

“Come closer...this place used to be a children’s theatre!” implores frontman Daniel Lee, potentially channelling The Child Catcher. Named after the villain of a kids’ book, perhaps it was the cutesy boy/girl vocal dynamic of Lee alongside Lorna Wright (she left the band along with keyboardist Nick Hune-Brown last year after four years), which has seen them frequently filed beside fellow proponents of jangly indie such as Black Lips. Fortunately the depth and vintage vibes of their garage rock don’t rehash the work of similar artists. It’s just a shame that most of the tracks they play from new album 'Tosta Mista' are stupendously short; the whole album comes in at just 23 minutes, which makes it shorter than the average Led Zeppelin song. Despite this, the buoyant, bastardised Beach Boys “oohs” of “Vacationation” feel eerier in person. Similarly “Den of Love” is heavy on soul and melodrama. “How much does it cost to get in, is a thousand tears enough?” ponders Lee on what could be a forgotten 60s b-side dredged up for a Gus Van Sant film. Despite plenty of craic with the crowd, high tempos and, erm, having an album named after a Portugese sandwich, Hooded Fang can do angst, too. Tonight’s highpoints are grungy “Graves” - with Ian Gomes proving himself a capable replacement for regular bassist April Alierio) - and the tight lo-fi progression of current single “Jubb”. These are tracks that – like their creators – don’t try too hard to be cool or complex. Post-gig Lee is playing with a plastic rhinoceros backstage, twisting its upside down so that it can “walk on the ceiling”. This weird, effortless adaption of a childhood toy seems an apt metaphor for the evolution of this lovably bonkers band.