

Not many people know this, but when I was a student at the University of Leeds, I worked in promotion for the sickest club nights in town. Everything I know about canvassing I learned dishing out wristbands and drinks vouchers on the Otley Road.

In the Law Society, they used to call me 'Mr Speakers'. On nights out with the Labour gang it was 'Keir Snorter'. My beloved nasal delivery style is the accidental consequence of one nosebeer too many at a foam party in Horsforth back in 1983.

Although these days I'm more of a BNOB ('Big Name on the Benches', apparently), let me make one thing absolutely clear. There's still nothing I love more than reaching for the lasers.

Now that I'm the Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition, I've had to dial it down, of course. In the summer recess, however, you'll find me on a beach in Croatia, a hilltop fortress in Serbia, or a mucky tent in Glastonbury, off my effing barnet vibing strictly to *extremely* deep tech, future house realness and IDM (intelligent dance music™). There's a reason the lads down at the Crown Prosecution Service call me the 'Resident Advisor'.

Purists say the new DJs aren't up to scratch. But I think 2010–20 was the best decade in the history of dance music. I got into the new generation through the 'Feel My Bicep' blog, which I started reading to take my mind off the credit crunch.

Those Bicep boys are incredibly safe chaps and I share their insatiable thirst for ditty, obscure bangers. If I had to pick one track? *Au Sève* by Julio Bashmore, obviously! It would be my first desert island disc. (Lauren Laverne, if you're reading this, please return my calls... what happened at Lovebox was a complete misunderstanding.)

LOTO goes YOLO

Our youth correspondent Sir Keir Starmer gives his rundown of the 2021 festival season.

Everyone asks: 'Keir, how can you still party so hard when you're nearly sixty? What's your secret?' I tell them: some are born ravers, some achieve rave-ness, and some have raving thrust upon them. So, exclusively for *The Fence*, I'm looking ahead to this year's waviest festivals, and share my tips for keeping the vibes positive through to the autumn sitting. Filthy!

DEKMANTEL

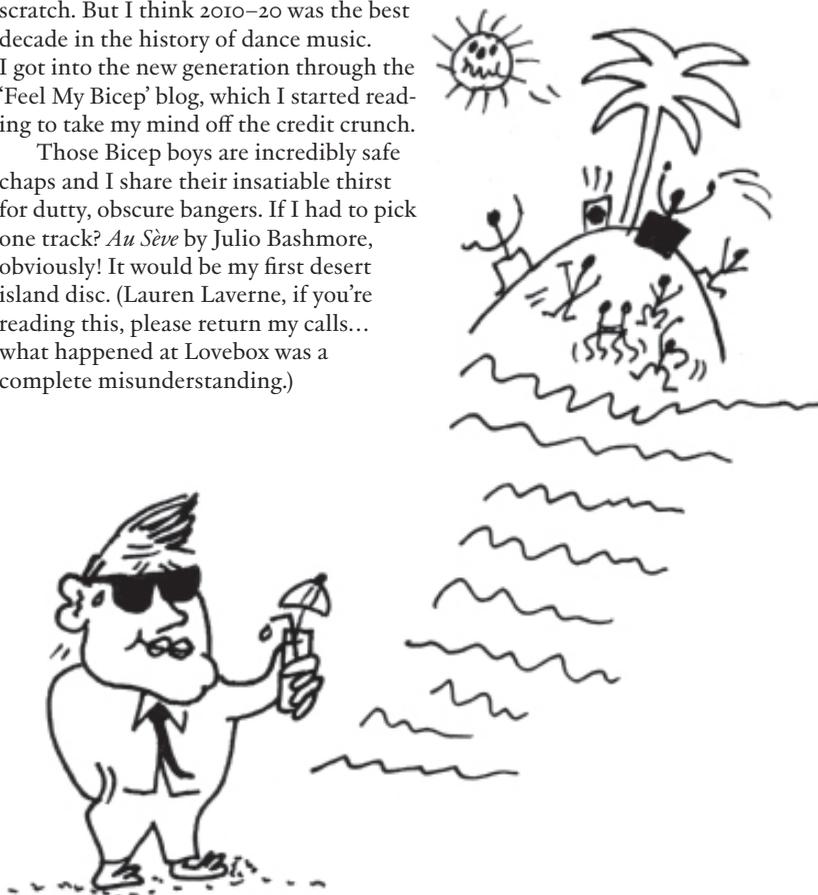
Diehards like me call it 'Techmental' due to the quality of the tunes and the never-say-comedown attitude of the crowd. Whoever said 'rhythm is a dancer' hasn't seen Andy 'Mandy' McDonald off his tits doing the Crazy Salmon at 10pm – mental! Word on the street is that a special guest appearance by Swedish House Mafia is going to make Dekky '21 unforgettable! The best thing about a fezzzy in the Dam? You can spark bare cones of sweet Mary J when it gets too much – with no static from the feds. Praise Jah!

HIDEOUT

Heaven ain't a half pipe, it's Croatia in July! I've had the best nights of my life – and the best nights I can't remember – with the Labour louts at Hideout. Soft left B2B hard house: what's not to love? I'll never forget 2013, when Miliband – or 'Milligram' as we call him, the absolute lightweight – lost his marbles at a particularly naughty Chase and Status drop. Edlar had to be carted off to the first aid tent... epic! 2021 boasts another stellar line-up but I'm praying for a secret set by Disclosure to make this year stark raving mental!

GLASTONBURY

You can forgive the weather when Eavis & Co keep booking the very sickest DJs the world has to offer. With Glasto's monstrous size, you can literally lose yourself in the sesh. I've been close with the security at Block9 ever since that little hiccup in 2014. I'm under an NDA so can't reveal too much but trust me: you do *not* want to come between Bassnectar and Lord Falconer after a few too many party favours! Such amazing times. Obviously, the line-up is hush-hush. But I have it on very good authority from some major househeads down in the Brizzle scene that a Bashmore comeback is in the pipeline, so watch this space, space cadets!



TOMORROWLAND

Me and the Westminster squad blow off steam with our annual big bash in little Belgium. ‘Tomorrowland’ has been the Party’s internal shorthand for a hypothetical Labour government ever since 2016, when Jonny Ashworth threw a gargantuan whitey and shat himself during Tiësto – legendary! The line-up is TBC but T-Land 2021 is going to be nothing short of mind-bending – see you centre-front-left.

DIMENSIONS

Dimensions is a tradition with the lads from the CPS. Once a year we get together and lose ourselves in beach, bass, and barrister banter all the way – with a little bit of illegal aid to keep the sesh going, obviously! At a boat party in 2014, I got a standing ovation for an epic butt-chugg during Calvin Harris and then got Max Hill to drink from it – what a sap!

EXIT

Exit is all love: no pretensions, no hipsters, just 100% vibes, an unreal line-up of Class-A DJs – and plenty of nooks and crannies for the odd cheeky *actus reus*, if you catch my sniff? Laughing my ruddy glutes off! I go every year with the old boys from Reigate Grammar. Needless to say, Norman Cook is an absolute lunatic. But Cooper and Sullivan are no slackers, either. In 2014 the two ‘Prangy Andys’ thought Skrillex was using the bass frequencies to warn them a communist bouncer was after their stash – what a pair of sesh gemz!

KING KEIR’S FESTIVAL TIPS

When you’ve been raving as long as me, you learn a thing or two about turning a good night into a legendary one. The most important thing to remember is: keep the festie vibes positive – strictly no Tory behaviour!

PACK A MIRROR

You’ve got to be looking on-fleek and you do *not* want to be using those tiny mirrors in the portaloos – butters!

BRING A BATTERY PACK

My phone died at Hideout 2015 and I lost the Labour lot for the whole weekend. I ended up having to carry on with Davo Grameron’s squad... what a bunch of

fucking boy scouts, honestly! Osborne passed out at 9pm on Friday and no-mates Gove talked shop all weekend. Twats!

VISIT THE PHARMACIST

I mean the *other* pharmacist! Painkillers are essential, especially if you’ve been listening to Ian Murray chat shit all night. But above all, lads, you absolutely must get your hands on some viags in case you get lucky. In chambers we used to call it ‘lasting power of attorney’. Remember: pilly willy ain’t right or honourable!

by Josh McLoughlin



No Choice but to Stan

*From try-hard to die-hard,
read our guide to who likes
what and why.*

FRIENDS FAN

Your last boyfriend just didn’t get you. He didn’t understand that you’re just that little bit different. You used to do crazy things, like give the wrong name to the barista in Starbucks, or have Netflix pyjama parties with all your friends. The boyfriend before didn’t understand you either. You lie on the sofa rewatching the Ross/Rachel arc of season 2. It’s been fifteen years. You still can’t decide which one you are.

KANYE WEST FAN

You grew up idolising Radiohead, then you decided you wanted to get laid.

LOUIS C K FAN

Come again? Who? Did you say Louise Gluck? No idea who you’re talking about. And even if I did, I definitely didn’t find him funny. Ever. Even when you were allowed to. So I can’t help you. Bye!

HAMILTON FAN

Perturbed by a *HuffPo* article about how Walt was a Nazi, you decided to put your Disney Spotify playlist onto ‘Hidden’ and search for a musical you could obsess about healthily. Now, four years later, you are trapped in an editorial feud over the Wikipedia article for Aaron Burr.

LOUIS THEROUX FAN

You spend your office lunch browsing RightMove and you like to go to Pop Brixton on the weekends.

CONTEMPORARY SHAKESPEARE FAN

You are never, never, never, ever, ever bored of the homoerotic subtext!

TERRENCE MALICK FAN

You have two unopened books by Heidegger on your bedside table (*What is Called Thinking & Being and Time*) next to the *castanospermum* you have featured twice on your Instagram.

CHRISTOPHER NOLAN FAN

You were born in 2005.

CORMAC MCCARTHY FAN

See the pomegranate. The sun high and the earth racked with day’s second feast. Disembowel its glistening seed and carbuncle, spawn of a ruby amniosis. *Plunder the thesaurus*, script tentacular and running like the egg-speck of a spider’s innards. Pause. *Plunder again the thesaurus*. Pause again. Worry you might not be pulling this off.

SNEAKERS FAN

You clean your shoes with a toothbrush.

CONTEMPORARY FICTION FAN

You write ‘This Is Everything’ beneath photos of books worth nothing.

MARVEL FAN

You loudly assert your individuality by expressing opinions about the most profitable franchise of all time, mainly on websites that use your personal data to predict what they should sell back to you. You get a lot of targeted ads for the DVD of *Infinity War*.