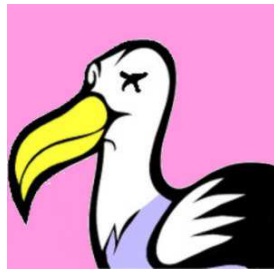


# The Dead Albatross Music Prize

> [www.deadalbatross.com](http://www.deadalbatross.com) <



#deadalbatross

Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> October. 8-11pm. Reel Rebels Radio.

The Dead Albatross Music Prize is a new alternative award to The Mercury Prize, and will run parallel to The Mercurys each year. We at Dead Albatross strongly felt that, for a number of reasons, The Mercurys are no longer fulfilling their requirement to represent a diverse and creative selection of British and Irish music within their nominations.

The thing we have always loved best about The Mercury Prize is the shortlist publication period - a load of albums covering a wide range of genres, thrust into the public's consciousness. Everyone starts talking about the choices, checking out the albums they haven't heard, and generally exploring music they would not have otherwise have been exposed to. All good, no?

Well, no. This year's shortlist left us a little cold and felt way too safe within its selections. We're not saying the Mercury shortlist doesn't contain any decent albums - far from it. But each of the albums has achieved a certain degree of success already (where's the underdog?), and many of the albums on the list wouldn't look out of place on a stand in your local supermarket. For us, the list doesn't feel like it explores the sheer depth of what British and Irish music has to offer.

And that's aside from the corporate nature of the event. There is a huge entry price each artist would have to pay, were they to want their album to be considered for the Mercury shortlist. And the Mercurys are sponsored by the bank these days - in the past at least they explored such music-related sponsorship options as Technics and Panasonic, but since 2004 it's been funded by various financial establishments - what does this have to do with music? But, perhaps most frighteningly, the inclusion criteria for the awards mean that each album needs to have been released via a major distribution route, and to have been available digitally through amazon or itunes. Vinyl-only releases, CD and cassette only releases, and self or independently distributed albums are not allowed, yet this is where the young talent we have to offer so frequently lies. Kevin Shields, of My Bloody Valentine, recently highlighted this issue, as the band self-released their enormously high-profile comeback album, *m b v*, and as a result were excluded from putting themselves forward for the award.

We founded the Dead Albatross prize as a direct reaction to these factors. We hope it gives a fairer representation of what the UK and Ireland has to offer musically. And it is absolutely not a money-making venture on any level. Our inclusion criteria is simply that you have released an album within the specified time period, which will be the same time period that The Mercury Prize uses each year. We don't care what format you are releasing your album on, we don't need your money to be able to decide if it's any good or not, and we certainly don't feel the need to tailor our shortlist to make it 'safe' enough for a bank to want to fund our ventures. We are simply trying to create a bit of publicity and excitement about quality British and Irish music, some coverage to a heap of albums that seriously deserve a wider audience, and to generally give a fairer snapshot of the sounds British and Irish artists are capable of creating.

So, on with the shortlist, and there are quite a range of genres within here. We have folk, house, krautrock, bass, field recordings, indie, metal, electronica, glam rock, shoegaze, neo-classical, glitch, jazz fusion, soundtracks, collage, electro, world, experimental, techno, and everything in between - trust us, many of these selections are hard to categorise in any single genre, and it feels important to pay particular attention to those who blur the lines and keep pushing musical boundaries.

Location is important to us, too. We are trying to represent Britain and Ireland fairly, so we have also paid attention to towns and regions whilst compiling our list, without, of course, letting that detract from the music within each album. On the list, you will find music from Glasgow, Bristol, Leeds, Derry, London, Manchester, Dublin, Gateshead, Yeovil, Aberystwyth, Edinburgh, Birmingham, and Sheffield. So, bearing these factors in mind, here is the Dead Albatross shortlist in full...

Andy Stott - Luxury Problems [Modern Love]  
Broadcast - Berberian Sound Studio [Warp]  
Chris Watson - In St Cuthbert's Time [Touch]  
Divorce - Divorce [Night School]  
Ela Orleans - Tumult In Clouds [Clan Destine]  
Factory Floor - Factory Floor [DFA]  
Fairhorns - Doki Doki Run [Invada]  
Hacker Farm - UHF [Exotic Pylon]  
Hookworms - Pearl Mystic [Gringo]  
Lee Gamble - Dutch Tvashar Plumes [Pan]  
My Bloody Valentine - m b v [Self-released]  
Owiny Sigoma Band - Power Punch [Brownswood]  
Poppy Ackroyd - Escapement [Denovali]  
Rhodri Davies - Wound Response [Alt.Vinyl]  
Serafina Steer - The Moths Are Real [Stolen]  
The Cyclist - Bones In Motion [Leaving]  
The Focus Group - Elektrik Karousel [Ghost Box]  
The Heliocentrics - 13 Degrees Of Reality [Now-Again]  
Trus'me - Treat Me Right [Prime Numbers]  
Walton - Beyond [Hyperdub]

We have assembled a voting panel of music fiends to judge the above list, consisting of radio hosts, DJs, music journalists, bloggers, record stores, and listeners, from every corner of The Isles. This panel of 20 have lived with all of these albums, and will submit their votes by 26<sup>th</sup> October. The votes will be totted up to determine who shall emerge victorious from the first annual Dead Albatross awards.

On Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> October, the very same day as the Mercury award ceremony, The Dead Albatross Music Prize will take to the airwaves, between 8-11pm, on Reel Rebels Radio ([reelrebelsradio.com](http://reelrebelsradio.com)). The format of the show will see a run through of all twenty of the shortlisted albums, featuring contributions from many of the nominated artists, followed by a top five countdown, revealing the winner.

Please spread the word about The Dead Albatross Music Prize, and the albums and artists featured within. We are committed to this cause, and will do all in our power to help promote the best music Britain and Ireland has to offer, for this, and for many years to come.

For further information, or interviews with the organisers, please contact [psackroyd@gmail.com](mailto:psackroyd@gmail.com).

Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> October, [www.reelrebelsradio.com](http://www.reelrebelsradio.com)

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