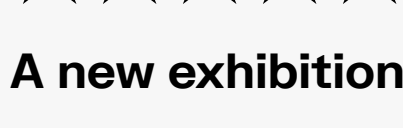
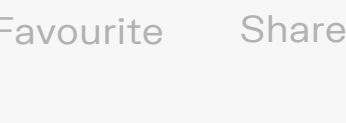




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Good Pop, Bad Pop Review: Jarvis Cocker's Brilliant (Barmy) Collection of Objects

Words by [Teddy Coward](#) Posted 35 mins ago



A new exhibition at The Gallery of Everything, coinciding with the release of a new book from Jarvis Cocker, shows the value in all the little items we've picked up over the years – and perhaps gives some comfort to hoarders, as well as lovely little insights into the Pulp frontman.

Objects have weight, significance, absorbing sentimental value through the years. An old pebble might remind you of a staycation as a young child; a postcard of a holiday abroad; a disintegrating toy of your youthful attempts to pass the time.

Existentialism tells us not to care about such things – to not be quite so sentimental. But it's hard not to add meaning, layer upon layer, with each coat of dust that settles on these objects.

That's what *Good Pop, Bad Pop* – an exhibition co-curated by Jarvis Cocker, along with James Brett, currently on show at Marylebone's Gallery of Everything – celebrates. The fact that such accumulated bric-a-brac can tell the story of our lives.



Specifically, the exhibition coincides with a forthcoming book of the same name, written by the Pulp frontman, which details the objects unearthed from his loft. It's both the workings-out of the book and a presentation of the book as if it were turned upside down and shaken for its contents, laid out across the gallery's two floors.

On the first floor sits a glass table, corresponding to a 'Periodic Table of Influence' that maps out the elements – ha ha – of Jarvis's life. Of course, this isn't an entirely ordinary life, but that of someone deemed a figurehead of the Britpop era and one of the most recognisable names in UK music.

What's so warming about the items on show, then, is not necessarily the old guitars and handwritten lyrics (although there's more of that to come), but the smaller bits that let you know he's just as human as us all: a get-well-soon card from a cousin, an old jar of Marmite and a packet of Lemsip, which Jarvis would consume to stave off illness when living in a flat on the top floor of a factory without heating.

Then, of course, there are the well-known spectacles that have become synonymous with Jarvis's image. And not just one, but a handful – largely on account of many of them being broken, having been sat on or dropped. (It's quite touching to think of Jarvis scooping up broken bits of his glasses; a kind of no-man-left-behind rule for his visual aids).

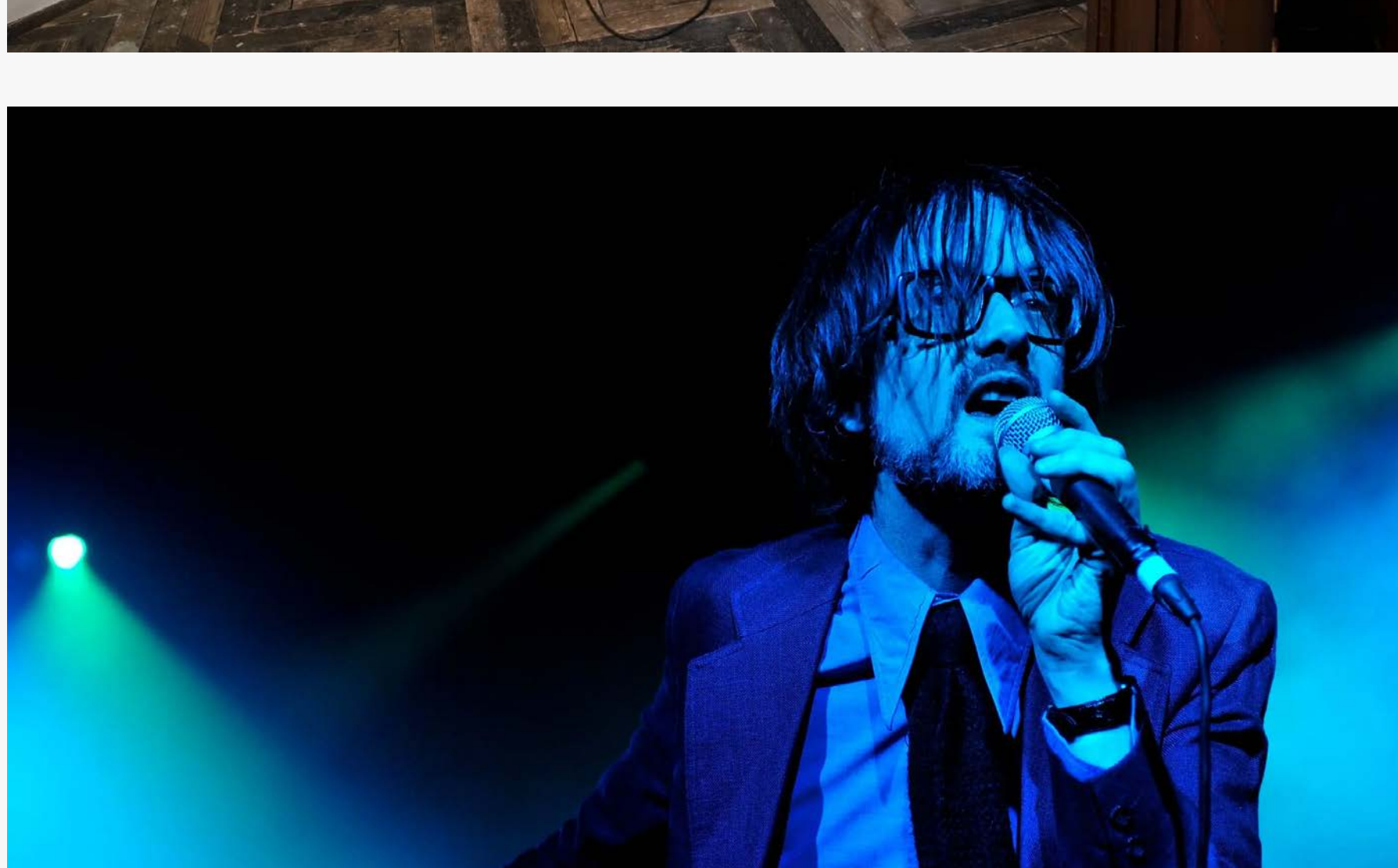


There's *The Pulp Master Plan*, too, which he wrote as a youngster, setting out how to achieve world domination. Whatever's in it, it did the trick.

Downstairs sits a slightly more varied collection of works, as audio of the exhibition's eponymous book (published 26 May) plays from an old speaker. At one end of the space, in a small, cave-like room, looped video of old, raw Pulp footage such as moments from old music videos is projected onto the wall. Gold discs hang on the wall, produced by Jarvis himself with as much determination about Pulp's success as the *Master Plan* manifesto.

The other end of the room, though, is where the real theme of family roots comes through. Previously unseen photographs taken by Jarvis's granddad Hugh Hoyland adorn the walls. The Ektachrome picks up a vibrant hue on each of them, capturing sunlight in the park where a young Jarvis plays with his sister, and even the edge of a cigarette smoked by a family member (too close to the young children by nowadays' standards). Another image sees the boy Jarvis inside a space rocket module doing a tour of the UK after the first moon landing – another projection, albeit symbolic, of his desire for meteoric stardom.

Although these photographs concern one man and his family roots, the nostalgic quality of the images is so palpable (Pulp-able, even) that it can't help but make you think of you and your own family – and only hope you have a relative as keen as Jarvis's granddad to document things in a similar way.



Finally, a small room at the other end contains a partial mock-up of Jarvis's old bedroom. Posters, flyers and Pulp cover the wall in a sprawling mass of the little moments that delivered Pulp their recognition; so too are some of the necessary instruments that helped them achieve that.

There's an old Hopf guitar, given to Jarvis by his mum's scuba-diving boyfriend one Christmas; a Tensai Rhythm cassette player with a built-in drum machine; and a Yamaha PortaSound PS-400 keyboard used by Jarvis to write songs after recovering from a fall from a third-storey window, which the book details.

These instruments are the more typically desired items we hope to see from our favourite musicians. But as with much of this exhibition, it's the thought of Jarvis as a human, trying to make his way in the world, rather than as a famous artist, that shines through. A small photograph of him and his sister, a seemingly mandatory poster of a world maps all youngsters had, are nice touches.

Ironically, it takes a bit of balls to try to celebrate the ordinary. It might be more normal for a famous musician to try to flog a few of their items at auction. Thankfully, Jarvis had a friend in James Brett, founder of The Gallery of Everything, who helped him curate this exhibition, one novelty item at a time, creating a touch of anticipation for the book.

As a result, we're let into Jarvis's world, through the good times and the bad – the good pop, and the bad pop.

***Good Pop, Bad Pop* is currently on display at The Gallery of Everything (4 Chiltern Street, London W1) until Sunday 29 May 2022.**

Jarvis Cocker's new book of the same name is published by Jonathan Cape on Thursday 26 May.

Details Words by: [Teddy Coward](#) Published: 35 mins ago



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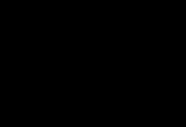


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