

Waking up to Something New



by David Howarth

My earliest musical memory was my Auntie buying me 'I Wanna Hold your Hand' at the age of 6, obviously she liked it but it was nothing like anything else we played in our house at the time. My parents were, and still are, completely passed by music of the popular age, but that's another story.

In by early teens the reel to reel used to be turned on for Alan Freeman on a Sunday night for "Pick of the Pops" which I used to tape every week, with such classics as "Blockbuster" or "Leader of the Gang". In fact I think these musical memories carried me through my mid teens until I went to university, there a complete clash of cultures from Bob Dylan to Thin Lizzy, from Wings to Joan Armatrading and then punk arrived which crossed all social barriers.

It was these musical memories that sustained me for many years into my 20's and 30's, until my son started to convince my wife, Geraldine, that some of his stuff was half decent and she after much resistance convinced me that there was a lot of good music out there. Instead of me waxing lyrically to my son about how great the Buzzcocks were, he pushed me into Green Day, although we both loved the Sex Pistols.

Where is this going you may ask, well I thought I would give you my perspective on some recent music that will enhance your drive to work, day by the pool, running performance in the Gym or whatever you find to do in Saudi to pass the time.

My current favourites in no particular order are

The Kooks - Inside In Inside out – excellent first album by British Band, top songs are 'Naïve' and 'She moves in her own way'. Recently had it delivered to my sister in New Zealand, where they are even more backward than Saudi Arabia. She loved it. Has a bit of a reggae feel to it but lots of sing-along songs for the Bahrain trips.



Kaiser Chiefs - Truly Madly Angry Mob – Second album by these guys from Leeds. The first album included "I Predict a Riot" which could be heard in most high streets on a Friday night. This album has its fair share of catchy lyrics but the highlights are Ruby, The Heat Dies down and High Royds which happens to be my ringtone, which really confuses the Saudis on the bus from the plane in Jeddah.



Maximo Park - My Earthly Pleasures- This is really good, the band are from Newcastle and are playing a number of the festivals this summer. The first album was excellent and this is even better. A very mature sound with interesting lyrics. "Our Velocity" is also Geraldine's ringtone if you hear it in any of the various malls that she visits during the day give her a wave.



Arctic Monkeys – Your Favourite Worst Nightmare-

Follow up to their hugely successful album "Whatever you say I am that's what I'm not". This is a bit different as the band moves on from the hard edged spontaneous sound of the first album, but some cracking tracks such as 505 and "Brianstorm". This was the first album I downloaded from Itunes so HMV didn't get my money this time.

Razorlight- Razorlight- Went to see them at Easter, this was my first concert since 1991 (Simply Red) once I got used to the fact that all bar 3 of the 10000 people were significantly younger than me, it was great to be back and we really must do this again. Great album with top tracks "America", "In the Morning" and "Pop Song 2006", the lead singer was/is going out with Kirsten Dunst and was allegedly caught on camera taking her on pub crawls around Camden. Seems like a top bloke. By the time this is published I may have been persuaded to go to Belfast to see Snow Patrol in September, hopefully not.

Fall Out Boy - Infinity on High - a bit different to the others with a harder rockier edge and of course they are American. But you can drive even faster to "It's not a scene it's an Arms race".



Others to watch out for::

Air Traffic- Fractured Life (Top new band from the South Coast of England)

Biffy Clyro - Puzzle (Glasgow band been around a while but this is their best album yet)

Interpol - Our love to admire (I think they are Aussie, previous albums pretty good)

Editors - An End Has a start (A more melancholy album after The Back Room which was great, worth a try.)

All these mentioned have great tracks and are fairly new, please give me your verdict. You never know one of these could appear on Alison Messum's next quiz night for the St George's society so don't say you haven't been warned.

Editors Note:

I know that David is trying to give me an education here. I confess that I didn't get one of those



music questions in the afore mentioned quiz but here's another one to watch out for.

Check out a band called Transistor State on www.myspace.com/transistorstate Music Week said: "they are the missing link between Radiohead, DJ Shadow and The Beta Band; they have a heavy dose of originality and integrity" Do I have a personal interest in promoting them? You can bet on it...

but you'll have to ask to find out any more!