

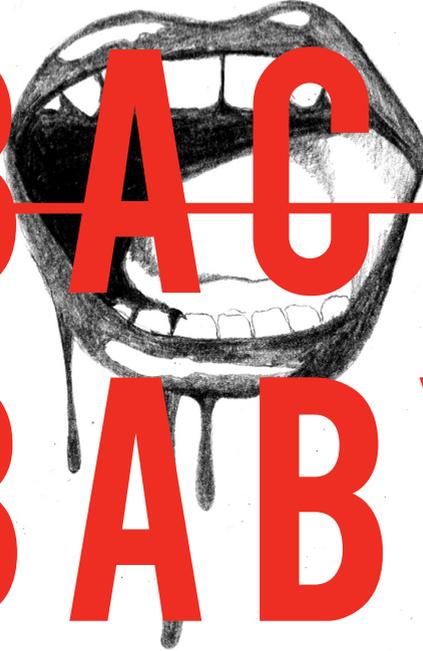
*Mercy Flatline: minusONE*



**WE'RE**

**BACK**

**BABY**



*Featuring:*

- + Gary Daly
- + Luke Kennard
- + Jennifer Poole
- + Ross Sutherland
- + Nathan Jones



03 **THIS IS THE NEWS**

04 **THIS IS NEW:** Luke Kennard

*New poetry and illustration from our first paperback*

06 **THIS IS VINTAGE:** Ross Sutherland

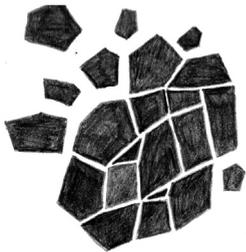
*2004-flava Mercy feature*

07 **THIS IS REGULAR:** My Gepetto

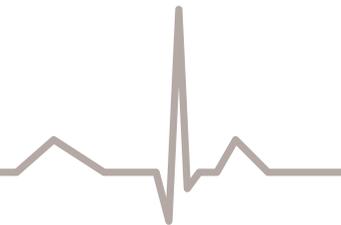
*Promoter and all-round music egg-head Jennifer Poole*

08 **THIS IS CLOSURE:** Nathan Jones

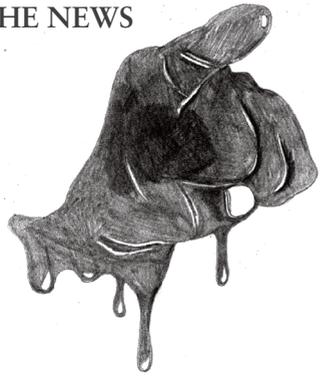
*Our hero finally writes the poem he was supposed to write to go along with Joe's illustration 3 years ago*



**YOU DON'T  
DISCOVER  
A FUCKING  
HUMAN  
BEING**



## THIS IS THE NEWS



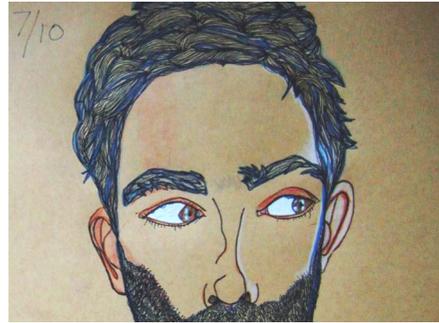
For those that hadn't noticed, we have had a little break in the first half of Oh-Nine, while we concentrated on developing an 18 month programme of the **ILL-EST, PSCYH-EST, ART-EST** goings-on this side of Timbuktoo. And probably the other side an' all.

Things will kick off for us (and you) proper from the Autumn, once we get our mega-big new website all alive.

In the meantime though we've put the long-dead Mercy Magazine on a stone slab, prayed to some digital Gods and then waited for a bolt of lightening to hit the roof of Mercy Towers. The end result is issue **minusONE** of this limited shelf-life zombified spraff-off; which will feature the occasional new commission, some stuff from the vault, and the first announcements of our new wave of new raves. It's good to be back. Baby.

Before we leave you to it, you may well be interested to know what has been going down on our patch? No? Good, here it comes >>>

## Poet in Residence



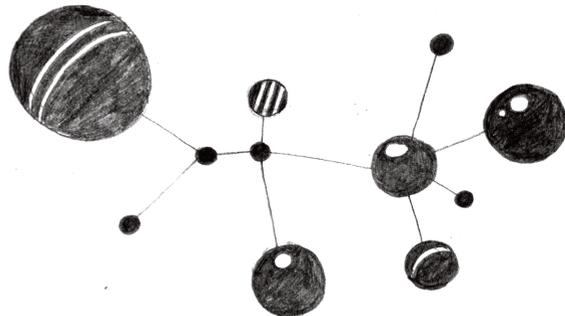
Imagine having your very own poet around the house, generally harping on in couplets and re-interpreting your whole internal and external life for all and sundry to see. Lush, right?

Well, that's *kind of* what the **Bluecoat** – Liverpool's oldest public building, and top cultural hub – have gone and got themselves. Mercy-style.

Our Creative Director Nathan Jones will be part-time resident at the Bluecoat for the next year, working with visiting artists, the curatorial team and the public on a fresh new approach to the role of the poet in contemporary arts. Follow his developments on his blog:

[nathanatthebluecoat.wordpress.com](http://nathanatthebluecoat.wordpress.com)

+ Nathan portrait by Gary Daly



## Dem Yoots

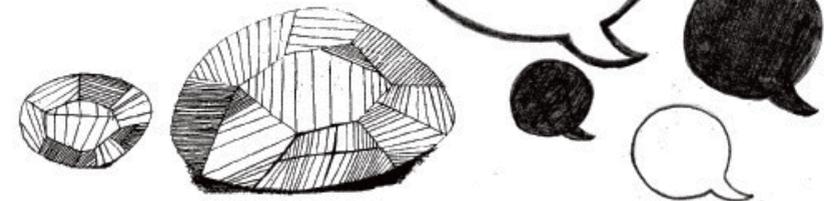


Making the first steps into Mercy: The Next Generation territory, we've been showing kids how to cut up bits of photos and then make them say something potentially libellous, so they too can set out on the trail that 'got us where we are today', much like Reggie Perrin's boss. One class at Tate Liverpool – produced with Craig Atkinson of Cafe Royal – is already done (results shown above), and a series at **FACT** is on the Autumn horizon. Keep 'em peeled.

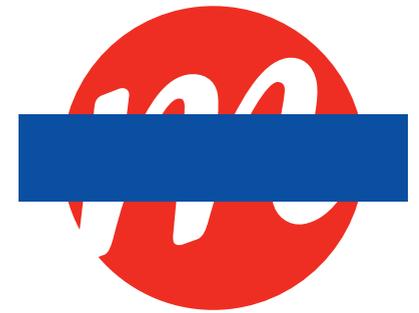
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## New Cultural Leaders Yeah?

That's what the ICA said about us when they picked us to do some 'inspirational' lectures as part of their **A-Frame** project, along with our very good friend Tom Keeley, of **GO / Cooling the Towers** fame. What this actually means we are still working out – but so long as it means we can push to the front of the queue in Gregg's of a lunchtime then we'll take it.



## Liverpool, London, Agency



We opened a London office in January of this year. It's in Hoxton Square, which means that Doug Mercy has been obliged to grow a pencil moustache, develop a gak habit and extend the points on his shoes by 18.8% in line with local regulations. We've been lucky enough to make some words and pictures for **Virgin**, the Young Vic, **Diesel** and EMAP since the turn of the year, and have just finished the artwork for regular musical Mercy cohort John Smith's mesmerising new album too.

You can see the sort of work we do, be the first to receive this 'zine and generally keep up with us Joneses at our website; so sign up for the latest at:

[www.mercyonline.co.uk](http://www.mercyonline.co.uk)

# *A Psychiatrist Rolls Through Town Face-Up On A Trolley*

THIS IS NEW

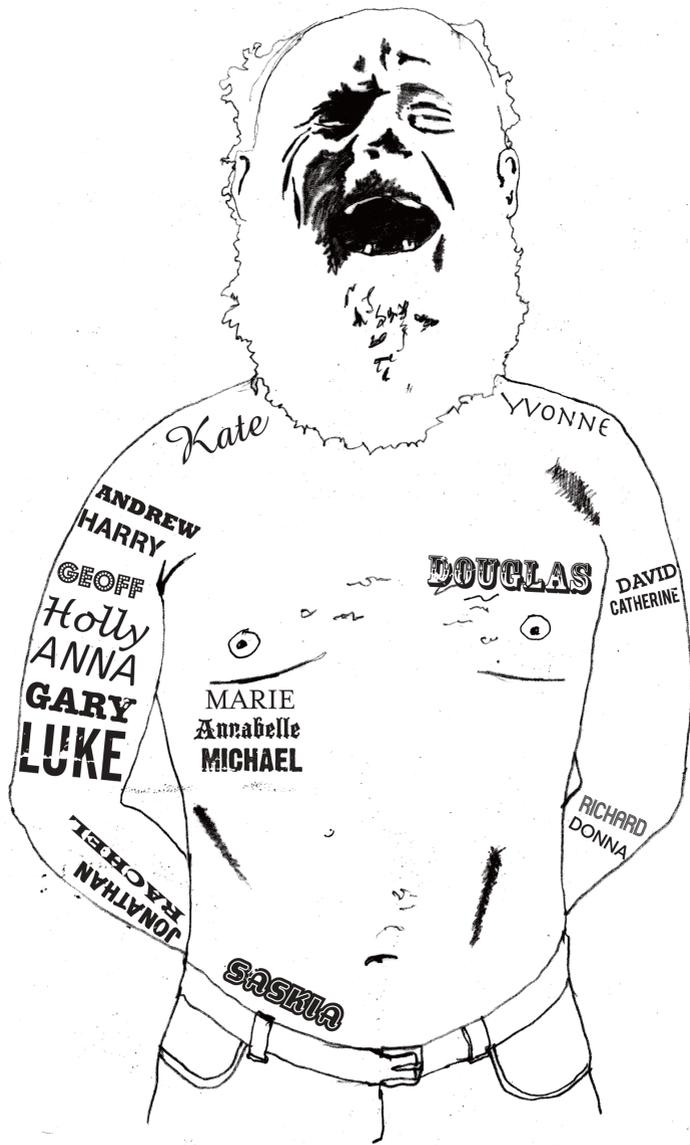
+ Words by Luke Kennard

+ Picture by Mercy (next page)

There were Harrys, looming, superior.  
Kates with blue eyeliner and True Crime magazines.  
There were Lukes, uncertain whether to cross the road,  
Some biting their tongues accidentally,  
Some having just purchased the wrong sized batteries.  
Garys, in drag with mascara-tracked cheeks,  
Consulting their reflections like maps in glass walls.  
Donnas, their rituals nameless, strutting onto the pier.  
Annabelles, their kites tangled in mid-air  
Running way too fast towards one another.  
Annabelles who collide like panicking dolphins.  
Intoxicated Catherines reflected in pools of petrol.  
Maries, quiet and helpful, like pastel sketches  
Of bowls of eggs on fictional blue windowsills.  
Geoffs of whom the world is not worthy.  
Saskias with their mobile phones broadcasting  
Watery toy music about disloyalty.  
There were Davids, celebrated filmmakers,  
Discovering their future leading ladies  
And future wives – Annas – arguing with their boyfriends,  
The tattooed, misunderstood Douglases, at the train station café.  
Douglases who will one day see the Annas in films,  
Recreating the same argument with their co-stars,  
Andrews, similar-but-better-looking Douglases,  
While backstage the Davids ask the Annas out to dinner.  
Douglases who will read interviews with the Davids  
Where they recount “discovering” the Annas,  
Arguing with the Douglases in shiny station cafés and thinking,  
‘There! That’s my new film, right there,  
Arguing with her boyfriend!’ (Rachels pausing their dictaphones).

Douglases who will surely resent the verb “discover”,  
Who spill some taka dall on their shirts as they lean forward,  
Who yell, ‘You don’t discover a human fucking being!’ at  
Richards with torn pockets who are by now sick  
Of hearing about the Douglases’ problems.  
Jonathans, who worry about their hair and their walks  
Their jugulars like French jugs of water.  
They look at you: ceramic, implacable Jonathans,  
Who would say, if you asked, ‘We are all just jugs of things.’  
Yes, balanced on the mantelpieces of world-weary Veronicas.  
There were Hollys, thinking they just walked  
Past that place they keep dreaming about, or it feels as though they do,  
That setting of many dreams for the last eight years, that alley  
With the upended paint can, the ladder, the...  
But on closer inspection, nah. Beautiful, disappointed Hollys.  
Matthews in blue blazers who also wake up  
Unsure whether it was a recurring dream or  
Whether they’ve just dreamed the whole history of the dream recurring.  
Yvonne, so many effulgent Yvonne in the last light.  
A sad zoetrope of Michaels, loping, trying not to take it personally.  
When a wheel fell off the gurney and I went skittering  
Into the abandoned optometrist I lost consciousness,  
My final thoughts addressed to the directors, the Davids,  
Why not a close-up on this red thread, to say it all?  
Why not just a long close-up on this red thread?  
Ten minutes later I awoke wanting to see my parents.  
Your parents. The parents of anyone.

*A Psychiatrist...* was commissioned especially for ‘This Is A Little Book’;  
Mercy’s first self-published paperback, released in July. [Buy it here.](#)



OF ALL THE WAYS  
OF USING HISTORY,  
NOSTALGIA IS THE  
MOST GENERAL,  
LOOKS THE  
MOST INNOCENT,  
AND IS PERHAPS  
THE MOST  
DANGEROUS

# *Future Retro*

*First published in  
Mercy 22: December '04*

+ Words by Ross Sutherland

Retro movements are encroaching on present time, bouncing back old ideas with increased ferocity, pushing youth industry forever towards a point in time where everything can simultaneously be in fashion. Age gives every object a cultural identity, and any old shit can become kitsch if you forget about it for a while.

But what of our own shit? Do we even have any of our own shit? What will survive from today, to be repackaged as 2004-chic? When Moschino is a wasteland and Vernon Kaye is dead, what will our time on Earth be remembered for?

## *Retro Psi-Trance*

Gatecrasher's Sheffield HQ is converted into a psychiatric ward in 2005, triggering the reluctant retreat of Psychedelic Trance back across the English Channel. In 2009, hardcore Psi-Trance chapters in Germany commit ritualistic suicide during a siege on their secret phosphorous disco-bunker. Paul van Dyk remains imprisoned in Frankfurt until 2060, when disastrously pure MDMA reinfilters Euro-clubland. Once again, nightclubs become chock with more tight white vests than the Die Hard Trilogy, Prada reveal plans to stitch 'MONGO' fridge magnets onto their 2061 collection, and Meg Matthews is spotted fingering Mr C in the cloakroom of Alien Resonance.

## *Retro So-Solidwear*

Syndication of the UK Garage scene is ignited by the So-Solid franchise (Blazing Squad pyjamas by 2006). However, the exponential layering of crucial headgear (hats over caps over durags over durags) leads to the accidental deaths of several Garage MCs at pedestrian crossings. Urban fashion labels take a sudden severe drop in popularity until the ironic wearing of original SS trackies in 2020, when that look of being crapped on by a flock of seagulls returns to the streets.

## *Retro Yo-Balls*

Outlawed from playgrounds but not forgotten, blueprints for Mattel's deadly putty balls are impounded by the Military in 2006. Yo-Balls are subsequently issued to all British troops for use in close-combat situations. Black market Yo-Balls reappear in Bootle schoolyards the same year. By 2022, most Liverpoolians confirm they own a Yo-Ball "strictly for self-defence", but "would use without hesitation if provoked".

## *Retro Retro Clubs*

By 2037, London club promoters try to authentically recreate the atmosphere of a millennial 80s retro night, complete with Cold War memorabilia and video projections of Beefy Botham. Clubbers revel in this sanitised version of a sanitised version of Thatcherite club culture, convinced that everyone in the 70s had a huge fluorescent afro, and everyone in the 80s looked like a hybrid of Wizbit and Limahl.

## *Retro Robot Wars*

Future-dwellers will be quite comfortable with the concept of fighting robots. Indeed, by the year 2214, one third of the Earth's surface is occupied by giant soulless sentient killing machines. Still, the remaining human population have a harrowing fondness for the return of Robot Wars. There is a naivety in Craig Charles's voice that harks them back to a less complicated time, when it was CDT teachers who pushed the buttons, and The Enemy was no more than a cheese-wedge on wheels.

Ross continues to be an integral Mercy collaborator and one of the most desirable guys in town. In the last year he published his first poetry collection, featured on Newsnight, and hosted one of London's top literature events, **Homework**. He is currently developing a new solo show for 2010 (*The Three Stigmata of Pacman*), a sci-fi script with Warp Films and an autobiographical 'popera' in partnership with Mercy.

# My Gepetto

*A series of interviews exploring the influences of some of our favourite artists and clever clogses.*

*This week: Jennifer Poole, co-organiser of London's most charming and off-kilter pop, folk and blues night, [Let's Go Baboon](#).*

What artist / human / thing(s) are you most influenced by?

Comic book artist, musician and 'Lower East Sider' Jeffrey Lewis.

What is it about him that you find intriguing?

There's something strangely biblical about him – he seems to wander the Earth being humble and kind. He throws himself upon the mercy of strangers – sleeping on his fans' floors and hitchhiking to gigs. He helps his less famous friends and musical idols when they fall on hard times – stuff like raising money for the medical bills of some guy who wrote amazing songs in the 60s but who now doesn't have two pennies to rub together. When he's not touring he holes up in an old shack in Maine and painstakingly creates these staggeringly beautiful and honest comic books. I bet he has great karma.

His songs are just like him – warm, witty and profound. And a bit awkward too. Admittedly, he can't really sing and his voice cracks on the high notes. He looks like Steve Buscemi's country cousin and freely admits to wearing rainbow tie-dye

and being a 'Dead Head' for a decade. But what I love is that he takes existential angst as a given and builds on it. He is not hectoring but reminding himself when he sings stuff like: *'Don't let the record label take you out to lunch/you're the one who has to pay at the end of the day/And try not to want people to like you too much/You'll just need more and more flatteries to recharge your batteries'*. His songs are deliberations on trying to lead a creative life without becoming a self-indulgent prick.

If you were to pick your favourite Lewis song / comic, what would it be? Why?

Comic book 'Fuff issue 5' describes the pros and cons of his couch-surfing lifestyle beautifully. On the one hand the band (consisting of brother Jack and pal Dave) make friends all over the world and get the insider view of every city – but on the other they give up the right to room service and a 'Do not disturb' sign.

My friend Alex and I caught a glimpse of this when we drove them around on a mini-tour a few years ago. One night the band supported Regina Spector with whom they grew up. We all went for a

curry after the gig and at the end she climbed in the back of a huge creepy van with blacked out windows, assisted by two beefy minders. By contrast we were five people and four guitars squished in a Renault Clio. The band just looked at her sadly, saying she seemed lonely.

Best song?

I love the songs where he takes self-deprecation to new and hilarious levels. 'East River' is probably my favourite overall. The first verse is sweet; the second is clever and trips really neatly off the tongue. The third is just excruciatingly funny. This guy is no John Mayer – you can't badge this kind of sensitivity and use it to pick up future women. Not normal ones anyway.

*And if I had a girl on 11th Avenue  
I know exactly what she would do  
She would wander at night  
hang around at bars  
Find someone who draws better  
and plays prettier guitar  
And then she'd leave me  
and I'd walk back east alone*



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END

*To receive issue minusTWO  
next week, make sure your  
email address is on our **list***