


GEAR

AUTUMN 2025

BLUEHUE:
REDEFINING WHAT A
LABEL CAN BE.



An abstract digital artwork featuring a collage of textures, colors, and light trails. The top left contains the text 'Where to go now?' repeated four times. The bottom right contains the text 'All these choices' repeated three times. The background is a mix of warm and cool tones with glowing, wispy lines in yellow, orange, and blue. A hand is visible in the center, reaching upwards. The overall composition is layered and complex.

Where to go now?
Where to go now?
Where to go now?
Where to go now?

All these choices
All these choices
All these choices

UP AND COMING

4-5

UP AND COMING

6

SPLIT LIP

8-9

COMMUNITY JAM

10

HOROSCOPES

11

AGONY AUNT

12-13

LET'S PLAY

16-19

BLUEHUE

20-21

GAMES

22-23

MERCHANDISE

24

GROWTH

25

OUTSIDERS

26

DONATE TO MAP

UP AND COMING

(AND RELEASES YOU MAY HAVE MISSED!)

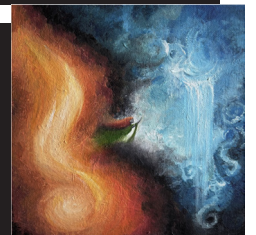
PhoneLines' debut single 'Cup Of Tea' captures confessional lyricism, smooth lounge melodies and a memorable hook. Through its life, the track has evolved immensely and has solidified itself as a fan favourite within the group's live set. On top of the track release, PhoneLine encourages you to head down to The Croft, Bristol, for their release show on the 10th of October.

PhoneLine
(@phoneline.band)
Release: 'Cup Of Tea'
Date: Oct 3



This witchy concept album has been in the works for many years, and it's finally ready for the world to hear. Listen to the stories of love and loss, of mountains and oceans and drawing down the moon. Get your friends and perform rituals in the forest with the perfect soundtrack this spooky season.

Cloud
(@cloudquartly)
Release: 'Warm as Summer,
Bright as Blood'
Date: Oct 10



GIGS, GIGS, GIGS!

PhoneLine
(@phoneline.band)
10th October
The Croft, Bristol

PhoneLine encourages you to head down to The Croft, Bristol, for their release show on the 10th of October.

Gopher It
(@gopherit.events)
10th October
Burdalls Yard, Bath

Alongside all the amazing music coming your way on the 10th of October, you could also indulge in an amazing night of music at Burdall's Yard, starring Canned Pineapple and Nobody's Dad... We can't wait!



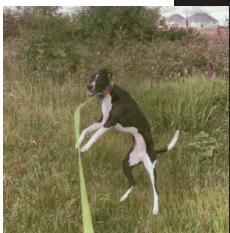
"Gluttony. Sloth. Lust. Greed. Wrath. A collection of tales from the infernal depths of the underworld. Don your platform boots for a party with the damned" - if you weren't entranced by their first release 'Dilute' then you will be by this incredible EP!

Wicked Chip
(@wickedchip)
Release: 'A HELL OF OUR OWN CREATION'
Date: Released



A short film that follows a young musician grappling with anxiety and addiction while recording in a studio. As he spirals, he risks both his creative passion and personal relationships. The film underscores the invisible struggles many men face and aims to raise awareness around mental wellbeing- everything was recorded in Bath and the music was created by Summer Away From Home, sparking a new collaboration within the bath art scene. Their upcoming film, Petrichor, is in pre-production so keep your eyes peeled!

Fin Faulkner and Summer Away From Home, Portaman Studios:
Release: 'Everything Passes'
Date: Released

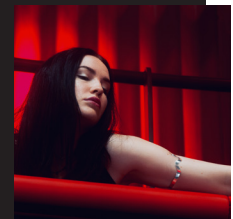


Blending indie, jazz and R&B, the title track of Xavier Jay's new EP sets the tone of the project; genre-defiant and introspective. His underground sound is exemplified in the EP's influences; citing folk, jazz, R&B and krautrock to create an expansive yet self-contained suite of songs that have a poignant narrative.

XAVIER
(@xavierjaymusic)
Release: 'I Promise I'm Happy'
Date: Released

"Another World" by Molly Fletcher Hebden is a raw and one-of-a-kind track that dives deep into the themes of running away, longing, and the bittersweet process of letting go of past loves and friendships. With its catchy melodies and emotionally charged lyrics, this alternative rock-pop single marks a bold new chapter in Molly's evolving sound. Whether you're clearing your head on a walk, lost in the theatre, or simply immersed in music, let this song transport you into Another World.

Molly Fletcher Hebden
(@mollyfletcherhebden)
Release: 'Another World'
Date: Released



Custard's 'Pace My Thoughts' is a dream popper's tribute that takes the listener on a journey through waves of self-growth and reflection. Beneath an ocean of noise lies cutting drums and twinkly topline inspired by shoegaze pioneers such as Slowdive and Beach House. Although this coming of age track paces itself softly, and slowly it becomes something bigger and more dramatic...

Custard
(@abandcalledcustard)
Release: 'Pace My Thoughts'
Date: Released



"Twin Skeletons deliver their anger in new bubble-gum flavoured doom 'PACESETTER'". This brat metal band has had a year full of festivals, with a desire to "bring the alternative scene back to the forefront"; we love it!

Twin Skeletons
(@wearetwinskeletons)
Release: 'PACESETTER'
Date: Released



**With so much new music to listen to...
why not start now?**

Written by Daisy McCaig
Designed by Abi Gold



Written by Daisy McCaig
and contributing artists.

Split Lip's Bristol Debut



As GEAR magazine has made its move to Bristol, so have the team, and there's no better way to get to know your community than [drumroll please...] a gig! So it happens, grassroots music venue, The Louisiana were hosting the perfect night to start our new journey - Split Lip, supporting Hunter Greensmith. Formed to be a **'musical manifestation of [his] thoughts,'** Alex's solo project finally sought out Bristol this summer in a captivating performance.

As I approached the venue [drink in hand] I knew I was in for a night of real indie sleaze, paired with raw lyricism and a bittersweet tone. And after the first track, I was delighted to find that I got exactly that. The first track to highlight is **'I'm the shit,'** a song that sets a solemn tone to begin with. However, as the track progresses it becomes evident that sometimes you really do just need to tell yourself that you're the shit - it's relatable. The repetitive structure is important and brings a lighter mood to its progression. With catchy chords, and a timeless melody - this is not one to be slept on!

Progressing through the set, it is obvious that a lot of thought and feeling go into Alex's songs. After getting the chance to speak with him, he revealed that he's an **'introverted songwriter'** and taking his songs from the bedroom to the stage **'almost feels like starting from scratch.'** As an onlooker, I can say that this set was professional from both a performance and songwriting point of view. The band's closing number left an impression on me, to say the least. Introducing front-woman Phoebe from Nobody's Dad, and an extremely catchy countermelody! With that, a ridiculously groovy bass hook and a tantalising drum beat this track provides an uplifting end to the set... and seriously I can't stop singing it!!

Towards the end of the night, I wanted to get an idea of how Alex thought the gig went. Although he felt it had some technical flaws, as a self-described perfectionist, he was just glad that he had finally **'knuckled down on the project's progression.'**

After this show, it is clear to me that Alex has a wider vision for this project. He aims to bring a meta modernist approach to the stage, like his inspiration Cameron Winter. Not only this but Alex is a visual artist who draws his inspiration from his love of films such as Radio n, and Hey World (by King Krule). Industrialism and mundanity are topics in his art and although they are **'extremely bleak...there is so much beauty in the bleakness of it.'**

To stay up to date with Split Lip find them on Instagram @splitlipmusic

Written and Designed by Jazz Jones

'Split lip literally came from [the time] I split my lip when I was younger' - Frontman, Alex Hardy Stewart.





Artwork by Katie Morrell

COMMUNITY JAM COLLECTIVE

putting people first



For the average Bristolian, a Tuesday night may not seem like anything special, but for those in the know, a trip to The Old England in Montpelier is the place to be. The Community Jam Collective [CJC] brings this small beloved venue to life weekly with an array of sounds, instruments, and people. Born from an impromptu jam in founder Harry Wright's living room, a mutual love for this joint experience between uni course mates was born. I got the chance to sit down with Harry to hear all about the journey and mission of Bristol's Community Jam Collective...

The Cloak and Dagger was the night's first home, originally starting off as a monthly open mic night with a short jam to open. But the community called for more. And so, weekly jam nights were put in motion. "There was definitely a need for more jamming", Harry smiles, "the whole idea was: you don't want a house band, you want a whole night where you can come in, pick up an instrument and jam with people". The community was put at the very center from the start. And when unforeseen circumstances moved the collective to The Eldon House in lower Clifton, it was that community that came together to donate sound equipment for their new home. From sound desks to amps, along with Harry's own gear from the original jams in his living room, the night was able to live on.

"[When we started] we really weren't making any money from it, we weren't really doing it for money... we really wanted to play music and we [were] at uni so we immersed ourselves in the scene", Harry tells. But eager to keep these nights sustainable, the collective made its final move to The Old England where a small nightly fund was negotiated. As a non-profit, this allowed CJC to upkeep and upgrade equipment whilst putting money towards events where artists can be paid fairly; a strong belief of the collective's. And as the jam nights have only grown in popularity, so has this fund. "It took a long time and we didn't have any support outside of putting our own equipment on the line". With this newfound security put in place, CJC decided to venture onto bigger things.

The first Community Jam Collective all day gig commenced last October, leading to a string of many more events just like it. Harry described New Year's Eve as the "turning point" for the collective. "That was the moment you could feel like, wow this is really relevant to all the people... Not just the jam night but actually the platform where people can play together". The events consisted of bands, DJs, artists, and fair pay for all acts involved. We can see the many types of positive impact CJC has had, from bands forming at jams to a wide range of demographics finding comfort in the space created. Harry explains "it's diverse and it all relates to music".

The future of the Community Jam Collective looks strong. Teaming up with Below The Belt productions, they have been successful in obtaining a meanwhile-use lease for a property in Hotwells: "we plan to use the space as a community hub". This impressive venture comes after the two promoters co-hosted an all-dayer at Ashton Court Manor, presenting a variety of acts and artists in a celebration of the summer solstice. And as we head into the colder months, Below The Belt and Community Jam Collective return to Ashton Court Manor for an epic bonfire night they have appropriately named 'The Fifth'. Find details @community.jam.collective on instagram ;)

It is clear that something special has been born out of those impromptu jams in Harry's living room, and the voluntary lengths that he and CJC go to in order to ensure that the community will continuously come first is admirable. "It's developed more and more into a platform that facilitates local artists, performer musicians, [visual artists], and sound engineers in paid roles in a community setting where they can network with other people their age".

The parting message Harry leaves us with is a thank you to all those who make the Community Jam Collective possible.

"George Lasbury has been there from the beginning... Ben Chanter really helped me get the events going. Jessie [Pirie], we wouldn't be doing what we are doing without Jessie... Obviously Below The Belts' Will and Beth... and Joe Fox our resident artist!"

Further mentions went to: Josiah Luck, Henry Hoare, Joseff Daley and, of course, the community that surrounds it.



Horoscopes

Mercury into Virgo - communication and thought enter the 6th natural house

Aries

Time to establish a routine that can push you to flourish and keep your busy mind occupied. Perhaps start that running club or try some morning stretches!

Taurus

In this lighthearted version of yourself, it's time to explore new possibilities. Remember not to overthink the fun out of it!

Gemini

The next time you think of that family member you haven't seen, or that friend you miss, MESSAGE THEM. Life is too short not to get back in touch.

Cancer

Learn about yourself and your needs, and find a way to articulate them; this matters more than your ego, and will help people you care about understand you better.

Leo

Money Money Money. This is the time to organise those books, and make those moves. Maybe now is the time to start a new venture, like investing, while your focus is grounded.

Virgo

You are most attuned with yourself right now. In this season of change, work out what makes you feel the most like you and what narrative you want to represent.

Libra

You've got a secret, Libra. Keep it to yourself, or tell someone... tricky decisions. Let the universe send you a sign on how to act upon this dilemma.

Scorpio

You may feel focused with your nose to the grindstone right now, but you must remember there is power in the community around you. Use it!

Sagittarius

Status matters to you right now. And why shouldn't it? Take the time to focus on what career or reputation you would like to build for yourself and take action.

Capricorn

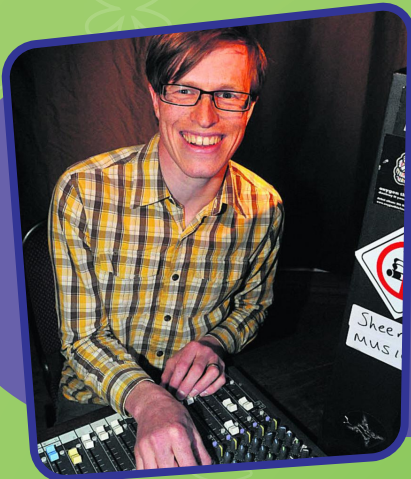
There is a sense of burning curiosity at your centre. Join a course, teach a class and find something to grow your wisdom.

Aquarius

You might be finding boundaries hard to negotiate. Take some time to work out what you need to keep for yourself, and articulate this to those who matter to you.

Pisces

You might be flying through life right now, but make sure to check in on those around you, and consider your communication channels; are they working on both sides?



Dear Kieran

Your agony aunt this edition is Kieran! With 20+ years of experience he's an inhouse sound engineer for Komedia in Bath and runs The Pump in Trowbridge!

As a sound engineer, what's your biggest pet peeve(s)?

1 "Oh, we sent you the wrong tech spec"

The amount of times I have heard this isn't funny. Literally just this month at Komedia, the headliner rocks up with, "sorry our agent sent you the wrong spec".

I had already prepared the venue for them, so that they could walk in, plug and play. And now I'm fannying around changing everything. Not cool. Don't do that.

2 "Oh we've brought our own engineer"

With no prior warning or conversation, rocking up to a venue with your own engineer/mate who has completed a CM course, is a bogus move. Unless you're a national touring act with some clout, pedigree, reputation behind you, just use the house engineer.

Obviously, I'll accommodate your sound engineer, because that's my job to make everyone welcome, and support people's ambitions, but it's often that I'm baby sitting their mix, as they won't know how to use the desk or "how the room sounds". I'll get asked "You know the room, what should I be looking out for?". How about you just let the experienced house tech do it?

3 YOUR TECH SPEC!

One PDF. Separate pages. Stage plot, including your band members names. An input list, with a very clear caveat that this is "best case scenario", so that the engineer knows you're not dicks when the venue cannot deliver 100% of what the document asks for. I.e. Asking for studio grade microphones in a pub venue isn't going to fly.

4 Language.

No bad phrases or language like "failure to do so will result in the cancellation of the show" or "for the sole use of the headliner". Get over yourself. If you're a stadium rocking band, you'll be ever so humble and look after your support bands and their crew and have the clout and money to do so. If you're just starting out, you'll be respectful to the venues and crew, if you're mid-way, for everyone's sake, please don't act all billy big bollocks.

5 Expectations

Look, I get it. Your music and live show are the most important thing to you. My live show and gig experience is the most important thing to me too. So, we're trying to achieve the same thing. Being realistic about what you're trying to achieve and how you're going to achieve it goes a long way in actually achieving the shared vision. Talk to your team that are working with you, to make sure you're achieving the best case scenario.

Luckily in the 20 years I've been doing this, I have more stories of people who are wonderful, gracious, supporting, respectful and amazing than I do the douche-baguettes. I tend to avoid those. So if I haven't done your sound for a while or you haven't played for me in a while.... Maybe there's a reason! That's a joke, you wouldn't know if I hated you.

Love from:

Kieran

Written by Kieran Moore
Designed by Joni Butcher

11

LET'S PLAY

After recently playing Toby Fox's passion project 'Deltarune,' the prequel to his infamous 'Undertale,' I cannot get enough of the soundtrack that follows the game's release. As a musician myself, it's always hard to ignore the exciting beats, repetitive melodies and how they correlate to make an atmospheric storytelling experience (or otherwise just a little bit of fun). Since I can remember, I have always been captivated by the music in video games. From opening my 3DS to hear the sweet soundscape that Kazumi Totaka and his team created in Animal Crossing New Leaf, to speeding through the raceways on Mario Kart Wii being ramped up by the soundtrack created by Ryu Nagamatsu and Asuka Ohta. Undeniably, music in video games has had a huge impact on not only how I listen to music but how I, and many others, create it.

So where did it all start? The relationship between electronic music and video games derives from the 1970s, a decade in which the popularity of arcade machines was on the rise. With this came a new wave of audio-visual aspects in video games. Physical media, such as cassette tapes, became a less reliable option for



The Link between
Electronic Music
And Video Games

arcade cabinets. Therefore composers started to use 'chiptune', or known today by the name of '8-bit.' Usually, the music used in games was monophonic and looped due to the lack of memory on hardware. However, the world got to experience the interactive atmosphere that music could create for video games in 1978's 'Space Invaders.' Intense and captivating, this certainly left an impression on composers and players alike - from then on, it's history!

Where are we now?

As electronic music and video games have progressed with the times, it is evident that creators are driven to make a new experience for a player with every new release. Alongside consoles such as Sony's PlayStation and SEGA's Dreamcast came games with OST's that could, quite literally, disguise themselves as modern-day drum and bass tracks. Games such as Jet Set Radio and Ape Escape have set in stone their influence on the ferocious subgenre breakcore, specifically with artist Machine Girl, formally known as Matt Stephenson.

It is often heard about when an artist's music gets featured in a video game. I mean, some of my very first experiences with genre and musical influence came from Forza Horizon's radio stations. With platforms such as Fortnite popularising in-game concerts during the outbreak of COVID-19, we saw artists from Lady Gaga to Weezer take the [in-game] stage. However, when it comes to breaking boundaries between music and video games, 'Neon White' is second to none. The game itself is an indie first person shooter with a score written by Machine Girl himself. Having a popular electronic artist write the score for a video game is almost unheard of, therefore it creates a promising future for the livelihood of musicians everywhere.

On the more artsy side of electronic music is J-pop band Kero Kero Bonito. With their debut release 'Intro Bonito,' they had surely created 'a nostalgia fuelled fever dream' according to Miguel Rivera. The album paved the way for

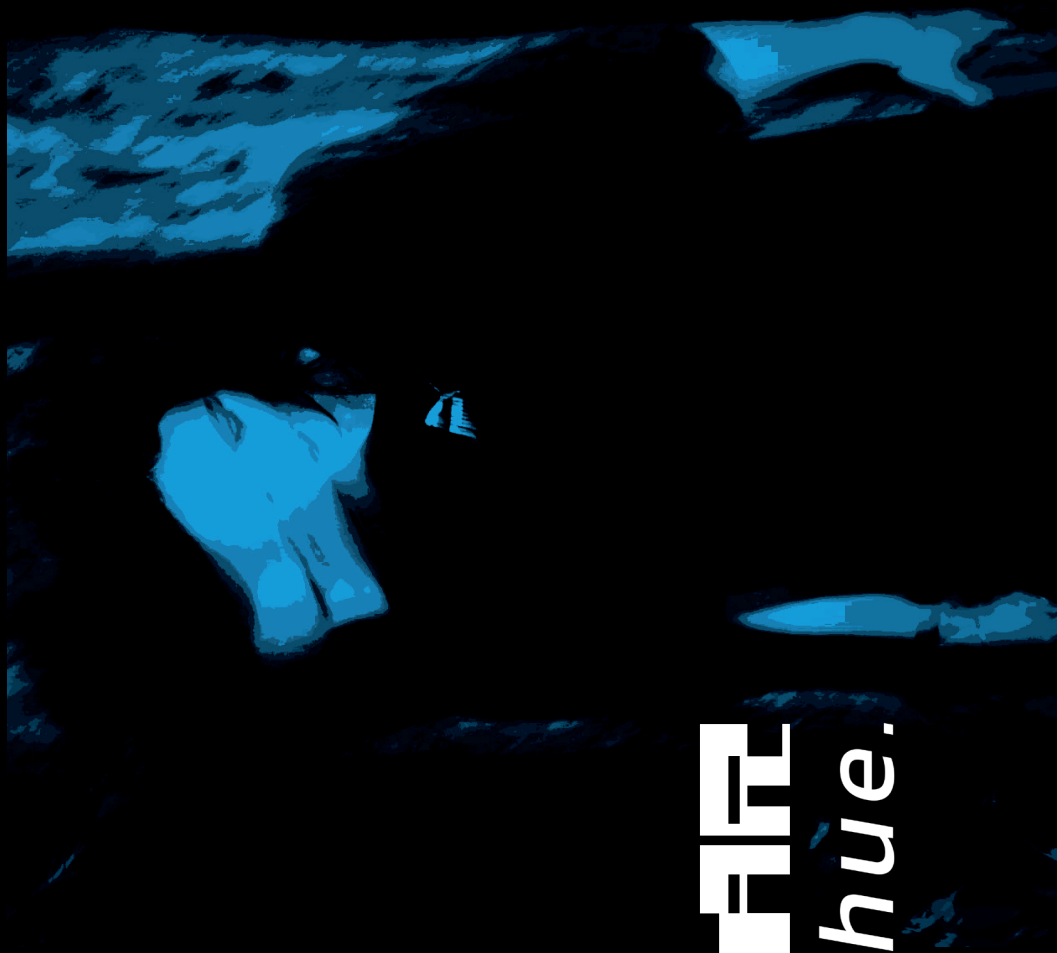
experimental electronic musicians, and any individual who played a Nintendo game. With too many samples from Nintendo to count, this genre bending album is definitely one for the nerds out there, like me.

Music and videogames alike are subjects I could talk about all day - so I'll make it short. If there's anything you can take away from this piece, I would encourage you to listen to the playlist I made below. This features some of my favourite scores from videogames or songs I've briefly covered in this piece. I hope you enjoy it! :p

Written and Designed by Jazz Jones







GEFF bluehue.



JB Hain's **bluehue**

the EDM label that

champions

authenticity



*“As long as the
music is good
enough and it’s all
born out of*

In the corner of a small beer garden full of people, JB Hain and I are chatting about her startup venture – the indie label ‘*bluehue*’. But, to simply call it a startup venture seems unfair. The sheer amount of love and attention that she has dedicated to her craft radiates from her as we talk. It’s clear that for her, *bluehue* is not just a business – it’s her life.

JB Hain has cemented herself as an icon in the music scene, both in her EDM genre and beyond – with close to a million total streams across her tracks on Spotify. She recently dropped an EP, sporting 6 trailblazing tracks (her personal favourite being “why is nobody up at the same time that i’m up? or are they?”) and one talented featured artist, Sumø. Being an artist and a label founder has afforded JB Hain a unique perspective – she’s able to pinpoint the pain points of the music industry as an artist, and then work to fix them through her label. The need to support other creatives is the backbone of *bluehue*’s artist-centric philosophy – pioneering “art that has a reason”. After spending years moulding herself to the requirements of various labels, JB Hain now has the freedom to experiment with her own vision.

Founded in 2024, *bluehue* began as a label for EDM artists but has since evolved to represent artists from other genres. The name ‘*bluehue*’ stems from colour theory and the importance it plays in our daily lives – often without us realising. The desire to have a recognisable motif prompted JB Hain to choose blue, as it is “one of the colours that stands out most”. From there, the name fell into place.

kindness

and

love

then why

not

promote it?”

17



To build up her brand, JB Hain reached out to indie label Bitbird, who helped her out with tips on playlisting, streams and distribution. She also gained some valuable knowledge by putting herself out there on Instagram, sending DMs to lots of people in the industry. Before launching *bluehue* properly, JB Hain spent years thinking through her strategy. Despite this approach, she's careful to emphasise the danger of overplanning. For her, the importance of an independent label lies in the freedom to "not necessarily have a goal...just to release as many artists as possible and get as much new talent seen as possible". She stresses that otherwise, you start to "limit yourself" – eventually having to accept any and all artists, regardless of their values, just to stay afloat.

The inspiration for *bluehue* came at an unlikely time – when JB Hain was considering giving up on her musical career for good. After sending countless tracks to record labels and hearing nothing back, she became disheartened and based what she planned to be her final release, 'Lose Hope', on these feelings. However, after submitting the demo to the label "found/red", they took her on. That same track now has over 300k streams on Spotify. "It completely changed my life", she says, with a sentimental look in her eye. "Music is hard...and to be able to have a label that I can use to help other people is just a dream. That's the most exciting thing, honestly."

Since launching *bluehue*, the response has been, in JB Hain's words, "just lovely". While she was initially unsure whether the EDM-centric ideas would resonate with people, she has been supported by all sorts of music lovers – repping the idea behind the label, rather than just the genre of the music. And, stemming from that, *bluehue* has attracted the attention of artists from various other genres – including folk trio Isle of Skeye. According to JB Hain, "it doesn't actually matter about anything except for the humans behind the song – what story they're trying to tell, and the fact that it's different...as long as the music is good enough and it's all born out of kindness and love, then why not promote it?" She's also learnt a few things about her own releases, with a realisation that not everything should be released. Some things are too close to home, and they end up being "just for you".

After asking for engagement tips, she emphasises to me that the best thing you can do is "simply show up" for others, and print more merch – as "having physical things to promote something you're working on is so underrated...you want shit that's real, that people can actually look at and associate with emotion." As well as this, she talks about kindness within the music industry – or rather, the lack of it. The "walls between artists and labels" work to limit musicians instead of uplifting them. But she recognises the pressure that is also on labels – specifically the "fear of unprofessionalism" that comes with reaching out to artists. However, according to JB Hain, "it should all just be really transparent, and they should be able to be kind." Couldn't have said it better myself.



"Music is hard... and to be able to have a label that I can use to help other people is just a dream. That's the most exciting thing, honestly."



So, how can you support *bluehue* – and other independent labels? The answer, according to JB Hain, is simple. "Just come and see the shows...The most valuable thing is literally just having more faces in the crowd to give the artist more confidence and give the venue more audience." You heard it here first, folks. Support grassroots artists, venues and labels. And GEAR Zine (duh).

JB Hain's future as an artist and label founder is looking bright. With a compilation album set to be released under *bluehue* at the end of September, with a wealth of talented featured artists (including JB Hain herself), there'll be five new tracks to sink your teeth into. She even hinted at another release in October, from "a very well known artist in the [EDM] space". Keep your eyes peeled, and your hues blue. There's a lot to look forward to.

**bluehue's
artist
recommendation:
Sumø**

"Sumø is one of the most kindhearted people I've ever gotten to work with. He's so versatile, and incredibly talented. His music is so diverse, and, unlike other rappers in this space, he incorporates a lot of emotion. He's authentically himself and just naturally produces amazing music."

Written by Jules Elizabeth
Designed by Joni Butcher
Photos by Corby Hill

GAIMPES

C	X	S	D	M	E	D	S	L	P	E	B	I	K	Y
J	G	R	A	S	S	R	O	O	T	S	Y	C	S	O
L	F	P	P	L	A	I	M	C	B	A	J	C	D	J
S	C	A	K	W	I	C	G	S	L	E	A	P	O	W
G	B	O	H	N	P	K	E	W	U	F	A	H	L	A
N	J	E	M	F	X	O	K	L	E	P	T	C	P	X
I	B	G	X	M	N	R	W	K	H	M	Y	T	C	P
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B	I	W	T	C	O	B	I	M	O	O	N	N	G	C
W	N	U	U	W	Y	N	D	T	E	A	T	I	K	S
T	M	E	L	F	G	W	X	G	Y	H	Z	S	X	G
O	X	E	V	B	H	R	Y	N	G	S	G	G	F	H
U	Y	R	S	R	E	S	R	J	H	R	Y	F	Q	E
E	S	Y	R	A	T	L	E	M	R	Y	N	B	Q	J

FIN!

Community

Grassroots

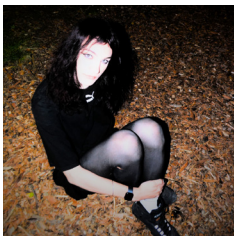
Cafe Kino

Moon

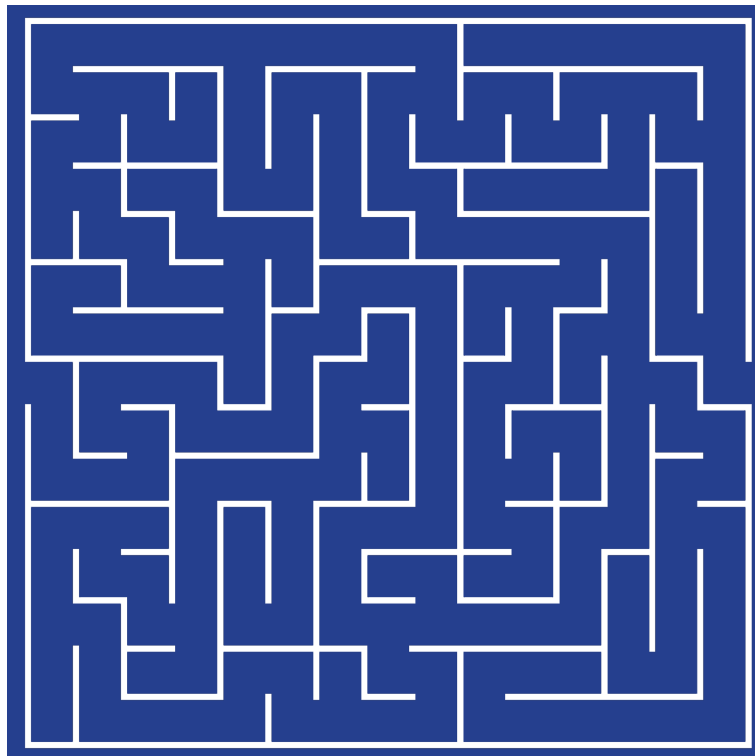
JB Hain

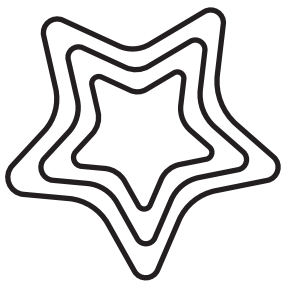
bluehue

SOUE!



**QUICK! Help
JB Hain get to
her decks!**

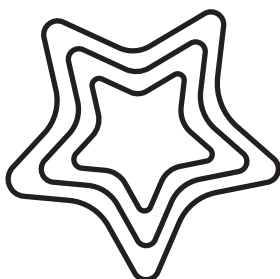
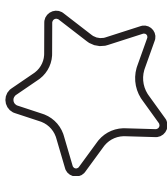
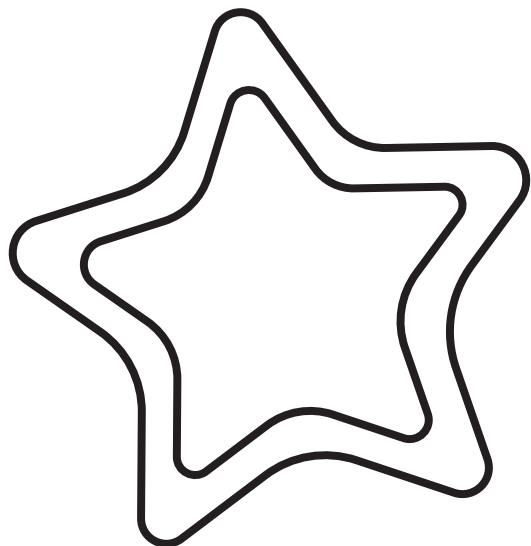
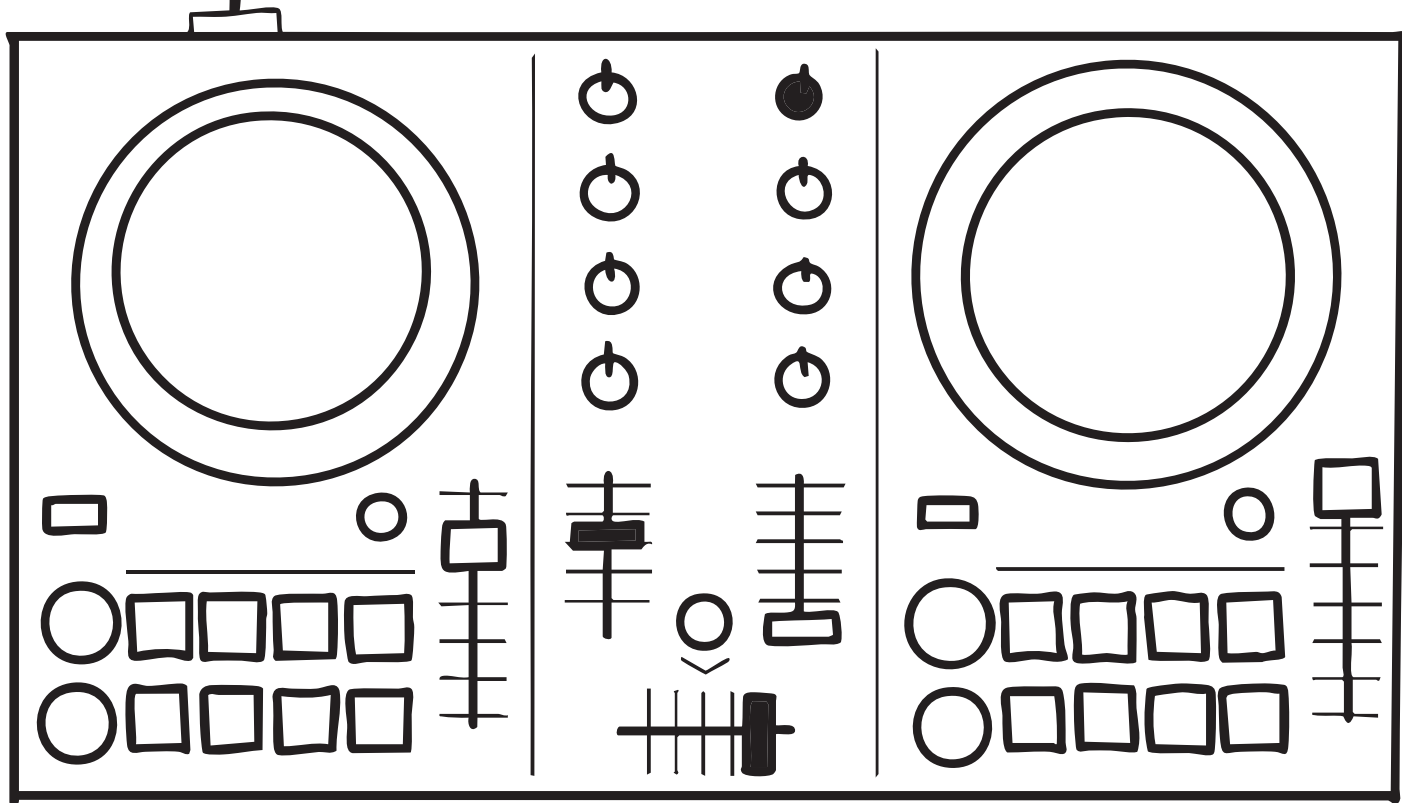
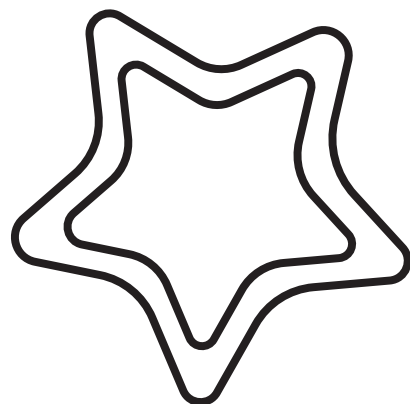




COLOUR

ME

IN!



MERCHANDISE

WHY YOUR T-SHIRTS AREN'T SELLING

There comes a point in every band's timeline where an itching to sell apparel becomes too scratchy to ignore any longer. The desire to whack the logo onto a t-shirt, sticker sheet or something else entirely is just too seductive, and suddenly you're at the back of a venue, flogging t-shirts, wondering why they aren't selling and whether you could've invested the £200 elsewhere to keep the band afloat.

And yet, somehow bands are making profit from this. Successfully. Merchandise is a huge contributor to the music industry's economy, and is one of the most secure ways of producing an income via a musical project.

Luckily, Beth Lock (merchandise superhero) has been in this world long enough to know what sells well and what appeals, having worked with the likes of Placebo and Franz Ferdinand. Even better, she's willing to impart some of her mystical merch making wisdom to you lovely readers.

So where to start? Beth says that the key factors to consider are the design, the colour and the manufacturer. It is important to think about how your brand is indirectly promoted, but it is equally crucial to work out a design that fits the brand. Beth cautions that bandmate's faces do not tend to sell well, so leave those for the press shots and social media posts. Of all the colours to choose from, black over white is truly the most sellable option. Lastly, the manufacturer is just as important, and it goes beyond pricing. You must also consider ethics, sizing and quality. A point Beth makes clear is that Gildan often gets called out for stitching issues, and could prove to cost more than it should to rectify.



Merchandise Beth
designed for her band
'Bitchin' Hour'

If you're still not sure what design you should go for, perhaps asking the buyer is a good move. Researching what other merchandise is sold within your genre is certainly recommended, but your best friend will be those pesky social media polls; THEY LITERALLY WILL TELL YOU WHAT YOUR FANS ARE MOST LIKELY TO BUY!

So now that you have an idea of where the merchandise will be purchased and what you want to put on it, what makes an effective design? Beth's analogy will make you see merchandise design in a new way: "You need to think of it like a tattoo, would you be happy having that on your body?" She also implores the artist to question the way the merchandise will reflect on the band. As aforementioned, merchandise is a passive form of advertising, so you need it to be recognisable, as well as presenting the right message. Keep it "innovative and interesting!"

Beth talks about design processes for larger artists; a whole team of people to put together a design is a testament to how much thought should be going into a merchandise creation:

"We have incredible designers, we will usually sit the artist down with a designer and get into what their vision is, or we ask for examples of merch designs they like and the vibes they are aiming for. Our designers will then research the artist and come up with some insane designs, they really are a talented bunch. If you want to see one of the best, check out Dani Hackett; she's expensive to hire but you'll get the best designs in the game."

But, as with so many things in life, it won't be worth your while to design a t-shirt if you can't sell it. The best way to sell is to promote, and we happen to be in a modern age where the best promotional tool is available to anyone with a phone - social media. Beth says "show it off, tease it, and show band members wear[ing] it". Nothing makes investing in apparel more enticing than someone else looking incredible in it.

All this hard work comes with a price though, inevitably. "Professional merch sellers would times the cost of the item by 4. So if the cost of the item is £5, you'd sell for £20. Obviously for smaller acts, I would suggest sticking to the max of £30 for a shirt and £50ish for a hoodie." In order to make profit, it has to be viable to buy; if you have a young demographic, then you have to think about what is affordable to your buyers. If you reversed roles, what would you pay for your designs?

On asking Beth about etiquette when it comes to dropping off your merchandise at a stall or festival, the following is the best way to keep you on their good side. Trust us, you do not want to be on a merch stand's bad side: "Do not bring your merch during the opening rush, ... Be nice to your merch sellers, they are working their arses off and have to charm the general public ... Don't turn up with messy unorganised merch, you just made their jobs 45x harder and they won't be impressed."



Beth as merchandise manager at RADAR festival alongside her team

Lastly, before you all run off to start sketching up your designs, Beth has one more thing to say to anyone who may need to hear it:

"Breaking into the music industry takes time, patience, and sacrifice — there's no way around it. The artists you admire didn't make it overnight; they spent years honing their craft, making mistakes, and grinding in silence before anyone noticed. [...] Most people quit when it gets hard. But if you're truly passionate [...] then your dedication will carry you through. Be obsessed with your craft. [...] Build real connections, because respect and reputation go a long way in this industry. If you stay focused, keep growing, and never lose that fire — it can happen. And when it does, it'll be because you earned every step."

A million thanks to Beth for letting us in on her knowledge, and if you want to know more about Beth, she is a drummer in a sick band called Bitchin' Hour (@bitchinhourofficial on IG) and also has a very exciting new project coming up (@roknrollahclothing on IG) - be sure to check it out!

Written by Daisy McCaig
Designed by Joni Butcher

G r o w t h

You're not sure but you might be
You change your mind and change it back again
You feel a certain way yet contradict it entirely in the same breath
You hate this until you love it
It is all ok

They say you haven't said hello to them in years
They say you don't put effort in like you used to
They don't know that is reflective of self preservation
They are not the ones who light you up anymore
It is all ok

We make a mistake but it has been fixed before and will be fixed again
We miss a deadline but it will come again
We find flaws in ourselves invisible to others and learn to adjust our own views
We do not know who we are
It is all ok

An overview of this Summer's bigger and smaller moments for music.

Written by Isaac Smith
and Peri Hammond
Designed by Thomas
Braniff

outsiders

+Peri

Thank you Gearzine for
having us back for
another season.

GEARZINE

TOP GIGS

THE SUMMER IN REVIEW

BEST BANDS

CROWDS, CHORDS, CHAOS

From stadium legends to festival first-timers, our summer in review.

PULP O2 Arena, London

Having seen Pulp 2 years ago, it was a last-minute decision, based on the strength of their new album, to buy a ticket to see them again at the O2 earlier in the summer. From their very first song, it was clear that my decision was justified. I've scarcely seen an audience react so enthusiastically to songs from a band's newest album, alongside their hits from 30 years ago. As such, the crowd was consistently engaged throughout, helped by the performance of Jarvis Cocker – surely one of the greatest frontmen of any band.

Isaac Smith
Writer



Heavenly Islington Town Hall, London

In 2023, one of Bristol's own Sarah Records' flagship bands reunited for the first time in almost 30 years and I was lucky enough to be there. 2 years on, with a new album on the way, seeing them again this summer was just as exciting. The crowd was filled with members of the Sarah-scene, including Sarah co-founders Clare and Matt. Mixing old favourites with newly-penned tracks, Heavenly thrilled the star-studded crowd.



Outsiders Summer Playlist



Victorious Festival Southsea Common, Portsmouth

It was my eighth successive year attending Victorious Festival in Portsmouth and, as always, it was a fantastic weekend. This year, joined for the first time by Peri, we saw some brilliant bands including CM's own Perfect Days. After the angst-filled Wunderhorse had torn it up on the main stage with their signature attitude and snarl, the highlight of Day 1 was undoubtedly Castle Stage headliners Madness. Appropriately equipped with our Fezzes, their hit-filled 90-minute set had us singing and dancing throughout (and all the way home).

Our highlight of Day 2 was Public Service Broadcasting. Somehow managing to make a large outdoor set feel amazingly intimate, we remained immersed from start to finish helped in no small part by their incredible background visuals. Given that their albums have such strong thematic concepts, often making use of archival audio to tell stories from 20th century history over a full record, it was impressive how they managed to make individual tracks from different albums flow so well into one another.

Having been underwhelmed by Sunday's lineup, we used it as an opportunity to go and see some bands on the festival's smaller stages. The Memory Club, a beautiful alt-folk band from Manchester made for the perfect start. As well as The Perfect Days,

Overpass and Graham Coxon's The Waeve, we saw local Portsmouth band Coast performing their biggest gig to date, on the festival's Seaside Stage. Having seen them play to a crowd of approximately 20 people on a tiny stage at the festival in 2024, it was amazing to see how far they've progressed as a band in such a short time span.

Written By Isaac and Peri

Although we had a great time at Victorious, the events surrounding The Mary Wallopers' short lived performance somewhat overshadowed the weekend, which warrants some discussion. The band brought a Palestinian flag on stage, but not bringing much attention to it. This caused festival staff to take the flag down, which led the band to start a chant from the crowd. The festival intervened, turning their sound off to silence them. Following this incident, several artists chose to boycott the festival by deciding not to perform, this included The Last Dinner Party, The Academic and Cliffords. Other artists who continued to perform at the festival expressed their solidarity with The Mary Wallopers. Rizzle Kicks and Vampire Weekend directly expressed this by calling out the festival organisers during their own sets.

**Palestinians are facing genocide under Israeli occupation
Stand in solidarity, donate here:**





Artwork by Jess Ferdenzi

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