



EVENTS

# BUG 63

Welcome to BUG 63. Once again Adam Buxton is here to present a fresh and new episode of BUG, combining excellent new creative work in the field of music videos with a smattering of things we were unable to screen here in the past two years, during our enforced break due to Covid. In addition, Adam will have more things to share with us from the inner recesses of his famous laptop...

And in the week after Glastonbury, it is fitting that we begin BUG 63 with the man who rounded off the festival with his stunning headline performance on Sunday evening – Kendrick Lamar. The show followed the release of the hip hop star's long-awaited new album, widely regarded as his most intensely personal yet. And that was heralded by the video for *The Heart Pt 5*, directed by Kendrick himself and his longtime friend, manager and label boss, Dave Free. Here they give us a video that combines a simple, bold performance by Kendrick, an unadorned showcase for his skill and charisma, augmented by extraordinary (and eerie) DeepFake technology. During the course of the video, Kendrick's own features are replaced by a succession of familiar faces – Black men who have also found fame (and to some extent notoriety) in America.

That is followed by a virtuoso animated work by Barcelona-based Swedish animator Gustaf Holtenäs for British experimental rock band black midi. The mind-bending collision of 2D and 3D animation for *Welcome to Hell*, from their latest album *Hellfire*, is Holtenäs's second for the band – both a sequel and prequel according to the director to the first, *Slow*, where he introduced an angry blue robot boy who rules one of three parallel dimensions. Here we have the robot's origin story, and also the outcome of his rage. It's an intense swirl of imagination and ideas, incorporating challenging imagery to deliver a pertinent social message about unhealthy, 'entitled' male behaviour in the online sphere.

Next comes French rapper Orelsan, renowned for a no-holds-barred attitude that has made him one of the biggest names in French pop. But he is in more contemplative mode with *La Quête* (The Quest), as he reflects upon different stages of life, from his childhood, his difficult teenage years and beyond, to adulthood. He turned to animation director Victor Haegelin to visualise the different stages through stop-motion animation. Haegelin then had the idea to combine animation with live action, casting Orelsan as the animator, allowing him to tell his own story on screen as well as in song.

At this point we look back to work from the past two years or so, firstly with a music video from 2021 that brilliantly encapsulated the pent-up frustration from a year of successive lockdowns. Ben Strebel's video for Skrillex's *Butterflies* – featuring Starrah and Four Tet – is set on a London housing estate, where the local youth are coming together again, their energy and enthusiasm finding outlet through dance. They take to wearing ghost outfits, and ultimately gritty reality is left behind as these ghosts leave the earthly plane altogether, in a climactic dance above the concrete walkways. Strebel worked with leading choreographer Holly Blakey for both earthbound and

ethereal dance routines, and with the team of animators at Electric Theatre Collective to create his photoreal dancing ghosts.

Newcastle-based singer-songwriter Richard Dawson's song *Jogging* actually precedes the pandemic – it came out on his album *2020*, released in late 2019 – but also captures a small, personal story of struggle: the testimony of a man who uses the activity of jogging to subdue his feelings of anxiety. The video, directed by artist and filmmaker Edwin Burdis, highlights Dawson's idiosyncratic fiction-like songwriting style by focussing entirely on a solitary man jogging, on and on... And he's played by Dawson himself.

Australian rock band King Gizzard & The Lizard Wizard are 12 years into a highly productive career – they have just released their 20th album. *Black Hot Soup* comes from their 19th, released last year, which then prompted a remix by DJ Shadow, no less, which he dubbed the “‘My Own Reality’ rewrite’. That in turn has spawned a wonderfully inane music video by the band's regular collaborator John Angus Stewart. The Melbourne-based indie filmmaker (who released his debut feature *Chunky Shrapnel* in 2020) features Australian satirist, documentary maker and author John Safran performing a wonderfully daft and irresistible hip-hop-scratching dance, possibly after the ingestion of mind-altering drugs.

Talking of drugs... our next video is a relatable tale of going out in London – a really big night out – in all its glory, ecstasy, and agony. The video for veteran dance producers Chase & Status's *Mixed Emotions* directed by Femi Ladi – one of an exciting new generation of directors now emerging in the UK – focuses upon a young woman's personal journey over the course of a night clubbing and beyond, astutely dramatising her experience, allowing the audience to share it – the highs and the lows.

For the second show running, we're showing a video for The Smile – Radiohead's Thom Yorke and Jonny Greenwood's new project with Sons Of Kemet's Tom Skinner – and this one for *Thin Thing* is a stop-motion animation with a difference. This is the work of Chilean artists and filmmakers Cristóbal León and Joaquín Cociña, whose 15 year career includes numerous acclaimed short films and a feature, *La Casa Lobo (The Wolf House)*. Shot on what appears to be an ancient film camera, León and Cociña reject narrative structure in favour of freeform creativity and improvisation. The video is a seemingly chaotic (and messy) stream of visual consciousness, involving found objects, rubber arms, *papier-mâché* heads, wax, and lots of paint.

At the start of the year FKA twigs released her first 'mixtape' called *Caprisongs* – which was accompanied by a visual for nearly every track – and nearly all of those were directed by London-based Glaswegian photographer and director Aidan Zamiri. He had revealed a more playful aspect of twigs's persona in a collab with US rapper 645AR early last year, and faced with the daunting *Caprisongs* project, Zamiri approached them differently from fully-fledged music videos. He arrived at a free-flowing, lo-fi style, some cut down from full-length promos, which placed her in a twigs-friendly version of the real world, allowing her to express herself fully, and explore more personal themes. Here are just a couple of films from the *Caprisongs* project: twigs pulling pints and Vogueing (with Danish dancer Maggie Claire) for *Darjeeling*, and then finding time to bond with her girlfriends in a Hackney nail bar, while also appearing in the cheesy salon video, for *Oh My Love*.

Next comes one of the big animation videos of the year – which took over a year to complete – for the big new song by superstar artist and super-producer Pharrell Williams, featuring guest artists 21 Savage and Tyler, the Creator. Directed by top French director Francois Rousselet, in association with CG animators at Electric Theatre Collective in London, it also happens to be a technically state-of-the-art take on one of the earliest cinematic devices – the Zoetrope. In recent years the device has been re-imagined in animation and reality, from art installations to commercials. Rousselet just pushes the boundaries further in this all-CG version, toying with perspective and size, and layers of complex world-building, while keeping true to the artists themselves, basing the virtual versions of real video footage of them performing the song, and other live footage.

Leeds band Yard Act have made a real impact in the past couple of years with their brand of post-punk/funk and frontman James Smith's memorable wordplay. The videos for songs from the first album *The Overload* have brought Smith's imagined universe of intriguing smalltown Northern characters to life, courtesy of director James Slater. Yard Act's ever-expanding fanbase includes the esteemed actor David Thewlis – who offered his services to Slater and the band for the video for the album's final track *100% Endurance*. It brings a notable series to a glorious climax, as Thewlis wakes up on a street bench, to find himself on a suburban housing estate, surrounded by its residents. Thewlis assumes Smith's vocal duties (and his raincoat) to deliver a philosophical reflection on the meaning of life, God and all that – punctured by a final comic twist.

We end this evening's show with a Golden Oldie – and a real classic. This is our small tribute to Taylor Hawkins, the Foo Fighters' charismatic drummer who tragically died in March. The video for *Everlong* is the incredible work of Michel Gondry at the very peak of his powers in the world of music videos, in 1997. It's a true masterpiece of the genre, in which Hawkins plays a key role, as the damsel in distress in Gondry's extraordinary fairytale of competing dreamscapes.

And that's our show. We'll be back at BFI Southbank later in the year so keep an eye on our social channels for news about that.

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**BUG title sequence**

*Director:* Miland Suman

**Kendrick Lamar – The Heart Pt 5**

*Directors:* Dave Free, Kendrick Lamar

*Production Companies:* PGLang, Project3

*Record Companies:* PGLang, Top Dawg Entertainment, Aftermath, Interscope  
USA 2022

**black midi – Welcome To Hell**

*Director:* Gustaf Holtenäs

*Record Company:* Rough Trade

Sweden/Spain/UK 2022

**Orelsan – La Quête (The Quest)**

*Director:* Victor Haegelin

*Production Company:* WIZZ

*Record Company:* 7th Magnitude  
France 2022

**Skrillex, Starrah & Four Tet – Butterflies**

*Director:* Ben Strebél

*Production Company:* Biscuit Filmworks

*Record Companies:* Owsla, Atlantic  
UK/USA 2021

**Richard Dawson – Jogging**

*Director:* Edwin Burdis

*Record Company:* Domino

UK 2019

**King Gizzard & The Lizard Wizard – Black Hot Soup (DJ Shadow ‘My Own Reality’ rewrite)**

*Director:* John Angus Stewart

*Production Company:* PHC Films

*Record Company:* KGLW Records  
Australia 2022

**Chase & Status – Mixed Emotions**

*Director:* Femi Ladi

*Production Company:* Somesuch

*Record Companies:* Virgin EMI, Mercury  
UK 2022

**The Smile – Thin Thing**

*Directors:* Cristóbal León, Joaquín Cociña

*Production Companies:* Diluvio, Pista B

*Record Company:* XL Recordings  
Chile/UK 2022

**FKA twigs – Caprisongs project: Darjeeling, Oh My Love**

*Director:* Aidan Zamiri

*Production Company:* Object & Animal

*Record Companies:* Young, Atlantic  
UK 2022

**Pharrell Williams ft 21 Savage, Tyler the Creator – Cash In Cash Out**

*Director:* Francois Rousselet

*Production Company:* Division

*Record Company:* Columbia Records  
France/US/UK 2022

**Yard Act – 100% Endurance**

*Director:* James Slater

*Production Company:* Zomdic Films

*Record Company:* Island Records  
UK 2022

**Foo Fighters – Everlong**

*Director:* Michel Gondry

*Production Company:* Partizan

*Record Companies:* Roswell, Capitol  
France/US 1997



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