

HAK BAKER

Hak Baker's story begins on the Isle of Dogs where his working class community became his muse and inspired an unconventional, rebellious career that has seen the East End troubadour become one of the most respected and reverent British artists of his generation. Hak's tales of inner city London life climb a spectrum between youthful nihilism and male vulnerability, to understanding that within the personal lives the political, as Hak paints a picture of a country in turmoil through his poetic lyricism. With fans spanning culture and genre, from Celeste to Mike Skinner, Fontaines DC to Skepta, Slowthai to Pete Doherty to Joy Crookes and Reuben Dangoor, Hak's fanbase identify as "MisFits", like-minded individuals who question the status quo and celebrate Hak's anti-genre, "G-Folk" sound. Over the past few years Hak has become one of the most prominent black artists in the alternative music scene, with Vice stating "*Baker subverts what a British folk singer can be*". Culturally sitting as comfortably beside the likes of Madness, The Specials and Benjamin Zephaniah, as he does The Streets, Kano, Akala and Greentea Peng, Hak's repertoire truly transcends genre, with his raw, unfiltered and authentic voice at the core of everything he does. And now, Hak Baker's forthcoming progression as an artist, an extraordinary creative leap tailor-made for an era of social inequity, internet addiction and post-pandemic disillusionment, arrives shaped by his belief that (figuratively, at least) only societal collapse can pave the way for a better, brighter tomorrow.

The result of this urge is the fittingly revolutionary World's End FM: a debut album of staggering scope, ambition and scuffed melodic gorgeousness that introduces the wider world to Baker's singular, mercurial folk-poetry in the manner of a molotov cocktail being 'introduced' to a window. Its premise alone is hard to resist. Building on the street-level stories and bruised geezer confessionals of his output since 2017's career-launching Misfits EP, World's End FM takes the form of a pirate radio broadcast from the edge of armageddon. Executive produced by Hak and Karma Kid and compiled from two years of prolific sessions with in-demand producers including Speedy Wunderground's Dan Carey, Shrink and Misfits producer Ali Bla Bla, the record crackles as the genre dial is twiddled from rip-snorting post-punk to lilting roots reggae. A rolling cast of friends and family (including Connie Constance and Allan Mustafah aka Kurupt FM's MC Grindah) drop by for phone-in skits; and there, at the centre of it all, is Baker – a one-man Greek chorus and cackling conduit, leading the listener through this unsettling, exhilarating, and unexpectedly life-affirming apocalyptic fantasia. Hak Baker's debut broadcasts a message of unity, protest and collective power loud and clear, while also announcing him as a vital, inimitable voice for those often denied one. Rip it up and start again. The end of the world has never sounded so bold, so imaginative, or so thrillingly full of the glorious, chaotic wonder of life.