

# Music Now

Pop-punk, hardcore screamo, contemplative spoken-word, melancholic piano, hip-hop and more, it's all happening in Scotland this month

Words: Tallah Brash

Local Music

April was another busy month for releases, and we've found it hard to keep up. There were new albums from **Withered Hand**, **Constant Follower** and **Jordan Stanley**, and a brand new mixtape, *LIFE WAS SHIT, IT STILL IS NOW*, from **Psweatpants**. Singles, too, landed like they were going out of fashion. Highlights included **NANI**'s sublime *Limbo*, **El Ghou**'s propulsive *Head Song*, the lilting *Groovy Itch* from **Berta Kennedy**, the gorgeous storytelling of **Alice Faye**'s *Jamie*, **Sonotto**'s comedic elastic breakfast bop *The Dilemma*, **Neon Waltz**'s anthemic *Thoughts / Dreams / Regrets*, **Elisabeth Elektra**'s 80s-tinged earworm *The Dream*, and newcomers **neverfine** have caught our attention with *Silhouettes*, straight out of the Italians *Do It Better* playbook.

This month, things aren't slowing down. Earlier in the mag (p28) we speak to **Comfort** about new record *What's Bad Enough?*, while on p35, **Cloth**'s Rachael and Paul Swinton talk us through their latest album, *Secret Measure*; read our full review of that on p52, before checking p53 for words on the exciting debut LP from Edinburgh's **Eyes of Others**, baggy, trippy and acid-drenched in all the right places.

Ever wondered what it would sound like if The Futureheads, Devo and Blink-182 had triplets but they were Scottish? Well, imagine no more. On 19 May, **Slime City** enter the chat with their all-at-once familiar yet unfamiliar sound on *Slime City Death Club*. Opening with the gentle wash of the Windows XP startup sound, this Glasgow trio of Michaels quickly knock us for six with the punchy two-and-a-half-minute *Last Generation Guaranteed To Die (In a Traditional Sense)*, perfectly setting the scene for the next 11 songs full of whoops, tongue-in-cheek takes, computer samples and more big riffs than should be legal.

Featuring classics like *You and Everybody That You Love* and *Will One Day Die*, *Dial-Up Internet's The Purest Internet*, *I.D.S.T.* and *Glasgow Is a Shitehole*, on new cuts, bold and brash existential pop-punk is still the order of the day. As the riffs continue, so too do the smirk-worthy song titles (see: *Algorithm Is a Dancer* and *I Feel It Best When I Feel Nothing At All*), while *If I Eat Myself Will I Double In Size Or Disappear Completely* offers some breathing space on the record, although leaves our



Photo: Mithaela Bodlovic

Imogen Stirling

brains a bit fried as one colleague suggests: "Wouldn't we just be the same size, we'd just be inside out?" Um, maybe, idk?

More big riffs can be found this month on **Moni Jitchell**'s *Unreal*, with the comedy in this instance stopping at their name. This

hardcore screamo two-piece make a serious amount of good noise, the kind that hasn't been heard in Glasgow since Bronto Skylift. Set for release on 24 May, syncopated beats, time signatures hard to get your head around, often unintelligible screeched vocals, double kick-drumming, and 12-string guitar shredding combine to make for a chaotic sludge of unreal brain soup. At some points it's hard to believe this pair will make it to the end of each song in one piece, but fasten your seatbelt and trust you're in good hands.

From rip-roaring shreds to the contemplative spoken word of **Imogen Stirling**'s *Love The Sinner* (5 May). Set atop a gorgeously intricate backdrop of music from producer Sarah

Carton, Stirling tackles the seven deadly sins across its seven tracks, with characters Sloth, Envy and Greed etc helping to explore everything from political apathy and everyday mundanity to the complexities of feminism. 'Wrath can't understand why she's angry all the time', Stirling declares on the do that/don't do that rage of *Wraith*. 'Don't take up space, take up space, be a boss bitch / Be a feminist, don't be a feminist, don't call yourself a feminist [...] Go out alone, don't go out alone / Don't

walk home alone, text me when you get home'.

While not an original concept, *Love The Sinner* is a commanding piece of work. However, the influence of Kae Tempest is easy to hear, to the point that some may find it distracting, but those willing to lean in will reap rewards aplenty in the perfect interplay between Carton's considered and precise production and Stirling's effortlessly paced and thoughtful social commentary.

On 1 May, **North Atlantic Oscillation** return with *United Wire*, a record hard to put into words. Playing right through with no breaks, it's an affecting chameleonic patchwork of captivating compositions, glitchy sounds and gorgeous vocals, with the kind of melancholic piano lines and electronics Thom Yorke would be proud to call his own. ngl, we're a bit in love with this.

Elsewhere, on 5 May **Erland Cooper** releases *Folded Landscapes*, further exploring his relationship with the environment, while Glasgow rapper **P CASO** releases *Mise En Scene*, a bouncy seven-track EP produced by Kalum. Later, Edinburgh indie outfit **Swim School** release *Duality* (25 May), **Billy Got Waves** completes his triumvirate with *Rocket Boy 3/3* (26 May), featuring lots of lush production from S-Type, and **Tzusan** and **Shogun** release the collaborative *Lead Wetsuit Schematics* (30 May). Plus there are brand new singles from **PLASTICINE**, **Nikhita** and **Carla J. Easton**.



Image courtesy of Moni Jitchell

Moni Jitchell



Photo: Chris Hogge

Slime City

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