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**SFTW** meets **JLS**

**RYAN MacDOWELL**

**WHERE:** Glasgow  
**FOR FANS OF:** Newton Faulkner, Biffy Clyro, Ben Howard

**JIM SAYS:** It's a couple of years since I was first introduced to the talents of young singer/songwriter Ryan MacDowell.

I believe it may have been his first gig, when he secured the runner-up slot at Young Scot's City Sounds competition at the ABC in Glasgow.

I was asked along by acclaimed musician Maeve O'Boyle, who's gone on to guide Ryan's career, along with her husband Gordon McNeil from the band GoGoBot.

Gordon has signed Ryan to his fledgling label Toy Town Records.

**Mentor**

Ryan says: "As much as I was a little in awe of the studio, it felt like the right place to start my career.

Balancing the recording of his album with studying for an HND in music at North Glasgow College, Ryan, 19, is focused on his career.

Highlights so far include opening for Admiral Fallow and touring with his mentor Maeve O'Boyle in Sweden. The singer heads back to Sweden next month for more dates before returning home to appear at the Bruce Springsteen-backed Light of Day fundraiser in support of Parkinson's UK at Oran Mor in Glasgow on November 23.

Single I'm Not The Captain (Put Down The Guns) is out on Monday.

**MORE:** ToyTownRecords.com

● Jim will play Ryan MacDowell on In: Demand Uncut this Sunday from 7pm on Clyde 1, Forth One, Northsound 1, Radio Borders, Tay FM, West FM & West Sound FM. See indemand-scotland.co.uk

BY JIM GELLATLY

**NEW MUSIC**

Ryan told me: "Gordon invited me to take part in the M.I.M.A. Project (Music Industry Made Accessible) where he had been tutoring with Maeve.

"That gave me an opportunity to experience all sides of the music industry and encouraged me to learn all that I could.

"Each time I had a song idea I'd send it over to Maeve and Gordon who'd email me back their critique.

"The feedback allowed me to develop as a songwriter and gave me the added boost I needed when we got into the studio.

"I knew the songs were strong enough and had been developed."

I patiently waited to hear some of Ryan's tracks. Boy, was it worth the wait! Ryan's debut single is something pretty special.

A hook-laden, laidback pop rock number, I'm Not The Captain (Put Down The Guns) is a perfect platform to showcase Ryan's talent.

# Something for the Weekend



**HOT TRACKS**

**SINGLE OF THE WEEK**

**ROBBIE WILLIAMS** – Candy

Synthetic strings reminiscent of Call Me Maybe combined with an upbeat chorus make this one of Robbie's most fun tracks to date. Co-written by Gary Barlow, Candy heads up Robbie's upcoming ninth album, Take The Crown.

**THE GASLIGHT ANTHEM** – Here Comes My Man: The incessant repetition of the phrase "Oh sha la" begins to harrow by the end of this up-tempo offering from these New Jersey rockers.

**DJANGO DJANGO** – Life's A Beach: Another multi-layered concoction from this Mercury-nominated band and a particularly infectious one at that.

**DEXYS** – Incapable Of Love: The clumsy and old-fashioned production on this frothy duet gives it a jarringly amateurish touch. Taken from the band's comeback album One Day I'm Going To Soar.

**PASSION PIT** – Take A Walk: The synth-driven chorus of this passionate track is set off perfectly by the tension-building verses.

**ARLISSA VS NAS** – Hard To Love Somebody: Arlissa's first step on the ladder towards superstardom boasts supreme levels of catchiness and a brilliant display of her Florence-esque vocals.

**MISHA B** – Do You Think Of Me: Thudding electronic percussion adding to the club anthem-inspired sound make this a far stronger single than the X Factor runner-up's confused debut Home Run.

**WILEY ft SKEPTA, JME AND MS D** – Can You Hear Me? (Ayayaya): The euphoric dance floor-ready chorus that comes courtesy of R&B newbie Ms D is the making of this carnival-esque track.

**OF MONSTERS AND MEN** – Mountain Sound: The joint vocals are beautiful on this stirring folk-rock track from the Icelandic six-piece.

**FRANK OCEAN** – Thinkin Bout You: Minimal production makes way for Frank's soulful falsetto on this emotive track, which steers clear of any clichés or sappiness.

**POPPY COSYNS**



## We're taking a risk with American sound

**SFTW** meets **JLS**

By CHRIS SWEENEY

**BRITISH pop's biggest heart-throbs have gone AMERICAN.**

JLS have pledged their allegiance to the Stars and Stripes and their new album Evolution is the result of their tactical switch.

Singer Aston Merrygold said: "It's 100 per cent American sound with an all-American producer base.

"There's only one song that has a British feel and even that's only on the deluxe edition.

"It's what we felt we were missing. Until this point we've kept it British but now we've produced something that's totally American."

The reason for the big US push is simple – all their idols are from there.

And the album's first single Hottest Girl In The World is the perfect example.

Aston, 24, said: "We took a risk coming out with something that's so different to anything anyone's ever heard from us, but it's getting a fantastic reaction.

"We took the whole album back to our inspirations and people we have learnt from – like Michael Jackson, Justin Timberlake, R Kelly and Usher. It's a homage to them.

"But there's a difference between someone inspiring you and copying them.

"People are comparing the new single to artists that have had uber success, success beyond your wildest dreams.

"Getting those comparisons says

**EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW**

**Smash**

"They are all checking the different charts around the world – but that's part of our job, we need to know what's popping in what country.

"Take Gangnam Style. That started as a little track over in Korea, now no one can deny how much of a smash that's been all over the world.

"Something starts somewhere then with a bit of help and a push from other territories, that's how big a track can get."

"We're in with the elite producers who've done songs for Whit-

ney Houston and Beyonce. And that's who we've done this album with, so it's understandable why everyone is saying it's so Americanised – we're not denying it."

Evolution – released on November 5 – is the band's fourth album and they genuinely see it as a watershed moment.

Pin-up Aston added: "We're the only ever act to come from any talent show that's on TV to go on and bring out four albums.

"For us, to have four albums is a huge stepping stone and a nice honour to have on our shoulders.

"I joined this band when I was 18. There's been a lot of changes, obviously – personal and public.

"It's all about maturing, I'm sure anyone in the world from 18 to 24 has had some massive changes in their life.

"As we mature then our music matures as well."

And in keeping with that, all of them have sidelines outside of JLS.

Aston is a judge on TV show Got To Dance, Marvin is DJing, Oritse manages girl band Vida and JB does some investing.

But the age-old boyband question of when they are splitting up won't go away. Aston said: "I

could have said no to Got To Dance and we would still get asked the same questions.

"Oritse has been managing a band for two years now and that's never interfered.

"JB and Marvin have other bits outside of music and investments, as do I.

"It just so happens I have also something public in the Got To Dance job, but we're still JLS."

"It's down to us four being as tight as we are, we've got this album and the next one after that – we're JLS through and through."

The lads also reckon their image of being party animals is blown out of proportion.

**Social**

Aston said: "You look at a university student or someone working in the City or someone who works in Burger King.

"If you took as many snapshots of them coming out of clubs, I'm sure it would be a lot more than us. Although we do let our hair down and we want to go out and party – we're not 80 years old.

"I enjoy my social life as much as I do my professional life – and so do all the other boys."

● You can pre-order the album now at [jlsofficial.com](http://jlsofficial.com). We've also got FIVE signed copies to give away.

To win, just tell us the name of the album. Email your answer and contact details to [chris.sweeney@the-sun.co.uk](mailto:chris.sweeney@the-sun.co.uk) by midnight tonight.

Catch JLS at Clyde 1 Live at Glasgow's SECC on December 13.