Film Music TV & radio Books Art & design Out of the frying pan Psych duo the Lovely Eggs

Music "The music industry is smoke and mirrors': how DIY duo the Lovely Eggs are keeping the north

weird Daniel Dylan Wray

The psych-poppers have made records with Iggy Pop and launched their own TV channel, but their biggest challenge yet is taking shape in their home city of Lancaster Thu 9 May 2024 14.00 BST

The experience echoes through their seventh album, Eggsistentialism, out next week. The opening punk thrash of Death Grip Kids comes with the scream of "shove your funding up your arse". But as it unfurls, the album is less grungy guitars and furious railing against the system, and more electronic and expansive as it explores themes of loss, fading memories and survival. "It's a very vulnerable record," says Ross. "To let people see that side of you is quite hard - it's difficult admitting things have been really tough. People think that we're such resilient people but sometimes you've got nothing left to give. The album is a snapshot of when we were at

However, despite the hard times, the Lovely Eggs are not just surviving but thriving. THE GUARDIAN ONLINE

OD Feviews now

THE LOVELY EGGS Eggsistentialism

our lowest."

EGGS CD/LP Casey Raymond's cover

artwork is wacky. dense, skewed. gleefully in-your-face like a glimpse of one of Rick & Morty's alternate universes. In other words, a perfect distillation of the aesthetic and philosophy that The Lovely Eggs stand for. 2020, is a perfectly scrambled punk-psychpop rollercoaster. Less lo-fi than previous The intro kicks things off with sci-fi synths and what sounds like beatific (if slightly

Eggsitentialism, their first album since works, it remains intoxicating and exhilarating. eerie) meows, soon to be interrupted by the quintessentially Lovely Eggs attack of 'Death Grip Kids', where Holly Ross's introductory lines make Johnny Rotten look like a country gentleman. A much fucked-up present is



almost broke them on a sunny spring day, and its inhabitants. Once was Lancaster Moor hospital, formerly the Lancaster county lunatic asylum, which was home to thousands of patients. "People were sent here from all over the place," she says. "There was a care in the community programme and people settled locally. There was one pub they all used to congregate in, a real bunch of outsiders and freaks - and I use that as a term of endearment because that

tell Daniel Dylan Wray

about the project that

For the best part of 20 years, Ross has been making outsider art in the duo the Lovely Eggs with her husband, David Blackwell. The pair play psychedelic punk and infectious garage rock, and - despite playing sizeable UK yenues and attracting collaborators such as Iggy Pop - are a fervently DIY operation. They run their own label, and have no manager, booking agent or publisher. They often make their own music videos, build their own instruments, host their own book club and, in 2023, they launched their own TV channel. Eggs TV broadcast a hugely ambitious six-part series featuring everyone from comedian Stewart Lee to Fugazi's Ian MacKaye. "That was such hard work," says Ross, as we form a production line to pack up hundreds of their latest 7in single, Nothing/Everything, at their storage space. "But once we dive in, we're committed to an idea. Even though it might kill us, we can't let go. It's never been a job. It's a lifestyle, a way of life, an ethos, a commitment to creating." The pair have been making music since they were teenagers at the Lancaster Music

Co-op, a nonprofit organisation that offers affordable equipment, rehearsal and recording space. The building is currently closed and the two have been in a five-year battle to save it. An agreement was struck with Lancaster

of when we were at our lowest." However, despite the hard times, the Lovely Eggs are thriving. It's important for that really creates is money to spend on marketing - the rest is bullshit. our sound engineer at the time was like:

city council for Ross, Blackwell and local

volunteers to take it over and raise a further

Ross says the bureaucracy "imprisoned me

for two years. That's how I felt. I felt put in jail, emotionally, every day doing that pen-

The experience echoes through their

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Ross. "It's difficult admitting things have been

£600,000. Which, remarkably, they have. But

'That's the end of the band.' But we were like: No," recalls Ross. "We bought seats on eBay and got the local mechanic to weld them into our van so we could go on tour with our kid. We treat it like a holiday and he loves it." As well as Iggy, they ended up working with another hero in producer Dave Fridmann (Flaming Lips, Mercury Rev. Sparklehorse). "We'd had a few drinks and I said I'd love to work with Dave Fridmann, but it was like a joke," says Blackwell. "That was the gauntlet and I plucked up the courage to ring it, but I was quite pissed. I left this drunken garbled message." Fridmann finally picked up the message, loved the band and suggested they work together. They have been doing so ever since. We finish packing up the singles and load them into four huge sacks and on to a cart that we then push through the streets of Lancaster to the post office. On the way we stop at the old music co-op, which is covered in scaffolding, as builders bang and clatter away. "We're managing that £1m project," says Ross, looking up at the huge building. "Just the two of us and some volunteers. We couldn't give in. Because of what this place means - giving working-class people access to space and music, just like we had. If the Co-op dies, independent culture and

subculture in Lancaster dies, and we can't let

Eggsistentialism is out on Egg Records on 17 May.

that happen. It's a space for freaks like us."

self-sustaining and profitable band can be achieved purely on your own terms. "The music industry is smoke and mirrors," says Ross. "You don't need to be on a label. All Even having a family hasn't stopped the pair's relentless drive. They've been taking their son, now 11, on tour with them since he was six months old. "When I got pregnant

Their first album in four years, Eggsistentialism might just be their best. Working in tandem once again with producer Dave Fridmann (Mercury Rev/the Flaming Lips), the 11 tracks are a positive shift in direction thanks to an increase in squelchy keyboards and embellishments, as well as songwriting that values pace as much as punch. So while the ramalama of Death Grip Kids hits hard, the seven-minute Nothing: Everything embraces tenderness with a skewed psych-pop sensibility that's a joy throughout, while Memory Man's electro-punk bounces with verve. Wonderful stuff.

CLASSIC ROCK

Julian Marszalek

ounk duo.

For all of their

colloquialisms.

earthy humour

and sharp

all wrapped up in ear worms

that straddle punk rock and

the DIY husband-and-wife

duo The Lovely Eggs is their

humanity. Far from immune

from the travails of daily life

blighted by economic woes

and social disintegration, this

is a band that's batting for the

right side.

psychedelia, what really defines

A Quietus Interview

Lovely Eggs

sounds like for us as a band."

then pouring it away in secret."

valuable to another," she explains.

machination, they have never abandoned it.

THE QUIETUS, APRIL 24

-Patrick Clarke, April 29th, 2024 09:14

impacted soul-baring new LP Eggistentialism

Tough To Crack: An Interview With The

The Lovely Eggs tell Patrick Clarke about how a battle to save a local

rehearsal space turned into a fight for their very identity, and how it's

All of this poured into The Lovely Eggs' new album Eggistentialism, not only their resentment

your funding up your arse!" Ross spits over thunderous drums and power chords – but also the

towards Lancaster Council, best expressed on the gobby punk rock of 'Death Grip Kids' - "Shove

lasting mental scars. The similarly rapid-fire 'I Don't Fucking Know What I'm Gonna Do' recalls a

moment of total hopelessness, laid bare as a breathless stream of consciousness, but elsewhere the

Eggs find themselves in altogether more melancholy territory. "There were times where we came

close to giving up, where we just didn't have the fight in us," Ross says, and as a result "the album

sounds a lot softer. We were absolutely beaten down to nothing, so this album represents what that

Consider 'People TV', based on a game invented where Ross would stare from their bedroom

window and describe what she saw, and their son would try (and usually fail) not to rush over and

look. On the song those descriptions are intercut with lines that point to the sheer banality of it all

"It's older than the sun, this self-repeating town/ the same thing went on then/ the same thing goes

point of gentle despair ("Please just leave me here/ I'll die trying"). One of the things Ross notes is

a businessman furtively pouring an unwanted takeaway coffee on the floor before stepping into his

car, an image that also appears elsewhere on the record. "I observed that on a regular basis," Ross

says. "It really got into my psyche, the wastefulness, the culture of spending four quid on a coffee

And yet, when Ross sings on that song, "I'm never going to change this view/ and I'm never gonna

be like you", she sounds determined as much as she sounds resigned. Elsewhere on the record they

return to the subject of banality – the seven-minute opus 'Nothing: Everything' for instance, or 'My

Mood Wave', which concerns endurance in the face of everyday tumult – but it's a subject from

which they extract a great deal of significance. (Ross, incidentally, cites the magical realist writer

Richard Brautigan among her biggest inspirations: "After reading his stuff I could see the normal

world, Lancaster, through different glasses, in such a way that it became magical.") 'Things', for

example, was inspired by seeing house clearances where a recently deceased person's belongings

are laid out in binbags and skips. "It gets me every time, you open a wheelie bin and there's a pair

of spectacles on the top. This is someone's life, and all it amounts to is going in a bin," says Ross.

essentially just a list of random objects, and yet its scope is far vaster than first appearances might

suggests. It hints at "a fascination with death" that Ross says she's held since she lost her father

when she was 20, and it's also "our analysis of value, how what's valuable to one person isn't

It's not hard to apply this idea to The Lovely Eggs' tumultuous last few years, which ultimately

have only consolidated the things they believe to be of value – their belief in independence and

creative freedom above all else, so tightly held that they even in the face of overwhelming capitalis

Opening with a beatbox that leads into an only slightly-less scrappy instrumental, the song is

on now" Ross deadpans – as a woozy electronic beat swirls around and around until it reaches a

The Lovely Eggs

THE GUARDIAN



THE LANCASTER DUO have a pretty solid argument for being the most entertaining band in

HOT PICK

Britain right now. Their psych-punk-pop flavours are much admired by a large hardcore fanbase and here they once again team up with super-producer Dave Fridmann. These 11 tracks display soaring indie rock melodies and funny (very Northern) lyrics and colloquialisms (Death Grip Kids starts with Holly Ross screaming: "Shove your funding up your arse"). They're fun, eccentric and colourful, and listening to them is like experiencing a bizarre combination of Coronation Street and Stereolab, but underestimate them at your peril. They're superb. **PH**

HI-FI CHOICE



albums & books

Standout tracks:

People TV, My Mood Wave

REVIEWED: RUBY WATSON

THE LOVELY EGGS EGGSISTENTIALISM Egg Records

of life, and this wonderful, genuine message expresses itself through the sound on their latest album, Eggsistentialism. Quirky lyrics and tunes make this album a delight to listen to with tracks like I Don't F***king Know What I'm Gunna Do possessing that powerful raw quality that makes you

For The Lovely Eggs, being in a band is a way

want to listen again and again. The album has an honest sound with some quite vulnerable lyrics such as "I am fighting

FEATURED ALBUM RELEASE my brain today and it's hard now to know what to say" in the track My Mood Wave. The gutting lyrics here almost get buried in the relaxed feel of the track which is emphasised

Domino

by its soothing 60s psychedlic sound. As an avid people watcher myself, I really enjoyed People TV, a song that describes a view from a window in Lancaster, a nod to the band's roots. Although lyrics like "I'm never gunna think like you" point to a rejection of the places and people they're

authenticity and pure passion for making music, each of which shines through on this new album. It's the way music should be made.

The Lovely Eggs: Eggsistentialism – Album Revie

The Lovely Eggs return with an emotional new album, the Dave Fridmann produced

For The Lovely Eggs the DIY approach is simply a way of life. Via the magic of the internet, we get a little glimpse inside the duo's world: from a front room full of record mailers and bulging bags

NARC

Eggsistentialism. Andy Brown shares his thoughts for Louder Than War.

watching, the track has a certain irony to it.

been born with a quirky nostalgic air to it.

management, booking agent, record label

Married couple Holly Ross and David

Blackwell have done it again, with no

or publisher seems to come freedom,

The Lovely Eggs: Eggsistentialism

(Eggs Records)

DL | CD | Vinyl

Released May 17th 2024

Out of the mundane, an interesting song has

Sunny side up for Lovely Eggs Control of the contro



The Lancaster-based duo - husband Holly on guitar and vocals and David on drums has won them a growing

and wife David Blackwell and Holly Ross - have been making music their way for the past 16 years and now they have a new album, their first for four years out now, and their biggest tour

yet about to start. "Being independent and doing everything ourselves is not some kind of marketing ploy," said Holly. "It's something we've done for last 16 or 17 years in this band and it hasn't changed. I think it's important to work in that way." So for the release of Eggsistentialism

the pair have been hand signing art

and packing up every album, writing

cards to accompany advanced orders

address labels and posting them off. "It has been a bit insane," said Holly. "I think we both wish we'd organised a bit more help but it's sort of crept up "This is our first album since I Am Moron, and it felt like we had a lot to do then. But we have never sold as many

albums as we have now and the tour will take us to much bigger venues than we have played before. "We may well get people on board in the future to help pack our records or take on some of the admin so that we can concentrate on the music. But I

think it will always be Eggland and something we control. That's something which is so important to us. "I can only speak about what we do in our world. But we always get back to everybody; send out every order ourselves as it is something meaningful. "Life should have meaning; it's not

just a sale of a unit or a transaction; life

should be so much more than that and

we try to make it that as much as we

The duo's lo-fi psychedelia featuring

★★★ NARC

★★★★-HI-FI CHOICE

army of fans who have bought into the couple's unique approach.

After lockdown they decided to produce their own TV series Eggland which proved far more time consuming than they had envisaged. "We thought it would take a few months," said Holly, "and it took us two years. It literally consumed us. But we thought if we were going to do it, we wanted to get it right. We worked with artist Casey Raymond who does all our records. That was a lot of time taken up." As if that wasn't enough, the pair have been embroiled in a long battle to

disrepair. "It's been a massive struggle,"she said. "We had to hold the council to account for the promises they made to us in 2018 which they didn't fulfill. It took us going in and saying' all you said in a full council meeting you haven't done, what is going on? When can we have our Music Co-op back?

Where is this long term lease you

promised us? When are the urgent

save Lancaster's Music Co-operative.

a building which had fallen into

repairs going to get done?' It took a massive emotional toll on me and David and rest of volunteers. "It's hard to deal with such a bureaucratic system but we feel so passionately about what it's used for. We want somewhere people can create music in a safe space; people of all backgrounds, all economic backgrounds as well. "It was bad enough in 2018 to fight them but we've had to fight for it again to get council officers to do what they said they would."

The ongoing saga of the Music

'THE LOVELY EGGS ARE NOT JUST SURVIVING BUT THRIVING"

THE GUARDIAN

"BLEAK TRUTHS WITH GIDDY POPSIKE, BUBBLING DEFIANCE" MOJO

BUCKLE IN FOR AN IMMENSE JOURNEY TO EGGLAND" NARC

ALTOGETHER MORE MELANCHOLY TERRITORY" THE OUIETUS

"THIS MIGHT BE YOUR BEST WORK" CHRIS HAWKINS, BBC 6 MUSIC

"ONE OF THE BEST THINGS I'VE HEARD THIS CENTURY" STREET VOICE

awarded us the funds it had allocated in 2018 to carry our repairs.

"That's not going to cover everything now so we are having to fundraise but the building has a roof on and is watertight and we are hoping to get it open for March next year." The new album reflects the stress that Holly and David were under. "There was so much unrest and turmoil. Eggsistentialism reads like a

diary entry really," she said. "We really

didn't have time to think about writing

the album, we just sat down and did it.

"You can definitely sense what we were going through and as a result it's a very human album which isn't a bad thing. After all life isn't always jolly. "They do say that as an artist when you are at your lowest you make your best work, and I think that might have happened with this album. I'm just annoyed we had to go through it all to get here, but we have got a very good album out of it."

secure the pair can now look forward to embarking on their biggest tour yet. "We can't wait to get back on tour." said Holly. "We'll be visiting some old favourite places and others we've not been to in quite a few years It's always a good laugh on the road. It will actually be relaxing after all the admin and sending out thousands of records. "But music has always been our escape. It is something very precious,

almost holy and now things have

calmed down a bit I'm hoping we can

get some balance into our lives and

can go back to do what we do best-

being in a band."

With the Music Co-op's future

Eggsistentialism is out now on Egg Records. The Lovely Eggs play New Century in Manchester next Saturday, June 1

★★★ FAR OUT

THE PUNK SITE

🔭 ★ ★ LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE



EGG. DL/LP

The Lovely Eggs

truths with giddy popsike (Everything/Nothing), bubbling defiance (People TV) and a rebuff to arts-funding BS (Death Grips Kid: "Screw your creative practice/ Just let us get on with it"). JB **MOJO**

*** being hauled to the Post Office to homemade instruments and their very own surrealist TV show. Eggsistentialism Married couple Holly Ross and David Blackwell have made a family run, indie empire. The duo takes great pride in their DIY credentials and the veritable Eggs-topia they've created. With this kind of intimate, indie operation, any collaborators feel like part of an eggs-tended family. Eggsistentialism sees Casey Raymond return to provide the albums psychedelic cover art while Dave Fridmann is back on co-production duties. Co-produced with Dave Intro uses dramatic drums and celestial harmonies to set a decidedly cinematic tone. With Fridmann, Lancaster UK duo drill Fridmann behind the controls, the band appear to be channelling Soft Bulletin-era Flaming Lips. This lasts for the grand total of 48 seconds before being abruptly interrupted by Death Grip Kids. down into the state of the Ross' sneering vocal knocks me for six, "Shove your funding up your arse/ We don't want your money". We're suddenly floored by a rush of heavy, Ramones-gone-psych buzzsaw guitar. It's an creative nation, contrasting bleak

absolutely brilliant rug pull of an introduction. Nothing/ Everything arrives next with an unexpectedly emotional counterbalance. With hints of Grandaddy, this seven-minute wonder

EGGSISTENTIALISM TRACY HYMAN DISCOVERS AN ECLECTIC ALBUM OF SHORT, SNAPPY PUNK AND GENTLE MELODIC TRACKS BY TRACY HYMAN ON FRIDAY, MAY 17TH, 2024

ALBUM REVIEW: LOVELY EGGS -

Egg Records Released: 17.05.24

The Lovely Eggs' Eggsistentialism is a reflection of the last four years; of survival, loss and strength. It is an insight into Eggland and just getting through. The Intro teleports us there, to Eggland, before the fiery, noisy, punk rock stomper of Death Grip Kids punches through. Gentle psychedelic pop song

synth-filled numbers, like the closing I Am Gaia. Buckle in for an immersive journey to Eggland. THE LOVELY EGGS Eggsistentialism

Nothing/Everything recounts the simplicity of everyday interactions and feelings, our struggles

earworm of a song that will have you singing along bouncing round the house.

existing, but being there for each other. I Don't F*cking Know What I'm Gunna Do is a repetitive

Eggistentialism is an eclectic mix of short, snappy punk, lo-fi beatboxing and more gentle melodic

EGG 8/10

Lancaster's lo-fi psych duo struggle and survive The Lovely Eggs' lives as subsisting musicians were

wrecked by the bitter battle over the Lancaster Music Co-op they called home, and these

are distressed, in-limbo songs. Their

unlikely latter-day alliance with Dave

Fridmann adds poignantly lavish

flourishes and echoing space-age keyboards to the dead-end punk tattoo of "I Don't Fucking Know What I'm Gunna Do" and monotone monologue and suffocating synths of "Nothing/Everything". "Leave it for a while/I'll call you later", Holly Ross sings, pain pinched into small, hurt words. Fuzz guitar freak-outs and bright psychedelic colours anyway burst through the local scenes, and "I Am Gaia" finally opts for stubborn continuation: "I am bleeding at the seams/But I am on fire". NICK HASTED

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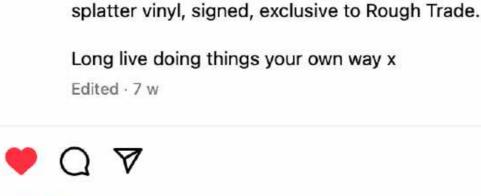
mean feat. It's something to be fucking applauded. In a new piece for @guardian, the band's Holly Ross says "It's never been a job. It's a lifestyle, a way of life, an ethos, a

GUARDIAN READER'S ALBUM OF THE YEAR SO FAR

"We couldn't give in. Because of what this place means giving working-class people access to space and music, just like we had. If the Co-op dies, independent culture and subculture in Lancaster dies,

The Lovely Eggs:

A Commitment To Creating



roughtrade

thelovelyeggs

commitment to creating."

Liked by rachelcarpepixie and 455 others

Released this coming Friday, grab 'Eggsistentialism' on

roughtrade You've got to hand it to @thelovelyeggs, over 20 years and still making, distributing and promoting their

music completely independently. In today's climate, that's no

It's an ethos that sweats through every pore of their seventh album 'Eggsstentialism', their most personal record to date

and one that sees them open up both lyrically and sonically in

The best album yet from the raw and wilful duo? It could just

order to intimately reflect upon loss and strength.

Add a comment...

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Released this coming Friday, grab 'Eggsistentialism' on splatter vinyl, signed, exclusive to Rough Trade. Long live doing things your own way x Edited · 7 w

Liked by rachelcarpepixie and 455 others



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The Lovely Eggs -**Eggsistentialism** Eggsistentialism by the Lovely Eggs is a classic album by any standard. It combines themes as diverse as love, strength,

defiance and being at the end of your

tether; it teeters on the brink of losing-it desperation in a way that has you laughing one minute and feeling melancholy the next. So many standout songs but Nothing/Everything is definitely up there with the best; so many styles and genres, pulled off with ease. Mike Duckles, Leicester

