

Something for the Weekend



LAST CHANCE . . . with Puppets' Alex

By CHRIS SWEENEY

MILES KANE had the pedal to the metal last year, powering his solo career into overdrive — but he's NOT easing off.

Everything the Scouse rock 'n' roller touches right now seems to turn to gold and he wants to keep his good run going.

New single First Of My Kind was made for a laugh — but it has ended up being a big hit.

Miles, 26, said: "I wanted to do it as a little keepsake for the fans."

"We did it when we got back from Australia supporting Arctic Monkeys in January."

"We had a few days off before going on tour in France — we did it in four days."

"I wasn't really thinking of it as a proper single, so there was no pressure on it to chart or get played on the radio."

"It was about putting a great song out there and letting people come to it, so they've decided what it's done."

"And that's great as now we're on Radio 1 and all the other stations."

"Obviously I'm buzzing, as every song you put out you want to do well."

This time last year, Miles was seen as an unknown entity with everything to prove.

He'd flirted with success in indie band The Rascals and teamed up with best pal Alex Turner as The Last Shadow Puppets.

But debut album Colour Of The Trap came out last May and won an army of fans.

Alex admitted: "It feels like I've turned a lot of people's heads and got them on board."

"With The Puppets and The Rascals, it sort of happened but it didn't — I took those ups and downs on board to find out who I am."

"It might sound really over the top, but I couldn't be here now doing my solo stuff if I hadn't gone through all that, as I don't think I would have found myself."

He added: "I didn't take any time off and I don't want to until I've done this next album and I've f---ing had it."

"Things are great, it's exciting times for me."

"If I felt like it, I'd take a break but I don't want to stop the momentum. I don't want to take time out, I love playing live too much."

"I feel at home on stage and miss it when I don't gig — I've not done anything for a month and I'm itching to get back to it."

Miles won't have to wait much longer.

He starts a UK tour this month, which hits Glasgow's



CLOSE CALL . . . The Rascals

SOLO STAR . . . Miles says the experience he had in groups has helped him win fans in his own right

I love clocking up the Miles

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Barrowland on April 21 before heading to Dundee and Inverness.

The Barrowland gig is a bit of a milestone for him.

He explained: "A year ago we were supporting Beady Eye there."

"So to go back and headline it, I can't wait for that one."

Miles is going to meet up soon with Modfather Paul Weller for a studio session — and he has already decided on the sound he wants on his next album.

He said: "It's going to be a real banging record, the blue-

print of it is rock'n'roll with call and response vocals."

"That's the way I want to go and I've got the vision for it."

"I've been working hard to get the songs in shape."

"I want them done over the summer and to get the record out in the autumn. That is what it's all about."

● **Pre-order The First Of My Kind EP, which is being released for Record Store Day on April 21, and get four tickets at mileskane.com**



NEW MUSIC
BY JIM GELLATLY

CHA CHA HEELS

WHO: Miss Marks (vocals violin), Cragg Stromo (vocals/percussion/megaphone), Mr Brown (bass), Castor (guitar), James Richmond (drums), Starky (keys)

WHERE: Dundee

FOR FANS OF: Scissor Sisters, Blondie, Goldfrapp

JIM SAYS: Local scenester Daisy Dundee introduced me to Cragg from Cha Cha Heels at Drouthy Neebors in Dundee last Friday after previously sending me their debut EP.

Unfortunately I'd overlooked it. Well, that was a major error of judgment on my part and I apologised for not playing any of their music on the radio.

Cragg's response made me even more sure that I'd missed out. He told me that they mixed their music with a bit of cabaret, and that the live show was where it's really at.

I've not seen them live, but judging by the tracks I was sent, it must be some show!

The note that originally accompanied Cha Cha Heels' EP said: "It is a collection of five original tracks varying in genre, and lyrically tells tales of social realism, jaded youth and broken hearts."

I like that as a statement of intent, but there is a recurring strand through the music to mark it out as the work of a single act.

So many times, when acts



PI: ROSS WERYK

have told me they cover a range of genres, they end up sounding schizophrenic. They try to appeal to everybody, but end up appealing to no one.

That's not true with Cha Cha Heels, who create a wonderfully fresh take on pop music.

Lead track on the EP, Red Light Lady, is a massive electro-pop rocker, somewhere between The Black Keys and Scissor Sisters.

There's stacks of style about Cha Cha Heels, but thankfully they back it up with content.

Cragg told me: "We want people to listen to our music and come to our shows, and forget about everything other than the moment they are in."

"No troubles. Total escapism. We just want to entertain people and for them to enjoy our music and shows."

I'd been drawn to Drouthy's to see Kates — Blair Kerr and Grant Dickson — play their first gig in eight years.

Grant then contacted me on Sunday to say Blair had died suddenly. He was just 40.

I've paid tribute to Blair elsewhere (including a podcast dedicated him), but I mention him here as Cha Cha Heels were exactly the sort of band he loved.

MORE: facebook.com/chachaheelsuk

● **Jim'll be playing Cha Cha Heels on InDubs on Uncut — Sunday 7-10pm on Clyde 1, Forth One, Northsound 1, Radio Borders, Tay FM, West FM & West Sound FM.**

I solve crises and make dog puns

POLITICS is everywhere. You can try to avoid it (*like I do*) or get stuck right in, à la topical knowledge-merchant Andy Zaltzman.

He graduated in classics from Oxford — now that's proper stuff. Andy is also one half of hit satirical podcast The Bugle, alongside John Oliver from The Daily Show With Jon Stewart. The Radio 4 star performs at The Underbelly in London on Wednesday . . . but not before answering our questions.

The PM wants raunchy pop videos to get an 18 rating. What do you make of this?

More effective would be to make it compulsory for all scantily-clad porn-lite pop videos to include a Queen Victoria impersonator sitting in the corner, tutting disgustingly.

Abu Hamza has lost his legal battle to stay in the UK. How do you feel about that?

He's increasingly unlikely to feature on any TV countdowns of 100 Greatest Britons. And any man who chooses to have a hook for a hand despite the advantages of being (a) alive in the 21st Century and (b) not a fictional character, clearly should be treated with considerable suspicion.

You're a Political Animal. What real animals would you liken to UK Cabinet members?

PM's Questions can give the impression that politicians have a 99 per cent DNA match with hyenas

and/or unfed gibbons. The NHS reforms appear to have been drafted by an infinite number of monkeys with an infinite number of malfunctioning typewriters. And in advising people to stockpile flammable substances Francis Maude displayed the political wisdom and delicacy of a rhinoceros.

Who do people tell you you look like?

The list is long, and at certain gigs has been aggressively communicated. Stand-outs include Queen Elizabeth I and Shirley Temple, and Simon & Garfunkel — which was at best only half valid.

What was your reaction to the Boat Race swimming protestor?

It was good to see a student journalist with such commitment to on-the-spot interviewing. The mid-race opinions of the rowers would have been fascinating if the police had not intervened so swiftly.

Has having a sculptor for a dad taught you anything?

That if you are to embark on a stand-up career it helps to have at least one parent who cannot tell you to "get a proper job".

What do your shows offer?

Solutions to all the world's social and political problems. And some puns about dogs.

● **Andy's touring the UK with Armchair Revolutionary and performing Political Animal at the Soho Theatre.**

For ticket info and more follow @hellobuglers.



SFTW meets ANDY ZALTZMAN

THE ROBOMOW, £1,071

IT'S time to dust off the mower and get back to cutting the garden.

But here's something that could turn that annoying job into a joy — a robot version that does the lot for you.

The RM510 Robomow can do the business on lawns up to 500 square metres and is the fastest on the market.

Just set up the boundaries of your grass and set it off — it can handle up to four different terrains without you stepping in, has a tilting blade to avoid obstacles and a bumper in case of

accidents. It's what they call a mulching mower, so you don't have to empty it — all the cuttings simply get chopped up very small and are then peppered across your lawn.

Programme it to go off during the day when you're out — just like the indoor robot vacuum cleaners that are so popular with lazy bachelor boys and rich students.

And once the Robomow is finished, it automatically returns to its base station to charge up ready for the next session.

Sounds a cut above to us.



SFTW meets MILES KANE

SCOTLAND'S CHARITY MUSIC FESTIVAL

THE HOWE COUNTRY CENTRE, FIFE

Friday

from THE JAM, The Beat, The Boomtown Rats

The Media Whores, Patrol, Diddums, Cash From Chaos, Ninja Kebab, Bags Of Rock, The Cundeez, Rising Souls, Ward 13, The Basics, Gary Ovens, Felix Champion, Bassement, Fire In Effect, Act Natural

2 STAGES

3 DAYS

4th-6th May

Saturday

GLASVEGAS

The Hoosiers, Complete Stone Roses, Tommy Reilly

Katie Sutherland, Dead Sea Souls, Vigo Thieves, Waiting On Jack, Scarlet Shift, Brown Bear & The Bandits, Slipstream, OK Social Club, The Fire & I, Radio Arcade, The Begbies, The Cosmonauts, T Bird & The Blond Spirit, Sara Douglas, Emily Middlemas

Sunday

james

Simon & Oscar Ocean Colour Scene Unplugged, Proud Mary, Kazabian

Root System, State Of Emergency, Catch 22's, The Lost Healthy Minds Collapse, Tango In The Attic, The Rainband, Modern Faces, Silverbox, Revolution, Phlight, Joe Viterbo, Till Dusk, Cutting Corners, Lori McTear, Seven Deadly Sins, The Banter Thieves

Ticket Available online

www.ticketcandy.com

visit www.bigstooshie.com

for major ticket outlets

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