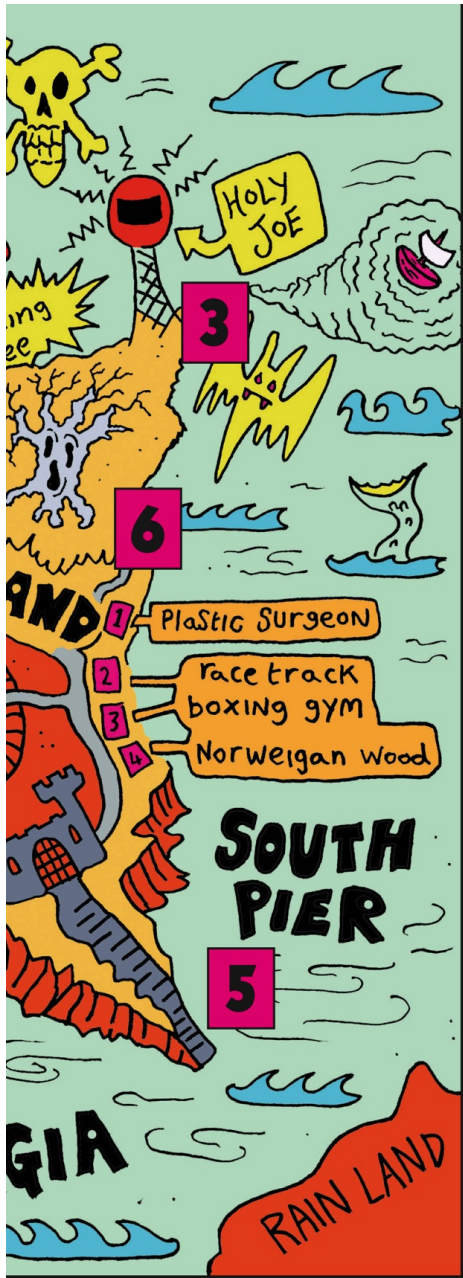




Land Ahoy!

It's been a rollercoaster ride all the way for **THE CORAL**. From the early days of prodigious scally psych, onwards through enduring radio-friendly hits and expectation-confounding interludes of acid-spiked krautrock, playful pop and spiky sea shanties. Suddenly it's time for the band's 10th studio album, *Coral Island*, a double feature tied to the places they know best – and that might never have existed at all.

Here's co-founder, keys man and author **NICK POWER** with an exclusive guide to this far-off, local land of imagined realities, accompanied with a map drawn by **IAN SKELLY**



CORAL BAY

1 Coral Bay is the sea that draws into the famous Coral Island North Pier. Step off the ferry here and see the haunted shipwreck, The Arklow and its ghosts, The Faceless Angels. Nearby is the bright container port with its skeleton cranes and freighters coming into port. Much like the Irish Sea and the view of Liverpool from New Brighton, it has influenced every song we've ever done from 'Shadows Fall' to 'Watch You Disappear'. The sea, the sea, the sea.

NORTH PIER

2 The North Pier is the nerve centre of Coral Island. The seaside in its wonderful heyday. Echoes of Coney Island in the '50s and



The Coral in 2001. L-R: Ian Skelly, James Skelly, Paul Duffy, Paul Molloy and Nick Power. "Memories of a misspent youth"

Blackpool in the '60s. Ornate piers full of long arcade rooms where all the machines are free. The songs here are sugar-sweet and full of hope: 'Lover Undiscovered' and 'My Best Friend'. Here, it is always summer.

HOLY JOE'S RADIO TOWER

3 Holy Joe's Radio Tower broadcasts to the whole of Coral Island. Holy Joe soundtracks everything; the Waltzers, the piers, the mystery houses, the Halls Of Illusion and everywhere else. Memories of our misspent youth at The Wirral Show and holidays at Llandudno Fair. Every fairground has a strict playlist of Del Shannon, Gene Vincent, Joe Meek and The Doors. The ghosts of rock 'n' roll. If you know, you know. Holy Joe does.

THE DIPS

4 The Dips are a green expanse in the middle of the Island. It shares its name with the same place in New Brighton that The Coral played our own festival, *A Midsummer Night's Scream*, in 2003. Here, gypsy fairs, circuses and mysterious medicine shows spring up overnight. 'Strange Illusions' and 'The Land of the Lost'. A ride called 'Mist On The River'. Lose yourself.

SOUTH PIER

5 The South Pier is where the ghost of Coral Island resides. Here, the crowds have dried up and the promenade is abandoned. It is full of brothels and borstals and switchblade gangs. We were bought up on caravan holidays and Whitsun weekends in towns like these. The forgotten places of Lancashire and North Wales. Here you'll see all the faded glamour of the pier. Every hotel has a "Vacancy" sign. 'Autumn Has Come' and is here to stay.

FINNILAND

6 Finniland was a strange walk-through ghost house next to a railway track in Hoylake in the '90s that seemed to spring up out of nowhere. In Coral Island, it is a forgotten place, home to a cult called The Children Of The Lightning Tree, and a hotel called The Finniland Inn. You might catch The Coral playing here in one of their four daily sets. They are the house band, held there by a bad contract and a binding spell. They play to the old carnies and fairground operators who have now retired – The Great Lafayette, Luna The Fire Eater, Mermaid Twins, Long Neck Beck, Prophet Zaar. They are the hired entertainment for retired entertainers.

➔ Coral Island is out on 30th April on Run On, in association with Modern Sky. 'Faceless Angel' is available to stream now. Over Coral Island, an accompanying 84-page book by Nick Power, illustrated by Ian Skelly, is published simultaneously by Murdered Crow Press

