

ink, paper
& rock 'n roll

gig sketches
2016-2019

david frankum

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this form of visual essaying is regulated by
the artist's respect for the experienced event
and its depicted participants.

- w. john hewitt

Introduction (this interview originally appeared in 'More of this Sort of Thing' Magazine. 2019)

9pm. The lights dim. A cheer erupts from the eager crowd. The band steps out onto the stage; there's a sense of excitement and adrenaline in the air. On the first hit of the snare drum, the band and the audience simultaneously come out of the starting blocks, hitting the ground running... and so do I. My pen frantically moves across the paper, energetic lines appear, ink splatters. Welcome to the world of "Art 'n' Roll".

Hello, my name is David Frankum and I am, well some would say, an artist. I simply like to draw. I work in many areas of art and design: I'm a designer, a teacher, an illustrator... the list goes on, but I'm at my happiest when I'm drawing in my pocket sketchbook, capturing and documenting life as it happens, no matter how exciting or mundane the subject may be.

I've been drawing for as long as I can remember. The thrill I had of creating marks as a child has never left me and I still get the same emotional response now as back then. Likewise, it's the same with music. The buzz of excitement when I saw Alice Cooper sandwiched between Donny Osmond and David Cassidy on Top of the Tops through my infant eyes has stayed with me throughout my life. From that moment, I sold my soul to rock 'n' roll. It's little wonder then that the two creative passions in my life would collide and come together.

Capturing my love of music onto paper is an absolute joy. It's everything that's great about rock 'n' roll: it's energetic, unpredictable and anything can happen. The process is relatively simple, I draw what I see and feel, capturing the spirit of the band and venue. I'm receptive to the energy and feel the atmosphere of the music. I draw straight onto the paper with an ink brush-pen, a very direct approach where mistakes and flaws can simply enhance the study. I try to translate the feel and vibe of the performance through a series of important lines, which form the foundations of the overall piece. This has to happen immediately after a short period of intense studying, observation and sharp decision making, after which, I loosen up and go with the flow. Sometimes, I may return to the sketch a few days later, drawing from memory. On occasion, these have been the more successful studies as they seem to capture the feel of the performance better. Naturally, I try to change my approach depending on the gig, but generally it's very much a heat of the moment creative impulse.

That's not to say it's always easy. I'm met with many challenges. People standing in front of me obstructing my view whilst I'm in full flow, getting caught in the pit (which I always enjoy, but not so fun when my pen gets knocked out of my hand), photographers noticing that I've found a great location to capture the band from and trying to 'nudge' me out of the way, artists playing in relatively complete darkness and, my most recent favourite: a band playing in a thick fog of dry ice so that I can't see them at all... nor my own sketchbook... nor the rest of the venue (They were called "Dead Smoke", so guess I should have seen it coming). Not all of the drawings go to plan or come off, but again, that's rock 'n' roll, folks. The hardest members of a band to draw are the drummers. If you are a drummer and wish to be drawn, please could you kindly remove your cymbals so that I can see you?

Over the last few years, I've been focussing mainly on the Stoner/Doom/Psych scene in London. Not only have I been capturing the bands, but members of the audience as well. There's a great sense of community and I've made many friends over the years, not only with the bands (some of which request that I come to their gigs to draw them) but members of the circuit. It's fair to say that I've very much become part of the scene, which is nothing but warm, friendly and... hazy. One of my sketches of Peter Holland, bassist in the band Elephant Tree, formed a wonderful friendship between the two of us and he even played during the service of my wedding last year. I didn't draw him performing on this occasion, though, as it may have ended up being the shortest wedding of all time... but I was very tempted.

Reportage drawing has been a huge passion of mine ever since I started at Art College, aged 16. Out of all the aspects of art and design I have worked in, documenting life around me in my little black book is by far my favourite field of personal visual expression. It's a compulsion, an addiction, my raison d'être, and I would be lost without my visual diary.

During my first year at art college, my tutor and mentor, Curtis Tappenden, taught me the essential skills required to observe, execute and capture a moment in time quickly, with an impulsive rawness, onto a blank piece of paper. It was also around this time that I discovered W. John Hewitt's sketches of the folk-punk group "The Pogues", as seen in the book "Poguetry". Mr Hewitt went on tour with The Pogues in the late 80's and documented the events of "life on the road" into his sketchbook. The results are a beautiful eyewitness account. The studies left a massive impression on me at a pivotal and blossoming moment in my life as an artist and it's fair to say that I still carry their influence with me to this day. The impact that both artists had

on me is immeasurable. It's to these masters that I dedicate this body of work.

Enjoy!

David Frankum 2019

1-2-3-4!
- dee dee ramone
the ramones





laura redhead - bbc radio 3 exposure ramsgate
- ramsgate music hall - 13/12/16



laura redhead - bbc radio 3 exposure ramsgate
- ramsgate music hall - 13/12/16



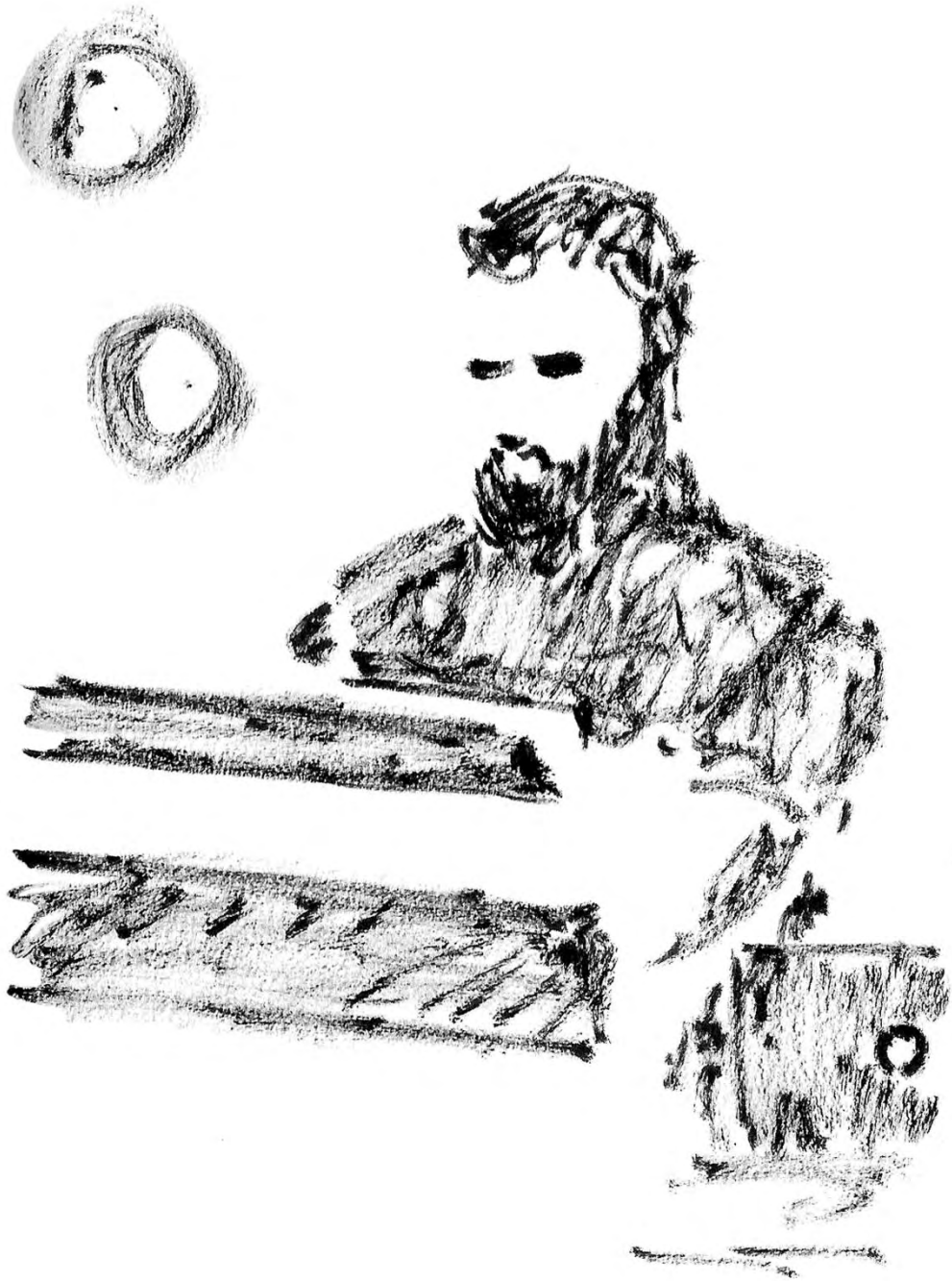
leonie evans - bbc radio 3 exposure ramsgate
- ramsgate music hall - 13/12/16



matt wright - bbc radio 3 exposure ramsgate
- ramsgate music hall - 13/12/16



robert stillman - bbc radio 3 exposure ramsgate
- ramsgate music hall - 13/12/16



carpenter brut - the underworld - 26/01/17



busker - st pancras railway station london - 10/03/17



zombi - forum kentish town - 26/03/17



nameless ghoul - ghost- forum kentish town - 26/03/17



hark - desertfest london - 30/04/17



jack townley - elephant tree - desertfest london - 30/04/17



peter holland - elephant tree - desertfest london - 30/04/17



wolves in the throne room - desertfest london - 30/04/17



wolves in the throne room - desertfest london - 30/04/17



wolves in the throne room - desertfest london - 30/04/17



al cisneros - sleep - desertfest london - 30/04/17




matt pike - sleep - desertfest london - 30/04/17



elephant tree - the bird's nest - 09/06/17



riley macintyre - elephant tree - the old blue last - 13/08/17



daniel kinsey - wizard fight - the black heart - 19/08/17



george cobbold - wizard fight - the black heart - 19/08/17



luke bolton - wizard fight - the black heart - 19/08/17



owen carty - chubby thunderous bad kush masters
- the black heart - 19/08/17



mark buckwell - chubby thunderous bad kush masters
- the black heart - 19/08/17



will hart - chubby thunderous bad kush masters
- the black heart - 19/08/17



audience - the black heart - 19/08/17



bavarian oompah band - beavertown extravaganza - printworks - 09/09/17



m.u.t.o. - Earls - 05/10/17



chris garth - upcdownc - Earls - 05/10/17



james bridges - upcdownc - Earls - 05/10/17



dale forster - upcdownc - Earls - 05/10/17



cavalli - new cross inn - 22/10/17



scott black - green lung - new cross inn - 22/10/17



andrew cave - green lung - new cross inn - 22/10/17



matt wiseman & tom templar - green lung
new cross inn - 22/10/17



tuskar - new cross inn - 22/10/17



nicholas george - gnob - new cross inn - 10/17



girls in synthesis - the shakelwell arms - 03/11/17



girls in synthesis - the shakelwell arms - 03/11/17



bad breeding - the shakelwell arms - 03/11/17



chris dodd - bad breeding - the shakelwell arms - 03/11/17



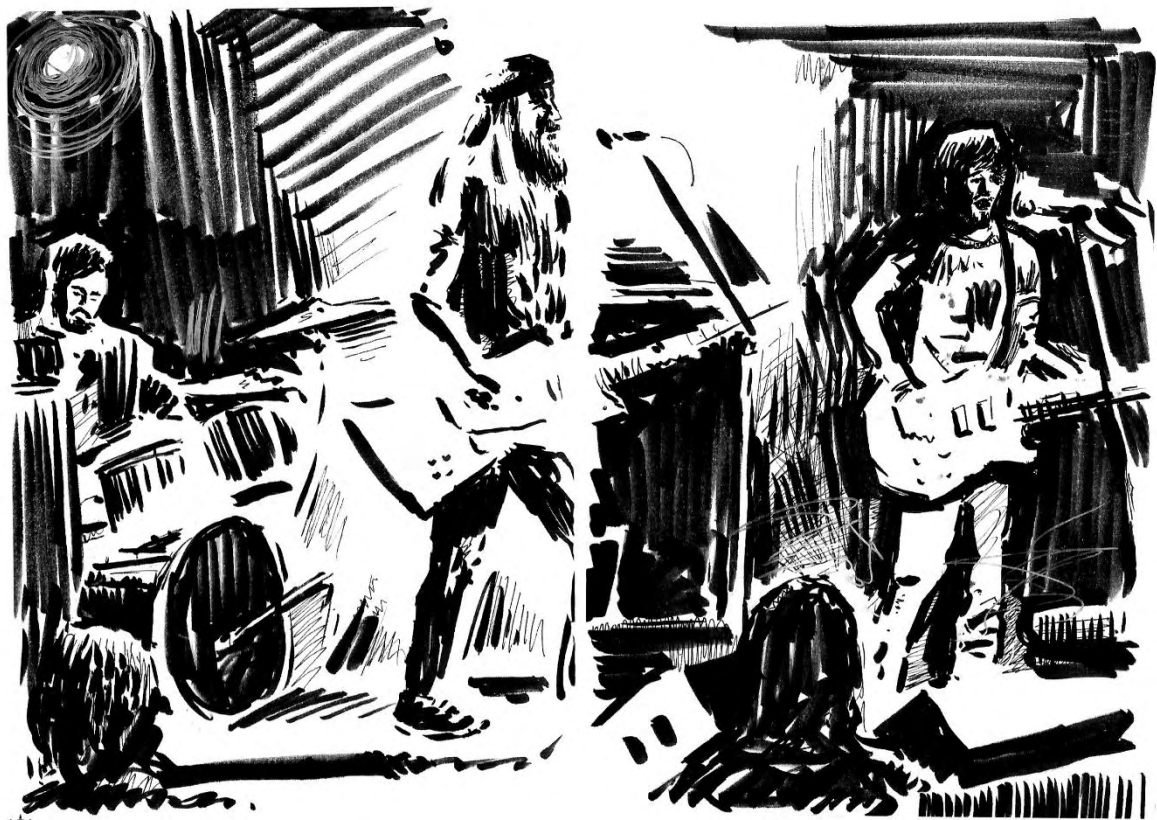
bad breeding - the shakelwell arms - 03/11/17



bad breeding - the shakelwell arms - 03/11/17



chris dodd - bad breeding - the shakelwell arms - 03/11/17



old man lizard - the underworld - 06/12/17



jack newham - old man lizard - the underworld - 06/12/17



mario lalli - yawning man - the underworld - 06/12/17



gary arce - yawning man - the underworld - 06/12/17



vile valo - him - the roundhouse - 19/12/17



him - the roundhouse - 19/12/17



justin and the argonauts - poco loco - 22/02/18



elder druid - the dev - 17/03/18



carpenter brut - koko - 23/03/18



ten foot wizard - the underworld - 13/04/18



nebula - desertfest berlin - 04/05/18



dave 'dixie' collins - weedeater -
desertfest berlin - 04/05/18



dead witches - the boston music room - 01/06/18



soozi chemeleone - dead witches
the boston music room - 01/06/18



oliver hill - dead witches & photographer john white
the boston music room - 01/06/18



church of the cosmic skull - the boston music room - 01/06/18



bill fisher - church of the cosmic skull
- the boston music room - 01/06/18



wychhound - the black heart - 16/05/18



pist - the black heart - 14/07/18



dave rowlands, pist - the black heart - 14/07/18



gurt - the black heart - 14/07/18





raiders of the lost groove - poco loco - 15/08/18



barbarian hermit - the black heart - 08/18



wild billy childish and ctmf - koko - 06/09/18



wild billy childish & ctmf - koko - 06/09/18



mothership - the garage - 28/09/18



the len price 3 - the ship - 09/11/18



tw - the black heart - 01/12/18



peter holland, tw - the black heart - 01/12/18



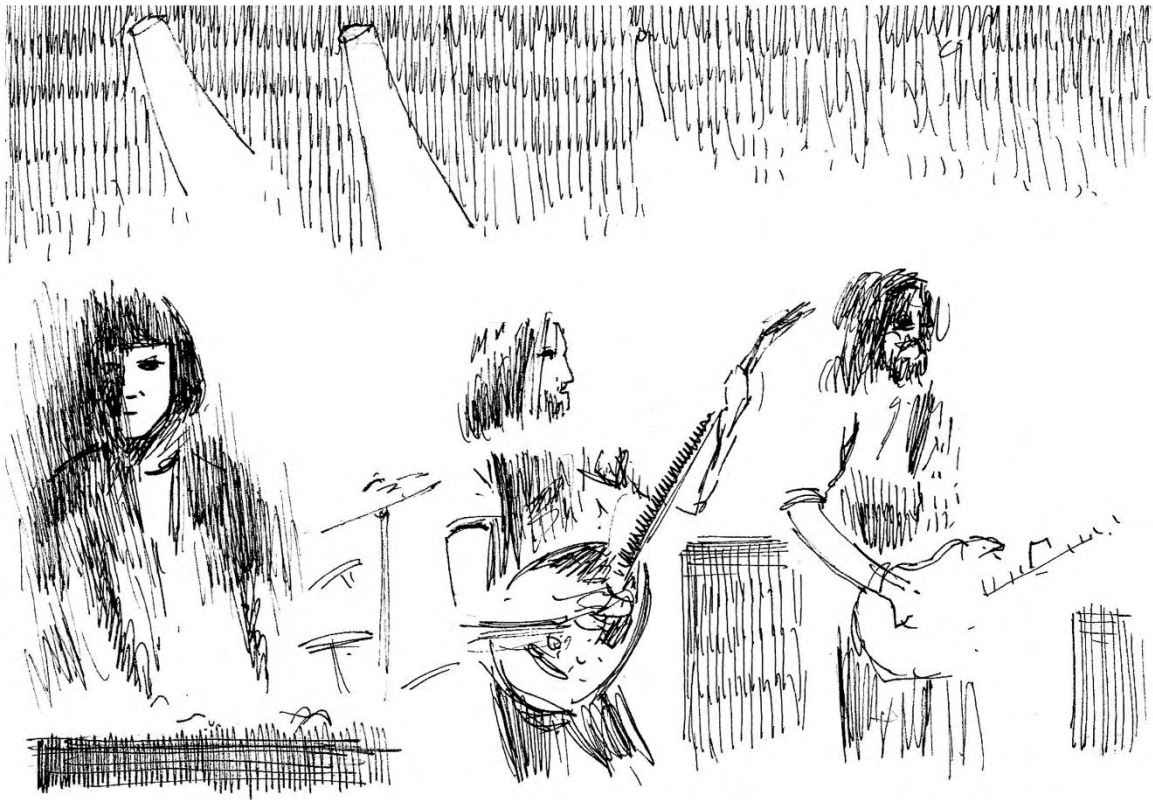
audience - the black heart - 01/12/18



boss keloid - the black heart - 28/01/19



matt ryan - desertstorm - the black heart - 28/01/19



giobia - the borderline - heavy psych sounds festival 22/02/19



deadsnake - the borderline
heavy psych sounds festival 22/02/19



black rainbows - the borderline - heavy psych sounds festival 22/02/19



mark greening - dead witches -
the borderline - heavy psych sounds festival 22/02/19



oliver hill - dead witches -
the borderline - heavy psych sounds festival 22/02/19



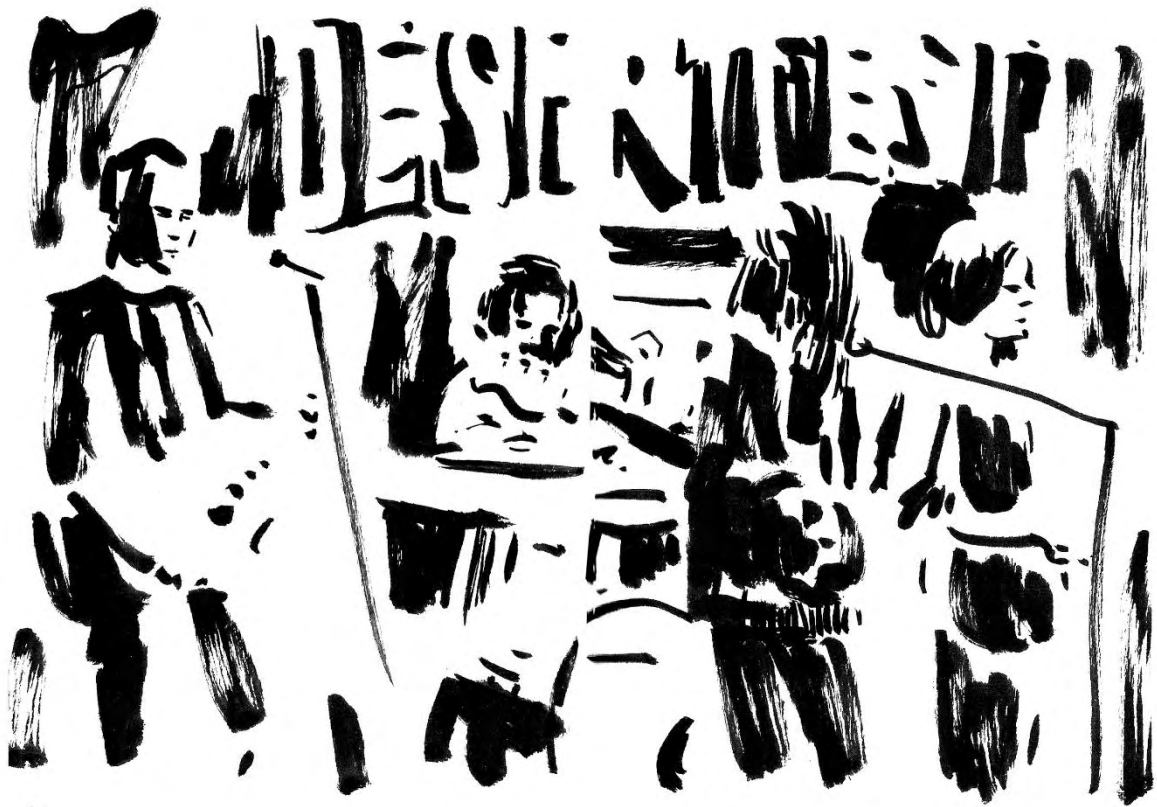
soozi chameleone - dead witches -
the borderline - heavy psych sounds festival 22/02/19



wolf girl - the oast - 16/03/19



rainbow reservoir - the oast - 20/04/19



wren - the black heart - desertfest 05/04/19



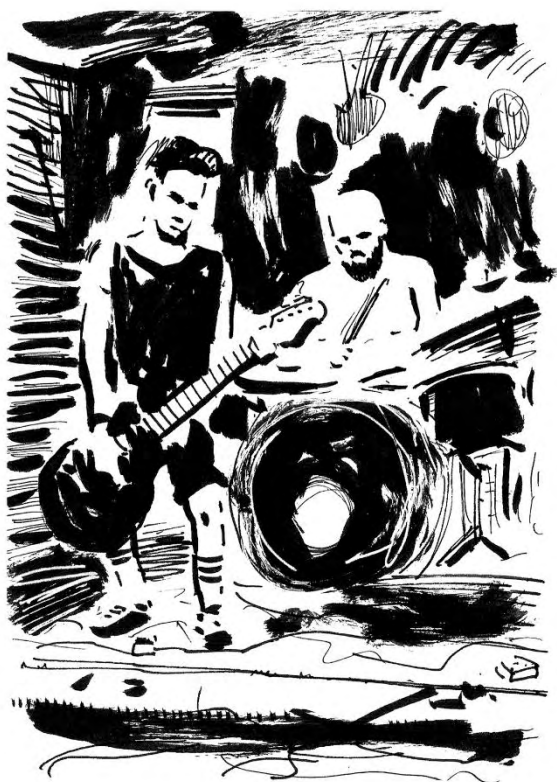
wren - the black heart - desertfest 05/04/19



wren - the black heart - desertfest 05/04/19



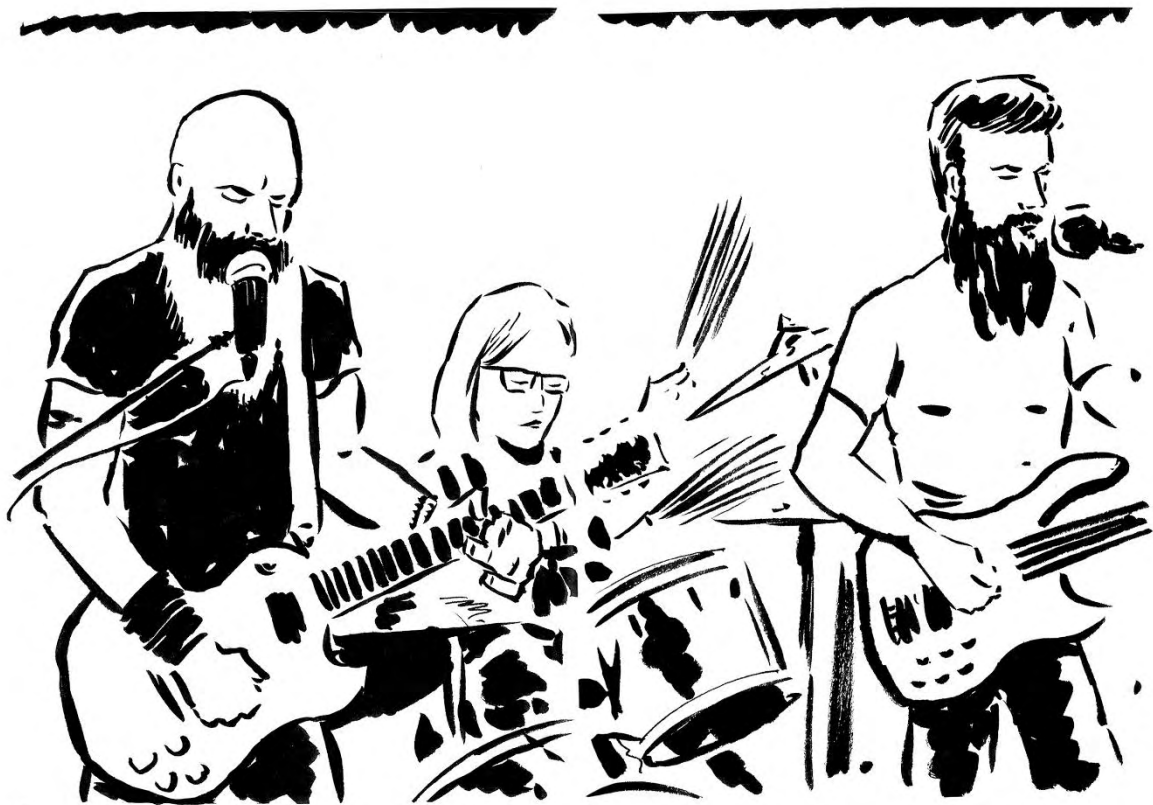
witch - the roundhouse - desertfest 05/05/19



haest - poco loco - 11/05/19



juniper grave - the black heart - 22/05/19



jackknife seizure - fogrest - the black heart - 07/06/19



limb - fogfest - the black heart - 07/06/19



paul weller - bedgebury pinetum - 16/06/19



witching waves - the oast - 21/06/19



dicky king - trippy wicked - the dome 22/07/19



weedeater - the dome 22/07/19



butcher in the fog - the black heart - 10/08/19



stuart turner and the flat earth society - the oast 4/10/19



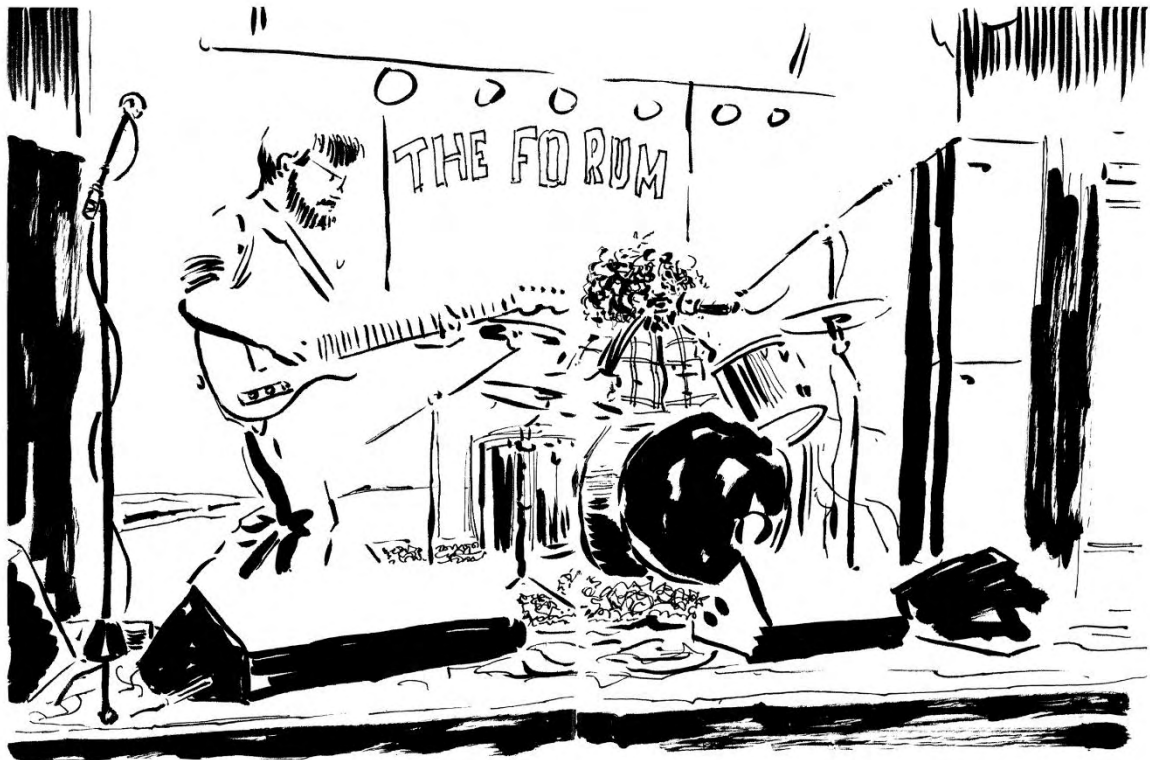
the gorgons - the royal function rooms - 11/10/19



the shadracks - the royal function rooms - 11/10/19



eddie glass - nebula - the underworld 21/10/19



sheena - the forum - 20/11/19



reserved for beth arzy - jetstream pony ?/?/?

don't be sad it's over, be happy that it happened
- ian brown
the stone roses



david frankum

david has a wide-ranging career that has covered many areas in the world of art and design. his illustrations and design work can be found in a variety of publications including books, magazines, comics and album covers. he has also taught art, provided businesses with designs, published books, designed posters and created artists' impressions for architectural companies.

in 2016 david independently published his critically successful debut book, 'the wormgler', capturing the imagination of its many readers worldwide, followed by his first solo exhibition, the well-received 'me: scenes of the medway towns in 2017. david has since exhibited his work in renowned galleries and museums, displaying both his passion for storytelling, reportage drawing and his home county of kent.

david is also a member of the medway based art group 'colony', supports the worlds greatest football team (gillingham f.c.), wears glasses and likes ginger tea.

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