

**ISSUE
18**

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RABBIT**

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This week I tried to be nicer. It's hard in the face of everything that is going on isn't it, to summon the energy not to just call people bad names, shout and swear. Swearing comes particularly easy to me (at the very best of times) but right now I find myself shouting the worst obscenities at my phone and laptop constantly. Even while apparently trying harder I couldn't entirely help myself, I still replied to Trump tweets, still drafted multiple versions of replies to Nigel Farage ranging from one word exclamations to longer more considered rebukes. Did you see him in that fucking suit though, going into that hotel to be a racist ?! "Nice work if you can get it". AGGAHAHAGAHAAHHH!

Sorry, come on be nice. Be nice.

It all started earlier in the week when Wiley was finally booted off social media for that extensive and horrific series of anti-Semitic posts. The Social decided to take 48 hours off everything. It was driven at first by a request to go silent on Twitter in protest at their inaction with Wiley. I'm not mad on the idea of silence in the face of racism and abuse, I wasn't sure about it a few months back with the 'black square' thing either, but not being 100% sure what the best thing to do is why we often take what appears to be the safe path, at the risk of causing offence or doing the wrong thing. I would have preferred to protest loud and hard, but then sometimes you do just need to be quiet and let others speak, take a minute. As I said before on a previous Broadsheet, it's necessary to take a proper look at what is happening, your role, and what you can do better, or how you can help, rather than just firing off a series of rants or meaningless declarations of solidarity not backed up by action.

Anyway, on Monday we decided it was best to just shut down everything for a bit – Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. All three of these platforms have become terrible places at times. It doesn't take too much looking about to find negative shit, people being horrible, threatening and racist. The cycle of bad news and entrenched political positions and arguments over

on Twitter in particular is very tiring. Our 48 hour break was in protest at a specific failing on the part of Twitter, but also a wider point that the whole social media space has become a wild mess of bad vibes. The Social is committed to good vibes, it is a founding tenet of the bar and a daily mantra.

We came back, of course we came back, but I wouldn't have minded a week off to be honest, or longer. I started to daydream again about taking The Social down from all social media platforms forever. I've often thought about this personally, long dreamed of deleting everything and being free. Problem is I know now that would not entirely be the case, I may well be free of the app, free of checking notifications, but i'll also lose a vital connection to friends, excellent music suggestions, films, book recommendations, opinions, news stories and stuff that just makes me laugh.

Now more than ever the networks on our phones, the invisible communal spaces where we exist in parallel are a crucial part of us being together in some way. I guess we all just have to find our way through the bad bits don't we. As we have seen with The Social Gathering, our little online space has been a source of inspiring, insightful, thought provoking, surprising and beautiful contributions during lockdown. This weekend we posted for the 150th time. We would have surely gone mad without it. I was saying to Heather Leigh just yesterday how grateful I am that people have taken the time to take part in our afterwork drinks, Heather herself will be joining us Monday at 6pm on Twitter. Her enthusiasm to get involved and share music with us was another little wonderful moment among hundreds of similar little wonderful moments where people we love and respect say yes of course i'll take a few hours out my life to be nice and hang out. Lovely isn't it.

So for now we'll stay online, we'll keep posting on social media. We'll try hard to be kind and look for the positive stuff, but sorry I won't be nice to Nigel. We'll keep calling out the constant lies from our political leaders, we will continue to condemn loudly and report racists and racism, and all other kinds of abuse and prejudice when we see it. We will shut up when we feel we need to again, we'll stop and listen. We're committed to following more new people everyday, finding out about new ideas, new organisations and artists, share more of other people's projects, help spread the word for good causes, and keep sharing music.

Onwards like Vashti we go! Hang on she isn't on Social media. Shit.

ONWARD

VASHTI BUNYAN

‘The road was so long, empty. But then – back in the distance – I saw a red dot. The dot became a car. A red mini. It flashed past me in a blink, reminding me how slowly we had been travelling, how our footsteps and hoof-beats were taking us along at just a human and horse’s pace.’



Our final vignette from a life lived in the spirit of freedom from the legendary **Vashti Bunyan**.

[Read it – and the rest of the series – here](#)

FROM HERE TO BEFORE AND BACK AGAIN

KIERAN EVANS

To coincide with the final post from Vashti, **Kieran Evans** has allowed us to share his brilliant documentary about her for one week only, exclusively on the Social Gathering site.

Kieran: *This felt like the perfect place to host From Here To Before and tell you the extraordinary story of Vashti’s journey across Britain on a horse and cart at the end of the 60s. That journey led her to write her classic debut album Just Another Diamond Day which celebrates its 50th Anniversary this November. It remains the perfect album to daydream to, almost like it was custom made to help guide us through these strange and trying times.*

[Watch it here](#)



IMAGINE AN ISLAND – DESTINATION 3: WELCOME TO BELBURY

Your semi-regular first class ticket on the next train out of here; an escape from this reality to destinations as yet undiscovered. Each edition explores a different destination – near or far – as visualised by artists, writers and designer friends of the site.

This third instalment comes from the geniuses behind **Ghost Box** – one of the most inspired British record labels of the 21st century. That label's **Justin Hopper**, **Julian House** and **Jim Jupp** take us to the historic market town of Belbury, which is situated somewhere just over that hill you can see in the distance and is twinned with glorious Ethernbach im Hag in Germany.

[Grab your weekend bag and join us](#)

SILENT WEAPONS FOR INVISIBLE WARS JOHN CRUMP

John Crump (aka [@MrOMFGWTAF](#)) is back and things it turns out are bad. Really bad.

Sit down, I've got some bad news. I hate to be the one to break it you, but we're currently in the middle of World War 3, and we're losing.

I know that you can't see any war, and yeah you think I'm the wrong'un, but the thing is the game has changed; the weapons, targets and theatres are all much different to those used in past wars, so it's no longer easy to recognise a world war when you see it. It's not you, it's them. Every advance in technology has led to unimaginable, unrecognisable warfare, and the early adopters tend to win the spoils. From Archimedes destroying the Roman fleet with his claw, catapult and death ray, to operation paperclip and the H bombs at the end of the Second World War, wars have always been won by the most technologically advanced participant.

[Read in full here](#)



WATCH THIS: DISCO VOLADOR LIVE

THE ORIELLES

The Orielles are one of our favourite bands, and their LP *Disco Volador* barely left our record player for months after release, so we're very happy to share this exclusive video today from a live session the band did together in Salford when reunited after lockdown. There are also some lovely words from frontwoman/bassist **Esmé Dee Hand-Halford** about the record too.



[*Watch and read here*](#)



THIS WEEK HAS BEEN POWERED ON BY...

Roisin Murphy - *Something More* / **Seduction - *Seduction*** / **In house jalapeños** / **Heather Leigh - *Glory Days*** / ***Walking The Great North Line*** - **Robert Twigger** / Pints with dad in the Paper Lantern / ***Dreary Nonsense*** - **Oh Sees** / Keyboard brush / **Katy J Pearson - *Fix Me Up*** / ***Standing On The Verge Of Getting It On*** - second edition / ***New Statesman* Summer Special** / Porridge Radio album / **Linda and Richard Thompson - *I Want To See The Bright Lights Tonight*** / Spurs' European Woes / **Pressing Pause** / ***All That is Solid Melts into Air*** / **John Burnside not Dying** / Realising that eating is underrated / ***Precious Memories*** by Aretha Franklin / New Romare album (Ninja Tune) / **Secret correspondence with David Holmes** / ***Blood on the Tracks*** / **Shirley Collins' *Heart's Ease*** / Editing David Keenan's 240,000 word masterpiece, ***Monument Maker*** / **Chris Frantz's *Remain in Love*** hitting **Sunday Times Bestseller List**

The Social Gathering Broadsheet is brought to you with love from Lee Brackstone, Carl Gosling, Tom Noble & Robin Turner.