

# Something for the Weekend

SFTW meets OF MONSTERS AND MEN

By CHRIS SWEENEY

**ICELANDIC** rockers Of Monsters And Men put themselves through a punishing globe-trotting schedule — because they can't play at home.

The band started off the year in Australia, hit Japan are now coming to Europe before going to the US.

Then they will go straight into the summer festival circuit. It's so time-consuming that they rarely get to go back home.

That's partly down to the storming success of last year's debut album *My Head Is An Animal* which was a Top Ten hit in **NINE** countries, including the UK and US.

Singer Nanna Hilmarisdóttir said: "Last year was insane. But we're working hard and it's paying off."

**Hobby**

The key has been getting out of Iceland as the 2007/2008 financial crisis in the country has left its mark.

Nanna, 23, revealed: "Our gigs on tour are nothing like playing in Iceland.

"For a start, we hardly have any venues left. It's a sad thing and they keep shutting them down.

"We were in the right place at the right time. We've got so many wonderful people who work for us and made this hap-

## Nanna can't go to Iceland



pen. But there's so many bands who don't get an opportunity in Iceland.

"It's so expensive to be travelling out of Iceland and, to be honest, back home being in a band is considered a hobby — people don't expect to pay you for it.

"You have these great bands or successful musicians but their other job is working in a record store or something like that.

They are always doing something else to get by.

"There's so much stuff that's yet to be discovered and there really is so much going on.

"If people dig into it, they'll be impressed — electric bands, reggae bands, it's all there. You name it, we've got it."

And Of Monsters And Men — also guitarist Ragnar Þórhallsson, drummer Arnar Hilmarsson, bass player Kristján

Kristjánsson and lead guitarist Brynjar Leifsson — admit that they're national ambassadors, promoting their tiny country to everyone else.

Nanna said: "Bands like the Foo Fighters and Queens Of The Stone Age used to come but they don't anymore because of the financial crisis.

"But we want more people to come and see Iceland — it's an honour to represent where we

come from." The band have just kicked off the UK leg of their tour and every gig is sold out.

And they're at Glasgow's O2 Academy tonight.

For now, the group are planning to keep on riding the wave and hope the momentum carries on.

Nanna added: "Sometimes it's overwhelming to look at what we've done — but we're going to keep going and enjoy it."

By CHRIS SWEENEY



## A labour of love

**NOT many singers shoot straight to No1 with their debut single.**

And even fewer do it with a song they only had time to record once.

But that's what songbird Gabrielle Aplin did with her cover of The Power Of Love which featured in John Lewis' Christmas TV ad.

She said: "I was late on to it. The agency chose a load of girls to cover that song and everyone else had pitched their versions.

"They got in contact with me on the Saturday saying I could have a go if I wanted but it had to be handed in by 9am on Monday morning.

"So on the Sunday night I was going to see Ed Sheeran at the iTunes festival and, just before, I went to the studio and bashed it out in one take.

"I expected that even if they did choose me, they'd want me to record it again but they used that recording in the advert. I can't complain.

"Everything was going well and I'd put my first single up for pre-order before that even happened.

"We had to push it back until February because of that.

It all worked out." Delayed single Please Don't Say You Love Me also did the business, charting at No6.

And both hits will be on her debut album *English Rain*, which is out in April.

Gabrielle explained: "I'd describe it as essentially folk rock but it's got this old English wartime vibe but it's still pop at the end of the day."

The 20-year-old landed her deal after being spotted on YouTube and controls all her business dealings.

**Scenes**

Gabrielle — who's from tiny village Sutton Bengier in Wiltshire — said: "I was studying languages and geography, but then I dropped out of sixth form.

"I just couldn't be bothered and I wanted a year out.

"I went to college and did music business.

"Having that knowledge means I can work behind the scenes now.

Building up to her album release, Gabrielle is hitting the road to show it off.

And she's at King Tut's in Glasgow on March 13.

● **For tickets and to pre-order the album, go to [gabrielleaplin.co.uk](http://gabrielleaplin.co.uk)**

ONES2WATCH

**ONE2SEE**

ACOUSTIC starlet Lewis Watson is low key but is making an impact. The fresh-faced youngster from Oxford has a new EP *The Wild out*.

And he's touring it all over the UK with some dates already sold out. He plays in Glasgow at King Tut's on March 10 and the following night at The Electric Circus in Edinburgh.

Get tickets at [lewiswatsonmusic.com](http://lewiswatsonmusic.com)

**ONE2HEAR**

THERE'S more to the Ayrshire town of Largs than knickerbocker glories at the famous Nardini's cafe.

Superb band Brown Bear And The Bandits are making their mark and new single *Olive Tree* is only helping them along. It's a real good tune — catchy and melodic.

Check out the video at: [facebook.com/brownbearandthebandits](http://facebook.com/brownbearandthebandits)

By JIM GELLATLY

NEW MUSIC

**ROMAN NOSE**

**WHO:** GP (Glasgow), BulletBeard (Tel Aviv), Young Cetin (Istanbul)

**WHERE:** Glasgow

**FOR FANS OF:** Skrillex, Chemical Brothers, Knife Party

**JIM SAYS:** It won't be long until we start the search for acts to perform on the T Break Stage at T In The Park this year. I'm again delighted to be on the selection panel, along with The Scottish Sun's Chris Sweeney.

Showcasing there can lead to far greater things. Snow Patrol, The View and Buffy Clyro have played the stage over the years.

Roman Nose ended up playing in front of 10,000 music fans thanks to a stray pint. BulletBeard told me: "We were supposed to play on the T Break stage but a drunk guy decided to throw his drink over the sound desk as we were about to take the stage.

"As fate would have it, we played before The Wanted in the



King Tut's Tent." The band members met after moving in similar circles in Glasgow.

BulletBeard said: "We first met at a mutual friend's exhibition at SWG3. We began Roman Nose as a bit of a creative project with no real intention of forming a band. A few months later we were offered our first gig at the Arches.

"That was late 2011, and from there we've worked hard at cultivating our sound and image."

Nominated as Best Electronic Act, Roman Nose perform live at the Scottish Alternative Music Awards (SAMAs) at The Garage in Glasgow on March 8.

Visit [facebook.com/tennentsbreak](http://facebook.com/tennentsbreak) for updates on the T Break stage.

● **Visit [romannose.tumblr.com](http://romannose.tumblr.com)**

● Jim will be playing Roman Nose on In-Demand Uncut this Sunday from 7pm on Clyde 1, Forth One, Northsound 1, Radio Borders, Tay FM, West FM & West Sound FM. [indemandscotland.co.uk](http://indemandscotland.co.uk)

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LABRINTH • OF MONSTERS AND MEN • THE VIEW  
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