

## Gentleman's Dub Club: Live Review

As seasoned veterans of The Duchess, Gentleman's Dub Club know how to play to a York crowd. Tom Cox reviews

By [Thomas Cox](#), Arts Editor (2012/13)

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Duchess veterans Gentleman's Dub Club

**Date:** 6th December, 2012

**Venue:** The Duchess, York

Returning to York for their annual show, a booming crowd received GDC with open arms and armpits.

Irie Vibes, accompanied by Marzec Group's eponymous Luke Marzec, were a memorable accompaniment. They completely outdid themselves with an experimental dub-jazz quintet; boasting two DJs back-to-back; a rarely heard but exciting melodica; a talented woman toting a trumpet with a growler; electric drums and of course Mr Marzec on saxophone. They played a delighted, but slow-filling, floor a tropical array of tunes.

The nine-strong band have delivered two short albums since their conception in 2006: widely acclaimed reggae/ska *Member's Only EP* and the more recent *Open Your Eyes*. The years have seen them progress into more dubstep-heavy beats that compliment wailing vocals with a grinding bass. Extensive tours have seen them visit major festivals such as Outlook and Latitude.

I had the pleasure of Gentleman's Dub Club at Camp Bestival last summer on a much larger stage: it provided that interesting comparison between festival and club performances. Daylit in a field was a far more relaxed and quiet affair than in the dark crevice that is the Duchess and, while a festival atmosphere's hype-weight pooled by the shared experience of hundreds is obviously preferable to a basement, The Duchess caged the band well.

Hailing from Leeds and having played at The Duchess several times before, the success of a good reputation ran before them and a large crowd were pulled in. It was their third consecutive night in a short burst of a tour that takes GDC from Darlington to London.

Clad in classic white-shirt and black tie combo, the sizeable band walked out in pairs, with both sound and stage gradually building until both were full to bursting. Duchess' acoustics are not the finest, with words

and finer melodies sometimes smudged by gravelly bass. However, sheer vitality of a band reeking of enthusiasm combined with the pounding strength of their sound worked the packed pit into a frenzy.

A dramatic opening riled the crowd with a juicy plethora of percussion and bass. Vocalist Jonathan Scratchley threw himself into crowd interaction, the jiggling band as sweaty as the rest of us, yelling "If you're with me, let's go!". His request, "York, are you ready to go a bit deeper?" was answered by a stampede of shouting. Sing-along vocals saw the crowd shouting alongside Scratchley favourites such as 'Emergency'. The group finished with 'Fire', and returned for an encore with 'High Grade', both which had the crowd gasping for more deafening wildness.



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