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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. Most 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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Enjoy the read.
IAN
I’m sorry, but it’s part of the plan. You’re in the way.”

Jacqui Marston was at the vigil outside Ancoats Hospital in New Islington, explaining how she was told that the council would subject her home to compulsory purchase. “They had a great big map. On this map were purple splodges, and those purple splodges were the demolition sites. And I happened to live in one of them.”

Marston’s home was demolished as part of New Labour’s regeneration of inner cities, where streets of decrepit council housing were cleared by government agencies to make way for upmarket private developments. New Islington in Ancoats was built in place of the impoverished Cardroom Estate as a showcase “millennium community” for this new “city living” lifestyle under the stewardship of developers Urban Splash.

The intended 1,400 new homes, less than one tenth of which would have been social housing, never materialised. Urban Splash received significant public assistance in developing the site when work began 11 years ago, including land provided by Manchester City Council and £22m from the Homes and Communities Agency. But the property market crashed and only 179 homes were built, around 50 of which are social houses for resettled Cardroom Estate residents.

House prices in Greater Manchester have declined for two years, creating an unravelling environment for profit-seeking investors, and the limited access to cheap finance means the originally planned luxury apartments are off in favour of low rise housing when, or if, the market recovers. Today New Islington is an eerie mix of colourful yet isolated apartments, fenced off wasteland, and a canal-side marina festooned with Private Property signs.

Ancoats Hospital, a Grade II listed Gothic Revival dispensary precariously supported by scaffolding and lacking its roof and tower, stands in the middle of New Islington. News that Urban Splash had been granted listed building consent to demolish it last summer shocked concerned locals. A campaign, Save Ancoats Dispensary, was quickly formed and, granted listed building consent to demolish it last summer shocked concerned locals have since held a continuous vigil of the threatened building. Today New Islington is an eerie mix of colourful yet isolated apartments, fenced off wasteland, and a canal-side marina festooned with Private Property signs.

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“This thing, 1889 is when it was built as a penny dispensary for all the people who were working in the mills around here. It’s got so much history involved I can’t believe it,” said campaigner Liam Ryan. For Liam, the dispensary was more than just a building. “It’s so much an iconic part of Ancoats. If this goes it’s the last remaining trace,” he explained.

Ryan, a former Cardroom resident rehoused in New Islington, was critical of how people in Ancoats had been treated throughout the area’s regeneration. “It became a situation where they were doing social cleansing,” he said. “The vision for the future was brilliant as long as we kept some of the people who lived there in what we called the guts of the community, which hasn’t really happened… we got back 42 or 43 out of the 106 houses that were on the Cardroom Estate.”

Urban Splash initially intended to renovate the dispensary into apartments. In 2001 the company’s chair and co-founder Tom Bloxham notoriously promised, “If we don’t deliver on this one, we’ll never work in this city again.” Little was done however and after the crash the company took the decision to “mothball” the building, beginning negotiations with the North West Development Agency (NWDA) for £1m to shore it up by repairing the roof and interior walls.

The NWDA gave the company an initial £100,000 pending final release of the remaining £900,000, and Urban Splash started work erecting scaffolding and removing the roof. But in 2010 the incoming coalition government scrapped the NWDA, pulling the remaining funding and leaving the dispensary a shell. Urban Splash has not fared well since the crash and says it has no choice but to make the “reluctant” decision to tear the building down.

Speaking to the press, a spokesperson said “We are sympathetic to people’s desire to save the Dispensary and are only in this situation because of the offer and subsequent withdrawal of the [NWDA] funding, midway through the restoration works.” They added, “It is with great reluctance that we have reached this point with the Dispensary, something which is outside of our control and contrary to our usual approach to saving buildings.”

The campaign to Save Ancoats Dispensary refuses to take the matter as settled, and are urgently fundraising for a structural engineer to conduct an independent survey. The group wants more than to preserve the building for its own sake and are putting together a business plan in a bid to return it to common use. “It could become the centre of the community, which hasn’t really happened… we got back 42 or 43 out of the 106 houses that were on the Cardroom Estate.”

Ancoats has not fared well in recent decades, as first jobs and then homes were destroyed and the pubs and social clubs which formed the backbone of the area’s society faded away. But the campaign to save the dispensary is bringing people together with their own view for the area, one not willing to accept the orders of local politicians and property men. In its own way, the dispensary is becoming a place of healing once again.

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. They are currently recruiting volunteers for various roles, from editors and writers to campaigners.

manchestermule.com
There’s a long-vacated wine shop in Chorlton, the exterior of which is flanked by two huge bay windows and the blue frames are that kind of salt-eroded, windswept pastel found only on British waterfronts and in Polaroid photographs. Travelling the suburban landscape that surrounds the wine shop, the houses begin to take on the same seaside form. It’s subtle and difficult to pinpoint the exact similarities, but they’re definitely there, and that’s when you notice the street signs: Fairhaven, St Annes, Lytham, Cleveleys. It’s quite serendipitous but there’s a long winding road that wraps around this estate which goes by the name of Sandy Lane – a tarmac beach. Were these houses designed to mirror the architecture of our seaside resorts or have the streets, like dogs that resemble their owners, taken on the characteristics of the towns they’re named after?

Le Corbusier famously outlined his plans for a new Paris in his manifesto The City Of To-morrow And Its Planning. The streets that had grown from the paths of least resistance, those traced by meandering pack-donkeys during medieval times, were not efficient for modern man. To Le Corbusier the city was a mechanism and neither character nor exploration was a necessary component of his well-oiled machine. The streets in his vision were laid out in meticulous order, exact geometry that suited and served the way of man, and not the way of the donkey. Manchester, like much of the UK, is part man and a whole lot of donkey. But not entirely. Some of the order found within the grid layout of new transatlantic cities, their blocks and their numerical naming convention, made it to Manchester.

In 1886, the American owned Westinghouse Electric Company built beside the Bridgewater Canal on what had been meadows up until the completion of the Manchester Ship Canal. Westinghouse pulled out all the stops to have his enormous factory built in record time along with a model village for his workers. He based his Trafford Park Village on the regimented blocks of America and provided four avenues and twelve streets of housing, small businesses and community centres. Today the streets have been altered somewhat but this grid layout still exists to some degree. The four avenues all run north to south, with the streets running east to west. In more recent times the avenues have been subject to a bizarre renaming, wherein the former Fourth Avenue is now Fifth Avenue. To offset any confusion a small street has been fashioned between avenues and has taken the name of Fourth Street, with the original Fourth Street being razed to the ground along with Second, Third, Seventh and Ninth. One can only imagine that this pointless and confusing renaming was influenced by the perceived glamour associated with Manhattan’s Fifth Avenue.

The etymology of some commonplace street names is often less obvious than High Street, Market Street or John Dalton Street, with Shambles Square towards Victoria Station deriving from ‘fleshammels’, meaning meat shelves, and Piccadilly being a style of fringed collar invented for Queen Elizabeth (yes, those Blackadder ruffles). During major investment into China Town in the 1980s it was mooted that the streets were renamed in honour of the area’s new residents, but as this is the oldest part of Manchester city centre that remains unchanged (and as such is home to an impressive series of ghost signs) it was decided against. Other streets within the city boundaries have changed over the years. Maine Road was originally Dog Kennel Lane but once the long hours of industry drove children to alcohol the city tried to be one of temperance and this particular change was a tribute to Maine Law – the prohibition of the sale of non-medicinal alcohol in America. Sanitary Street in Ancoats was built as a model street for mill workers, but the residents disliked the mundanity of their new abode, so named to reflect the comparatively high standards of living. Long before the signs of Canal Street were tampered with to reveal an altogether smuttier message, Manchester was already prone to defacing signs – removing a few letters here and there until the street eventually became Anita Street.

The streets of a city are a source of fascination, a maze of brick and concrete, the ways of the pack-horse or the precise directions of a city planner. It’s the unnoticed nuances of the streets that are all the more fascinating: the Trap Streets – those fictional roads which exist only within maps to protect copyright; the specially commissioned Tim Rushton typeface ‘Cypher’ that adorns the Northern Quarter with white letters on blue for the streets that run east to west, and blue on white for those running north to south; and more simply there’s the street names themselves.

Skyliner is dedicated to unusual and fascinating art, architecture and history.
theskyliner.org
It’s Sunday morning at 6.15am, the kettle boils as I open the curtains to see the cat outside, rubbing itself against the glass patio door, waiting anxiously to escape the chilly morning breeze and perch itself firmly in front of the fire that now warms the entire living room. I let her in and as she brushes past my ankles into the warmth I inhale my first breath of the fresh, clear December air.

Today I will be embarking on a short but meaningful drift through one of the first major municipal housing experiments of inter-World War Britain. Commencing from the tired and threadbare bus terminus which lies at the heart of Wythenshawe, I will be walking out of the town accompanied by Kat, who intends to record my thoughts for a local radio spot. Explaining my interest and fascination of Psychogeography is quite a daunting prospect for me because I cannot yet fully explain its appeal. At present, its main appeal is that it engages me in a way that helps me to deal with my rather lugubrious and forlorn outlook on modern life in a big city, and my own place within it. But I will give it my best effort, coffee down and boots laced, I leave the monotony of the three bed terrace and set off towards Wythenshawe bus station.

After my short garden path I follow the pavement for 100 yards, arriving at the playing fields situated directly opposite my house. Having lived here since 1993, these fields have always provided a quick escape from the concrete and terraced houses lining my street. I walk onto the moist grass, glistening dew sparkling underneath a blanket of low-lying mist as the bright sun breaks through the early morning grey.

I trudge across soggy grass towards the narrow, overgrown path leading to the main road. Birdsong gradually disappears beneath the groans and growls of the early morning traffic. Such noise is hard to escape here. My house is situated bang in the middle of a triangle bounded on all three sides by motorway. It goes on all night. I can often hear huge wagons and lorries arriving at the nearby industrial estate, unloading their goods, the cold night air echoing with the laughter and conversation of the Polish and Czech drivers, cigarette smoke lingering under the streetlights, fresh from their long transcontinental voyage.

Wythenshawe bus station is perhaps not the most inviting place. Faded, worn and grey 1960s architecture lies in the shadow of multimillion pound, modern glass and steel. The new Manchester City Council building with its dozens of CCTV cameras cast an imposing eye over the place, as warnings of the legal implications of daring to smoke in the bus station cast an imposing voice. Aware of the penalty for defiance, I stub out my cigarette as Kat arrives.

What a curious picture we must portray. As Kat and I trudge through the sprawl, headphones on and microphone in hand, we discuss everything from the declining values of architectural creativity to the consequences of mass immigration on ecclesiastical participation. We take in the sights of one of Wythenshawe’s main arteries, Peel Hall Road, including the remnants of the old manor and its moat. We stroll past another church which is being kept alive by African migrants, eager to maintain an integral cultural practice thousands of miles away from home.

Something I have always found fascinating about this part of Wythenshawe is its proximity to the affluent Cheshire suburbs of Styal and Gatley. Looking towards Styal Road from Peel Hall Park, all that lies before it is a few hundred yards of empty and overgrown field. The people of Styal Road and Gatley would be very quick to distance themselves from being labelled a Wythenshawe resident. Recently, the residents of Heald Green nearly choked on their smoked salmon with uproar when the new sign for Heald Green Railway Station displayed the words “Home of Wythenshawe Town Centre”. Also, anyone living at the bottom end of Hollyhedge Road in Wythenshawe might say they’re from Gatley, eager to distance themselves from the inaccurate and unjust reputation Wythenshawe has acquired through the years. As we cross from Wythenshawe to Gatley, I half expect border police to be patrolling the streets, dogs in tow, doing their best to keep the haves and the have-nots firmly separated. Thankfully, this is not the case, however there is the obligatory CCTV camera keeping a watchful eye.

Gatley Carrs nature reserve is a sanctuary well worth visiting. But, sat on a bench overlooking the deserted fields and marshes, there are constant reminders of the hectic urbanity just over your shoulder. Behind us, a freight train hurtles past, disturbing the temporary peace. In front of us, busy Sunday traffic trundles down the M60. Above us, the landing path for the nearby airport reminds us of the proximity of the modern world. The only thing missing is the stern voice warning us that it is illegal to smoke in a public place. Fortunately, this is a CCTV-free zone, for now at least.

wythenshawewalker.wordpress.com
@WalkingWythen
There comes a time in every person’s life when they say, quite reasonably to themselves (though at volume and through teeth so gritted it almost makes the sentence indecipherable), “NO! THIS WILL NOT DO!”

The age you reach this sentence differs wildly, as does the reason you’ve uttered it. It may have been ejaculated through sheer annoyance at the state of the government or trains being cancelled, again. It might be shouted after the postman has, for the third time in a row, jammed through your letterbox a cardboard envelope to which, along with the legend ‘Photos, Do Not Bend,’ he has added ‘Yes They Do,’ and shoved it in. It may even be to do with your expanding equator and your forlorn attempt to stick at the diet you promised yourself.

The event, act or travesty which has caused me to explode, worthy alone of reintroducing corporal punishment, is the dropping of litter.

Before we start, can anything dropped by anyone be classed as littering? Let us not forget that to drop litter (in a public street) is an offence, against the law, a crime. Under the Environmental Protection Act of 1990 and the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act, a fine of between £50 and £80 can be imposed. You get me!?! Yes, I’m talking to you, the miserable woman behind Piccadilly train station near the taxi rank who dropped what I thought was a full packet of fags and who said, with a smile, after I pointed this out, “No it’s okay, it’s empty.” Leaving me orally inert, she sashayed off, a spring in her Doc Marten clad feet. Git!

So, before what would become a passionate tirade were my column inches upgraded to feet, should we first define ‘litter’? Easy, yes? But perhaps it’s not so obvious and white, even though it is and I would enjoy sticking a variety of small, sharp-toothed mammals up transgressors’ nightdresses. For one, if someone dropped a tenner in the street, ask yourself this: would you approach the ‘law-breaker’, appalled, wave the note in front of their face telling them that they should be disgusted with themselves? Would you jog up to them, panting, saying, “You dropped this!”? Or would you pocket it and wander off in the other direction, whistling? I know where I stand. It’s on top of a huge ivory tower, bellowing, as we all know what littering really is, don’t we?

Well, because we haven’t time for an in-depth polemical study, littering is: the (casual) dropping of wrappings and assorted detritus which could have otherwise found itself in a bin with absolutely no hardship bestowed upon its owner. Takeaway boxes, cigarette packets (I hope you’re listening you be-air cushion soled slattern!), drinks bottles, betting slips, unlucky scratch cards and old pants do not belong on the floor.

Let’s suppose you’re out walking in the countryside. You’re eating an apple, you finish the apple, you throw it in to some bushes. That, my callipygian lovelies, is okay. To do the same in a busy high street is not. And just because the object in question is organic, the reverse isn’t true. Tossing a pizza box to the floor of either of these venues is abhorrent.

Would you agree then, that litter is either something of no value (see ‘cash’ paragraph) or something considered an eyesore? Even though throwing away your dog ends is technically an offence, their miniscule nature doesn’t fill me with the same horror. And it isn’t always what’s thrown away, it’s how it’s thrown away. The casual flogging of unwanted items by people who think they own the portion of the planet can send murderous convulsions through my already twitching frame. Certainly where you’ve been brought up and by whom plays a crucial part in these law-breakers’ actions. To educate early is the only answer. But if no respect is shown to the place from where you come, then you will think it normal to discard anything from your crisp packet to an old mattress wherever the hell you like.

Apart from forming an action group and visiting nurseries and primary schools to instil these values early, the only recourse we have is to tell litter droppers that it’s not permitted. This isn’t easy. You can very often become involved in a futile argument with no victor. Almost without exception, people who drop litter think they’ve done no wrong. If you point this out, no matter how genially you do it, abuse can very often come your way. This is especially true if the person is part of a group.

Losing face and all that is just another punishment that could be meted out, and eating their charred remains is just something we could consider. Too much?

Yours, R. Lecter x
They’re here but not to stay. Pop up restaurants offer an increasingly popular way to dine out. If you can catch one that is. The nature of hunting for food is back but now with a middle class twist. Once again your food is on the run and you have to locate it, track it and trap it before it has a chance to slip away.

The pop up trend took off primarily in New York and London in the late last decade, but in the past two years the craze has found its feet firmly under the table, offering Manchester’s food scene a vibrant and energetic change of pace. From supper clubs like north Manchester’s Spice Club – an underground dining experience of fresh, authentic Punjabi cuisine served in the intimate surroundings of family living rooms – to the Guerrilla Eats Street Food Initiative – providing up-and-coming chefs, bakers and patissiers with interesting and unused spaces around the city to serve up exciting food from tailor-made mobile kitchens - the reasons to eat out are transforming and growing with positive effect.

The restaurant trade has always been notorious as an unstable environment for business venture. With large start-up costs, slow return through marginal profits and unpredictable trends, it is difficult, especially in today's economic climate, for anyone to set up shop. What the pop up allows is a way in for the naturally passionate and talented cook without the risk of bankruptcy or necessity for a grotesque business loan. It is a vehicle of exposure for people who have a love and respect for the produce they use and the dishes they create from it.

What great advantage this promises to our restaurants. Already we see more food establishments operating with independent creativity and a unique attitude to restauranteering, in refreshing contrast to the bland high street chains of bistros and corner and barren retail park.

The explosive real ale trend too is born from the frustration of its fans: “I can’t find a decent pint.” The user is motivated through the birth of overseas travel for the everyday person, in the 50’s we were swept up with amour for the exotic and the unknown, but all we really ended up with was a bastardisation of what other cultures had to offer. A watered down version of alien textures and tastes from all over the world, forgetting our own identity and rich heritage in food and drink. Continental lagers watered down with chemicals to maximise shelf life and allow for travel, mock Indian dishes made with crude and unsubtle spice mixes, finished with large amounts of cream to satiate this nation’s appetite for gravy and sauce based dishes.

However, now we have reached some maturity with our understanding of other cultures and slowly we are developing a respect for the lineage of food from other lands. We consciously seek out more authentic representations of the tastes we adopted as our own, and perhaps to a growing embrace for our own multicultural heritage.

With this in mind it is important to remember that, although the pop ups, supper clubs and street vendors that inform our resurfaced appreciation for quality and authenticity are transient and temporary, our attitude to what they produce should not be.

We should adopt and nurture the recent revival for our love of good food and drink and hold it steadfast in our demands of the food industry. As much as this new hype encourages the love of good food we must remember that quality should not be a fad; it is something we should search out and expect any time we leave the comfort of our own homes for the adventure of a bountiful dining experience.

Since food should be spared the ‘fad’ system that convolutes much of our life’s pleasures these days, I was thrilled to be shown a cookbook carefully put together and beautifully hand scribed by a matriarchal family member sadly no longer with us. Some of these recipes are generations old and the book itself is a testament to the shelf life of the good and the hearty.

I have handpicked some recipes to share, hopefully giving life to these old dishes through different hands. Watch out for the Impossible Pie. It really does work!
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**TRAPEZE.**

It is the light before dawn
when the first birds wake
and yawns settle as mist.

A bottle of vodka stands empty on the table;
a clear drop of liquid blooms from a folded lip;
a sip, rolls in the bottom of a slow blown glass.

Nothing could console me
when the strange crying of cats
would waft in with the bin smell at night,
or when the eyes on the wardrobe stared
and the crocodile grinned in the corner;
nothing, but the swing without release,
the eye's shining fulcrum,
that sonorous thrum.

A shift in a chair of a body in sleep.
Caress me now.

Teach me to say Listo again.

James Roome.

---

**SAVASANA.**

Lined in prescribed spaces
we enter incubation
The low drone
of a web of wires
Silences the sound of our voices
Focus on the inhale, exhale
A cracked instruction.
Noises fade
and the wide-eyed panting
the air fills with the sting of brine
we erase.
People drain out
unconfined
A vague awakening.
The drummers play them away.

Charmain Leung.

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**CALLING PEOPLE FROM QUABBBS.**

There is a tiny chapel, folded in time, where
well come is whispered on the wind.
It stands pertinent and proud, aware
of its sacred space, sleeping pinned
to the landscape, home to the living and the dead
and to those walking the high drover's grind.

The gravestones face north, embedded
silver grey-green lichens grow bright and pure,
seen through the deep eye of a lens, they spread
fact as barnacles, but without tide, endure
by reaching out and up, inhaling names blown
smooth on stone, claiming the space with spore.

Bright beacon on moon cold nights, chapel windows
warmed by breath and skittish candle flame, throb
and vibrate to voices, shrill and low
calling people from Quabbs.

Valerie Bence.

---

**LABRADOR.**

By the shed, a Japanese Maple burns
over brown seeded heads of summer plants,
where your shit lies, damp with the sheen of dawn.

You strained here,
pink sphincter stretched
white over weak legs.

You pushed the brown head
onto fallen leaves with a leach
of blood and looked for me.

There's a print of your paw near the back door,
and by the shed, where maple leaves flame red,
the ridged twist of your bowel on faecal clay.

Neil Fawcett.

---

This issue’s gaggle of poets (or is it a clutch? A murder?)
represent the current cohort of postgraduate students
studying at Manchester Metropolitan University writing school.
A showcase, of sorts. Some are first year, some second, but they’re all great.
I hope the poets will forgive me for this: forget about the poet’s intentions, these poems are yours; treat them well and they will love you for it.

James Roome.

PS. Two of the students organise a regular poetry, spoken word and music night at The Castle Hotel on Oldham Street. Tongue in Cheek takes place on the third Thursday of every month, running from 7.30pm till late. Find out more at tongueincheekmanchester.wordpress.com.

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Craft is cool again, there is no doubt. In the San Francisco area the taste for craft beer is seemingly insatiable and, when I was in London recently, craft was definitely on the menu. It’s worth taking a look at what happened – especially as Britain has always been a home for beer, but now seems to be borrowing ideas from the other side of the Atlantic.

As the world’s third most drunk drink (after water and tea), beer has been consumed more or less since cereals have been grown and harvested, and has brought people and civilizations together since. It is a simple fundamental recipe, requiring few ingredients, some decent equipment, and a little time and patience. At a brewing session in one of the West Coast USA centres of craft, San Francisco (where I live these days), the huge and delightful owner of the shop (who drank Coke, naturally) provided his self-proclaimed Fat Man Tips on how to brew. His main advice was: simply lose all distractions, then look, smell, feel, and ultimately dedicate yourself to the process of brewing a beer. That way, you could make tasty beers with depth, and many West Coast brewers have clearly taken note.

For most of the last century (and it continues) in the UK and US, the beer market was mostly dominated by mass-produced liquids with little flavour and certainly many more ingredients than necessary. Small-scale local beer held limited attraction and ‘old man’s pub’ and ‘ale’ were bywords for uncool.

Here in San Francisco, craft brewing is now second nature. Gone are the days of tiny and large-scale: now so many people brew and so many bars sell so many variations that beer has vaulted back into focus. It was around 1980 that Sierra Nevada launched; now it’s the second biggest craft brewer after Sam Adams. At the time it was an anomaly in a very difficult market, but the founders realised that, slowly but surely, they were onto something as their small batches kept selling out. Another leader of the 1980s resurgence was Anchor Steam, which almost closed in the 1970s having been originally founded in the 1800s. Now, both are ever-present in bars here and exported to foreign markets – including the UK – as a premium brand.

Although it started slowly, popularity has rocketed in the last ten years. Craft brewers have been popping up all over the US. The West Coast has generated its own style. IPAs have been around for a while, but not quite in the hop-soaked way developed here, with instant names like Total Domination IPA and often ABVs to make your head spin. Lots of bars stock all sorts of beers, all sorts of people are drinking it, and the ever-multiplying brewers have become more adventurous in their styles. When craft wasn’t cool, people opted for imported beers or other drinks altogether – the West Coast managed to counter this, and now it seems UK brewers are taking notice. Not only making good, local beer but also marketing it in an appealing way.

It was only on my last trip to England in December that I really understood the trend over here – bars like Craft and brewers like Brewdog have started consciously tapping into the (young) market. Breweries like Kernel and Marble are creating consistently interesting and popular beers, with adventure and ambition similar to West Coast brewers. Last year, the number of UK breweries topped 1,000 for the first time in 70 years, in contrast to the diminishing number of pubs, meaning a current ratio of one brewery for every 50 pubs. It’s a booming market, and it’s great to see.

But beware. I sometimes feel that US brewers are starting to eschew quality of beer to instead focusing on the bottom line. Don’t get me wrong, you’ve got to stay solvent, but the whole base of craft culture has to be in the quality and feeling of the brewing process, otherwise it could slip into a process of acquisitions and diminishing variety that would undermine the whole craft culture.

It is fairly typical of the US’s West Coast to take an ancient love and reinvent it with such panache. Not in a way that fundamentally alters the drink (as with multinational breweries in the last century), but by rediscovering the fundamentals of brewing good, local beer. Craft is here, and hopefully to stay. Which means one very good thing: lots of good beer to drink, and that’s the way it should be.
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The wine was flowing at Whitworth Art Gallery on Oxford Road for a special evening celebrating David Hockney, William Hogarth and some of the most promising Northern talent working today. The night showcased one of The Whitworth’s current exhibitions entitled Hockney to Hogarth: A Rake’s Progress, with 18th Century artist William Hogarth’s series of eight etchings entitled A Rake’s Progress appearing next to Hockney’s own interpretation under the same title. Hogarth explores the morally bankrupt aristocratic societies of London in 1735, whilst Hockney’s series of prints highlights his time spent amidst the hedonistic art scene of New York in 1961.

Suitably titled Hockney’s New York Loft Party, the evening played host to Manchester-based singer songwriters Yields, Rachel Hillary and Alex Cartwright, who set the artsy NYC ‘61 vibe as they serenaded the visitors admiring the exhibition. A screening of Dog Star Man: Prelude (1961) by American underground director Stan Brakhage injected a dose of experimental into the proceedings being scored live by Otto Smart’s trio Ears in Excellent Condition. Upcoming choreographer Hannah Buckley’s Hockney-inspired dance entitled That’s The Way I See It saw five dancers wearing orange tie dye shirts and oversized ruffled collars exploring the performance space in their own time. Hockney’s use of perspective in his more recent work had clearly influenced the dancers’ formations as they moved from close and personal to dancing in the distance throughout the piece.

William Hogarth’s A Rake’s Progress has been in the Whitworth’s collection since 1926 and tells the story of Tom Rakewell, a young man living in 18th Century London who becomes swept up in a world of vice and destruction following the inheritance of his miserly father’s fortune. The eight etchings feature crowds of animated characters with questionable intent and each lively scenario shows an insight into the corruption, sex, alcohol, debt and class create a wonderful dialogue between 1735 London and 1961 New York. Viewin the two versions of A Rake’s Progress side by side at the Whitworth draws a parallel between the two eras in history, the two cities and the two artists. London in the 1700s saw scandal and intrigue just as New York in the 60s was decadent with drugs, sex and buzzing with the explosive rise of Pop Art. Andy Warhol was at the top of his game and the NY art scene thrived with excitement and enthusiasm for glamour, celebrity and pop culture. The two moments in history may seem worlds apart, but the essence of A Rake’s Progress – the story of a young, enthusiastic newcomer thrust from their comforts into an exhilarating yet dangerous city – is still pertinent today and will always be relevant as the adventurous amongst us seek to find ourselves in the heady depths of the big city.

Stalker emphasises that the similar “themes of morality, lost innocence, glamour, celebrity and pop culture” of the 18th Century and the 60s provided Hockney with a means to embrace his homosexuality during his time in New York. Ultimately Stalker emphasises that the similar “themes of morality, lost innocence, corruption, sex, alcohol, debt and class create a wonderful dialogue between 1735 London and 1961 New York”.

Stalker notes differences between the two artists; Tom Rakewell’s London is deeply heterosexual whereas Hockney was beginning to embrace his homosexuality during his time in New York. Ultimately Stalker notes that Hockney visited areas of New York “such as the Bowery and Harlem, where he witnessed high levels of crime, prostitution and alcoholism. This reminded him of the scenes in Hogarth’s engravings and he then made a connection.”

The lure of the sordid lifestyle brimming beneath the surface of London’s aristocratic circles is heightened by Tom’s disillusionment. Hogarth influenced Hockney with his storytelling method, depicting exploration and destruction through a series of prints without words. Hockney told a story of a young lad dazzled by the big city, which was inspired by his own experience of transitioning from small town Bradford to big city New York. The exhibition curator, Helen Buckley, explained to Aesthetica Magazine in October 2012 that Hockney being a young, gay, northern art student in New York impacted how he dealt with and experienced the city. She says that Hockney visited areas of New York “such as the Bowery and Harlem, where he witnessed high levels of crime, prostitution and alcoholism. This reminded him of the scenes in Hogarth’s engravings and he then made a connection.”

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The word ‘bedlam’ is used in Hockney’s A Rake’s Progress to great effect, coloured orange and scrawled out in capitals throughout the series to communicate a link between Hogarth’s Madhouse and his own disillusionment. Hogarth influenced Hockney with his storytelling method, depicting exploration and destruction through a series of prints without words. Hockney told a story of a young lad dazzled by the big city, which was inspired by his own experience of transitioning from small town Bradford to big city New York. The exhibition curator, Helen Buckley, explained to Aesthetica Magazine in October 2012 that Hockney being a young, gay, northern art student in New York impacted how he dealt with and experienced the city. She says that Hockney visited areas of New York “such as the Bowery and Harlem, where he witnessed high levels of crime, prostitution and alcoholism. This reminded him of the scenes in Hogarth’s engravings and he then made a connection.”

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Dan Birkbeck is a Manchester-based artist working in a number of different disciplines, including graphic illustration, graffiti and good old fashioned pen to paper sketches. Drawing together influences from all over the shop, from Japanese art to comics, Dan is a versatile yet humble artist with lots to say about his craft. Straight off the back of taking part in Brandalism, a project that aims to subvert corporate advertising by taking over billboards in five UK cities, we spoke to Dan about the work featured in this issue of Now Then and his motivations for being an artist.

What got you started as an artist?

I think the first thing that really got me into drawing was the comic ZODIAC, specifically the ABC Warriors. I would copy the characters from there. Seeing ALMA for the first time in 1989 had a great effect on me. I knew that I wanted to draw pictures like that. The film Aliens also. I suppose it was about big guns and spaceships, and horror. It all captured my imagination and I had my own ideas of how things could be – cool robots and spaceships. By drawing them I could realise those ideas. It was exciting.

It’s the same for me today. Although subject matter is much different, it’s about realising the things from my imagination.

Can you describe the process of starting a new piece?

If I’m on a roll one piece naturally flows to the last. I’m often thinking about what I’m going to do next while still working on something. There are recurring themes and elements in my work: the tentacles and hands for example, patterns and colour schemes. More are added as I go, so the more I do the more elements I have in my ‘kit’ to work with.

The King of Spades is the first of what will be a full deck of cards. This took a lot of planning and research into the traditions of card design. For pieces like this I will sketch ideas over and over again until I measure up, plan, make sure everything is in exactly the right place. I know each line before I draw it and exactly what order I’m going to do everything in.

What tools do you use regularly and which could you not do without?

Fine liners, Posca, pencils, markers, Adobe Illustrator, emulsion and spray paint. I’m always looking to work with new materials and add to the tools at my disposal. I started using Illustrator about six years ago, teaching myself (which takes time!), and spray paint about five years ago. You never stop learning but I’m aiming to become as fluent with these as I am with a pencil.

I couldn’t do without a pencil. It’s the basis of everything.

How is your average day spent?

My days consist of drawing, painting, reading, loud music, looking for work online, meetings, collecting prints and posting them out, daydreaming and thinking – trying to get an idea to fully form in my mind before I begin sketching. It’s not bad if you don’t mind being poor.

What are you working on at the moment?

I’ve just done a Mayan piece which has been very well received so I reckon I’m going to crack on with some more stuff in this vein. Much of the work I’ve been making over the past six months has been hand-drawn and finished in Illustrator. While I like this affect and process I’m keen to get back to making purely handmade art for a while. I don’t like to get stuck on one thing for too long. You get complacent and work becomes stale. I only do it if it’s fun.

I also exhibited alongside some other great artists at the OneFiveEight exhibition on 9th February at Kraik Gallery in Manchester’s Northern Quarter.

Which of your most recent pieces have you enjoyed making the most?

I think the King of Spades, Ying Yang, and the Eyes & Tentacles. These are the ones I’ve hand-drawn and coloured and textured digitally. It was a new process for me and exciting to make that step. It really opened up doors and showed me the possibilities of combining handmade art with digital processes. That and my No Evil piece being used in the Brandalism project.

There are obviously lots of departure points for your work, but who or what are your biggest sources of inspiration?

There’s a great and varied mix – comics, tribal art, traditional Japanese art, graffiti, all kinds of music…

Vaughn Bodie’s work ethic and philosophy is a big inspiration: “My imaginary universe stimulated me to produce drawings, writings and records of what I thought… I saw and did. Drawing, organizing, and firming up my projections on paper… And that is where it is at. The paper world of the true artist is real, and you know it when you see it. Ain’t that a bitch.”

You were involved in getting permission for the big graffiti pieces in the underpasses linking Hulme with Manchester city centre back in 2011.

Yes, that was a good day. Live music and DJs and the tunnels getting painted up. There was something like 40 artists who came down to take part. It started life as a much smaller event but in the planning stages snowballed into something much bigger.

Do you think general opinions about graffiti are changing in this country?

I think it’s a case of ‘if it’s in the right place’, which is fair enough really. What Manchester lacks is more places to paint that are in the public eye. Most spots here are out of the way and often only seen by other people coming to paint. Many European cities have street art all over the place and it’s recognised by their councils as a growing tourist attraction. I think this country’s councils could learn from that attitude.

You’ve painted outdoors in ‘the right place’ recently for the Jelly Fish Rooms in Chorlton and for Northern Quarter’s Out House MCR. Where do these designs rank in your personal favourites? Do you tend to prefer large-scale murals or small-scale pieces designed for prints?

The Out House one was okay. I spent a while working on the design for that only to realise, a day or so before I was due to paint it, that it was rubbish so had to work on a new one quickly. It could have been much better. Not everything is going to be a success, and when it’s a public piece like that you have to get used to the fact that it’s on display whether you like it or not. The Jelly Fish piece I like. It still needs finishing but the weather this time of year is a factor. I have no preference between murals and small scale stuff. It’s different and I get something different from each. Sometimes it’s good to be out painting with other people. Sometimes shutting myself away for a day or so in my little studio and getting involved in some ideas is great too.

What do you dislike in art?

Conceptual art. Stuff that needs a side of A4 beside it. Boring. Self-indulgent stuff! I did a Fine Art degree (’98-’03). A guy on my course laminated three sheets of A4 paper and stuck it to a wall with some blurb about the possibilities blank paper offered. Piss off. Where’s the joy of creating something beautiful?

Good advice you wish you’d been told earlier?

I was probably given a lot of good advice earlier…

facebook.com/danbirkbeckettbrandalism.org.uk
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- £8.00 Advance: 7pm – 11pm: Music Hall

**FRIDAY 22 MARCH**
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**THURSDAY 28TH FEBRUARY**
- SOLD OUT: 7pm – 11pm: Music Hall

**SATURDAY 23RD FEBRUARY**
- £8.00 Advance: 7pm – 11pm: Music Hall

**TUESDAY 26TH FEBRUARY**
- £12.50 Advance: 7pm – 11pm: Music Hall + special guests

**SUNDAY 24TH MARCH**
- £10.00 Advance: 7pm – 11pm: Music Hall

**FRIDAY 8TH MARCH**
- £7.00 Advance/£8.00 Door: 7pm – 11pm: Music Hall

**SATURDAY 9TH MARCH**
- £10.00 Advance: 7pm – 11pm: Music Hall

**SATURDAY 2ND MARCH**
- £7.50 Advance: 7pm – 11pm: Music Hall

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**SUNDAY 10TH MARCH**
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**FRIDAY 22ND FEBRUARY**
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**WEDNESDAY 20TH MARCH**
- £11.00 Advance: 7pm – 11pm: Music Hall

**WEDNESDAY 27TH FEBRUARY**
- £10.00 Advance: 7pm – 11pm: Music Hall

**WEDNESDAY 20TH MARCH**
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**SUNDAY 17TH MARCH**
- £8.00 Advance: 7pm – 11pm: Music Hall

**TUESDAY 5TH MARCH**
- £8.00 Advance: 7pm – 11pm: Music Hall

**MARCH**

- **STEVEN WILSON (Seated)** – Friday 1st March
- **Foals** – Saturday 2nd March
- **Twisted Wheel** – Thursday 7th March
- **Dan Reed Band** – Saturday 9th March
- **Huey & The New Yorkers + Mike Martin** – Sunday 10th March
- **Claudia Brucken** – Friday 15th March
- **Brantley Gilbert** – Saturday 16th March
- **Eels** – Sunday 17th March
- **Skunk Anansie** – Friday 22nd March
- **The Black Crowes** – Sunday 24th March
- **The Stranglers** – Saturday 30th March

**APRIL**

- **HURTS** – Monday 1st April
- **The Wildhearts + Earth versus The Wildhearts 20th Anniversary Tour**
- **+ Eureka Machines + Baby Godzilla**
- **Everything Everything** – Friday 22nd February
- **Clinic + special guests**
- **Exit Calm + special guests**
- **Fenech-Soler + special guests**
- **David Ford + special guests**
- **Kid Congo & The Pink Monkey Birds**
- **Ulrich Schnauss + special guests**
- **Foy Vance + special guests**
- **Planes + special guests**
- **Triggerfinger + special guests**
- **Josh Kumra + special guests**
- **Me & The Wilds**
- **MELODY’S ECHO CHAMBER + guests**
- **The 1975 + special guests**
- **David J Giles + Tom Law + Edd Plant + Bribry**
- **LostAlone**
- **The Stranglers** – Saturday 30th March
Many would assume that vinyl records are on a collision course with oblivion. The digital revolution having left behind physical artefacts and shepherded us towards a virtual cliff face, the harsh neon lights of economics nosediving over the edge. End of tape, cue static. Game over.

Artists and innovators have been fighting back. Charlie Holt’s Possible Record Sleeves exhibition at Vinyl Exchange (Oldham Street), inspired by the Last Shop Standing documentary by Pip Piper, is one of many initiatives by vinylphiles who don’t want to see their passion pass away. This mentality is reflected in better sales for vinyl in recent years, aided by adding free download codes to record sleeves. According to the Official Chart Company, “Vinyl sales grew for the fifth successive year with a total of 389,000 LPs sold during 2012 – an increase of 15.3% over 2011’s sales of 337,000.”

So, independent record stores, who’ve persevered with vinyl even as technology and time had seemingly forgotten them, should be quids in, right? Not according to Edinburgh based Avalanche Records, which is concerned the figures aren’t necessarily good news for indie retailers, since sales increases are predominantly within the megastore realm – particularly online. Quoting 2012 vinyl sales figures for the year up to October, Avalanche found that chain stores, or ‘specialists’ like HMV and Amazon, shifted 151,324 units, up 26.7% on the 2011 total, while the equivalent tally for indies was 107,350 units – down 9.3% on 2011. But US figures show a different emphasis. The Nielsen Company, who monitor the success of vinyl sales in the US, shows that an indie and non-specialist might not feel the benefit from HMV’s demise, with customers now forced to divert from the high street when shopping for records? If this is the case then Avalanche’s concern could be reversed.

Has an option presented itself? The vinyl trend was unable to balance the books of recent Goliathan administration captive HMV, while losses in their trademark CD sales proved pivotal. Can the humble indie store benefit from HMV’s demise, with customers now forced to divert from the high street when shopping for records? If this is the case then perhaps indies will become less niche than many currently are and end up catering for and soaking up the remaining HMV demand.

Alternatively, of course, HMV’s customers may switch wholeheartedly to the internet marketplace. Or supermarkets. Who knows? Music sales are a fickle beast. And let’s not forget that the total sales of vinyl and CDs are still a hundred times apart, the former increasing to 0.4m in 2012, while the latter dropped to 69.4m. But Rough Trade Records co-founder Stephen Godfroy told ThisIsFakeDIY in January that “Formats aren’t the issue, it’s the quality of retail that’s at the heart of this situation.”

The number of independent record stores in the UK has fallen dramatically from 2,000 to 300 in the last decade, with much of their market share falling prey to the internet, legally or not. It’d be a shame to see those remaining fail to reap any benefit from HMV’s demise. Of course, the record shop – and any sentimentality towards it – has led only a relatively fleeting existence within the last century. The savvy have always had to diversify to survive, and continue to do so. Eastern Bloc (Stevenson Square) now houses a café and lounge, Withington’s Deco offers hot drinks and outdoor seating (weather permitting) and in-store performances are welcomed at many premises. The wider community of record sellers also have the annual Record Store Day to drum up support, even if it’s only one day per year.

Taking a wider view, the fight for vinyl and other recorded music products is being fought by non-traditional, unconventional record stockists. Even beyond the more obvious Northern Quarter staple of music haunts or out of town emporia like KingLego (Chorlton), Double Four (Stockport) or Deco, it is the unconventional stockists offering a platform to grass roots musicians on the shelves. On The Corner (Bleech Road, Chorlton) mirrors Eastern Bloc by striding out from the opposite starting blocks; a café that also sells vinyl. It’s an additional endorsement through association; a taste for smoothies likely extends to a taste for equally refreshing music. Also in Chorlton, Wowie Zowie’s vibrant 60s threads and furnishings are the ideal foil for psychedelic artists such as John Stammers, Homelife and Paddy Steer.

Far from being like a price-undercutting supermarket afterthought, these are stocked because the owners believe in a musician’s cause. These shop owners aren’t swayed by stockists stocking the latest six monthlyfad en masse, which is where HMV sat at the other end of the sensibility spectrum and is potentially one reason they’ve struggled.

Looking at the playing field from the musician’s point of view, although they won’t receive the same exposure as being shelved at HMV, the non-specialist offers unique benefits. It cuts out the bean counting middleman in much the same way as DIY websites such as Bandcamp. It’s not as direct as the post-gig merch stand, but is far more permanent. In a bid to display their wares far and wide, musicians have fallen for the middleman in much the same way as DIY websites such as Bandcamp. It’s not as direct as the post-gig merch stand, but is far more permanent. In a bid to display their wares far and wide, musicians have fallen for the middleman in much the same way as DIY websites such as Bandcamp. It’s not as direct as the post-gig merch stand, but is far more permanent.

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In a bid to display their wares far and wide, musicians have fallen for the middleman in much the same way as DIY websites such as Bandcamp. It’s not as direct as the post-gig merch stand, but is far more permanent.
Tonight’s event at Band On The Wall showcased the latest critically acclaimed releases from Manchester label Gondwana Records. Starting off the evening, GoGo Penguin performed their triumphant debut. Tonight’s event at Band On The Wall showcased the latest critically acclaimed releases from Manchester label Gondwana Records. Starting off the evening, GoGo Penguin performed their triumphant debut, testing the new material from his latest album, Halsall. He performed as a stripped back trio alongside keys player Taz and bass player Esbjörn Svensson. The Edsvagen Trio sound does feel like a point of departure; the quintessential modal harmonies, Bill Laswell’s grooving, flute-flavored piano melodies and Grant Russell’s high, haunting, bowed double bass through effects pedals. But there is more to the hypnotic power of their music than meets the eye.

On the Ashes Twin-inspired ‘Last Words’, drummer Rob Turner animates the trio with restless IDM beats and fills. On the expansive ‘A’shitless’, a similarly dreamy ambition colours Rousell’s spacious harmonies. There are moments of unbridled combustion, such as the anarcho breakdown on 'title track 'Fanfares' and the heroic breakthroughs in the ruminative ‘HF’. For its first record, Fanfares comes across as an impressively complete work. Their music has a darkly atmospheric quality which maintains a feeling of continuity throughout. Beside a few hazzy-eyed words from Grant, they remained immersed in their music and they followed them all the way.

After some choice spiritual jazz from labelmate, saxophonist and DJ Nat Becher, it was time for trumpet and Gondwana founder Matthew Halsall. He performed as a stripped back trio alongside keyboardist Taz Modi (Submotion Orchestra) and Luke Flowers (Cinematic Orchestra) on drums. Maybe he’s waiting until the harp and strings are onstage before testing the new material from his latest album, Fletcher Moss Park. Tonight he selected mainly from his last record, On The 6th, in addition to a well-received rendition of ‘Acrid Avid’ from Jam Shed by Ashes Twin and The Cinematic Orchestra’s ‘Ode to the Big Sea’. Halsall performs with the clinical control of a surgeon, manipulating his instrument’s horn lines through an effects desk to fill out the ensemble with delayed, reverb-tinged layers of sound. Combined with Modis’s languid Fender Rhodes tones, the trio’s acoustic grooves have a rich, textural intensity. Heard live in this format, his music feels more visceral than on record. Sure one of the most exciting drummers in the UK, Luke Flowers’ explosive energy is the ideal contrast to Halsall’s meditative stage presence. A mesmerizing performance from some of the city’s most beloved.

Still in its infancy, Gondwana is attracting a considerable following of music lovers of many persuasions. As you’d expect from an evening at BOTW, there’s a cross-pollination of many influences and genres. Or, as Gilles Peterson is fond of saying, joining the musical dots.

An air of mystery surrounds the legacy of the late Delia Derbyshire, despite the distinctive recognizability of her realisation of the Doctor Who theme in 1963. Employed by the BBC’s Maida Vale-based Radiophonic Workshop to create atmospheric aural backdrops for their programming, she pioneered the manipulation of sounds created by everyday objects through stretching, cutting and looping the reels of tape they were recorded on. Retracing with the advent of the synthesiser, which she hated, she made no more music until a brief flurry in 2000 prior to her passing.

This celebration in Manchester, curated by three artists known as the Delta Darlings, sought to promote recognition of Delia Derbyshire as a pioneer of electronic music. The setting was as apt as 267 tapes found in her attic (three paper artifacts) are housed in the bowels of John Rylands Library, tended by film director David Butler. The day began with The Delian Mode, 25 minutes of film featuring snippets of interviews with associates and visual accompaniments to Delia’s music, offering insights into her sound-making process. Delia’s voice was present throughout, providing a narrative thread. The film raises several further questions about her life and choices its focus wisely. The audience remained relatively shy for a Q&A with the film’s director Karla Blake, preceding a lengthy panel discussion by Delbyshire experts. Mark Ayres, former custodian of the Delia archive, dominated proceedings with eye-opening tales of the BBC’s treatment of the Radiophonic Workshop’s tapes and conditions leading to the department’s demise in 1998. Butler then explained why none of the digital archives have been issued commercially yet, citing issues of copyright and even identifying whether Delia herself performed on recordings.

The day’s highlight was a listening session of some publicly unheard pieces, truly validating the claims of Delia’s pioneering work. Having the opportunity to just listen allowed the audience to lose themselves in gloriously bastardised sounds and aural backdrops that bled through the walls they didn’t hear the flailing version seen here tonight. They get the quiet bossa nova version. Through my contrition I will remember the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection. I picked up the battered Brasso shaker with my departed father in-law’s broad chisel handle, not the recently fashioned pre-selection.
REVIEWER – TOM BELSHAW.

APOLLO.

At Yourself’ that you could really see his true floaty potential. His latest Manchester’s Synkro has been forging his name as a garage and 2-step minimalist, ambient, forward thinking, upfront, future bass music. Before reared its head a few years back and welcome to the subject at hand; Aphex Twin and Fennesz adapted into ambient and drone soundscapes. School of classical musicians, which included the likes of Steve Reich music has been indulging in since the 1960s. The New York Hypnotic Allow ing simple musical motifs to speak volumes is something modern eating half a tube of Pringles or watching no more than ten minutes of in restraint. The simple act of holding a little back can open up whole Mildly tedious electronic fad or no, there’s a certain amount of beauty where we had no idea it was around. They’re both essentially the same through a period where we thought we liked minimal techno or a period Paradoxically, minimalism has a lot going for it. We all either went

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ACCEPTANCE.

REVIEWER – TON BELSHAW.

By way of introduction, there are certainly more creative and less predictable approaches to the genre. Gnod pull no punches in their pursuit of a collective consciousness. Creating their otherworldly vision, rarely deviating from a groove once sinking their teeth into it. In fact, it’s more than half an hour into the record before they let a guitar solo slip through the net. When they finally do change key (usually after several minutes), the effort is that of a satellite being propelled from its orbit, spiralling off towards the deepest recesses of inner space. The trumpeter ‘Man On The Wire’ makes the most of this trick with a sin-along chorus and a fist-raised sense of urgency.

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ROCKET RECORDS.

REVIEWER – DAVE FIRTH.

Chaudelande ep, previously available only in a limited run of vinyl last year, as one record. It is a collection which offers a fine introduction to Manchester’s kosmische praxis in all its psychedelic glory. Recorded in France, Chaudelande has Gnod in more structured form than previous incarnations, utilizing repetition as a dRAMa device with which to catapult themselves (and any waking listener) beyond the mundane facade of the waking world. They single-mindedly latch onto a primal riff and keep pounding it out until something happens. A solid backbones is provided throughout by the sti le rhythm section; drums and bass entwined in perfectly interlocking grooves. Layers of guitar feedback and angle grinder synth add sonic depth. The vocals sit low in the mix, processed to oblivion in an eerie torture chamber and floating past like the megaphone rantings of a cornered cult leader.

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 GNOD.

REVIEWER – JAMIE GROOVEMENT.

Paper Tiger kick off 2013 with a double whammy – this EP (their second for the esteemed Wah Wah 45’s label) with the frankly massive Foreign Beggars, and the announcement of upcoming work with one of the realest rappers out there, Stones Throw’s Homeboy Sandman. Paper Tiger have never sounded standard, and ‘Come Correct’ is no exception, with echoes of dub and all sorts of other sounds powered by that killer Tiger trademark – live instrumentation. Throw the relentless energy and pinpoint flow of the Beggars over that and you’ve got a winner. B-side ‘Sidetracked’ sees LV-collaborator Joshua (behind the calm over and turn up) and Fulgeance build up. A murky remake comes courtesy of PT’s Brooklyn counterparts Archi Pelago, while the dual MPC master Fulgeance snaps the neck of ‘Come Correct’ with an electronic overhaul.

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Paper Tiger.

COME CORRECT EP.

WAH WAH 45S.

REVIEWER – IAN PENNINGTON.

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RAIKES PARADE.

CROSSING PATHS TO FIND NEW FOOTPRINTS.

TESLA TAPES.

REVIEWER – IAN PENNINGTON.

Eclectic is a word bandied around with a fair level of frequency but is fitting for RAIKES Parades输出. The one-off weight cohort is a regular with Herbal Sessions sound system, sound engineers for Gnod, and keeps up his own solo explorations. His quirky touch with this EP is the circularity of the overall recording that lends itself to immediate repeat via its looped cassette tape release format.

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LITERATURE THIEVES.

MOON STORIES FROM THE GLASS MOUNTAIN.

RED DEER CLUB RECO.

REVIEWER – DOM KAY.

Having frequented Manchester’s live scene last year, angelic all-girl folk trio Literature Thieves have just signed to local label Red Deer Club. Each track is awash with swirling harmonies, made evident with the first moments of opener ‘Happy’. They lace with wonderfully pulsating percussion and shamelessly bouncy guitar, ukulele and mandolin; particularly on the quirky ditty that is ‘They Say’, the vivacious ‘Spider’ and the foot-stomping new ‘Waves That Weave’. The songs fit perfectly together as an EP and with the stripped-back sound they do well not to overpower the melodies or assured lyrics. ‘Pearls in The Orchard’ is a fine example. Some areas could do with a tweak or two in their sound and delivery, but this is a majestic and confident debut, and a gorgeous taste of the Literature Thieves all-folk sound.

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The Age of Glass has quickly established themselves as Manchester’s premiere mischief makers, fusing feel-good riffs and trills with electro-funk stampedes and sounds percussionist Nick Froud captures in an instrument stolen from the future. Fat, buoyant, uplifting beats saturate the Glass soundscape, while wide-eyed Rory Charles waltzes and scats his way through take of love in a lost metropolis, like a burnished beast in a sequined cage.

Their flamboyance and energy has knocked crowds sideways and robo-chic dancers in gimp suits have even been thrown into the mix. Songs like ‘Bound To The City’ bounce and ooze across Stan Lipnitski’s funk-fuelled bass lines, conjuring scenes of cosmopolitan drones wading through digital mud, shimmering in sync with spontaneous synth supernovas. ‘Aliens’ fizzes and glides through surreal static landscapes, radiating stellar harmony, and ‘Here We Are’ descends into a booty shaking euphoria of epic proportions.

‘The Age Of Glass’ - what does it mean?

Rory: It was a buzzup between that and Dad’s Lipstick. Some friends are still upset about the choice. We used Purple Aki for a bit but a mate from the Wirral got the fear and thought Aki might come pay us a visit. I think Age Of Glass represents the idea that people’s lives are becoming increasingly transparent and on display. We got the inspiration from a book Nick was reading by Nicole Krauss called History of Love.

When did you join forces?

Nick: About two and a half years ago, me and Rory got together at my place, looped some beautiful melodies over electronic beats and burbles, re-layered, delayed and squelched until hours had passed and with bleary eyes we decided we probably had something. Then Stan came and completed the line-up.

What was the first track you wrote?

Rory: It was one called ‘Money’s On Top’. It ended with a dirty techno section that sent everyone nuts, which made us think that might be the way to go.

You’re very theatrical and love a bit of dress-up, sometimes involving dancers. Is performance key?

Rory: Definitely, it’s all escapism and fun. I’m addicted to a rapidly falling apart sequin jacket, which I might just wear until there’s only one sequin left and then think about a change...

Stan: I like things that radiate energy and ooze good vibes. Being on stage gives you the ability to throw ideas into the crowd and say, “There ya go!”

The Glass sound has some bad ass bass. What’s the secret of the funk, Stan?

Half the time bass players go unnoticed in bands, so I thought if I got a massive amp and played funk grooves really loud then it wouldn’t happen to me. I was also obsessed with Funk (as most bassists are) and when I was starting up as a musician and funk makes me want to jiggle my ass. If the audience is dancing I want to be dancing too.

What other projects are you involved with?

Stan: DJ and co-promote The Satellite State Disko, dealing with all things Balkan beat; and I also sing and play bass with The Organgrinder - porn-funk, hip hop and Middle Eastern surf.

What’s that contraption that thuds and bleeps when you tickle it, Nick?

It’s called the Zenium LT. It’s a ridiculously responsive MIDI controller made from solid wood with 25 sensors that trigger sounds in my computer. I decided some time back that I was tired of pre-recorded material when playing live and wanted to have an instrument I could practice and get good at. I love it because I still get to create big fat electronic sounds while jamming in a very human way - react to other musicians, change tempo and improvise. All these things are much more difficult if you are working with pre-recorded beats.

What other instruments do you play?

Nick: I can play guitar, cigar box guitar, uke, didgeridoo, tables, springs, cameras and truly soldered electronic disaster areas. I’m obsessed with sound, listen for it everywhere and am often found with a portable recorder hitting, shaking, bowing and plucking interesting objects. The sounds heard live are gathered together from many sources, a combination of ‘found sounds’ and synthesised percussion.

What do you think of the Manchester music community?

Rory: It’s like that coat you had as a kid with loads of pockets - outside pockets, inside pockets, bigger inside pockets. It takes time to find them all in the rain, but they’ll all keep your hands warm and be full of goodies.

Your favourite local bands?

Nick: Honeyfeet and all their offshoots and incarnations are shockingly talented. Lost Rites (aka Drop Productions) are really on it right now! They’ve been busy converting a warehouse into a music hub with practice room and studio space these past few months. There’s too many to name them all...

Rory, you’ve got an unconventional set of pipes. Have you ever tried yodelling?

There was a lost week once a while back. I came to to find myself striding through mountain snow armed with a musket, wearing nothing but a cowbell and howling like a bloodhound. Turned out I was only a stone’s throw from the Alpine village of Zermatt. There may be some underlining influence in there somewhere.

What were your highlights of 2012?

Nick: Theugis in Holland were insane. We supported our friends Will And The People in Amsterdam and Hangelo. It’s definitely given us a taste for the road.

Rory: And I got to sign my first boob – a milestone in any artist’s career.

What are your plans for this year?

Stan: Finish our album, then tour.

Rory: The doll range is coming out. Stan’s has X-ray vision and farts if you squeeze its belly.

When can we behold your mirth-making in the future?

Stan: Check out our gig calendar on the Facebook page. There’s a lot planned for March.

Where should the unfamiliar seek your beats?

Rory: Come and see us live. It’s what we do.

thageofglass.com
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That’s how I see theatre going. I like theatre to be theatrical. 

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businesses to come along and say, “This is what we’re looking for when 

Why do you think Manchester’s fringe theatre scene is so lively at the moment? 

There are the theatre schools for a start: Salford, MMU which is an 
adcredited drama school; Manchester University has a drama 
department and a working theatre, The Arden. So you’ve got all these 
actors pouring out of all these schools every year, wanting to put stuff 
on in the city where they trained. And there’s a massive TV industry with 
Red Productions, the BBC and Baby Cow all based here. A lot of stuff 
gets cast in Manchester. 

How can you explain the increasing number of people getting involved in fringe here? 

In Manchester there’s a real sense of community, collaboration, and support. It’s amazing that pretty much anyone can put anything on 
if they’ve got the inclination. That’s what fringe should be about – 
extperimenting, and enjoying, and failing, and getting it right, and not 
quite knowing what you’re doing. However, it also means that there’s no 
quality control; if there are ten fringe shows over a month, and nine of 
those are awful – are you going to go and then see the tenth, or are you 
going to go: “All fringe is crap”? So I’m worried that the lack of quality 
control might affect people’s opinions about what fringe is. 

Could it be that the city has reached a saturation point? 

No, because it ebbs and flows. People will follow trends and 
opportunities. They see someone else opening a fringe venue: The Lass 
O’Grorie opens the Salmon Room upstairs. It’s a tiny little space but it 
works and it sells out because they’ve got a good PR team and create 
a really good buzz. Someone else goes, “Hold on – if they’re doing it, 
why can’t we?” In a depression people start rolling their sleeves up and 
going: “Well, there’s no work, what can we do? Let’s make our own 
work,” and that will shift and change again. I don’t think it’s saturated, I 
think it’s very healthy. But it doesn’t mean everyone will survive. 

That said, Lucia’s outlook is positive, and future plans for House of 
Orphans include collaborations across all the arts. 

houseoforphans.com

At a time when the Arts Council budget is being cut year-on-year, and some local authorities are looking to cut their culture budgets altogether, the future for subsidised theatre looks uncertain. In spite of – or maybe because of – this, Manchester’s fringe theatre scene is thriving. Last year, Lucia Cox’s one-woman show, Blackbird, was nominated for a Manchester Theatre Award and selected for the re:play festival. This year, her House of Orphans production company has two productions at re:play festival. The Bubble is a co-production with Eat Theatre, and Can’t Stand Up For Falling Down (a co-production with Unholy Mess, in which she also performs). The latter focuses on the lives of three women who are all connected by one man. Through a series of cleverly-constructed, interwoven monologues, we see their lives gradually converge, with dramatic consequences. With some bold choices and a committed cast, under the direction of Lucy Allan the piece was pitched just right.

What does it mean to be a part of the elite group of nine fringe shows selected by The Library Theatre for re:play festival?

I don’t feel like it’s an elite group at all. I don’t think one show’s better than another show. I think The Library is really good at understanding the diversity of what’s on offer, rather than it being la crème de la crème. There are lots of shows that haven’t got through that were very good. I don’t think it’s a competition. It’s a festival, it’s a celebration. The standard this year is just incredible, and it feels very nice to be part of that.

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Considering Arts Council budget cuts and local authority austerity measures, is inclusion in these nationally-recognised festivals all the more valuable in helping to secure what funding is available?

As far as I know, Box Of Tricks got funding for My Arms after having it in 24/7 festival last year. Now they’ve got into re:play, they’re taking it on a regional tour, and they got funding for that. I’m presuming that the re:play tick next to their name will have helped somewhat.

What about House of Orphans?

I don’t know because I’ve never personally applied for funding. It’s always been something that’s scared me because the paperwork’s so vast. That’s the plan for this year. I’m trying to look for investors as well – that’s something I’d be more interested in.

Do The Library Theatre or re:play assist in terms of submitting applications or finding potential investors?

I don’t think there’s anything in place like that at the moment. On the middle Sunday they have a Networking Day. Last year it was all the fringe venues. It would be really interesting to try and get local businesses to come along and say, “This is what we’re looking for when we want to invest.”

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That said, Lucia’s outlook is positive, and future plans for House of Orphans include collaborations across all the arts. That’s how I see theatre going. I like theatre to be theatrical.
As a kid, going to the cinema always seemed like a magical experience. The smell of popcorn, the rush to get to our seats and the dimming of the lights all added to the wonder and excitement of entering another world on screen. However, having finally grown up, I'm starting to wonder what all the fuss was about.

Walking into pretty much any multiplex now, I'm not greeted with the memories of my youth but a lethargic teenager who overcharges me for pretty much everything. Even the buildings seem to have changed. What used to seem like impressive and grand entertainment complexes now look outdated and crass money-making machines.

Then I realise that perhaps I'm not thinking of my childhood. I mean, a lot can't have changed in ten years. Maybe I'm just feeling nostalgic. What used to seem like impressive and grand entertainment complexes for pretty much everything. Even the buildings seem to have changed. Memories of my youth but a lethargic teenager who overcharges me for pretty much everything.

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The task of creating a state-of-the-art digital cinema environment from scratch in a room with no electrics, piles of rubbish and peeling walls should not be underestimated. A team of passionate volunteers and tradesmen managed to work tirelessly for the cause and generously offered up their time and skills. Sam told me that the whole project opened up his eyes to the fact that there are “a lot of really great, creative, skilled, experienced people who are out of work and need something to do.”

One of the first things Sam did while leading this independent cinematic revolution was put up a board for volunteers to write down their own cinema memories and it quickly filled up with interesting stories. Quite a few contained details about an usher nicknamed ‘Lurch’ and even talked about being able to pay to get into the cinema with clean jam jars.

Sam had been part of pop-up cinema projects before but was glad that the opportunity finally came to do something with a more permanent, longer lasting effect. In fact, the cinema has already started to become part of the fabric of Moston and a supportive partnership has been forged with FC United, who are looking to build their new stadium across the road. Volunteer Kay Philips suggested the idea of doing a matinee screening for kids of the parents who, like herself, also volunteer at the football club. As fun as it might be for the kids, she also liked the idea of being an ice cream lady.

The local community have warmly embraced the screenings and events that have already taken place, although Sam did stress to me that the whole project is a “marathon rather than a sprint.” A really interesting idea he had for a future event was a festival all about mining-related films and activities. The idea of screening films like My Valley and Kes, as well as holding Minecraft gaming tournaments, seems like an innovative way of using culture to celebrate the contemporary social history of Moston.

Perhaps in the near future we might be able to see and experience a ‘Small Cinema’ in nearly every community across the North West. However, until then, you can always sample the delights of The Plaza in Stockport and join in the fun at the Small Cinema in Moston.

stockportplaza.co.uk
smallcinema.re-dock.org
There’s no secret about the whereabouts of Afflecks Palace. I’d estimate that a 30 mile radius of Manchester is aware of it by their early teens.

Quite what lies inside might be a different mystery entirely. It takes a handful of ways to begin to understand the layout of this multi-trader leviathan, moored amidst the Northern Quarter and towering over its thurifera like a beacon for independent traders.

There has always been an emphasis on alternative cultures, and punk and metal sub-genres among the more noticeably represented outlets. Entering via Oldham Street, which can forget the first time they saw the mass of band t-shirts, badges and gothic poster designs opposite them on ascending the first flight on many stairs. Then, curiously, you dive deep into the bygone era before supermarket delis.

Set over three floors for over 12 decades, the oldest art store needed to ply their craft and sullen art.

Where do they go to shop? It’s Fred Aldous that provides.

FRÉD ALDÔUS.

On the verge of Chorlton, just sliding into Whalley Range territory is The Hillary Step. No, we’re not talking about the last push to reach the summit of Everest here. The Hillary Step we mean is more of a pleasant bar. This little watering hole always has on offer a wide range of real ales from local breweries, a carefully thought out supply of bottled, continental beers and food including expertly prepared慢 and cheese platters.

As if this isn’t enough to entice you through the door, the Hillary Step provides live music most Sunday nights. From jazz to country, the live entertainment adds a pulse to the relaxed and friendly atmosphere. This is a place where you can easily while away the night away not much doing other than enjoying the finer things in life.

FRED ALDÔUS.

Aside from shops, there are hairdressers, cafes and the Three Minutes Theatre (aka 3MT), which is a frontliner in its level of support for local fringe theatre projects.

INSIGHT FILM FESTIVAL.

Afflecks Palace.

52 CHURCH STREET, M4.

AFFLECKS.COM

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INSIGHT FILM FESTIVAL.

Z-ARTS, 335 STRETFORD ROAD, M15.

INSIGHTFESTIVAL.CO.UK

Insight Film Festival was originally staged in 2007 at The city Art Cafe following John Forrest’s initial idea to encourage filmmaking around the topic of ‘Faith’. The University of Manchester’s film lecturer, David Butler, was able to support it and the rest, as they say, is history. The festivals are now staged since every two years, with 2011’s event attracting an audience of over 400 people. It has now migrated to Z-ARTS, where filmmakers are invited to interpret what can be a controversial subject matter from many perspectives, such as religious, humanist and atheist. Part of the raison d'être is to encourage debate and wider cultural understanding and a monetary prize is offered in one of the categories.

The three-day event will culminate in an awards ceremony, with films being judged by a panel including filmmaker Tina Ghavari, producer Gary Kurtz, reviewer Peter Malone, BBC's New Writing Manager Henry JF Sambrook, Empire magazine editor-at-large and the Hillary Step, cushioned in between the fireplace shop and the Antiques Village, a hearty, little snug in the shape of a café-restaurant.

For the various art and coffee lovers pop up all the this issue.

New girls, new ideas and unmissable pop up all the time, such is the fertile ground for creative entrepreneurship. The Burlesque inspired fashion label Pretty Disturbia is one of the latest newcomers to this second floor, solidifying its Manchester origin with a boutiques.

Sure, the site has had its issues with the rising rent costs synonymous with the Northern Quarter. It took a petition to buy the building, but for the time being at least they have

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11. INSIGHT FILM FESTIVAL 2013
12. MANCHESTER ACADEMY 1, 2, 3 & CLUB
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14. WOWIE ZOWIE
15. BATTERY PARK JUICE BAR
16. THE NOOK & CRANNY
17. ÉPICERIE LUDO
18. KEN FOSTER’S CYCLE LOGIC
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