

WELL, THE SUMMER'S OVER FOLKS, BUT DON'T START PUTTING YOUR LONGJOHNS ON JUST YET! WHY NOT RELIVE THE MUSIC OF THE SUNNY SEASON WITH OUR HANDY GUIDE!



Glastonbury
25-30/06/03

Our man in Somerset, **Huw Roberts**, sends this report.

FRIDAY: After being rudely awakened by utterly abysmal joke that is **The Darkness** the day can only get better, which it does when **De La Soul** take to the stage; hip-hop's very own peace loving outfit legendary status alone results in lots of sun baked smiles although there's too much crowd playing and not enough, well, tune playing. 'Me, Myself and I' is as brilliant as you'd expect. Next up **Mogwai** - loud as ever, taking much pleasure in the perversion of The Mogwai playing the main stage at Glastonbury in glorious sunshine in the afternoon situation. Quite odd, but rather enjoyable. **The Music** follow, a much better proposition than **Zwan** for whom they have stepped in, bringing some much needed grooves to the party, 'The People' and 'Take The Long Road' in particular inspiring some mid afternoon dancing. Nice.

We're spoilt at night as the **Scream Machine** rolls into town, well, campsite, easily the best band of the festival. Headlining the other stage the band sound simply awesome, riding on a huge wall of sound they fill not only the stage with all their equipment and personnel, but also the night. Dark grooves of urban paranoia and sneering bass driven punk from their recent outings on record mix with blissed out **Screamadelica** thrills before the perfect Glastonbury party ends with the glorious Stones a like rock n roll of Jailbird and Loaded.

SATURDAY: For many others and me Saturday begins with the legendary **Jimmy Cliff** on the main stage. On yet another wonderful sunny day his perfect reggae grooves make a lot more sense than **Interpol**, who

appear on the Other Stage dressed in black and singing rather sad songs. They're good, but this is not the occasion, two songs is all I can stomach. Later on **Arthur Lee** delights us with a beautiful, vital run through 'Forever Changes' complete with orchestra before encoring with his own claim on the invention of garage rock and punk 'Seven and Seven Is'. Astounding. **The Coral** must find it impossible to believe that they're following their hero, this high up on a Glastonbury line up within a year of releasing their debut album. Tonight they're fantastic, mixing stabs of crazed Mersey Beefheart hysteria (hello 'Skeleton Key') and perfect pop, 'Dreaming of You', with lots of new tunes that does nothing to tame the crowds fervent reaction, 'Gypsy Market Blues' in particular getting a riotous welcome. Highlight though is the extended version of 'Goodbye' complete with a tight grooved psychedelic jam that closes the set as The Coral grow from a gaggle of music loving youngsters to a lean kicking band. Saturday night is of course **Radiohead** night. Ultimately they're very average. On a post 'Ok Computer' heavy set, to which they have every right and expectation to play, the impersonality of their new material is apparent in this atmosphere. Radiohead have always been geeks, and tonight it really shows: the machine like drumming of Phil Selway, Jonny Greenwood hiding behind banks of equipment and Thom Yorke's face. I'm only being honest when I say that the majority of their more recent sonic outing leave me unmoved. Still, they're not without their moments, which inevitably come from their back catalogue. 'Climbing Up The Walls' is dark, brooding, paranoid and incredible,

"lots of sun baked smiles, although not enough, well, tune playing"

Live at Leeds: Blur



Leeds Festival
22-24/08/03

house special agent **Jen Knutsson** goes undercover...

FRIDAY: Unfortunately, I started the first day of bands with a cracking hangover, which meant that the thought of jumping around with the kids down the front sounded like a fate worse than death. Therefore the first band that I saw when I finally staggered up to the main stage were rock legends/dinosaurs (delete as appropriate) **Primal Scream**. I wanted to like them, having had a rather enjoyable time dancing along with them, caned off my face a few years back. But alas, they were shit.

Not the best start to the day, so I headed over to the Carling Stage to see what Radio 1's latest indie darlings, **Longview**, had to offer. Well, if you wanted uninspiring, morose, Doves-esque dad-rock then you were in for a treat. Me and the rest of the assembled crowd didn't, so we all fucked off to the Radio 1 stage to see **Hot Hot Heat**.

Canada's finest export since, ahem, Avril Lavigne, **Hot Hot Heat** certainly had more energy than I'd seen so far that day.

SATURDAY: After a good night's sleep I was ready for a day of rock and roll hedonism. And so it was that when the most anticipated band of the weekend, **The Darkness**, began their set, I was suitably trashed. Nevertheless, the importance of the occasion could not pass you by. As the whole crowd joined in for the falsetto chorus of "I Believe In A Thing Called Love", there was the dawning realisation that this was the sound of a band hitting the big time. Then there were everyone's favourite white-robed pop stars, **Polyphonic Spree**, the crowd for the Spree might not have been quite so big, but what a crowd it was. There has been talk that this band is actually some sort of religious cult, and from the amount of people who seemed converted by the end of the set, I would have to agree, from the sight of the dancing masses it seemed I wasn't the only one wishing that I had my own white robe.

SUNDAY: After the dark, noisy horror of **Cave-in**, the flood of beach balls preceding **Junior Senior** was just what the doctor ordered. Senior was on top form as usual, bouncing around like a kid at a fun fair, whilst Junior seemed a bit overawed by the assembled crowd. Enjoyable though it was, many people ended up disappointed as Move Your Feet seemed over almost before it began.

But bigger disappointments were yet to come. Rumours abound all weekend about (pre-jail sentence) Pete turning up to reunite with his fellow **Libertines** onstage, but alas no. The band rushed through their set without a word to the crowd, playing half of the gig with their back turned. The songs were hurried but not without emotion, as the break-up of the rock 'n' roll marriage of the two Libertines front-men shone through their songs, full of hurt and anger.

Who would have thought that **Blur** could come through and deliver one of the best sets of the weekend? Songs from Think Tank and unusual old material like Badhead and For Tomorrow, Blur united the crowd proving that they've still got what it takes to headline at a major music festival. Someone get on the phone to Linkin Park will you?



Rob Taylor's pretentious pick of the summer

The Silver Mount Zion
"This Is Our Punk Rock,..."



Mogwai
Happy Songs For Happy People



Broken Social Scene
You Forgot It In People



Black Rebel Motorcycle Club
Take Them On, On Your Own



The Thrills
So Much For the City



I have a friend who says that if you haven't sat up all night to watch the sun come up then you have no soul. I think I have atoned for going to bed at a reasonable hour by listening to this record. The Silver Mount Zion take the unusual theme, of the decline of uncontrolled urban land; specifically the removal of a derelict railway line, and base a record on it that sounds like the desperate strangled cries of a dying people. The beautiful opening track sounds like indigenous tribal song and then gradually slips into a string arrangement of the second track before then breaking into folky laments to the "lovely traintracks". The Tra La La Choir sings in unpolished innocence behind the wounded caterwauling of Efrim as the album fades out with the chorus, "sometimes everybody gets a little lost sometimes."

In the school of music, of which Pete Waterman is the hapless headmaster and all the kids watch info videos telling them to just say no to reality TV, the half term report for Mogwai would read something like: "very creative, very quiet, doesn't fit in with the other kids. Keep up the good work." Whilst this album doesn't take Mogwai places no man has ever gone before, it is still a fine record and sees their style evolving and even mellowing. The title, Happy Songs For Happy People isn't as sardonic as it first appears to be; this album is full of warm, happy songs. There's the occasional tear jerking moment, such as the fantastic Killing All The Flies, but apart from that Mogwai seem more content whilst not, thank goodness, putting their feet up.

The name sounds like an Emo band for the over forties and the title could answer an inquiring surgeon as to where his scalpel might be, but the record itself is diverse, beautiful and inventive. Made up of 16 members from various Toronto bands, it seems that every one of them must have been into a different type of music, but rather than descending into a playground squabble about how The Flaming Lips are better than Miles Davis, they all play together nicely. It makes for a remarkable bout of genre hopping and the experience leaves you breathless. From the dodgy thyroid of KC Accidental to the dreamy drift of Anthems For A Seventeen Year Old Girl the only forgettable moment comes under the guise of a rather pedestrian smooth jazz track. Maybe they had to include that one to keep everybody happy.

The first thing that you have to admire about Black Rebel Motorcycle Club is the fact that they didn't tag the magic hype generator, "The" on the front of their name. In any case it would be doing them a disservice to be boxed up along with every other garage rock band and put in the loft. This record sees BRMC continue to plough their furrow in effortlessly cool acidic rock; the opener Stop expands simple 12 bar blues wailing guitars and the coolest bass riff off the year whilst tracks such as Heart And Soul snarl back to Sonic Youth and 80's underground.

Critics of their first album said they owed too much to The Jesus and Mary Chain; you can borrow fuzzy distortion and echoed vocals, but what you can't take is genuine John Travolta cool. On this record BRMC barely break sweat.

Even if Brian Wilson, Mr Stelios Easyjet and Bridlington had put their heads together, its unlikely they could have come up with an album so full of hits and hooks and summer sun. At the risk of sounding like a listless NME critic, you could say that this is the ultimate in 'sun drenched pop'. From Big Sur to One Horse Town, every song is very brilliantly constructed and produced. Sure, the lyrics don't inspire much closer analysis and although these boys are from Dublin, every song is about a different legendary location in America. Maybe they are making a sophisticated po-mo point about the mythologizing of Hollywood, or maybe they just know that when you're driving to the beach with your stereo beating up the parcel shelf, you don't want to hear the wining of some middle aged Emo singer about how no one will go out with them.