

**'Is This It' producer Gordon Raphael set to reveal all on forthcoming UK lecture tour**



## "Strokes stories?"

## I have a backlog..."

**Y**ou'll probably know **Gordon Raphael** as the owner of the face that didn't belong to one of The Strokes – but got equal billing with them – on the inner sleeve of their classic 2001 debut album 'Is This It'.

Gordon produced that album in his Manhattan basement studio, as well as the 2003 follow-up 'Room On Fire', capturing the band's skin-tight sound perfectly. He was replaced on studio duties for the band's third album 'First Impressions Of Earth' by Paul McCartney producer David Kahne, and has been living in Berlin since 2005.

Now he's set to head to the UK for a series of Q&A-style speaking shows. Happily, he's willing to accept that he'll be spending most of his time answering a lorry-load of questions about what it was like to be in the inner circle of Julian Casablancas' gang.

"Well, it just so happens that

I have a backlog of stories about my time with those guys," he says.

Some of the yarns will be sweet and positive. "I remember walking around the East Village and seeing Albert Hammond Jr in his little suit with a box under his arm," Raphael recalls. "He was like, 'Hey Gordon, check out



the artwork!' It was 'The Modern Age' EP, which I'd just produced for them. He was going up and down record stores on St Mark's Place asking if they'd take copies and put it out."

Some memories aren't

quite so pleasant, such as the time Julian goaded him about not signing a proper deal to produce 'The Modern Age' after it made The Strokes the hottest new band in the world. "He came up to me – I could smell alcohol on him – and he hugged me," says Gordon. "Then he looked at me and said, 'Don't you wish like hell you'd made a contract with us? You're not getting anything from these records we're selling!' I said, 'You fucking asshole!'"

Gordon hasn't worked with a band as high-profile as The Strokes since, but he was inches away from producing The Libertines' debut. The band begged him to do it, but

**"I CALLED JULIAN CASABLANCAS A FUCKING ASSHOLE"**

**Gordon Raphael**

their label, Rough Trade, vetoed the move. "I was at a Strokes aftershow in London, very stoned," he says of his first meeting with Pete and Carl. "Pete, aged about 19 and wearing a trilby hat and old English suit, got on his knee, flipped his hat down his arm into his hand and sung me an old English song. It melted my heart!"

His secret to giving captivating talks, beyond recalling intoxicated meetings with indie legends? Like his recording technique with The Strokes, it's simple but effective: "I wear a cool outfit, get onstage, then just ask people to ask questions!" ■ JAMIE FULLERTON

### GORDON RAPHAEL'S TOUR DATES

**Manchester Night & Day (January 29)**  
Wakefield Unity Works (30)

**London Dingwalls (February 5)**  
Leeds Eiger Studios (8)

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## Alas, poor Yorick, I cannot swim...

**Laura Marling shows her thespian side in new short film**

**H**er forthcoming album (due on March 23) is called 'Short Movie', and now Laura Marling is the star of one, too: *Woman Driver*, which premieres at the London Short Film Festival on January 14.

Marling has already won Best Actress in the American 72-Hour National Film

Challenge, for which the film was made. "We were given a genre, a character, a prop and a line of dialogue by the competition and wrote a storyline around that," director Chris Perkel says. "The film is about two strangers going in the same direction but for different reasons." ■ NADIA KHOMAMI