



The Peckham Rye Music Festival is now in its second year, and is set to welcome diverse new genres





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Why Peckham is both hot property and fertile ground for music and creativity right now

Words MADELEINE HOWELL

Few saw it coming, but Peckham – the famous stomping ground of the loveable and perpetually hopeless con merchant Del Boy – was recently named as the best place to live in London by *The Sunday Times*. Many of its homeowners are now, indeed, millionaires, or at least on the right track. The average price of a semi-detached property is currently £967,550, according to Rightmove at the time of writing. Derek Trotter would be jumping for joy. Fortunately, creativity and community spirit is still going strong too.

For Glenn Middleditch, a former BBC radio producer and the founder of the Peckham Rye Music Festival, it's the place to be, and he's incredibly proud to be a part of it. 'I don't want to rely on clichés, but there's a real sense of it being a "hotbed of creativity". As cheesy as that line sounds, it genuinely is,' he insists. Cliché it may be, but with other projects like Peckham Levels from the creators of Pop Brixton also making waves, he's clearly onto something.

The inaugural music festival was celebrated as a runaway success, and lauded for its good-natured, carnival atmosphere. This year, from 12-21 May, it will be even bigger and better, with the exclusive use of outdoor space and an



Axel Bowman, DJ GILLA and Children of Zeus are set to make appearances

extra rooftop in Copeland Park, and a wider variety of music on offer as well as fringe events, exhibitions and workshops in the likes of video art and pottery throughout the week.

The idea, Middleditch tells me, came to him organically one night at SE15 haunt The Nines, when he attended an event that saw numerous local record shops including Rye Wax, YAM Records and Do!!You!! records come together. ‘There was a certain vibe that came from seeing them all together that made it feel really special,’ he reflects. ‘I was like, “Hmm, I wonder if we could do this on a bigger scale?”’

The concept is simple. ‘What we’re trying to do is bring all of the creativity together to punch above our weight and get people to take notice, and to discover stuff that happens around the corner

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from them that maybe they haven’t come across before. Although it’s musical, it’s about making and doing as well.’ Long-term, Middleditch is looking to draw inspiration from the famous South by Southwest festivals, which put Austin in Texas on the map by innovatively converging artists from the music, film and visual industries.

When it came to the music last year, Middleditch (who has worked on everything from the Proms through to Radio 1’s Big Weekend, but in his spare time has always nurtured a passion for underground house and techno) went with what he knew. ‘I kind of went for my own record collection really. I was a little bit like a kid in a sweet shop,’ he admits. ‘I booked my dream line-up, which leant towards the house and techno side of things, although I’ve got quite eclectic taste.’ In 2017, the





South east Londoner, saxophonist and producer Laura Misch

PECKHAM'S FINEST INDEPENDENT RECORD SHOPS

Vinyl fans are spoilt for choice in south east London...



RYE WAX

An underground treasure devoted to records, food and live music. There's also a wide range of graphic novels and comics, as well as regular quizzes, live jazz and club nights.

The Basement, The CLF Art Café, 133 Rye Lane SE15 4ST; 020 7732 3176; ryewax.com

YAM RECORDS

YAM Records specialises in second-hand vinyl and carefully selected new releases from choice independent labels.

135a Rye Lane SE15 4ST; 020 7277 9172; youandmusic.net

DO!! YOU!! RECORDS

The venture of Charlie Bones, NTS Radio's breakfast host, Do!!You!! stocks an unrivalled selection of disco, jazz, funk and reggae.

The Sky Shopping Centre, 137-139 Rye Lane SE15 4ST; 07565 312529; doyourecords.co.uk

SACRED GROOVES

The secretive Sacred Grooves (it doesn't even have a website) stocks musical rarities for the musically curious, including sounds from around the globe.

98 Friary Road SE15 1PX

RAT RECORDS

Rat Records stocks, buys and sells an eclectic range of music from blues and jazz through to soul, reggae and funk, as well as rock, indie, punk and electronic music. It also provides a record cleaning service.

348 Camberwell New Road SE5 0RW; 020 7274 3222; ratrecordsuk.net

line-up is expanding to include more genres. 'We've got a reggae stage on the Friday with a happy, friendly ska sound. All we need is a little bit of sunshine and we'll be well away! On Saturday there's a world music feel, so there'll be Afrobeat sounds and a bit of jazz. If you listen to Gilles Peterson's show on 6 Music, you'll know what to expect.'

On the Sunday of the main weekend, the festival be hosting Secret Sundaze, London's infamous Sunday daytime party. 'It just made perfect sense to bring

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them down,' says Middleditch. 'They put on the first party that I came to in Peckham on the roof of the Bussey Building. They're just the best DJs around for a great Sunday daytime bash. What I love about the area, and the Bussey in particular is a champion of this, is varied programming. On a random Friday you might get some pounding techno, and the next day you'll get funk and soul.' He's not kidding – the Bussey Building is home to everything from vintage markets and yoga studios to all-night parties.

It seems that now is the time to celebrate one of London's most exciting postcodes – and who knows what it will be like this time next year?

Book tickets at peckhamryemusicfestival.co.uk

Don't miss Sunday daytime party legends Secret Sundaze

