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## Kid Carpet Vs. Troy Banarzi

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Shane Meadow's 'This Is England' certainly paid a stylistic homage to a changing social and political time in Britain in the early 80's, albeit with a dark message of what it really means to be patriotically challenged. Racial paranoia aside, there is another facet to our roots that defines us equally as quite frankly a nation of nutters. That of course is our penchant for the abstract, surreal and ridiculous. Troy Banarzi and Kid Carpet both epitomise and embody this. Cast at opposite ends of the same spectrum they fall into a timeline peppered with the spectres of Spike Milligan, Quentin Crisp, Syd Barrett and Keith Moon.

Banarzi on the one hand is an experimental music maker. With a more art-orientated approach, he is one of those figures whose work and performances have lead him to galleries and 'unusual spaces' around the capital. His latest venture sees him coin the phrase 'Twisted Circus' for his opus 'Euphonika', a genre that can only be described as a quintessentially English foray into the fantastical fairgrounds of yesteryear. Brought together over a two year period, it features eight musicians and an accompanying visual show which is based on the 'human desire that dolls/statues can come to life' idiom. Anyone who remembers watching the adaptation of E Nesbit's 'The Enchanted Castle' and marveled at its eerie, ethereal nature (it was, after all, pretty spooky viewing at 4.30 in the afternoon) will undoubtedly appreciate this.

Intertwined within this world of wonderment, wherein string quartets, toy piano, melodica and electronics interplay, are spoken word references to the statue theme. Snippets of Statuesphiles (yep, they exist), an extract from Dennis Nielsen's journal and a reading of Harold Harlow's 1958 lecture, 'The Nature Of Love,' featuring monkey mothers and the, ahem, 'Uni-breast,' are all present.



Taking an altogether more simplistic, yet equally honest and revealing route, is the musician cum anti-pop star, Kid Carpet. A one-man sideshow on the main stage, lost between being child's entertainer and obsessive Casio keyboard collector: our version of Dan Deacon, but without the day-glo nerd appeal. Carpet is yet another example of English eccentricity for Generation Y. With a second album ready to go on Sunday Best ('Casio Royale') the festival favourite adds a tad more sheen to his productions. It is, however, still grounded in the 8-bit analogue funk mode made popular by the Northern surrealism of Frank Sidebottom. Lyrically, the comedy remains intact, with maybe a dash of cynicism thrown into the mix. Check the music box waltz of 'I Don't Believe' for proof.

Overall, though, it's pop: unashamedly straight-down-the-line, car-boot-sale pop. The latest single 'I Don't Want To Fail In Love' sounds like it steals unapologetically from Madonna's 'Material Girl', whilst 'Don't Stop The Pop' shouts it loud and clear.

This, alongside Banarzi, is real England (or at least part of it) - right here, right now. It's like the Chuckle Brothers and Vic & Bob all getting on famously in some parallel world, where pretension is swapped for lunacy. All of this, underpinning and appreciating our want and need to promote the weird and wonderful, with a DIY mentality that brings control back into the individual's hands. So play on boys, for these are the people putting the Great in Britain, not the Turner Prize 'Stars,' vacuous football players, or the self-professed arrogance of mop top Mancunian brothers, or anyone else who doesn't quite know how to entertain the concept of self-parody or escapism. Play on indeed, in your heads and mine. Play on...

'EUPHONIKA' BY TROY BANARZI IS OUT NOW (THE OLD HAND RECORDING COMPANY)  
'CASIO ROYALE' BY KID CARPET IS OUT NOW (SUNDAY BEST)