey and expressive. There is a dark spy movie aura here too. The bridge is particularly goose-bumping and takes us into a killa chorus. The mid-section is cool too. Thumbs up all round.

Regular readers will know that the lovely **Nick Woodgate** aka [The Jojo Man Band](#) is TTD royalty. He has a new single out called *Pop*. The lyrics are majestically simple but effective. 'It's only Pop!' he sings before adding 'Pop! It's the feeling that I've got'. And certainly Nick's ability to pen a top pop choon and set it to lush, sophisticated post-psych Alt Pop (in this case with classic Motown Soul chops too) is legendary. *Pop* is, even

by Nick's high standards, a great track. The descending/ascending organ chords and guitar stabs bring momentum while Nick's clever vocal overlaps enhance an engaging melody. He switches keys between chorus and verse while the bass swaps between providing a solid foundation and sometimes doubling the melody. The drum track drives all this forward. One of those moments where you know there is nothing that could be added that would make this better. The Dexys-like horns in the final stretch are a lovely touch too. This is making me smile all over.

this time it's [The Roebucks](#) bringing the noise with *He's My Man*. From the Shangri-La's pastiche intro, this is a joyful slice of classic 60s-influenced Punk Pop that mixes influences from across the decades from The Ronettes to Dream Wife and from Blondie to The Big Moon. Female vocals lead the line with chunky guitars and a great interband instrumental chemistry at its heart. The melody grabs us by the ears and refuses to let go as the track builds and, helped by punchy production, they deliver a song that will refuse to leave your brain for long afterwards.

I keep saying that Brighton is the Southern Capital of new music and



Londoners [Shy Plant](#) bring us *Passing Ships*. This is jingling-jangling shoegazy Dream Pop/Alt Rock (enough categories already!) with an engaging male vocal melody that has echoes of early New Order while the guitar, bass and synth figures and fluid drums overlap is more in Ride territory but mixing with some classic 80s Indie Pop a la Friends Again/Close Lobsters etc, broadly speaking. It is engaging and driven by positive energy. Good to hear.

Continuing on a shoegaze theme, [AceCrave](#) bring us relentless dreamy Alt Rock with deliberately low-mixed deep male voice set against a relentless four-chord pattern that works because of the surprises in the way the texture is altered and taken in unexpected directions. Definite Ride and early Lush influences going on here. Its repetitive nature might put some people off but the arrangement is nuanced enough to pull it off.

Glasgow's [Verse Metrics](#) bring us ***See Fairies (We're Not Alone In This Lake)***. We have to conclude therefore that the impression of great gushing waves and circulating watery sounds are no coincidence. This is a superbly kitchen sink-style approach to production with big echoes, deep voice, waves of instruments and ambience and big spacious mixing to create a giant of a track that is in broadly Shoegaze/Dream Pop territory. Invigorating.

Oxford's Princess of Pop and TTD favourite **Alice Offley** is showing a whole other side to her creativity with her band [Alice](#), and the single ***I Love You More***. This is thunderously energetic Punk Pop laced with some



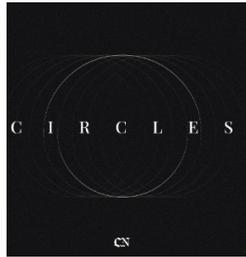
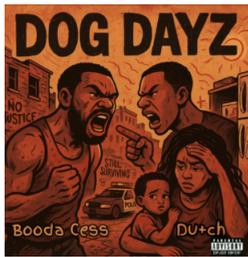
From Silver Lake, LA come [Occasionally Humans](#) with ***Midnight Crescendo***. Soft but assured female vocals, bathed in lush harmonies lead the line with some very pretty and delicately delivered guitar and fluid, inventive bass while synths float ethereally around the mix and the beat is constant but unobtrusive. This is sweetly and infectiously melodic with a dreamy atmosphere that is matched by the production. Irresistible.

sixties pop sensibilities and even a touch of Blondie but all done in Alice's own way with her expressive vocals at the forefront and driving guitar interplay and general instrumental chemistry providing a monster of a backing track for this refreshing slice of yearning, invigorating powerpop.

Derry-based artist **Shannon Dolores O'Neill** aka [Sister Ghost](#) bring the noise with ***Not Your Toy***. This is no-holds-barred melodic Punk with snarling guitars, driving bass and drums and powerful female vocal repeating 'I'm not your f***ing toy'. It bristles with energy and makes its point without a hint of ambiguity.

[The Deadmans](#) return with ***If Arizona Didn't Exist***. This is less driving than *Nice Kid* and has an undercurrent of Americana mixing in with its organic Alt Rock character. Female vocals lead the line, backed up by a more laid back guitar style that picks up into the chorus while the band provides a solid foundation. Tuneful and energetic.

BEATS, RHYTHMS & RHYMES



There is a subtle Old Skool Hip Hop vibe about [Booda Cess & Du+ch](#) from Charleston, South Carolina, USA and their track ***Locked In***. There is a slur to the rapping style that nods to Snoop and a dark late night aura to the musical backdrop that creates an atmospheric intensity. The sung hook adds another dimension and the lyrics are thoughtful and reflective.

The always consistent [NTHN](#) is in no mood to trifle on ***Circles***. Set against a dark electro-synth backdrop and chanting, almost churchian backing vocals, he delivers a monotonic melodic rap in which he dishes it out to fickle fairweather friends and talks about keeping his circle small. It has a real intensity from the outset that never lets up. Original, striking and powerful, this is another cool track from NTHN. Also check out the excellent synth-driven ***Places (feat. æsc.)*** which shows another side to his creativity plus some goose-bumping upper register vocals from æsc.

US rapper [Socallous](#) returns with ***Inside Edition (prod. By Krish)***. It places his trademark biting delivery and matter-of-fact lyrical style against a dark atmospheric backdrop

with a bit of a spy movie aura, reminding us that he can be controversial but intelligent in his approach and painfully honest at times too. All good.

The Soundcloud link takes us to [The Quiet Laureate](#) which is some sort of label outlet linked to a hair and beauty salon in Lake Norman, North Carolina, but the artist is actually [Salam Noir](#). Her track ***So-Called Game*** has a laid back, late night chill vibe despite the serious nature of the lyrics. Salam has an appealing semi-drawl that reminds me of a young Macy Gray when she sings. She raps rhythmically against jazz-tinged piano chords and syncopated beat. The changes in texture over the final stretch add a nice touch to a cool, classy track. A lovely hybrid of Old Skool Hip Hop and sophisticated syncopated Soul.

[Verleens](#) brings a combination of polyrhythmic rap, dark synth-hop backdrop and compassionate lyrics on ***Hold On***. This is a soundtrack for the not-so-salubrious underbelly of our dysfunctional society, following the tales of those who are struggling the most. It is intelligent,

observational and musically engaging and intense too.

SOULFUL SENSIBILITIES



Talented South Londoner [EDBL](#) teams up with **Jay Alexander** on a live recording of the song ***By My Side***. From the opening bar, there is a cool laid back subtly funky Soul vibe about the jazz-infused piano chords, picking guitar and grounded bass and drums. The male vocal is gritty, soulful and dexterous, bolstered by some lovely harmonies and tasty guitar play. This is sophisticated Soul performed with craft and expertise. I bet it was a great gig.

London's [Tilly Valentine](#) returns with ***Tornado***. This is slightly futuristic sounding funk-edged Soul-Pop with a Garage-inspired beat! The echoing, ricocheting synths and funky sounds swirl around the persistent groove while Tilly's vocals are powerful, punchy and agile too. Harmonies are used to very good effect and the chorus is absolute klla. Great track.

[Kylie Auldist](#) is a new name to TTD but she brings some serious Funky 80s style Soul on ***Pheromones***. Despite the unequivocally retro vibe, her voice is so strong and distinctive and the musicianship, chord changes and harmonies are goose-bumping. Punchy production rounds off a groover of a track.

London's [Gareth Donkin](#) has a track called ***Never Gonna Break Your Heart*** which is essentially smooth, jazz-tinged Soul with lush vocal harmonies, gorgeous squelchy bass and cool chords. But it also has an almost Broadway-like cinematic string arrangement that is intriguing and original. Gareth's voice is upper register, distinctive and soulful and the song is beautifully written and arranged. A nice surprise gem.

CLUB CULTURE



[Pimlican](#) returns without his usual vocal partner T.I.N.A on ***Reach Out***. There are male and voices on this that I presume are sampled although I don't have that on any authority! This is a pumping pulsating power-driven piece of Electro-House with some 80s-style synth play contrasting the driving House beat and phat bass. Catchy, energetic and a definite floor filla.

Danish artist and producer [DJ Sam](#) brings distinctively Old Skool vibes on ***Beat Rush***. A relentlessly driving House beat remains high in the mix while a variety of different synth figures come and go, creating some interesting melodic content and keeping the arrangement sufficiently fluid to hold out interest.

[BØDHI](#) brings us ***Let It Go***. This is a slightly dreamy Drum'n'Bass track with breaks in the beat and different

voices, female and high register, male and breathy etc. adding melodic content to the ensuing mix of long sweeping chords, synth bass and crisp beat. Works well.

Polish artist and producer [Aleksander Kaczmarek](#) aka [Sonus Animae](#) returns with ***Thoughts***. This is cinematic Deep House with staccato and legato synths contrasting around a cool bassline, persistent beat (other than where there are breakz) and little melodies and chord stabs that keep events constantly changing; appearing and disappearing like laid back fireworks. There are some funk-laden moments too to spice things up. Inventive, packed with ideas, you could let this wash over you or groove your butt to it. Or both probably.

SINGER-SONGWriters

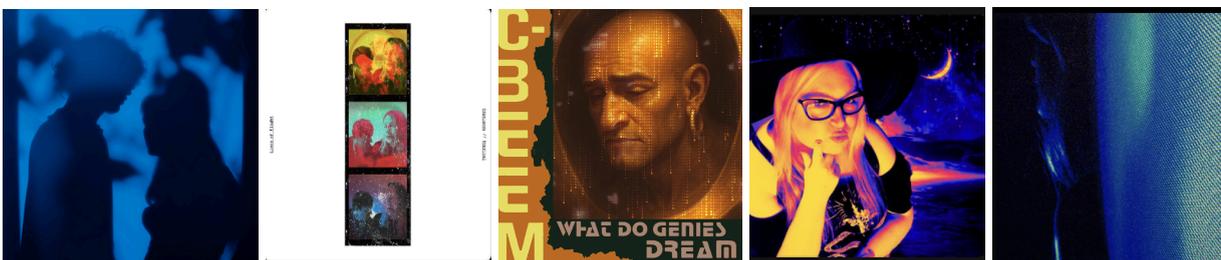


It is very special to receive the new single from Welsh singer-songwriter [Elli Glyn](#). Not only did she play a breathtaking live set for our Brilliant Brent gig in December. She is also one of our MA students (same class Sherry was in a few years earlier) and a really vibrant, popular and inspiring individual. ***To Be Loved*** is top quality from start to finish. Elli makes lush use of extended and suspended piano chords and big multi-tracked harmonies while, in her distinctive and classy alto voice, she delivers a heartbreaking tale of love lost and watching the one she loves cavorting with a new lover. The melody is beautifully crafted and the track

builds in depth, dynamic and daunting emotional intensity. Elli Glyn is on a mission and, with songs this good, who would bet against serious success for her, building on what she has already achieved, in 2026.

The ever-consistent [SAER](#) returns with ***Say How You Feel***. Observational lyrics, delivered in his trademark high tenor range are set against a dreamy, floating backdrop of piano chords, long synth tones and strummed guitar. Above all this, SAER's impressive, rangy and expressive voice and powerful falsetto soar like a high flying bird, dominating the track and lifting it to another level.

SYNTHEMATIC



It is a special delight to welcome back Italian-Welsh Synth Dream Pop band [Lunar Bird](#) after a gap of several years. Singer, keyboardist and the band's creative driving force **Roberta Musillami** got in touch

recently to announce new single ***Blue Chamber*** which sees a shift in their visual imagery colour-wise at least. The song is trademark Lunar Bird in as much as it is a synth-driven, substantial slice of upbeat melodic

Pop with a driving beat and punchy instrumental mix accompanying Roberta's distinctive, dreamy vocals and sweet harmonies. It demonstrates the more energetic, uptempo end of their creative spectrum and the repeating synth melody plays off perfectly against yearning, expressive vocals. Great to have them back.

TTD regulars [Lines Of Flight](#)'s latest offering is **Edgelands**. The track finds them in darker Synthwave territory. Built around a mid-tempo groove and a minor key IV - I configuration, classic retro synths bubble and squeak around the central riff while Helen's vocals are harmonised, sometimes in fourths. The melody is immediate and the chorus lingers long after it ends.

Our good friend **Chris Mills** from Leicestershire is [C-Beem](#) and regular readers will know we never know what he will do next. **What Do Genies Dream** kicks off with a refrain that has shades of the Pointer Sisters in a mash with Suzanne Vega but the track is nothing like either, except that it does have an unmistakably 80s vibe about it. Syncopated beat, sparkly synths and Chris's highly recognisable voice dominate this track. The melody grabs you from the outset and the development through

the introduction of subtle sounds and fluid arrangement makes for another fine track.

Glasgow's [Lynney Williamson](#) is not an artist we usually associate with Synthpop but, on this collaboration with **Evolution**, it seems to fit here. **Lost (feat. Evolution)** is in a slow tempo with reverberant, rain-like synths setting the scene and bringing an 80s undercurrent to a thoughtful song. Lynney's expressive, yearning vocals are underpinned an octave down by Evolution's, creating an agreeable effect and an air of melancholy. Like all her songs, it has a strong melody that will grab you by the ears too.

From Bordeaux in France comes [Nuit Oce an](#) with **Till The Dawn**. This is a track that could arguably have been reviewed in one of several sections but it feels more synthemantic than anything else on account of the striking synth stabs and long tones that play against single piano chords and slow beat while the vocals have a rueful intensity, enhanced by the unusual filtered sound that is used throughout. This is cinematic and emotionally charged, delivering a lovingly crafted tune with refreshing individuality.

ELECTRONIC & AMBIENT



Yes she's back! Great friend and TTD regular [Hannya White](#) has a new single out called ***Slow My Mind***. There is nothing slow about the tempo though as a pulsating four-to-the-floor beat pumps away, occasionally diving into rapid semi-quavers. Ambient sounds build in a slightly unsettling rhythmic figure before Hannya's voice, put through an alleyway-like sound effect, add obscured spoken word and the sounds build in intensity. A repeated vocal chant of 'Hey Hey You, Pick Up The Phone' comes in at one point shortly before a percussive assault that breaks up the flow momentarily. Over the final stretch, the same chant is made more slowly and spaced out while Hannya wails softly above the

mechanistic backdrop. As with all her work, it is measured, organised and dynamic. Always a pleasure.

A mouth watering collaboration between two TTD regulars [Roger Burke](#) and [Mark Heffernan](#) aka [Pocket Lint](#) has resulted in ***Into The Night***. This has a beautifully laid back, late night dreaminess about it. Mark's distinctive and dexterous vocals adorn the track while Roger replies in spoken word phrases. The music is synth-driven, ambient and floats peacefully, yet tinged with a darker edginess. Mark's vocals have a yearning quality that fits with the mood of the track. This is lovely.

CONTEMPORARY CLASSICAL AND SOUND ART



The super talented [Paul Taylor](#) once again graces our airwaves with ***Clandestine II***, continuing his series of similarly named pieces. Paul not only blends his fine composing

skills with the unusual ability to improvise even when doing so with non-diatonic harmonic language. He also traverses the boundaries between contemporary classical and

jazz, fusing some goose-bumping arpeggios and fantasia-like explorations, holding our attention for the full thirteen and a half minutes.

We don't receive enough Sound Art tracks but that is essentially what we have from [D+VE](#) with *+The R+Ins Came*. Dripping percussive notes play against enigmatic outdoor sounds and gusts of wind, creating a kind of ambiguous language and intriguing atmosphere. Good to hear this.

[D+VE](#) has also brought us *Improv For Piano & Tape #2: Photocopier/Glitch Loop* which is more conventionally classical and

built around a diatonic minor key fantasia but adorned by field recordings, in this case using the sound of a photocopier and some form of looped glitch to add an enigmatic ambient quality to the piece.

The versatile and prolific [Christof R Davis](#) graces these pages with amazing regularity. *And The World Turns* is less harmonically adventurous than some of his works but it is nonetheless a rather beautiful melancholy solo piano piece with some mild dissonances here and there amid a subtly dark minor tonality. Nicely done as always.

JAZZ & INTERNATIONAL JOURNEYS



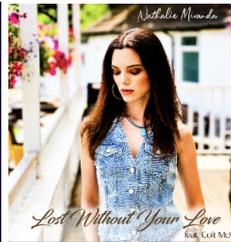
From London via Zagreb, or perhaps it's the other way around, we get saxophonist [Max Murtić](#) (seemingly using the name **Truth & Tribe**) with *SI*. Full of cleverly cracked up contrasting rhythmic configurations and some interesting and slightly bluesy riffs, this is a journey through different moods with sounds and ideas drifting in and out of focus while his rasping, solid sax style dominates.

What a joyful thing the latest track from **Max Murtić** (again!) and [Mimika Orchestra](#) is. *Night Dance/Noćni Tanac* is. It kicks off with some mind-spinning a capella voices before a great brash, rhythmically complex and superbly executed jazz-soundtrack infused instrumental play ensues. Then we get alto range female vocals, harmonised a food deal of the time singing in what I imagine is Croatian given their origins in Zagreb. The writing,

arranging and performance are of a breathtakingly high standard. The harmonic language is stunning and the rhythmic configurations and big

brass stabs all add up to one of the most outstanding tracks of the month.

FOLK & COUNTRY FARE



Huddersfield band [Fishing 4 Compliments](#) will be familiar to long-time readers and they have a track called ***Feeling Lucky***, taken from the album ***Lost In Good Intentions***. This is tuneful Indie Folk in which Eileen's yearning vocal tells a tale of a guy she wishes she knew now and her bandmates provide soft, slightly dreamy backing vocals. The instrumental backdrop has a sparkling organic feel that brings a punchy energy while the chorus tops it off with a great hook.

Our super talented, unpredictable and versatile Spanish **Monochrome Motif Records** label mate and friend [John Serrano](#) has teamed up with talented Portland, Oregon (USA) artist [Edward Givens](#) on ***What A Ride***. This is full of surprises with heavy percussion, cool evolving extended guitar chords and a plethora of sax, keyboard, strings and other sounds diving all over a dauntingly dark and loud mix. John's

distinctive voice soars and swoops all over this too. Dynamic, intense and utterly unique (in a good way obviously).

The unique duo [The Bookshop Band](#) return with ***What We Can't Say***. The pair write songs in response to new books being unveiled at their local book shop in Bath. This track mixes their voices with an intriguing lyric (for which reading the book would no doubt bring context) and the organic mix of instruments provides a refreshing and inventive backdrop.

London's [Nathalie Miranda](#) is in a melancholy mood on ***Lost Without Your Love***. The vibe here is unmistakably retro but it's so well written, bringing a Country-tinged Americana vibe. Nathalie's unique and distinctive voice dominates, expressive and intense at times, fortified by great harmonies and organic instrumental play.

PART THREE: OTHER COMMENTARIES

INTERVIEW WITH CORY WONG by DEL OWUSU



Cory Wong is a highly accomplished and revered US musician, writer, producer etc. who has worked with a stellar list of artists including Dave Matthews Band, Kenny Garrett, Metropole Orchestra and many more. Del managed to get him to a Tea & Biscuits interview.

Hello Cory, how are you?

I'm good, thanks! I've had quite a bit of time off the road over the last couple of months, so I've been chilling and being creative in my studio everyday when my kids are at school.

Congratulations on the release of "Lost In The Wonder" how does it feel now it's out in the world?

It feels so great to have this out in the world. This collection of songs was really fun to make because they were all collaborations that featured different performers, all with the backdrop and throughline of my production/arranging/writing/performing. This is one of those albums that really shows a different side of my artistry than what you see in a live show of mine.

What's your favourite track from it?

It's really hard to pick favourites on an album. When I'm this close to making it, it almost feels like having to pick your favourite kid. A couple years from now I think I'll have a clearer picture, but if I had to pick right now I'd probably say "Lisa Never Wanted to be Famous" because it's been so many years in the making.

What are your favourite memories of recording it?

The fun thing about this album is that it was recorded in so many different places. I think one of my fondest memories is hanging out at Benny Sings' studio in Amsterdam and writing/recording "Lost in the Wonder" in one day. I sent Benny a handful of songs and ideas before I flew out to Amsterdam; but when I got there, it was clear that we were meant to come up with something together on the spot. We had coffee and talked for a couple of hours in his studio which is basically underneath a bridge next to a beautiful canal. We talked life and artistry and career stuff, and then this song just came out of us.

What was the easiest and most challenging part of recording it?

The challenging part of that one was just finding some time in both of our schedules that was open that allowed me to fly out there. The easiest part was the collaboration and recording. He's a true artist who knows his own

voice and instincts, and we drew things out of each other that hadn't been explored before.

It's your 19th project; what's changed in your writing and recording process since the first one?

I'm always growing and evolving both in my personal and artistic growth, so it continually shapes my writing and playing. As far as my writing, I've learned to trust my instincts a bit more and be more open in my collaborations. For recording, I've never stopped studying the engineering and technical side of things, so I'm mixing and producing all of my albums now.

You're also going out on the road. On a scale of 1-10 how excited are you?

It's always a 10. I love playing live. I'm a live guy. My music goes from being meticulously arranged to having jumping points into improvised exploration. The fun part is when that line gets blurred for both the audience and us as a band.

How are preparations going?

I've been working on a bunch of new arrangements for songs off of the new album, and also new arrangements for stuff deeper in my catalog. I also worked on a bunch of new music for a residency I did at the Blue Note in NYC with Joshua Redman and Kenny Garrett. I'd like to

try a few of those tunes with my full band too.

You're a virtuoso guitarist, who are your 3 favourite guitarists?

Prince, George Benson, Pat Metheny

How do you like to warm up?

I separate my warmups by physical, musical, and mental.

I try to make sure my body is warmed up and loose by doing some light exercise and stretches (gotta stay limber). The ideal guitar warmup includes about 5 minutes of coordinating my hands together and getting them to cooperate/move with each other, and then about 5 minutes of practicing some tough lines or phrases that I'll be playing that evening. Mental preparation usually

consists of clearing my head of distractions, and focusing on being present. I also try to absorb some sort of art in the day that will get my mind curious or provoke lateral thinking.

What are you listening to at the moment?

I'm on year two of a Henry Mancini obsession.

What three things are you looking forward to doing in 2026?

Continued exploration of writing and recording.

Playing shows in places I've never been before.

Trying to get Donald Fagen to return my phone calls.



WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO GET ON THE MEDIA RADAR? Neil investigates!!!

BBC Radio 6 Music Playlist



It is the Six Billion Dollar Question that independent grassroots artists have been asking for decades? What does it take for an aspiring band or artist to get a track playlisted for daytime rotation on their ideal target national radio station? And how important is that as an aim in 2026?

There are a few factors that need to be understood before getting into the detail of this article. Firstly, it is absolutely true that radio's position as the indisputable primary media for breaking artists and providing the best exposure has waned considerably in the past two decades. The evolution of the streaming platforms and consequently the expanded role of the Spotify [or other] playlist has changed the

landscape and the culture. For many music fans, the act of discovery of new music is more likely to take place through streaming platforms and social media than through their favourite radio shows. This is especially true of mainstream pop.

Statistics in this area can be surprising though. According to Luminate (2025), a survey found that 44% of fans discover new music via friends and word of mouth whereas 43% said they still use radio. In the USA, 36% said they discover music through social media and they expressed a preference for short form content on TikTok and Instagram, echoing the advice we constantly hear from industry insiders and influencers on these kinds of

platforms. However, an article by Olivia Jones (2025) for Midia Research notes that younger (18 - 24) fans are less bothered about finding out who a song is by and only 19% are likely to listen to further tracks by an artist whose track they like.

This news may be more alarming for artists who are seeking success in the commercial pop field. But, for those whose music is more niche or at least is broadly seen as being outside the immediate mainstream, fan behaviour is different. The notion of 'indie' fans being more likely to follow specific bands and artists and being less inclined to follow conventional leads on what is fashionable goes back decades.

According to a survey by Off The Air Music (2025), indie fans are the most open-minded group of listeners in relation to music discovery while pop fans are the least open-minded. Hardly a revelation but interesting to see it in black and white. The Google AI response to how indie fans discover music suggests it is '... through a highly fragmented mix of social media algorithms, peer recommendations, streaming curation, and niche online communities'. However, the same article goes on to suggest that mainstream pop fans are more reliant on radio to discover new music. This seems at odds with what other surveys are reporting. A group calling

itself Independent Artists (2025) claims that YouTube is the number one discovery platform followed by Friends and Family (Word of Mouth) and Radio! Hardly a consensus emerging here!

An Academic Research paper by Marit Hoitinga (2024, University of Twente) throws up some interesting theories. Not least the notion that the ease with which music can now be made by almost anyone is adversely affecting the quality of music across the board. Accordingly, listeners feel overwhelmed by the sheer volume of music they have to wade through to find the good stuff.

This points to the need to have media through which trusted sources pick out the better quality music and provide it with a platform. Radio very obviously offers one such medium. Trusted playlist curators are another. Hoitinga's report concludes that social media is the primary source for music discovery, followed by peer recommendations and Spotify playlists. If, at this point, it feels like we are going round in circles, that is because we are! Perhaps the missing link here is about the nature and demographic of those being surveyed.

What we can say with certainty is that, while radio may not even figure when surveying mainstream pop fans and, in particular, Gen Z consumers,

the very reliable RAJAR (2026) figures have consistently demonstrated that BBC Radio 6 Music is holding steady at around 2.7 million listeners from one quarter to the next. For the broad spectrum of *alternative* music artists, those whose music sits outside the commercial mainstream, 6 Music offers a platform unparalleled outside of the UK. 24 hours, 7 days a week of alternatives to the pop charts. It is no accident that, for so long now, it has remained the world's most listened-to DAB-only radio station.

In 2023, when I was fortunate to be on the guest list for a Slaney Bay gig in Shoreditch, the band introduced me to their manager Emily Street, who also manages successful Indie bands She's In Parties and Bleach Lab. Emily told me that, if you can get a band onto the A or B List of 6 Music for a reasonable timescale, they can begin to make a living because they are now perceived to have 'made it' and will be capable of generating live ticket sales at venues all across the UK. When we spoke to Simon Raymonde, former Cocteau Twin and head of Bella Union Records, he disagreed with that assessment. Nevertheless, both individuals recognised that, for 'Indie' artists, 6 Music remains hugely important. It was Simon who recommended Shy Cat for promoting our work to 6 Music and other media. I will return to that point.

While there is no question about the importance of Spotify playlists as one of the means by which people discover new music, it can also be the source of misleading statistics. Artists, in particular, can become obsessed with volumes of streams as a form of validation. But, if these streams are emanating from popular playlists, the great majority of them will be 'passive streams'. They are not indications of fandom. And, if you are an indie act on a playlist sandwiched between Billie Eilish, Lewis Capaldi, Charli XCX and Drake, it is highly unlikely that followers of that playlist are going to like your music enough to save it to personalised playlists or libraries, let alone become active repeat listeners. You need more substantial evidence of support than simple streaming numbers.

Having worked with very good playlist pitchers, while there is a feelgood factor about seeing your tracks rapidly gaining streams, it has been far more satisfying, since we have had support from a playlist curator who is a genuine fan and an artist himself because not only has his support had more meaning but it has also led to a significant increase in personal saves to playlists and libraries and to a marked increase in active listeners. The reason is not rocket science. The playlists are supported by an audience whose interests align much more closely with ours.

Despite all this, we recognise that the most effective way we could get our music in front of more than a million listeners who are engaged with music broadly similar to ours is by getting onto BBC 6 Music. Not individual spot plays. We have had plenty of those over the past few years. It is rotation that we need and, with that, we would be elevated to a new level and status that would have a massive impact on our career. That is true of any indie-related band whose core audience is reflected by BBC 6 Music.

So we have been taking advice. To this end, we are especially grateful to Clarice at Shy Cat PR who has given us a frank assessment of where [The] Music Of Sound are in that particular food chain. Clarice looked at all our own PR material, read through our EPK and checked out our tracks and videos. Her verdict, as someone who has direct relationships with the likes of 6 Music, 1Xtra, Radio 1 etc. was that, far from being an issue, our unique angle of being a band with two Gen Z female artists and an old guy was interesting and works. She also felt our songs have great radio potential and that, with sufficient traction, we could grace the 6 Music playlist.

However, she stated that she would not have the confidence to present us to the station yet. We need to have done more than played a short tour

and achieved good streams and saves. She felt we needed some support slots with well-known artists in broadly the same field as us. She also felt we needed some more evidence of BBC Introducing or similar endorsements and ideally some appearances on festival stages.

She considered that, while the look of the band is fine, our wider visual identity needed more work (albeit we have been addressing that with the visual style of our Instagram posts). Last but not least, having a track go viral on TikTok would obviously help too although it is not essential.

So, while I am not suggesting that everyone reading this who is an artist or band member is at the precise same point as us on their journeys, it does represent sound advice in a general sense. Whether you are further forward than us on your journey or have not quite reached the same point, that combination of milestones and validations still represents a tangible aim and a potential stepping stone to national recognition.

Clarice's advice was particularly useful and detailed. But it also broadly reflected what other industry and media figures have told me. So food for thought for anyone who aspires to be successful as an indie artist and particularly one whose natural home on radio is BBC 6 Music.

Of course, you should still seek to get onto good quality playlists; in particular those whose audience is likely to 'get' your music and add it to their own personalised playlists and libraries. And you should analyse the data in your Spotify Artist account because some of it is genuinely very useful in identifying your broad audience and what works well.

The great panacea of national airplay with daily rotation has always been one of the fundamental goals for upcoming artists. It may not be as

important in 2026 as it was in 2006 but it still offers a strong route to wide recognition and fanbase expansion. As we can see, a lot needs to be accomplished before the heads of music at those big stations consider you to be ready. But none of it is unobtainable.

In the meantime, we all have to keep battling away and grabbing the opportunities when they do arise. And *whether* they do arise inevitably has some correlation with how hard you are prepared to work to create your own luck.



JOSEPH HASSAN McCARRON: ARTIST: MANAGER: MA POSTGRADUATE & A&R DESCRIBES HIS JOURNEY



My journey in music has been long and steady. I have experience as a recording artist and songwriter, having released music all the way back in 2014, and an EP in 2020. I did this mostly for passion. I dreamed, perhaps, of being an artist, and I sometimes still envision that. I still write every now and then. But my journey in music has unfolded in different stages and places.

I have always been that person who loves to take over the aux, who can recite lyrics word by word in thousands of songs. The people that really know me know that this has always been a passion of mine since I was very young, especially since I fell in love with hip-hop as a

teenager, which also gave me a sense of identity. I think I have a good understanding of what a great song is, but of course I am always learning, always trying to look into how I can be part of the music ecosystem, even if not as an artist. I knew a long time ago that this is what I wanted to do, but I could not quite put into words what that would really look like. I guess I am still learning every day and figuring it out.

In 2020, I decided to study a BA in Music Business, first two years with Edinburgh College and third year with Edinburgh College in partnership with Kingston University in London. After that, things slowed down for a year, and in 2024 I

decided to apply to do the Master's in Music Business at ICMP. Since being in London, that was my first objective, to get a Master's degree under my belt. Also, since 2020, I have been part of various independent projects, from management to marketing and live music.

I did succeed in getting the Master's, which could not have been possible without my resilience, but also without the support of my lecturers, most importantly Neil, who was there with me throughout the whole journey, especially in the final project stage as my supervisor. I could not thank him enough.

Now, most recently, I have joined Liberty Music PR as an A&R. I cannot lie, since starting my academic journey, when thinking about what role I would like to do, my first answer was always A&R, followed by management development and marketing. It has been a long journey to get here, everything at my own pace, but the universe has rewarded me with this opportunity, and honestly I could not have asked for a better foot in the industry than this.

So far, I am really enjoying the role. I get to listen to music every day. I get to reach out to independent artists, identify their goals, and combine my passion to help artists with the expertise and resources of

a company like Liberty Music PR. I genuinely believe this role was meant for me. We work across different mediums like press, Spotify playlisting, radio, YouTube, social media, and more.

I think what I love most is being in the position where I can make a difference and really help artists with their releases. Having met so many artists throughout the years, the fact that I can now bridge the gap is incredibly rewarding for me. I have lived in Scotland for 15 years, and talking to artists back home has been fulfilling, but also meeting new artists from all across the globe, networking with them, and identifying ways that Liberty can fill in the gaps in the promotional process. Even artists who I have met so far in London have made the experience even more inspiring, seeing first hand the level of talent and ambition that exists and knowing I can now play a role in supporting their growth.

There is so much noise nowadays, with hundreds of thousands of songs being uploaded every day. Liberty positions itself as a PR company that can really help independent artists grow and find new audiences. Of course, this involves artists investing in services, but there are real results. Many artists come back. It is about building a relationship and being invested in their long term growth.

I honestly could go on and on, but I want to say that I am very happy to have joined them. They are a company who genuinely care about artists, as much as I do, so we are aligned in our ethics.

Independent artists who read this, please do not hesitate to contact me via email at josephm@libertymusicpr.com or on Instagram @joe.hmcc. We can arrange a call, discuss your goals, and find a way to move forward with backing from a PR company. As mentioned, we work across various mediums. Let us get your story and your music out there, where it deserves to be. We primarily operate in English speaking markets, including the UK and the US.

Thank you for reading. And thank you to Dr. Neil March for the opportunity to be featured on Trust The Doc.

And Neil adds: Massive thank you Joseph for this amazing article and your kind words. It was a privilege to supervise your MA Final Project but it was down to your talent and hard work that you did so well. Liberty PR have played a blinder by bringing you on board.



MUSIC REVIEW: SHERRY DELVES INTO THE ENIGMA THAT IS INDIE ROCK TRIO TEMPER CITY

TEMPER CITY - Self Aware

I was scrolling through my FYP the other night when a specific sound stopped me mid swipe. It had that moody, late night energy that immediately reminded me of Arctic Monkeys but with a modern, dreamy twist. After a bit of digging, I found the track, it's called *Self Aware* by a band called Temper City. Released on 15th of February 2026, the song has already started to make waves for its relatable lyrics and amazing production.

Although their sound fits perfectly with the American indie rock scene, the band members themselves are possibly based in Israel. Temper City is a trio made up of Eytan Peled, Aviv Barenholtz, and Chen Kordova. (Neil - Information on this is very difficult to verify. Eytan Peled has a solo Instagram account that suggests he uses Arabic, English and Hebrew. Elsewhere he is described as being based in Tel Aviv but the band's Soundcloud page claims they are American and their advertised mobile number has a US code so location remains an enigma!).

The first thing that hits you about this song is the production. It's edgy, polished, and gives you a genuine euphoric vibe as the vocals

pick up. It has that cool, effortless melody that feels like it belongs on the soundtrack of a high end indie film. If you're a fan of atmospheric guitar and dreamy vocals that feel a bit dark but still catchy, this is 100% for you.

While they are still a growing name in the international scene currently sitting at around 1,144 followers on Instagram their high production and relatable quality suggests they won't stay underground for long on social media. They produce that mixture of indie rock and electronic music that feels both personal and professional.

It's not hard to see why this track is on its way to massive virality. The lyrics are incredibly relatable. It's all about that curse of overthinking a relationship until you almost ruin the moment. The line "I know you think that I'm always way too self aware" is basically guaranteed to be the next big trending audio.

What's wild is that even though the song is racking up a huge amount of streams, Temper City still feels like a hidden gem. They currently have about 1,144 followers on Instagram and 8k plus on tiktok, which is tiny compared to how professional they sound. The fact

that their streaming numbers are exploding while their social media is still in the growth phase proves one thing, the music is speaking for itself. Wherever they are based, they are clearly growing into an international act.

Self Aware is that perfect modern indie vibe; dreamy enough to zone out to, but edgy enough to keep you hooked. If you are looking for a track that perfectly captures the feeling of overthinking in this digital age, Temper City's new single, *Self Aware* is exactly what you need.

[Spotify](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Tiktok](#)

[Youtube](#)

[Facebook](#)



TEMPER CITY: A VIDEO STILL FROM THEIR INSTAGRAM PAGE

AND FINALLY

Well what a month February has turned out to be. In Ed 112, we indicated that we were waiting on a decision from Arts Council England about a grant application. We now know it was successful so we face the exciting prospect of our latest collaboration with our amazing friend Dom Elton and his Mayfield Records label and studio.

This one decision has helped to reinvigorate Trust The Doc Media and, with other good things happening, we enter the Spring months with renewed optimism. So look out for more unveiling of exciting plans including the launch of the DocCast on Trust The Doc TV which will involve the two of us and Del Owusu presenting a podcast with its focus on grassroots music.

In the meantime, we are enthused about the new single by [The] Music Of Sound and we are pulling out all the stops to promote **Tyche** and to build on a successful year. If we can engage the right support, we hope to have more news to share on that subject too.

It has also been a month in which the debate around how much time and effort music artists and those in their support spheres should be committing to content creation for TikTok and other social media has intensified.

When we are hearing teenage students expressing their feelings of exhaustion with it and seeing social media as an unavoidable bind that offers very little pleasure, that should ring loud alarm bells for the industry and media. Last month we published an article about cutting through the noise but the noise, in terms of industry ‘insiders’ and ‘influencers’ pouring pressure on aspiring artists to spend hours every day on TikTok engagement is constant and overpowering. Is it time for this to stop while we all take a step back and discuss what this is doing to artists and their creativity?

In this edition, there is an article about what it takes to get onto the radars of the key national media in the UK. Even that adds pressure on struggling artists to attempt to achieve key milestones in order to have ‘traction’. We need to consider what happens to the artistic vision, individualism and originality of our best and most unique talents when they are made to feel they have to commit a disproportionate amount of their time to copycat marketing ploys and crowd-following exploits in order to be relatable and engaging.

It does not stop with aspiring artists either. We were in a conversation earlier this week with

another ICMP tutor who is also a leading session Bass Guitarist and performing artist. Even he was bemoaning how much time he has to spend making what he called 'silly little videos for social media' when he would far rather be practising and honing his skills as a musician.

We have always been clear that we do not yearn for how things were in pre-digital times when recording one track to a decent demo standard meant spending more than an entire month's salary on studio time and self-releasing, Red Guitars excepted, was almost impossible beyond pressing a limited batch of locally available singles.

The digital age has made it far more easy and affordable for independent artists to record and release music and have it available globally on all the leading platforms. This is a much better scenario and hankering after a past that never was is pointless and ridiculous.

Yet this democratisation comes with a price. Namely that the aforementioned ease and affordability means an insane number of new tracks are released daily, intensifying the competition and removing the quality control that labels once operated, however

inconsistently. So standing out from such a vast crowd means having to offer sufficient distinctiveness and quality. But then, in essence, that was always the case and so it should be.

The biggest threat, of course, comes from AI. It arises from the failure of leading governments to even discuss, let alone agree, an international legislative framework to control the extent of AI usage in music. Now we have a free-for-all in which respect for ownership of intellectual property is desperately lacking in some key areas. Musicians need to take a stand on this, however belatedly. And this needs to be an international stand, not one that is confined to the UK.

So food for thought until next time when we hope to have more guest articles raising intriguing questions and describing amazing journeys. We welcome contributions to *Trust The Doc* so, if you have something you want to write about that we can help you to publish and have read by more people, get in touch by emailing us through our trustthedoc@demerararecords.com account.

Finally, thanks for reading this, everyone, and see you, with love, in Ed 114.

NEIL & SHERRY xxxx