

FIB 2014

JAVIER KIRÁN | guestlist.net

It's 21h of Friday 18th July and I'm in the camping when a summer storm begins. At any other place this will ruin the night, but not here. Instead of protecting themselves, people stay under the rain singing "Seven Nation Army", we are in FIB. The International Festival of Benicassim (Castellón), that celebrates its 20th anniversary from 17th to 21st July.

However, reaching this anniversary has not been easy for this festival, with a change of owner (from Vince Power to Melvin Benn). This change has affected the line-up with just two headliners, deriving into the worst record of assistance of its history (120,000 persons). But this is FIB, and it is to be lived. Maybe due to its location in the outskirts of Benicassim, and with the camping right behind the scenery, there is a festival ambience all over it. But the essence of the festival are the fibers. Coming from all over the world, they can be seen sleeping in the paths during the day and dressed up in the evenings, combing flower-ribbons and painted in fluorescent colors with t-shirts of their favorite bands. They turn the festival into a utopia, and this year they are ready to enjoy the experience and its great music. And I say great music because even in the absence of two headliners, the 20th Anniversary's line-up offered high quality:

Thursday

James' show (one of the veteran) stands out mainly due to its charismatic singer Tim Booth, who made a performance with the public I've never seen before on stage. Such a show made the stage small to Tinie Tempah or Ellie Goulding.

Friday

It was one of the most powerful days with people like Albert Hammond Jr., the "modfather" Paul Weller or the Australian Tame Impala, who are not rookies anymore. The main show was delivered by the British Kasabian. The Leicester's band are the successors of Oasis in the Brit-Pop throne, and because of the rain its thunderous live was damaged by the lack of screens.

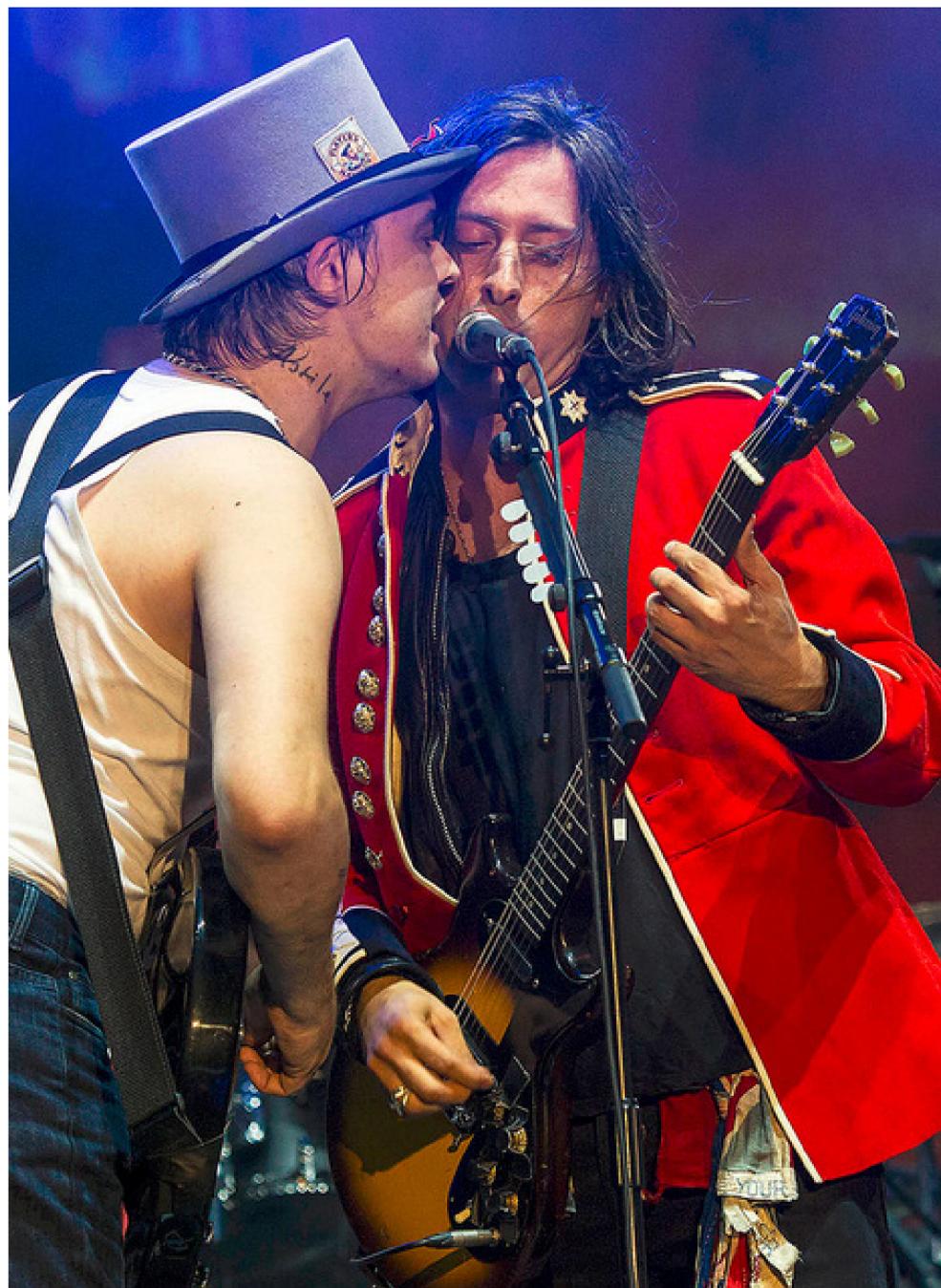
Saturday

It was the festival's night, but not because of Lilly Allen or Manic, that did not leave the path; Even not to the Swedish Ingresso (the big electronic man of this edition). The center of attention were the Libertines, and the tandem Doherty-Barat didn't disappointed. Even if during the past 10 years they have been growing independently, together they are unstoppable. Incredible sounded hits as "Can't stand me now" or "Time for heroes". When it finished we knew that was the best show of the festival.

Sunday

Was a day to enjoy future promises as La Femme or Wolf Alice, and old bands as Charlatans, who came back to the festival every decade. Paolo Nutini left a bittersweet flavor, even in its maturity as artist, his songs are not for that time at night. At the same time, Courteeners were triumphing among the British, where now they can call their new home. Alesso closed the main scenery with a session devoted to a fan from Castellón deceased a few weeks before in a tragic accident.

That's been all. Well,...not everything. There are many other memories that I'll share forever with other fibers. Them, as myself, must go back to real life felling that that has been more than a trip. But as it is said in the song "Don't look back into the sun, now you know that the time it's gone..." We must look forward and wait for FIB 2015 to come.



BBK LIVE FESTIVAL

JOSE MANUEL CHARRO | guestlist.net

Legend says that every summer in the north of Spain, the peace of the Kobetamendi mountain, with unbeatable views of Bilbao, turns into euphoric, happiness and joy. Noise, songs and laughter inhabit its summit and slopes for three days. It's a meeting point of the best National and International "Indie" artists and young people from all over the world, but mainly from Central and Northern Spain.

The line-up headlined by Franz Ferdinand, The Prodigy and the Black Keys. It is a reasonable price, it is argument enough for the festival to have sold out a month before it takes place. However, BBK is still much more than your average festival. It is a great celebration of indie rock and electronic music, perhaps the best to occur in Spain, having dethroned FIB (at least in terms of popular "Indie"). The festival takes place on the second weekend of July, and its location on the outskirts of Bilbao make it an unavoidable stop for lovers of San Fermin (only two hours by coach). The culture and cuisine alone are impeccable and stand alone as reason enough to visit the area. However, what made us travel the distance was the music, and it certainly lived up to expectation. On Friday, most people thought Crystal Fighters were the best live act of

the day - perhaps better than Thursday night's headliners, the Scottish band Franz Ferdinand. On Saturday, The Prodigy unleashed an hour and a half of madness with some influence of drum and bass covers of their old classics, like the controversial "Smack my bitch up". The vibes in the crowd at the main stage felt more like an illegal rave rather than an authorised festival (in the best way possible). On Saturday, the final and most tranquil of the three days, were 'The Black Keys', whose performance was a disappointment as it somewhat lacked in delivery. Despite this smaller bands lower on the bill were able to magnify themselves on stage. For example Crystal Fighters played a great set and really got the crowd going. Also it's worthy to mention the local Belako, Izal from Madrid and the galician Eme Dj performances.

The festival facilities and organisation make improvements every year. This year the BBK camping had supermarket and lockers for the first time. It was also great that parking for whole festival only cost 7 euros, and there were plenty of shuttle buses connecting Bilbao with the festival and campsites.

However there were downsides of course. We had to climb several hundred meters uphill carrying our gear to the campsite from the car park. It's a shame, as it makes the site inaccessible to people with reduced mobility and/or strength.

The festival has been improving every year, meaning next year should be even more promising. Let the legend of BBK live on! It really is something you must see for yourself!!

