

Critics' choice

Life&Arts

Visual arts Jackie Wullschlager

Heidi Bucher

Parasol Unit, London

She cast the interior of her childhood home 20 years before Rachel Whiteread's "House", made latex hanging works at the same time as the more famous Eva Hesse, and in 1987 created "Die Quelle" (The Source), the strange giant vase spouting cascades of latex water that now appears to float over Parasol's outdoor terrace.

The "Häutungen" or "skinnings" of Swiss sculptor Heidi Bucher (1926-93) are just beginning to be acknowledged as significant contributions to later 20th century process art and considerations of how the body inhabits space. Bucher was included in 2017's Venice biennale; this is her first exhibition in a UK public gallery.

Entering Parasol, you encounter "Borg" (1976), Bucher's earliest "Raumhaut" or "room skin": a dark, fleshy replica of a butcher's cold store. "Kleines Glasportal, Bellevue Kreuzlingen" (1988) an interior moulding of a psychiatric hospital, by contrast has light passing through rubbery translucent windows: an ethereal, phantom space. Upstairs, elegant, minimalist structures from Bucher's Glue House series, "Weissleimhaus" (1976-83), suggest the miniaturised shells of houses. "Rooms are shells, rooms are



skins" Bucher chants in a film showing her coating surfaces or interiors with gauze, pouring liquid latex into it, then stripping off the shroud-like cladding to produce ghostly forms, stiff but supple, sturdy but fragile.

Memory — protecting it, escaping

it, clinging to it, casting it off like an unwanted skin — and transience are Bucher's deeper themes. A favourite motif was the dragonfly, which as a larva sheds its skin to become a creature of dramatic fleeting beauty, living just a few days. The sculpture "Der Schlüpfakt der Parkettlibelle"

(1983) ("The hatching of the parquet dragonfly") has a surface mixed with mother-of-pearl pigments, delicate as the insect's wings: poignant, luminescent, original as all Bucher's work.

parasol-unit.org

September 19-December 9

'Kleines Glasportal, Bellevue Kreuzlingen' (1988)

Estate of Heidi Bucher

Renzo Piano: The Art of Making Buildings

Royal Academy, London

81-year-old Renzo Piano's offer to design a replacement, as memorial and a "positive moment of unity and co-operation", for the collapsed Morandi bridge in his native Genoa, is typical of this socially committed architect. He is an ideal figure to launch the inaugural architecture exhibition in the RA's new Gabrielle Jungels-Winkler Gallery; the show, the first on Piano in London since 1989, reveals through drawings, models and photographs the process behind celebrated buildings including the Pompidou Centre, The New York Times Building and the Shard. royalacademy.org.uk to January 20

Ocean Liners: Speed and Style

V&A Dundee

Scotland's first design museum, Kengo Kuma's 8,000 sq metre construction of curling concrete walls suggesting a cliff face, opens today with this glamorous

show, imported from London but perfect for Dundee's waterfront setting, exploiting the engineering, design and cultural impact of ocean liners from Brunel's 1843 steamship the Great Eastern to the QE2. vam.ac.uk, to February 1

Cornelia Parker, Perpetual Canon

Turner Contemporary, Margate

"Perpetual Canon" (2017) Parker's spectacular installation of 60 flattened instruments from a brass band, arrives in Margate to overlook the North Sea. Parker calls her silenced compressed trumpets, cornets, tubas "an anti-war" that is slowly winding through the band "is still marching" — given freedom of eloquence by her investigation of the process of renewal through destruction. turnercontemporary.org to March 17

Ibrahim El Salahi

Vigo Gallery, London

A survey of the visionary Sudanese modernist's graphic works, beginning with the 1960s series "The

Pop Ludovic Hunter-Tilney



David Guetta

7

What a Music/Parlophone
★★★★★

As one of the world's most successful DJs, a fixture of Ibiza superclubs and Las Vegas dance music mega-spectacles, David Guetta has presumably not named his new album in tribute to Federico Fellini's 8½, art-house cinema's classic account of writer's block. But beneath its brash exterior, 7 (yes, it is Guetta's seventh album) betrays self-doubt.

A double album, the first part finds the Frenchman on the hunt for pop hits with a sprawling cast of guest vocalists (Sia, Nicki Minaj, Justin Bieber). The production is better than Guetta's haters give him credit for but the song structures are clumsily formulaic, an assembly line of pre-choruses and hooks.

The album's second part makes an abrupt swerve to a thumping house music setlist that looks back to Guetta's pre-superstar DJ days. With chewy beats and a populist ear for rhythmic dynamics, these are uncomplicated exercises in dance-floor abandon — the better side of Guetta's split personality.



Jungle

For Ever

XL Recordings
★★★★★

Following a stint in a failed indie guitar band, London duo Joshua Lloyd-Watson and Tom McFarland shifted the dial successfully on their first album as Jungle in 2014. The music was an enticing confection of soul, disco and funk, at once classic-sounding and contemporary. Good reviews, a top 10 chart placing and a Mercury prize nomination followed.

For Ever is the follow-up. Opener "Smile" is driven by uncharacteristically powerful drumming, as though opening up some dynamic new space in their sound. Lloyd-Watson and McFarland's high voices build towards wild notes, a departure from the comfortable hues of their eponymous debut album.

"Heavy, California" reverts to type with warm pop-funk that loses lustre as the song fails to move out of cruise control. But elsewhere are signs of progression. "Beat 54 (All Good Now)" has a loping, soulful charm, while "Mama Oh No" shakes up the pair's vocals with moody James Blake-style distortion.

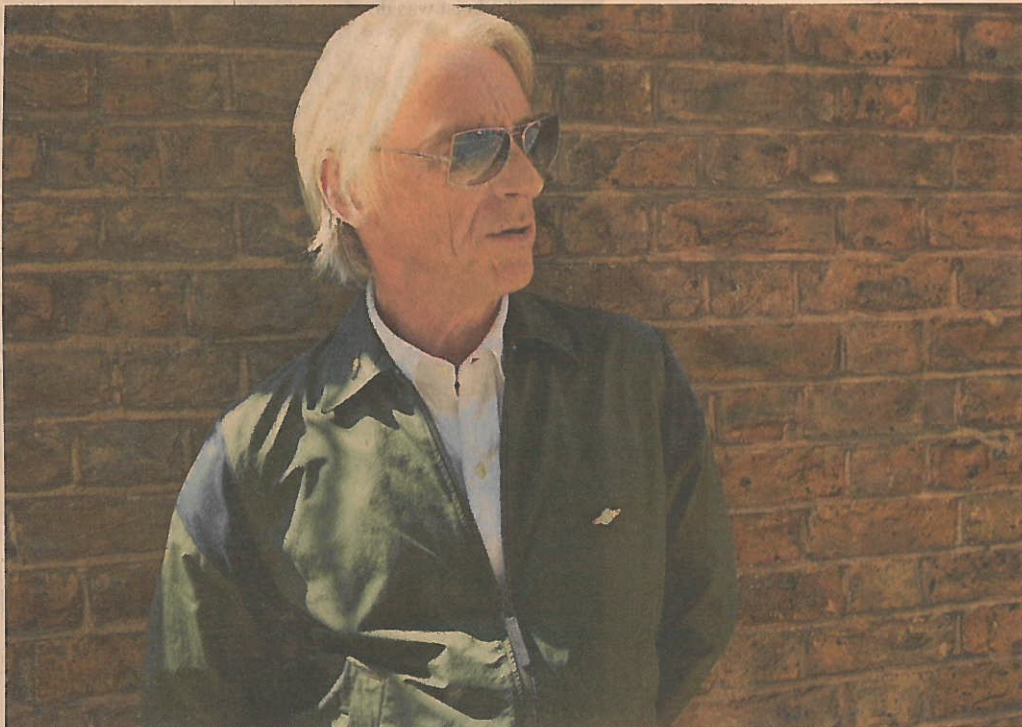


Paul Weller

True Meanings

Parlophone
★★★★★

"Let's just see where the seas are taking us," Paul Weller sings on his new album. It is a philosophy that has served him well since 2008's *22 Dreams*, a free-spirited double album whose excursions into jazz-rock and psychedelia reversed a dull drift into middle-of-the-road Britrock. It came out as he turned 50, a statement of renewed artistic intent.



Since then Weller has been in a rich vein of form. The Modfather, a byword for sharply tailored style, has allowed his music to develop a loose-limbed sensibility. Now comes *True Meanings*, released four months after his 60th birthday. It finds him playing acoustic rock with folk influences, a music evocative of campfires and rustling leaves — a far cry from the angry young man of his Jam days or the urbane activist of The Style Council.

Natural imagery recurs. Winds blow, tides flow, songs unfold under blue or evening skies. Weller's voice has a weathered quality, gently hoarse, not so much wizened as smoothed by the passing years. He is joined by British folk grandees MartinCarthy and Danny Thompson, alongside younger musicians (Lucy Rose, Conor O'Brien of

Villagers). Noel Gallagher has a cameo on "Books", playing keyboards rather than dadrock riffs.

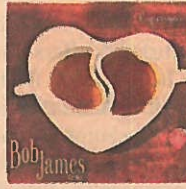
"The Soul Searchers" sets the ball rolling, a charged but dreamy number featuring rolling acoustic guitars, a psychedelic organ solo and lyrics about a moonlit ramble in search of cosmic truth. "Old Castles" shimmies by with beguiling ease to an old-fashioned folk-rock shuffle. "Books" is the highlight, a sitar-led number that Weller sings with gruff tenderness, building in intensity, accompanied by a mystical-sounding Rose on backing vocals.

The album's string arrangements are its weakness, a luxuriant wash of music that occasionally coagulates into outright syrupiness ("May Love Travel with You"). They gild a lily that would have been better left in its natural state.

Folk leanings: The 'Modfather' Paul Weller

Nicole Nodland

Jazz Mike I



Bob James Trio

Espresso

Evosound
★★★★★

The svelte grooves, scintillating setting arrangements and catchy themes of the Bob James aesthetic present glossy emotional surface. But details add depth, and with solos burrowing underneath, the pianist's appeal is boundless.

This CD, the American's first studio recording as a leader for 12 years, finds him returning to the piano format of his 1962 recording debut. There's a nippy reading of Fats Waller's "Ain't Misbehavin'" that features twiddles, riffs and a clearly stated theme, a reworking of the 1975 arrangement of Ralph McDonald and William Salter's "Mister Magic" became a breakthrough for the late saxophonist Grover Washington. The remaining themes are originals, mostly freshly written, and all brought to life by the strong support of Michael Palazzolo and Kilson on bass and drums.

The album opens with the unfolding panorama and understated bounce of "Bulgogi", and continues

Classical Richard Fairman

Dance Louise Levene

Theatre Sarah Hemming

World David