

Something for the Weekend



NEW MUSIC

By JIM GELLATLY

DAVID KNOWLES

WHERE: Edinburgh
FOR FANS OF: Mark Lanegan, Damien Rice, Ray Lamontagne

JIM SAYS: David has come a long way since first picking up a guitar as a 16-year-old. He said: "After hearing Nirvana's MTV Unplugged album I wanted to learn the riff from Come As You Are. I got obsessed, learned the whole Nirvana catalogue then spent years tracing the roots of rock through Jimi Hendrix and the early delta blues of Robert Johnson."

Originally from Wigan, David spent a lot of time travelling before finally settling in Edinburgh. Much of his debut album Footsteps was shaped while on the road. He added: "It's an album that's been 12 years in the making. I wrote the words for Satisfy My Soul, Howlin' At The Moon and Silence In The Storm while sleeping on beaches in Australia aged 21."

"I was robbed and had to sleep on Bondi Beach on Christmas Eve while waiting for my mum to wire some money. After that, I occasionally chose to sleep outside to save money. On The Road and Child Soldier were written on my second backpacking trip through Asia. The Air You Breathe was written when I was travelling through Latin America with my wife Suzi."

The album does sound like it's been created by somebody who has lived a full life. I was surprised to find David is still only 33. With the exception of Child Soldier, with a grunge feel, it's a laid-back acoustic blues affair. Having played in his bands in his youth, it's his discovery of the blues that shapes Footsteps. He said: "I started a grunge band called Crave when I was a teenager. I can't even listen to our demo now because it was so bad. I went travelling for the first time, wrote some songs, came back and formed an indie band called Solarslide."

"We played loads of gigs but when we saw a video of us performing we realised we were just another average band. We packed it in and I went travelling again. That's when I discovered the blues." Footsteps is out on Monday, with a launch event Sunday at the Voodoo Rooms in Edinburgh.

MORE: davidknowles.biz
● Jim presents Drivetime on XFM Scotland, Monday to Friday 4-7pm. xfm.co.uk/jimgellatly.com

Watch video of the band in action at thescottishsun.co.uk



By CHRIS SWEENEY

Dreams come true at



DREAMS do come true — that's the message from T Break bosses.

Today, they launch their 20th year of putting the best and most exciting unsigned acts on at T In The Park.

There's even more excitement for this summer's bash, as it's the first at T's new home, Strathallan Castle.

T Break head honcho George Kyle said: "It's a massive year for T Break — it's been 20 years since we began which is remarkable."

"The thread has been there consistently. T In The Park is an incredible event — that was recognised very quickly — and people knew Tennent's did music but they wanted to know, what do you put back?"

Bands do it all

"It all sounds a bit worthy but it's not meant that way. It's just meant to be an opportunity."

"I'm at pains to say that's all we offer. We don't take any credit, these bands do it all off their own talent and hard work."

"We work with a great group of judges who give the acts pointers and that's integral."

"The stage at T in the Park is fantastic, it's mobbed all weekend with a welcoming crowd."

While festivals used to be dominated by indie and rock bands, that's not the case

now. And George — Head of Sponsorship at Tennent's Lager — says it's the same at T Break.

You don't need to have a guitar around your neck to be in with a shot on a stage that's seen the likes of Paolo Nutini, Amy Macdonald and Twin Atlantic strut their stuff.

He explained: "We crave and desperately want people to put their hats into the ring. There's no genre-specific element. It's not just about guitar bands."

"I think back a few years ago to the rapper Kobi Onyame who then did a launch event for us — he came through T Break and he's a solo artist."

"What we want is as broad a spectrum as possible — and more and more artists are recognising that."

T Break is also a cracking chance for acts from remote outposts like Orkney and Shetland — where the gig circuit is tiny.

George said: "We want Scottish bands and artists from the length and breadth of the country."

"Again, we'd hope people would look at artists like Biffy Clyro and Snow Patrol who've come through it, then gone on to headline T In The Park, to see how positively it's looked at."

"The likes of The View and Travis also catch your eye and more recently Anderson McGinty, Webster, Ward and Fisher — they were brilliant. We hooked them up with Dougie MacLean and they did a TV advert for us, so we've probably spent more time with them than any other T Break band."

Growing year on year

"They were sitting there jamming with Dougie and covered Caledonia in the ad. You can see the development in Model Aeroplanes from last year, both in their performance on the day but also seeing them at other events."

"But there's dozens of examples of that over the years which should be an encouragement to everyone out there to get involved."

While most schemes have a shelf life, T Break goes from strength to strength and George expects to still be giving it laldy in 2035. He raved: "It keeps growing year on year. T Break will always be part of the agenda."

"It's symbolises what Tennent's is about, we see ourselves as part of the fabric of Scotland and we've been doing music for 30-odd years now. And T Break has been one of the most constant strands of that."

● Take the first step on the ladder to stardom by going to tennents.com/tbreak

ONE2WATCH



TOP TIPS

I'M one of the T Break judges.

There's no magic secret to getting picked. Making good music is all this is about. Here are some simple tips...

- 1 Upload only your best tracks.
- 2 Forget any long, indulging intros — I'm not interested, it's not the time or place.
- 3 Get on with the song, let's have it.
- 4 Also make sure they're clear and not all fuzzy, as if you've recorded them in your toilet.
- 5 Apart from that, keep active on the live circuit.
- 6 Play where you can, get the buzz going.
- 7 Don't rely on social media stunts — get real punters raving about you.
- 8 If the judges know your name, there's more chance they'll take a little bit longer to listen to your stuff.
- 9 And remember, everyone gets a fair crack of the whip.

Good luck. See you at T.

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