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MUSIC

ONES TO WATCH

Edited by
CHRIS SWEENEY

ONE 2 SEE

BIRDY is one of those acts who is bigger than most folk realise.

She's got a cracking voice, which has a unique sense of vulnerability.

It makes her songs sound as if she's battling her emotions to sing them.

The 20-year-old has a UK tour lined up with a big live reputation too.

She's at Glasgow's O2 ABC on October 28 and the following night, The Corn Exchange in Edinburgh. Get all the info at officialbirdy.com

ONE 2 HEAR

POLITICALLY charged posters She Drew The Gun's new single Pit Pony, is about animals working in the coal mines. Not an obvious radio friendly hit.

But they've bashed out an electro stomper. Singer Louisa Roach said: "I thought it was a good metaphor for anyone who feels trapped in the mundane mines of modern industry."

It's out now and they play The Hug and Pint in Glasgow on October 27. Check out shedrewthegun.com

Some Finn special

BADASS Bluegrass boys Steve 'n' Seagulls might look like a joke but there's nothing funny about their mega success.

The Finnish band are touring the globe and are just finishing a run of big gigs in the US.

They do hillbilly style versions of rock metal classics such as AC/DC's You Shook Me All Night Long.

Its video has racked up 4.5million views online and features them cranking it out, while driving tractors and mucking about with cattle.

Speaking from New York, double bass player Pukki Kaalinen said: "It's going alright, definitely. We've been getting good crowds over here. It's still a surprise for us."

"Years ago, this would never have happened without the whole YouTube thing and what not."

"If we'd gone through the traditional channels of sending demos and trying to getting a recording contact, we'd still be in Finland, possibly Sweden

and Estonia – that's it. There was no plan. The idea was to get some promotional material and we changed singer just before we posted the first video.

"It was just something we made that was cheap and we decided to play acoustically."

Other songs they've covered are Paradise City by Guns N' Roses and Led Zeppelin's Black Dog.

Pukki, 33, said: "We thought the serious metal groups would probably be pissed off at our versions."

"But they haven't, we've been received really well."

"We probably can't do only metal and besides, we like other stuff – there's plenty of good things around."

"Our first cover ever was Lady Gaga's Poker Face."

On the surface they look like jokers – but seeing how good they are on their instruments, it's clear they're anything but.

Pukki said: "We got people assuming that and still do."

"We brought it on ourselves really – it's supposed to look fun but we do take it serious."

"All of us have been full-time or part-time making a living like this in music for the past

10 years, before the band took off. It's kind of a parody band, but we take it seriously."

Now, they're heading for Scotland on their UK tour and are at The Cathouse in Glasgow on November 17.

And they just hope they can understand their fans this time around.

Pukki admitted: "Your accent is a bit hard for us to follow."

"We struggled being on the merch desk selling CDs and T-shirts to understand people in Glasgow."

"But it's a shame we didn't book more Scottish dates."

"We should really do a whole tour there. The place was packed last time and we loved it. They were really into it."

"The great thing is people are into our stuff and seem to enjoy it."

"But it's impossible to predict anything."

"We're hoping to be around in 15 years, why not?"

"We're trying to see how far this will take us."

"We're in what the Americans call our heyday, so the work needs to be done now – or not at all."

● For gig tickets and more, go to stevenseagulls.com

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Kara seal deal with a Kiss

AYAKARA**WHO:** Max MacQueen (vocals), Felix Christie (guitar/vocals), Alex Maslov (guitar), Callum Jones (bass/vocals), Jonnie Wallace (drums)**WHERE:** Edinburgh**FOR FANS OF:** The Libertines, Arctic Monkeys, Courteeners**JIM SAYS:** Edinburgh indie-rockers Ayakara have come up trumps with their latest single Bitter Kiss/Lips.

The double A-side is a further progression from previous releases Day By Day and Soothe Ya.

Singer Max said: "It's gained us a lot more fans. It's been our biggest campaign so far and it's really paid off. We feel we've launched ourselves onto the radar of many people."

"Our song-writing capabilities have developed encouragingly over the time we've been together. We're starting to find our stride with it now. We're all on the same page."

Long-time pals, they got together in their final years at Trinity Academy in Leith. That friendship comes across in

**NEW MUSIC**
By Jim Gellatly

the music. They bond like a gang, rather than a bunch of musicians thrown together. They create a great vibe and after around three years they are starting to get the attention they deserve.

Callum said: "There is a distinct community between us and our fan base and we feel people who come and see us feel that energy and they want a piece of it. All are welcome."

They have just completed a seven-date tour to promote the single and

seem delighted with the response. Felix said: "The tour has taken us around the UK, playing an array of supports and headlines, which have been so important to our development."

Alex added: "Playing The Lexington in London and Surf Café in Newcastle, and being booked almost immediately by the promoters to come back was a great feeling."

Other dates included a slot supporting one of Scotland's hottest breakthrough bands, Baby Strange, in Dunfermline. Mixing with such acts and going on the road can only help Ayakara get to the next level.

Jonnie said: "Touring has helped us gauge the mood of the country. We find that the smaller the town, the livelier or more appreciative the crowd. It's been really interesting."

Ayakara talk of "recording timeless, seminal albums". If they stay on the same track, that's not beyond them.

MORE: facebook.com/ayakaramusic
● Jim presents a weekly showcase of New Music on Amazing Radio Sundays 2-4pm. amazingradio.com/jimgellatly.comWatch video of band at: thescottishsun.co.uk