

Foreword 4 Wiz

Spaces For Sounds

By Joe Booley
and photography by **Karin Fraser**

Since the 10-4-10 project in 2017, I have been fortunate enough to work with the Forward 4 Wiz Trust on various things ever since.

I did 10 shows in just one day with them alongside me all the way, went out to Europe with Parachute For Gordo with their help, and also put out my first ever vinyl release with their support. These are just a few of the small things they have done with me that has impacted me just in the last year or so. But this project is something much more important.



Spaces For Sounds. Something that at different points we thought would be the death of us, but quickly became one of the most rewarding things to be a part of. With the main objective to highlight the lack of venues and creatives spaces within our local area, and within the UK in fact, while also celebrating the growing talent of four developing artists. To work alongside these developing artists the trust decided on four established artists within the area, which included

myself (Joe Booley), Parachute For Gordo, I Plead Irony, and Slow Clinic, to mentor the developing artists.

Finally deciding on an old converted stable (GuitarLab, Godalming), a scenic church (St Martha-on-the-hill, Guildford), a tank shed (Aldershot Military Museum), and finally an echoic sports hall (Mill Chase, Bordon), we set upon task of pairing each artist to their space.



I worked closely with Rachel Thomas, the student of Laura Lee (of Parachute For Gordo fame). She and Laura had been working more recently on her songwriting skills within her lessons, but being a fellow solo artist we thought it best we were paired together. She had written her first full song, ‘No Man’s Land’, which on first listen I was taken aback by with the delicate quality of the songwriting with simple accompaniment of acoustic guitar. With my style in mind, Laura Lee put together a rough recording of what Rachel had in mind for a

possible backing to Rachel's raw piece. With various back-and-forth's between ourselves we met to finalise the arrangement for the day of recording.

We were all set to record 'No Man's Land' at GuitarLab in Godalming on one of the hottest Thursday mornings of August. The team assembled, set up, and we started playing. There was something that James, our audio engineer had said regarding this project and his PHD study of how spaces influence the performers and performance, you do truly feel that when you enter a space which isn't a venue. You react differently to how you usually would when amplified through a PA in a 200-cap venue. And I admire the naivety to this that someone like Rachel possesses, but just like myself, she will find this all out in time, and let's hope those rooms will be bigger than 200-capacity.



Onwards to the second session of the ‘solo artist’ day, Slow Clinic (aka Reverb James) had been appointed the duty of mentoring Mikey Riley. Some of you might already know this name within the local scene, whether by being one of the nicest guys in Aldershot, the guy that encourages you to try all the cider at Westival, or more importantly for his prolific songwriting. Mikey is no stranger to performing, or working with the trust, but this will actually be his first public release after many years within the scene.

Mikey and James had been discussing the idea of recording together for a few months prior to their pairing, which was set for beautiful results from the start. Performing the track ‘Peg’, the perfect blend of ambient guitar work from James and rich vocals from Mikey had been placed in St Martha-on-the-Hill, just outside of Guildford which captured the space and openness of the track perfectly.

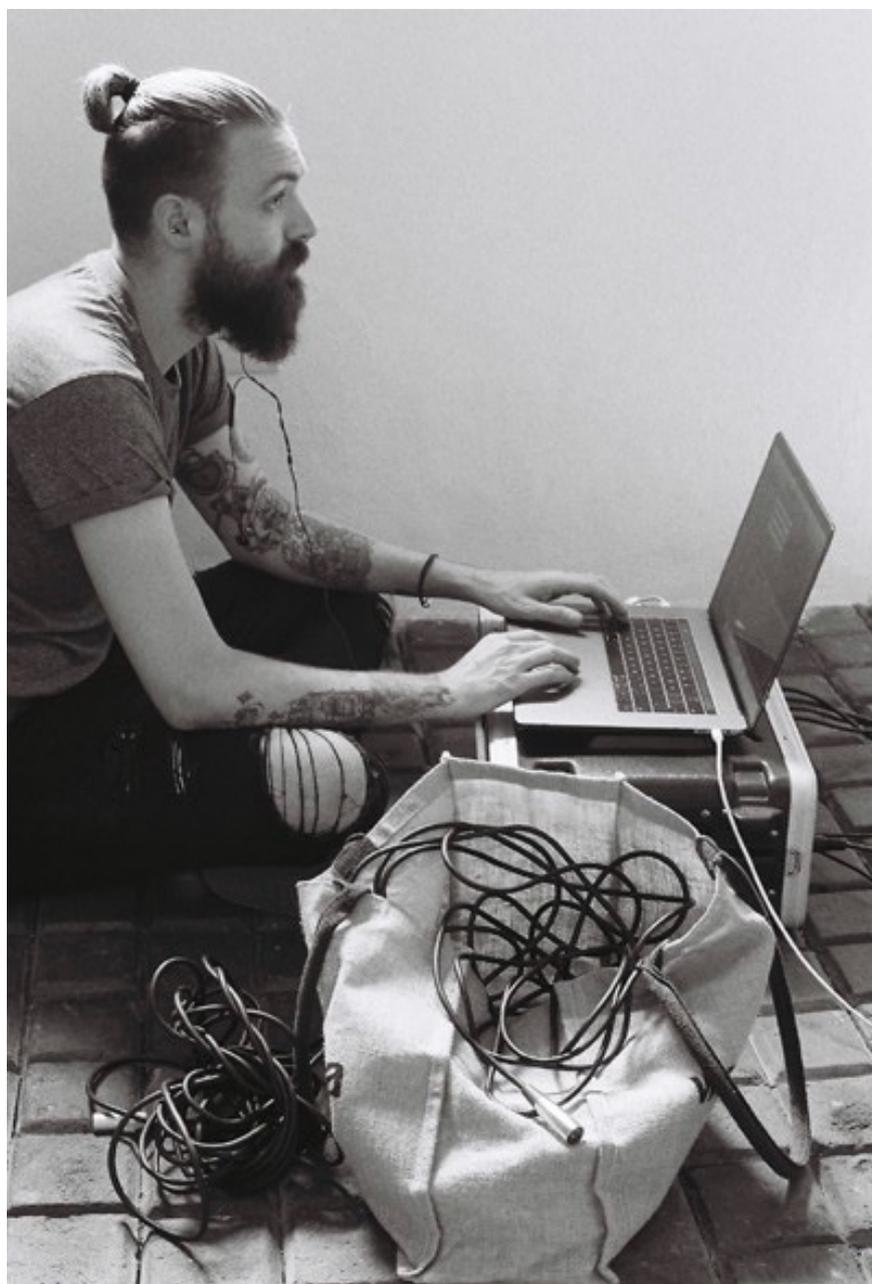


With the solo artists taken care of, it was now time to move onto the bands. Working together for the first session of the day was I Plead Irony, mentoring Maybe Not Today, or at least Jack of the band, placed at the Aldershot Military Museum. Pairing these two bands up is what I'd say is the quintessence of this form of mentorship. Members of I Plead Irony have been in actively touring bands for a good number of years, released numerous records, and gained various experiences of the industry from all perspectives. Placed with Maybe Not Today, a three piece indie-rock band with members barely old enough to play the local pub, with IPT's experience yet to come.



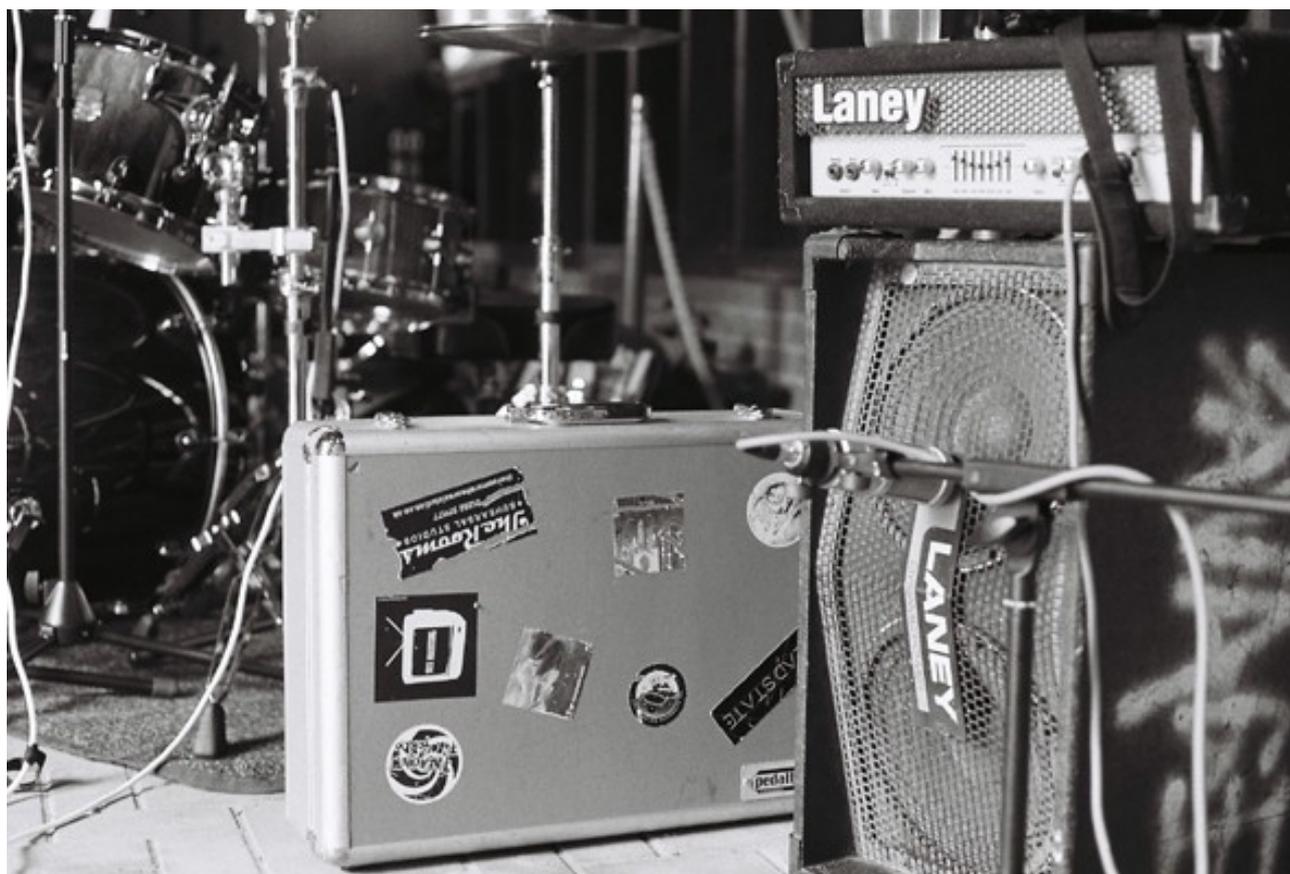
To finish off the recording on the Spaces For Sounds project, the team gathered at Mill Chase (Bordon) to record Project Untitled in a sports hall. These guys had been working intensely with Parachute For Gordo, who in themselves cannot be caged into just one genre. Instead dance around from math-rock to noise-punk, through to post-rock and jazz.

On the lead up to this project, Lewis (of Project Untitled) was discussed greatly due to his experimentation, which was obviously a big attraction to pairing his latest group alongside fellow madmen (and woman). The recording of this track was expected to be the biggest challenge in terms of capturing the performance, Johnny (of Moper) discussed how he was forced to change his usual microphone choices just to deal with the echoic nature of the location. A space can alter every aspect of a recording, not just the performance as previously mentioned.



Much like the day I did 10 shows, this project was to highlight a sad truth we are having to face. Venues are closing. Places I know and love are under threat of closure every single day and we don't just need more people to care, we need more people to highlight it and help us fight it too. Statistics show that roughly 35% of music venues across the UK have closed in the last decade. That statistic is 35% too high. We hear the stories of developers moving next door to music venues, people in a block of flats complaining about the noise from the venue, but we need to remind them what was there first.

Even in the position I'm currently in, these grassroots venues are vital to my growth and establishment, and to all the artists involved in this project. I hate to think what live music in the UK looks like in 5 years, 10, 50!!!



Go out, support your local scene, musicians, and music venues, and fight those that seek to destroy what we love.



Thank you to all those involved in Spaces for Sounds;

Joe Booley
Slow Clinic
Parachute For Gordo
I Plead Irony
Rachel Thomas
Mikey Riley
Maybe Not Today
Project Untitled
Ben Clayton
Somerset

GuitarLab, Godalming
St Martha-on-the-hill, Guildford
Aldershot Military Museum
Mill Chase, Bordon

And thanks to you for taking the time to read this zine
and for supporting the Forward 4 Wiz Trust and music.

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