

Music

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HOMAGE: Bel Blue's
Dunraven Bay

SINGER and songwriter Bel Blue is a familiar presence on the live music scene, counting The Riverfront sessions and Maindee Festival among her many appearances in recent years.

Bel recently released the stunning track *Dunraven Bay* via her Bandcamp webpage. The song, which is inspired by the Vale of Glamorgan, was recorded at Shabby Road Studios in Caerphilly and perfectly displays Bel's beautiful wistful vocals set against a lilting acoustic backdrop.

"Recording with multi instrumentalist Al Steel was a joy," says Bel. "Given the time we had and my style of playing, we went for a live organic feel. Percussionist Andy Constable added a clay bodied Tabla, that drives the song all the way though, with an undulating beat, like the ebb and flow of the sea."

"It was a heart-warming experience to record this song with Andy and Al and I'm looking forward to going back to do more."

You can listen to Bel's recording of *Dunraven Bay* by visiting belblue.bandcamp.com. Although you can download *Dunraven Bay* for free, donations for the track are invited so that any profits made can be donated to a Mental Health Charity of Bel's choice.

Singer gives a seasonal hit a unique Welsh twist

WELSH singer/songwriter Georgia Paterson is all set for a busy Christmas with several gigs scheduled in the coming week.

Her take of Clara Barker's song *Christmas In New York* retitled *Christmas in South Wales* is also doing well on YouTube. Georgia told me: "A little while ago one of my fans (Julie - who has become a friend and big supporter of my music) suggested

that I cover a song called *Christmas In New York* by Clara Barker (a singer/songwriter from the Isle of Man).

At that point I had heard of neither the song nor the singer. Julie sent me a link to the song and I soon fell in love with it. Having never been to New York it didn't quite feel right so I adapted it and *Christmas In South Wales* was born. I'm very proud to be Welsh and I always spend Christmas in South Wales - it was lovely to be able to name check some of the local places that I've played in. I've shared my version with Clara Barker and she loves it and has been super supportive - I've been thrilled with the response the song has received."

Georgia's EP *Hear Your Voice* was released earlier this year and will get a digital release in early 2015. Georgia will be performing the forthcoming gigs in the build up to New Year:

December 20 - Poet's Corner, Cardiff.

December 22 - SAFE Foundation Christmas Meltdown, Cardiff.

December 23 - Raliway Tavern, Tregdegar.

December 29 - Winter Wonderland, Cardiff.

December 31 - The Wharf, Cardiff Bay.

To see Georgia perform *Christmas in South Wales* visit youtube.com/georgiapaterson and for details on her gigs visit georgiapaterson.com.



CHRISTMAS GIGS: Georgia Paterson

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May we take this opportunity to wish our readers and customers a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Rockers, movies, iconic songs and hipsters

Rival State Youth Tax

AHEAD of their first ever UK tour, Rival State have released *Youth Tax*. It's a fairly straightforward rock record that is ever-so-slightly alternative. The riffs, and the guitars in general are somewhat disappointing. They are by no means bad but they just feel slightly underdone or "not quite full."

They do have a certain degree of Guns N' Roses-esque swagger but it has been watered down to a point almost unrecognisable. The vocals are very reminiscent of Stone Gods. This is not a bad record but, as with many bands, there is little to set it apart.

Dan Barnes

Johann Johannsson The Theory Of Everything

CD Reviews

SOUNDTRACK albums can be a curious breed. In an age where every film now possesses its own unique soundtrack, an album of music to accompany a film release has become a necessary piece of marketing. In the case of *The Theory Of Everything*, the forthcoming biography of Stephen Hawking, the accompanying soundtrack features no less than 27 pieces of music from Icelandic composer Johann Johannsson.

Releasing the album ahead of the film's release gives listeners a chance to appreciate the music on its own merits and without the intrusive imagery of an accompanying film. As much as I enjoyed

the intricate orchestrations, I did find them incredibly short in length, but maybe that's more the limitation of CD space than Johannsson's impeccable compositions.

Andy Howells

Idina Menzel Christmas Wishes

THE singer of one of the most popular songs of 2014, *Let it Go* from *Frozen*, has released a Christmas album.

Featuring an interesting range of songs including *The Christmas Song* (Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire), *Silent Night*, *White Christmas* and *Holly Jolly Christmas*, I enjoyed the laid-back, relaxed tone of the album, which makes it perfect for a cold dark winter's night sitting in a cosy



CHRISTMAS:
Idina Menzel

house drinking hot chocolate.

My favourite tracks were the self-penned *December Prayer* and her cover of Joni Mitchell's *River*.

Rachel Howells

Andrew Jackson Jihad Christmas Island Taster

THIS is a preview of the band's new album *Christmas Island*.

While the songs are incredibly catchy, the lyrics bring everything down.

They just feel like the band is trying much too hard to be weird or "out there."

Coupled with the slightly lo-fi aesthetic, it could be argued that this band is trying so hard to be something different that, as a result, they have moved themselves even further away from it.

Quintessential hipster. They actually sound like they could make a really good record if they focused less on trying to be quirky.

Making it effortless is even better.

Dan Barnes