

About the band



Formed in 2007, the multi award-winning quartet **Empirical** ‘is still a reliable touchstone of contemporary British jazz at its most sophisticated’ today (Jazzwise).

Featuring **Nathaniel Facey**(alto sax), **Tom Farmer** (double bass), **Lewis Wright** (vibraphone) and **Shaney Forbes** (drums), Empirical’s instrumentation has proved the perfect vehicle for the band’s invariably complex compositions and distinctive signature sound. ‘Flirting with nostalgia while living on the edge of experimentation’ (Jazzwise), Empirical’s music is defined by a deep commitment to improvisation and a uniquely collective creative process.

In keeping with their risk-taking approach to music-making, in 2016 the quartet embarked on a daring exercise in audience creation with their ‘Pop-up Jazz Lounge’ residency project, which has seen the band turn disused shops in train stations and shopping malls in London, Berlin, Birmingham, Cheltenham and Bath into fully-fledged jazz clubs, for a week at a time. Since then, the band has played to more than 10,000 appreciative commuters and shoppers, racking up over 150 live sets in the process.

For Empirical, this kind of gigging marathon is a much-relished opportunity to develop new musical ideas during live performance such as their two-part EP set entitled *Indifference Culture*and *Distraction Tactics*.

Their most recent release, the 2022 EP *Like Lambs,* features three unconventional long-form pieces by drummer Shaney Forbes. The EP’s title track poses the philosophical question whether, as humans, we are truly capable of independent thought – or are we all like lambs to the slaughter?

With their characteristic interplay between composed and improvised parts, Empirical once again demonstrate their masterful ability to inhabit contrasting emotional states in their playing.

Recent touring has included shows at the Purcell Room at London's Southbank Centre and at Ronnie Scott's jazz club, as well North America shows at Rochester Jazz Festival, Rhizome in DC, Dizzy's Club NYC and at Edmonton International Jazz Festival. In 2020, Empirical were *Nimmo Artists in Residence* at the renowned Wiltshire Music Centre (WMC).

A new full-length album is planned for release in 2023.

**Press quotes:**

**‘London’s quartet Empirical delivered it all… This was the height of contemporary jazz from risk-taking players with real commitment.’** (Calgary Herald)

**‘Empirical are exactly what top-class modern jazz should be – trailblazing yet wholly respectful of tradition.’**(Time Out London)

**‘Empirical are among the most admired and individual-sounding bands in contemporary jazz. Much of this is down to the instrumentation, which has the lightness and clarity to convey quite adventurous ideas without losing the listener along the way.’**(The Observer)