

# Label Focus - Moshi Moshi



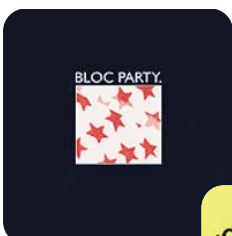
**Moshi Moshi** is an independent record label based in London and established in 1998. It has so far released over 30 albums and 80 singles.

Its first release was a seven inch single by American duo **Sukpatch** entitled *Hey Jolie*. A subsequent review in NME ("it ambles in on what would be some strings if they had any money, then sashays around on a precious breakbeat; drawls languorously, gets stung by a buzzing guitar and ambles back out again") encouraged the label to continue with the venture, with subsequent releases including singles from **Zan Lyons** (an NME single of the year in 2000), **Blue Foundation** and **Junkboy** following in the next two years.

These first releases helped establish an early blueprint for the label's vision, summed up in one press release as 'lo-fi leftfield self-indulgent pop music for the masses'.

## Landmark Releases

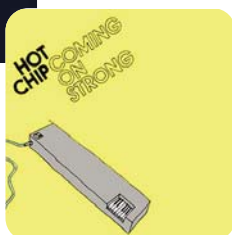
The label really started gathering momentum in 2004 when it began working with two acts which would go on to be Mercury music prize nominees and achieve considerable commercial success.



In that year both **Bloc Party's** *Banquet* single and **Hot Chip's** first album *Coming On Strong*

*Strong* were released. The label's Stephen Bass explains: "Hot Chip's first single and album

we worked like crazy and really focussed on. They're a band that really fit in with the Moshi Moshi ethos and we are proud



## Best Sellers - Albums

1	Hot Chip	Coming On Strong
2	Hot Club de Paris	Drop It Til It Pops
3	Architecture In Helsinki	In Case We Die
4	Tilly and the Wall	O
5	Tilly and the Wall	Wild Like Children
6	Tilly and the Wall	Bottoms of Barrels
7	Au Revoir Simone	Bird of Music
8	James Yuill	Turning Water Down For Air
9	The Wave Pictures	Instant Coffee Baby
10	Various Artists	Can You Hear Me Clearly

## Best Sellers - Singles

1	Florence and the Machine	Kiss With A Fist
2	Florence and the Machine	Dog Days Are Over
3	Kate Nash	Caroline's a Victim
4	Tilly and the Wall	Beat Control
5	The Rakes	Retreat
6	Bloc Party	Banquet
7	Hot Club de Paris	Sometimesitsbetter...
8	Friendly Fires	Paris
9	Late of the Pier	Bathroom Gurgle
10	Slow Club	Let's Fall Back in Love

of and happy about their ongoing success. Finding them and releasing the Bloc Party single really set us up as perhaps a bit more than a bedroom hobby label; it was also around this time that one of us started doing Moshi Moshi full time, which was another benchmark".



James Yuill

*Banquet* gave the label its first taste of chart success, reaching Number 51 in May 2004. The following months, however, saw even more bands on the label make the chart, including:

- indie-pop four piece **New Rhodes**, whose three singles all made the Top 75, including *You've Given Me Something*, which cracked the Top 40
- **Yeti**, the band formed by Jon Hassall (ex-Libertines) whose first single on the label, *Never Lose Your Sense Of Wonder*, peaked inside the Top 40



Slow Club

- **The Rakes**, whose *Retreat* single gave the label its biggest hit to date by reaching number 24 in April 2005

Stephen also cites the 2005 album by Architecture in Helsinki, *In Case We Die*, as important in the label's development. "This album is a classic, I think, and one which we worked hard on and went on to do really well for us around Europe. The band were at the time an eight piece and based in Australia so it all involved a lot of work, but they were and remain a really special band".

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## 2008 to Present

The label continues to work with new artists, and here Stephen highlights some releases by signings from the last two years:

- **Tilly and the Wall's** *Beat Control*: "this was our first ever BBC Radio 1 playlist going on to the B-list last summer"
- **The Wave Pictures' Now You Are Pregnant**: "our first release with the Wave Pictures who I think are writing some of the best songs around today"
- **Slow Club's Yeah, So**: "this record isn't out until July 6th 2009 but is going to be an important release for us. The band are already a success in some terms, having generated more sync income for us than all the other bands we have ever released put together".

The label has also recently put out critically acclaimed albums by New York trio **Au Revoir Simone** (*Still Night, Still Light*) and London-based **James Yuill** (*Turning Down Water For Air*).

## Special Editions

In 2006 the label started Moshi Moshi Singles - in the words of Stephen - "so we could get back into putting out one-off 7 inches in an easy manner. The bands are free to do any artwork they desire as long as its one colour (some inspiration from Henry Ford there) and we do limited edition singles".

These releases have yet again born testament to the label's keen ear for new talent, having included the first releases from BRIT award winners **Florence and the Machine** and **Kate Nash** as well as early releases from **Friendly Fires**, **Lykke Li**, **Late of the Pier** and **Dananananaykroyd**.

Sales data from the Official Charts Company web site demonstrates this noticeable bias towards vinyl. Since its inception in 1998, 18.7% of all its singles sales have been on the seven inch format. Sales for the year to

## Singles Sales by Format

1998 to May 2009

CD	7"	12"	Digital
9.8%	18.7%	0.2%	71.2%

January to May 2009

CD	7"	12"	Digital
0.7%	6.1%	-	93.2%

Source: OCC

date are more predominantly digital, but 7" vinyl still claims a 6.1% share, way above the wider market average of 0.2%.

## Distribution

Moshi Moshi's releases are distributed in the UK via Brighton's Republic of Music but the label has a licensing arrangement with Co-operative Music who provide distribution, marketing and promo throughout Europe, Japan and Australia, meaning their acts are getting released in most major territories. Currently in the US the label has no set deal but does sell digitally via State51.

## Other Activities

Aside from the day to day recorded music business, the label puts on regular monthly Moshi Moshi nights at the Hoxton Square Bar and Kitchen, having previously hosted parties at the ICA and the Buffalo Bar. On these nights the label promoted the first London shows by Fleet Foxes, Teenagers, Lykke Li, El Guincho and White Lies amongst other up and coming bands.

The label has also been hosting a night at Iceland Airwaves for the last five years and have thrown parties at the annual South By South West festival in Austin, Texas for a similar length of time. On top of this, Moshi Moshi nights can be found at events such as Camden Crawl and The Great Escape. This year the label has also taken over the booking for the Saturday at Winterwell Festival in Gloucestershire in June.



Some notable Moshi Moshi releases.  
From top: Tilly and the Wall *Beat Control*; Florence and the Machine *Days Are Over*; Kate Nash *Caroline's A Victim*; Friendly Fires *Paris*

Last year saw Moshi Moshi mark their tenth anniversary with a sold out show at Matter nightclub at the O2 in London with Hot Chip, Florence and The Machine, Kate Nash, Tilly and the Wall, The Mae Shi, Slow Club, James Yuill and The Wave Pictures all playing live.

Recently the label has also branched out into publishing (in conjunction with Blue Mountain Music) and management, with its first client being Metronomy. The roster is still small and has only increased by the addition of Slow Club and Friend ([www.myspace.com/friendddd](http://www.myspace.com/friendddd)).

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