

# LEFT *of the* DIAL

## band width



**Arctic Monkeys**  
*Who The Fuck Are Arctic Monkeys?*  
(Domino, UK import)

They're currently the biggest band in Britain and the clever little bastards deserve to be. All barely in their twenties, the members of this Sheffield quartet picked up instruments, started the band and within a couple years already have a debut album that has instantly become a generational touchstone for Blighty's lads and girls with a refreshingly back-to-the-basics approach and unique take on tired old, guitar-based rock and roll. Nicking just enough of The Jam's unbridled power and "everyday England" storytelling as well as big choruses, reverb and conversational style from The Smiths, the Monkeys add a touch of reggae skank and defiantly wonderful pop song structure to capture the zeitgeist. Vocalist/guitarist Alex Turner is like a streetwise prophet in his zip-up Adidas jacket and pint of lager spitting truisms like "there's only music so that there's new ringtones." Arctic Monkeys still have yet to make even an Oasis-sized crack Stateside and their debut *Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not* only washed up on US shores two months ago. The ep *Who The Fuck Are Arctic Monkeys?* was recently issued in England, though, both as a signpost of a band bursting with music and of a label willing to satiate listeners hungry for more. It's odd that plinked down among these five tracks is the opening track from *Whatever People Say*, the rushing, jagged tour de force "View From The Afternoon," and it is the only questionable move here. "Cigarette Smoker Fiona" is a blistering stomper that changes pace throughout, as the Monkeys are prone to do. "No Buses" is tempered and blue-hued, with Turner pining about romantic tangles. The title track is a myth-debunking song showing venom toward new found celebrity and self-loathing which shouldn't be coming off a band so young, but it works. America at large may never know who the fuck Arctic Monkeys are, but if we don't, it's our loss.

—donny kutzbach



**Harry Nilsson**  
*Son Of Schmilsson*  
(RCA/Legacy)

It's no big surprise that Harry Nilsson was a favorite of The Beatles. His god-given vocal talents, prolific songwriting abilities and campy sense of humor all made Nilsson a crucial American equivalent of the Fab Four in the late '60s. But his biggest success came after the Beatles' demise. As the follow-up to the huge hit album *Nilsson Schmilsson*, *Son Of Schmilsson* pushed both the pretty and zany sides of Nilsson's art to extremes. It's a wonderfully schizophrenic bunch of songs, marked by bad puns, strategically placed profanity, horror movie clichés, a star-studded band and one of pop's greatest voices. There is a fairly even mixture of rockers and ballads, but every time the band plugs in, Nilsson lays on the satire. "You're Breakin' My Heart" kicks off with a blues-rock stomp led by guitarist Peter Frampton, but the song wouldn't be memorable without the silly irreverence of the lyrics: "You're breakin' my heart/You're tearin' it apart/So fuck you." The opening "Take Fifty Four" is a bouncing blues reminiscent of "Ob La Di, Ob La Da," where once again, Nilsson lets the sarcasm rip: "I sang my balls off for you baby/I almost broke the microphone." When he gets serious on the more stripped down numbers, his voice soaks up the spotlight, dancing in the upper registers with an elasticity that few men have been able to match. Songs like "Turn On Your Radio" and "Remember Christmas" possess a timeless beauty, explaining why Harry Nilsson was able to effortlessly walk the fence between rock risk-taker and pop star. Any review of *Son Of Schmilsson* would be remiss without mentioning "I'd Rather Be Dead," a masterpiece of dark humor that finds Nilsson singing the refrain with the Senior Citizens of the Stepney & Pinner Choir: "I'd rather be dead/Than wet my bed." The artist practiced what he preached in subsequent years, living a decadent, reckless life in Los Angeles, accompanying John Lennon during his infamous "lost weekend," and forever ruining his amazing voice in the process. Like his British counterparts, Harry Nilsson was breaking apart on *Son Of Schmilsson*, but while doing so he made some beautiful noise. As a result, this was the last stone masterpiece of his career—a demented, heavenly last gasp.

—joe sweeney

### Group Name:

INFERIS

### When/Where playing this week?

Friday, May 12 at The Buffalo Icon w/ Speakerfire

### Band members' names/instrument(s)...

Adam Curtin—vocals

Kevin Brennan—guitar

Bill Crissy—guitar

Dennis Ferry—bass

Jason Podkulski—drums



### When did the band form?

January 2005

**You might like our music if you like...** Converge, Scarlet, Fear Before the March of Flames

**List of Recorded Releases** *Fear the Engineer*, Emerald Moon Records (2006)

**Upcoming events:** CD in stores Tuesday, May 16. Touring this summer to support the release.

### Anything else you would like our readers to know about the band?

We're a young band playing music that has effort and conviction behind it, and we're working hard to progress. That's something almost impossible to find in Buffalo lately.

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