

MUSIC

with Helen Clarke



The B52s
Funplex
Single
(EMI)
March 10
★★★★☆

AHEAD of their first studio album for 16 years, The B52s release a single that's so distinctively them, it's as if they never went away.

Funplex is The B52s by numbers – from the lyrics (“You broke my heart at the funplex, yes you did”), to Fred Schneider’s insane sneerings (“Hey ladies!”). The clue’s in the title – they’re not out change anything, they just want to spread their infectious dance-rock as far as they can.

Nearly 30 years after *Rock Lobster* made a bid to bridge the punk/dance gap, their influence is still felt across the charts today, from the Scissor Sisters to LCD Soundsystem. A welcome return and an exciting introduction to the album, also called *Funplex*, released later this month.



be your own PET
Black Hole/The Kelly
Affair
2 x 7" vinyl
(XL Recordings)
March 10
★★★★☆

be your own PET ease us back into their chaotic wall of noise by releasing four singles over two weeks – before finally unveiling their second album next week.

It's been two years since the Nashville teen punks' self-titled debut crash-landed on our shores – a life time ago in iTunes land, when tracks are gunned out as quickly as they can be recorded. They've been touring their homeland with our own Arctic Monkeys – but their boys'n'guitars sound hasn't seeped into be your own PET's brand of electro-clash.

This week we're given *Black Hole* and *The Kelly Affair* – last week they released *Super Soaked* and *Food Fight*. All four prove that short, sharp tracks are still the name of the game – steeped in brattitude that betrays their preppy image.

It's Atari Teenage Riot for toddlers – milky Digital Hardcore guzzling musical E numbers.

If you like your music loud and proud, be your own PET are a dream come true – check them out when they headline at the Scala on April 1.



British Sea Power
No Lucifer
Single
(Rough Trade)
February 25
★★★★☆

RIDING high on the top 10 success of their crossover album, British Sea Power release their best single since 2001's *Remember Me*.

It starts off with a burst of chamber music before chants of “Easy! Easy!” kick in and singer/bassist Hamilton purrs his way through three minutes of dreamy, atmospheric, choral rock.

With their third album, *Do You Like Rock Music?* the band were given an injection of Arcade Fire's gloomy optimism, and with *No Lucifer* it's more present than ever.

It's a confident statement of a single – they've paid their dues and now they're ready for the big time. A sure-fire summer festival anthem that's just the right side of quirky to keep their die-hard fans happy, while still winning over some new ones.



DOTTY: The Next Performance, 2005, by Jeffrey Dennis

FUTURE PERFECT

PRICE tags reading £50million dangle from Damien Hirst's artwork today, but imagine if you'd bought when it sold for under £5,000.

Art Futures, the art fair run by the Contemporary Arts Society (CAS), would have been the place to do it. For 20 years it has consistently exhibited work by tomorrow's stars.

By discovering talent, the yearly fair can afford to sell work from a few hundred pounds.

Some established artists also contribute to the six-day fair, whose profits go to support *Art Futures'* charitable parent body.

Among this year's 100 artists is Michael Craig-Martin, godfather of the Young British Artist movement that spawned the likes of Damien Hirst and Tracey Emin.

But even if you are not a budding collector,

CHRISTIAN McLAUGHLIN GLIMPSES THE FUTURE OF MODERN ART

viewing is free. Making new art accessible has been the ethos behind 100 years of CAS history.

“CAS gave the Tate its first Paul Gauguin painting in 1917,” says

Stephanie Post, head of membership at CAS.

“We've gifted Henry Moores in the 30s, Francis Bacon in the 40s, Gilbert and Georges in the 80s, but it's not just the big names...”

Raising money through yearly membership schemes and events such as *Art Futures*, CAS buys, then redistributes artworks for nothing to 89 UK

museums, from the titanic Tate Britain to the tiny Glynnvian in Swansea.

CAS's latest membership scheme is called Blood.

Aimed at new art aficionados, it organises 12 events a year, such as Monday's Artist's Party, where members will meet the *Art Futures* artists.

If it's London's buzzing contemporary art scene you are after, the monthly CAS bus tours take groups behind the scenes to smaller, cutting-edge studios and galleries all over town.

● *Art Futures* 2008 is at Bloomberg Space, 50 Finsbury Square, EC2, to March 12. Free. Fri/Sat/ Tue 11am-6pm, Sun/Mon 11am-5pm, Wed 11am-9pm. Call 020 7831 1243 or see www.contempart.org.uk for news of *Art Futures*, Blood and buses.

JEFFREY DENNIS

A 49-YEAR-OLD painting tutor on the BA Fine Art course at Chelsea College of Art & Design, he is represented as an artist by London's Art Space Gallery. His works sell for between £390 and £2300. See www.jeffreydennis.co.uk

“Teaching at Chelsea keeps me on my toes as an artist. It's always exciting; for 10 years I've been exposed to the best young talent and ideas. Most artists at *Art Futures* are also bright young things, but mixed in are a few old veterans like myself. I started exhibiting internationally in my final year at Slade School of Fine Art in 1979, and *Art Futures* was one the first to pick up on my work in this country. The fair was in Covent Garden back then, and contributing was a very welcome bit of exposure on my home turf. The profits from the sales at *Art Futures* don't end up lining the pockets of its organiser, but are put towards purchasing artworks which are then given to British museums for all the public to see for free. It's a really important aspect of the show that's easy to forget. My



paintings are about capturing life in London – the brief encounters and mixed communities – in an abstract space I call a bubblescape; it's like a pressure cooker where experiences are compressed.”

KIEREN REED

A 31-YEAR-OLD graduate from Chelsea College of Art & Design's 1999 MA course, he works for the not-for-profit gallery West London Projects in Fulham. His works sell for between £300 and £1,800.

“I volunteered for the Contemporary Art Society (CAS), organisers of *Art Futures*, while finishing my BA in art at Kingston University. I admire it for the support it gives young artists and public galleries. The pedigree of *Art Futures* gives emerging artists immediate exposure and gives older, more established artists the chance to give back and fundraise for CAS by including their works. My central piece is called *Why can't you go back home forever and let me be?* It's a series of objects in a display vitrine case that act like clues. There is an open copy of Graham Greene's *Brighton Rock*; stills from Jean-Luc Godard's 1966 film *Masculine Feminine*; a blank 1950s vinyl, a picture of a sound recording booth and a few other bit and pieces. Together they form a mental picture of sound booth recordings and the potential for love their messages hold. It might sound daunting, but I didn't want the piece to have a blatant explanation, like something you'd see in the Science Museum.”

