



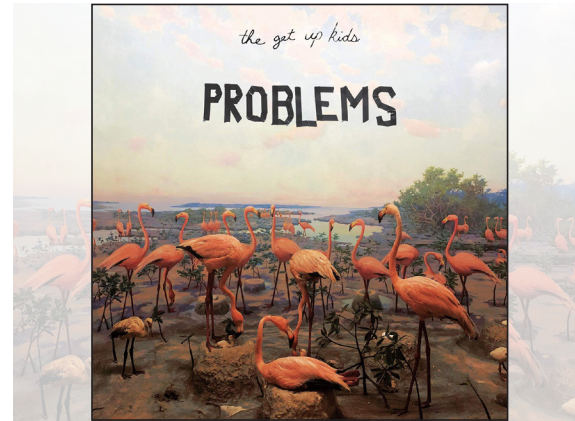
CRAIG FINN
I NEED A NEW WAR
PARTISAN

While his most notable gig, **The Hold Steady**, seems content to work intermittently, **Craig Finn** has kept his considerable lyrical gifts – and ever sprawling fictional universe of itinerants – alive in his solo work. **I Need A New War** completes a trilogy of sorts for **Finn** – the same characters, the same band, and the same hope for a peaceful resolution – are alive and well. Instead of The Hold Steady's bar band conceit, **Finn's** solo albums have much more room breathing room, musically-speaking, which gives his characters more room to twist around your imagination. Raucous guitars have given way to organ stabs, horns, and doo-wop ascension. More NYC focused than ever before, **Finn** is making Lou Reed proud. Forget Netflix: Binge on these records instead.



FONTAINES D.C.
DOGREL
PARTISAN

Dogrel is the full-length debut album from Dublin, Ireland band **Fontaines D.C.** It spits, it snarls, it snaps with the very best of them. But also it yearns, like the greatest Irish music must do. In songs like the almost unbearably sad “Dublin City Sky” there is a marriage of the lyrical to the poetic tradition that bears comparison not just with Shane MacGowan’s (the Pogues) best work, but echoes the exquisite heartbreak of Luke Kelly’s timeless reading of Kavanagh’s “On Raglan Road.” But, to put things in a more contemporary setting, if you love The Fall, Protomartyr, Sleaford Mods, Idles and the like – smart lads confronting the quotidian via melody and menace – then pull a pint and crank this the fuck up!



GET UP KIDS
PROBLEMS
POLYVINYL

On **Problems** – their first full-length in eight years – **The Get Up Kids** examine everything from loss, loneliness and the inevitable anxiety of existing in 2019. But by sustaining the essence of their sound, the band highlights those troubles as a shared experience, giving way to an unbreakable solidarity. **The Get Up Kids** took a characteristically introspective riff-driven yet decidedly pop-minded approach to song structure, while also allowing themselves a new sense of creative freedom. “At one point with this band, if we came up with something that felt too much like when we first started out, we would’ve said, ‘No, we can’t do that anymore,’” says Matt Pryor. “These days we’ve learned how to write without roadblocking the ideas that come naturally to us.”



THE CRANBERRIES
IN THE END
BMG

Thirty years after forming in Limerick, Ireland, **The Cranberries** release their eighth and final album **In The End**. While it is tinged with sadness following Dolores O’Riordan’s unexpected death in 2018, **In The End** is not a valediction – it is a celebration: One that stands as a powerful testimony to the life and creative work of Dolores and her brothers in music, Noel Hogan, Mike Hogan and Fergal Lawler. Demos for the album were completed in 2017. In coming to terms with her tragic passing, the band and producer Stephen Street, with the support of Dolores’ family, wanted to honor their close friend, and collaborator by completing the record. The result is both a strong goodbye and a fitting tribute to their friend.



TACOCAT
THIS MESS IS A PLACE
SUB POP

This Mess is a Place, **Tacocat's** fourth full-length and first on Sub Pop, finds the band waking up the morning after the 2016 election and figuring out how to respond to a new reality. **Tacocat's** move was to do what they’ve always done so well: Mingle brightness, energy, and hope with political critique. **This Mess is a Place** is charged with a hopefulness that stands in stark contrast to music that celebrates apathy, despair, and numbness. **Tacocat** feels it all and cares, a lot, whether they’re singing odes to the magical connections we feel with our pets (“Little Friend”), imagining what a better earth might look like (“New World”), or trying to find humor in a wholly unfunny world (“The Joke of Life”).



AJR
NEOTHEATER
S-CURVE

Indie-pop sibling trio **AJR's** third full-length album, **Neotheater** was entirely self-produced by the group in Ryan and Jack Met’s NYC apartment with portions recorded in Los Angeles. The 12 original songs spin a coming of age tale that hears the band coming to terms with the sacrifices that come with growing older now that they are in their 20s. The buoyant and uplifting music is juxtaposed with darker lyrical narratives that touch on anxiety, naiveté and searching for integrity. Effervescent single “Birthday Party” features an eerie sample taken from David Lynch’s **Eraserhead**. The song’s tongue-in-cheek lyrics live at the apex of wide-eyed inexperience as the song is sung from the point of view of a one-minute-old child.



ALDOUS HARDING
DESIGNER
4AD

Designer finds **Aldous Harding** hitting her creative stride. After her previous album, **Party** (one of 2017’s best), **Harding** came off a 100-date tour and went straight into the studio with a collection of songs written on the road. Reuniting with John Parish (PJ Harvey; Sparklehorse), producer of **Party**, **Harding** spent 15 days recording and 10 days mixing at Rockfield Studios, Monmouth and Bristol’s J&J Studio and Playpen. From the bold strokes of opening track “Fixture Picture,” there is an overriding sense of an enigmatic artist confident in their work, with contributions from Huw Evans (H. Hawkline), Stephen Black (Sweet Baboo), drummer Gwion Llewelyn and violinist Clare Mactaggart broadening and complimenting **Harding's** rich and timeless songwriting.