

JAMIE XX IN COLOUR

XL / YOUNG TURKS

Jamie xx has made such an impression on the music scene the last several years that it's sorta hard to believe that *In Colour* is his first solo album. The eleven-track LP includes previous releases "Girl" and "Sleep Sound" as well as forthcoming single "Loud Places," which features vocals from Romy Madley Croft. The release of *In Colour* comes on the back of an incredible six year creative period for **Jamie xx**, which has seen him alternate effortlessly between his role as founding member and producer of **The xx**, and creator of more electronic and club orientated music as **Jamie xx**. A string of acclaimed productions in recent years including debut solo single "Far Nearer," remixes for the likes of Adele, Radiohead and Florence & The Machine, production work for Drake and Alicia Keys plus *We're New Here* - **Jamie's** seminal production of Gil Scott-Heron's final studio album - hinted at what was to come. With *In Colour* - a bold, celebratory, emotional record that features collaborations with **The xx** band mates Romy Madley Croft ("Seesaw" and "Loud Places") and Oliver Sim ("Stranger In A Room"), Young Thug and Popcaan ("Good Times") and Four Tet ("Seesaw") - **Jamie** delivers his definitive artistic statement. Also available on VINYL!



HUDSON MOHAWKE LANTERN

WARP

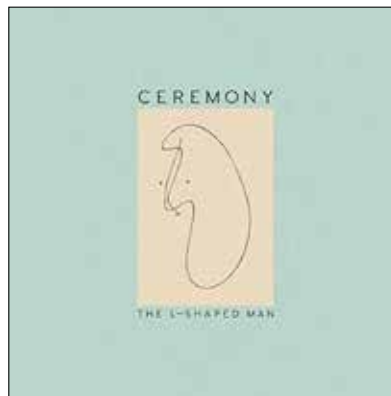
Hudson Mohawke has been on a meteoric rise the last few years, working with some of the biggest names in hip hop, pop and dance music but everything started in a bedroom in Glasgow when he was barely a teenager. From age 15 he was an award winning scratch DJ producing happy hardcore on cracked software. He came to define a generation of electronic fusion producers but unlike many of his peers, **Hudson** has matured into a fully-fledged contemporary hit-maker continually working to break the mold. Born of the underground club scene in the UK, **Hud Mo** has been releasing music for the last 10 years, cultivating a formidable presence in the community. His US break-out came in 2012 with **TNGHT**, the collaborative project with fellow producer Lunice, which saw their production influence the A-list in rap and help reintroduce the US dance / EDM scene to Hip Hop as club music. In the two years following, **Hudson** has worked on releases from Drake, Kanye West, John Legend, Young Thug, Pusha-T, and Antony Hegarty. **Lantern** is the sound of **HudMo** circa NOW - casually pushing Hip Hop ever forward into the 21st century ... But you'll be too busy partying to notice.



CHRIS ROBINSON BROTHERHOOD BETTY'S BLENDS: BEST OF THE WEST (VOLUME TWO)

SILVER ARROW RECORDS

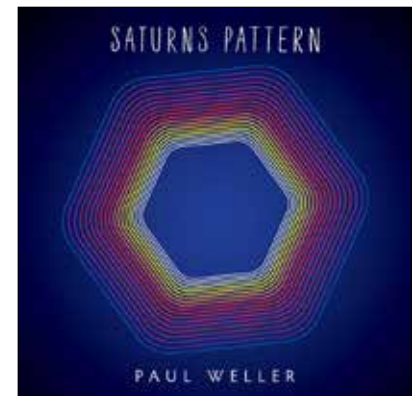
The Chris Robinson Brotherhood - the long-standing solo project from the former Black Crowe's frontman - is back with **Betty's Blends Volume Two: Best From The West**. Recorded and mixed by the legendary Grateful Dead archivist Betty Cantor-Jackson, the seven-track collection features performances captured throughout **The CRB's** 2014 summer tour of the western United States, including "Rosalee" from the Henry Miller Library in Big Sur, "Shore Power" from Terrapin Crossroads in San Rafael, "Burn Slow" from Cervantes' Masterpiece Ballroom in Denver and a standout 15-minute plus version of "Vibration & Light Suite" from Theatre Deville in Vacaville, CA. In addition to **CRB** originals, the set includes a pair of covers: "They Love Each Other" by The Grateful Dead and "Driving Wheel" by Tom Rush, which are invariably highlights of **The CRB's** live shows. True to the band's farm-to-table aesthetic, **Betty's Blends Vol. 2** will be issued by **Robinson's** own label imprint, Silver Arrow Records, as a truly limited-edition release with only 2000 2-LP sets, 2000 CDs, and 2000 downloads available.



CEREMONY THE L-SHAPED MAN

MATADOR

Ceremony's fifth studio album, *The L-Shaped Man*, uses singer Ross Farrar's recent breakup as a platform to explore loneliness and emotional weariness, but it is by no means a purely sad album. Rather than look inward, Farrar uses his experience to write about what it means to go through something heavy and come out the other side a different person. In order to tell Farrar's story, **Ceremony** have almost completely stripped back the propulsive hardcore of their previous records, turning every angry outburst into simmering despair. "We've always tried to be minimalists in writing, even if it's loud or fast or abrasive," says lead guitarist Anthony Anzaldo. "It's really intense when I hear it... Things are so bare, you're holding this one note for so long and you don't now where it's going—to me, that's intensity." That intensity is apparent on "Exit Fears," the first full song on the record. It meticulously pairs Justin Davis' loping bassline, which pulls the track along, with Anzaldo's icy, minimal guitar work. The sound is abetted by producer John Reis, who honed his sound in seminal bands like Rocket from the Crypt, Drive Like Jehu, and Hot Snakes. Much of the gravelly aggression he experimented with in those bands is present on *The L-Shaped Man*. Check it out!



PAUL WELLER SATURN'S PATTERN

WARNER BROS./PARLOPHONE

Paul Weller does not rest on his laurels. His life's mission to keep producing new music is never obscured by the mountainous accolades he's racked up after six era-defining albums with **The Jam** or the five albums he made subsequently with the soul-jazz-funk-anything-but-rock **Style Council**, and eleven albums as a multi-award-winning solo artist since 1990. *Saturn's Pattern* is his follow-up to 2012's tour-de-force of cut-up pop-punk-kraut and abstract escapades *Sonik Kicks*. This time around, **Weller** wanted something with a bit of swing and space in it. And so work on *Saturn's Pattern* began. "It's not necessarily a dance album, but I wanted something with rhythmic drive," he says. "But it has the tunes to match." As is typical with a **Paul Weller** album, you'd struggle to define it stylistically. There a soulful feel that encompasses it all, especially on songs like the bustling, piano-fed "Going My Way," or the wonderful Southern-fried organ precision of "Pick It Up." There's a psychedelic feel to songs like "Phoenix," too, as well as the magnificently expansive summer breeze that is the closing "These City Streets." It's a kaleidoscope of an album that feels both out-of-step and ahead of its time.



TALLEST MAN ON EARTH DARK BIRD IS HOME

DEAD OCEANS

Dark Bird Is Home doesn't feel like it came from one time, one place, or one tape machine. The songs and sounds were captured in various countries, studios, and barns, and they carry a weatherworn quality, some dirt and some grit. If you're a fan of *The Tallest Man On Earth*, *Dark Bird* pays real tribute to the old records you fell for, and goes new places you're going to love as well. If you're new to *The Man*: HOLY SHIT! Many would be jealous of your position. While *Dark Bird* is *The Tallest Man* at his most personal and direct, deeper and darker than ever at times, it's also an album with strokes of whimsy and the scent of new beginnings — which feels fresh for *The Tallest Man on Earth*, and well timed. Reliably, the melodies and arrangements are sturdy and classic. The lyrics and their delivery are both comforting and alarming, like tall trees & wide hills. The other musicians and layers on this recording put a wide lens on familiar themes. Fear and darkness, sleep or lack of it, dreams in the dark and in the light... Moving, leaving, going.... Distance and short stops, long straight lines, temporal places. More hopefully, a grateful nod to a traveling partner, a healing mind... Maybe a little forgiveness needed. But *Dark Bird Is Home* is an album you'll never forget.



UNKNOWN MORTAL ORCHESTRA MULTI-LOVE

JAGJAGUWAR

On *Multi-Love*, *Unknown Mortal Orchestra* frontman and multi-instrumentalist Ruban Nielson reflects on relationships: Longing, loss, and the geometry of desire that occurs when three people align. Where Nielson addressed the pain of being alone on *II*, *Multi-Love* takes on the complications of being together. *Multi-Love* adds dimensions to the band's already kaleidoscopic approach, with Nielson exploring a new-found appreciation for synthesizers. The new songs channel the spirit of psych innovators without ignoring the last 40 years of music, forming a flowing, cohesive whole that reflects restless creativity. Cosmic escapes and disco rhythms speak to developing new vocabulary, while Nielson's vocals reach powerful new heights. "It felt good to be rebelling against the typical view of what an artist is today, a curator," he says. "It's more about being someone who makes things happen in concrete ways. Building old synthesizers and bringing them back to life, creating sounds that aren't quite like anyone else's. I think that's much more subversive." While legions of artists show fidelity to the roots of psychedelia, *Unknown Mortal Orchestra* shares the rare quality that makes the genre's touchstones so vital: Constant exploration.



ROISIN MURPHY HAIRLESS TOYS

PIAS

Her first album in 8 years, *Roisin Murphy's Hairless Toys* is a career defining tour de force. Tipping its hat to the dark disco of European house music, Casablanca Records and Grace Jones, while seamlessly taking in the freedom and organic spirit of jazz, country and gospel. The rich, expansive production - by *Roisin's* long time musical collaborator Eddie Stevens - is full of inventive loops and unlikely hooks, a grand magical spell exemplified by album opener "Gone Fishing" - a song inspired by the film *Paris Is Burning*, where originality, invention and celebration are escapes from the ugly realities of the world around us, a place where The practice of realness, feels so surreal. The genesis of *Hairless Toys* lies in last year's *Mi Senti* EP. A release mainly of covers, all sung in Italian, a collaboration between *Roisin*, her partner Sebastiano Properzi, and Eddie Stevens. This very adult-orientated Disco, which channeled Edith Piaf through Studio 54, served as a reminder of *Roisin's* creative free spirit and unmistakable voice. *Hairless Toys* finds *Roisin* taking this sound even higher with songs that slowly reveal layers and take unexpected turns. Every song sumptuous delight - like a dance party on pot brownies. You need this.



HOLLY MIRANDA HOLLY MIRANDA

DANGEROUS RECORDS

On a trip intended to jumpstart the creative process for new material, *Holly Miranda* reflects, "I had a dream that I was going to rent a house in Joshua Tree and go write by myself for a month. I'd never been there before, but I woke up the next day and booked the first house I found and left a few days later. Whatever it was *Miranda* needed from her time in desert, she seems to have found it. On her self-titled sophomore release *Miranda* nods at her singer-songwriter roots but also pushes herself in new directions. She co-produced the album with Florent Barbier, and tracks like "Desert Call" and "Everlasting," show off straightforward songwriting, soulful delivery and a lighters-in-the-air orchestration that places *Miranda* alongside the pantheon of songwriters who can make heartache sound beautiful. After half of her life spent on stage or in a recording studio—with her former rock band The Jealous Girlfriends (Look 'em up. Seriously!), a touring guitarist for Karen O, and more recently as a solo artist — *Miranda* is still experimenting and diving for deeper truths. Raw, soulful, searing, and, when the moment's right, ethereal, *Holly Miranda* is a vision quest of the highest caliber.



CHRISTIAN LOPEZ BAND ONWARD

BLASTER RECORDS

Christian Lopez is a 19-year-old with the soul of a 65-year-old Appalachian mountain bluegrass musician hidden away inside, steeped in the roots of his West Virginia upbringing in Shepherdstown on the shores of the Potomac River at the northeastern panhandle tip of the state. On his debut full-length effort, *Onward*, the young artist emulates the sound produced by the region's resident pickers and strummers, writing all but one of the songs on the album. Highlights include the Old Testament gravity of the focus track, "Leaving It Out," the plaintive, yearning lament of "Seven Years," the twangy pedal steel guitar lacing through "Morning Rise" and the whistling-past-the-graveyards fatalism of the ghostly goth-gospel "Oh Those Tombs," a song *Christian* discovered in the public domain popularized by Hank Williams. Don't worry: He cranks up, too. Produced by Dave Cobb (Jason Isbell, Sturgill Simpson).



SAN CISCO GRACETOWN

ISLAND CITY RECORDS

Coming out of the small coastal resort of Fremantle, a beautiful town nestling in the shadow of Perth's gleaming monoliths and separated from the more fashionable parts of Australia by thousands of miles of red dirt, you might expect the music of **San Cisco** to be limited in vision, comprising flimsy surf-ditties extolling the ephemeral pleasures of sun, surf and sex. You would be wrong, however. For while it would be untrue to claim that the unholy trinity of sex, sun and sea are absent from their songs, on their new album, *Gracetown*, the band — singer Jordi Davieson, Josh Biondillo (guitar), Nick Gardner (bass) and Scarlett Stevens (drums) — extend their sonic palette to new territories. There is a deeper, chillier feel to songs that signals a new sophistication and maturity. Less sun, then, and more muted shades, as well as a deeper exploration of the hormonal tangle that is postmodern sexual politics. The album shows **San Cisco** growing up, and this growing up is scary and magnificent to behold.

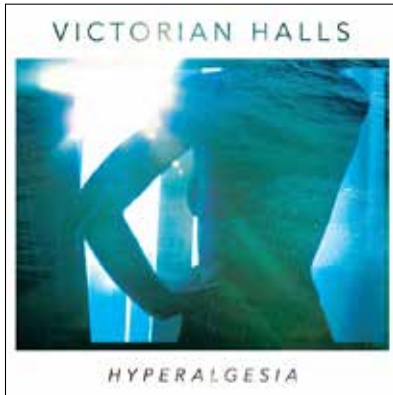


TWENTY ONE PILOTS

BLURRYFACE

FUELED BY RAMEN

Blurryface, **Twenty-One Pilots'** latest album, opens a new chapter in the Columbus, Ohio-based band's story. A chapter that finds the duo of Tyler Joseph and Josh Dun disinterested in expectation and certainty, instead absorbing themselves in the undefined and breaking new ground as they fearlessly reimagine the possibilities of their music. **Blurryface** feels innovative and vibrant, every track imbued with a sense of propulsive motion that derives largely from Josh's drumming. Even as the musicians explore diverging styles, shifting between genres in a way that is unnecessary to define, the urgent live drums draw the music together. **Blurryface's** lead track, "Fairly Local," plays with a moody sparseness of instrumentation to create a surging atmospheric number that bluntly proclaims, "This song will never be on the radio." Single "Tear in my Heart" takes a more buoyant vibe, teasing out a pop-inspired melody and anthemic chorus. The lyrics, overall, connect, but for Tyler it's essential not to reveal his exact intentions behind them. The band is interested in creating music that feels unexpected and open to interpretation, both thematically and instrumentally. The songs are as much for Tyler and Josh as they are for the listeners.



VICTORIAN HALLS HYPERALGESIA

VICTORY

The writing process for album number two can be difficult for any band to uphold the chemistry of their first release. On their second offering, *Hyperalgesia*, **Victorian Halls** have gone leaps and bounds beyond their debut and created an alluring album that is part dance, part pop, part rock and 100% irresistible. The Chicago trio, headed by vocalist/guitarist/pianist Sean Lenart, bassist Jordan Dismuke and Mike Tomala on drums, made waves with their Victory Records debut *Charlatan* in 2011, exhibiting their incendiary approach of experimental beats. That grand theatrical backdrop remains with 2015's *Hyperalgesia*. Now **Victorian Halls** turned up the heat with abstract melodies and hooks that weave seamlessly with smart pop lyrics, and sourced different experiences to create an album that cascades gleams of pop shrapnel and brisk elegance. 11-tracks that expands the bounds of indie-pop, unhinged synth-rock, and propulsive, melodic indie-rock, *Hyperalgesia* will surprise you with every track.



SOAK BEFORE WE FORGET HOW TO DREAM

ROUGH TRADE

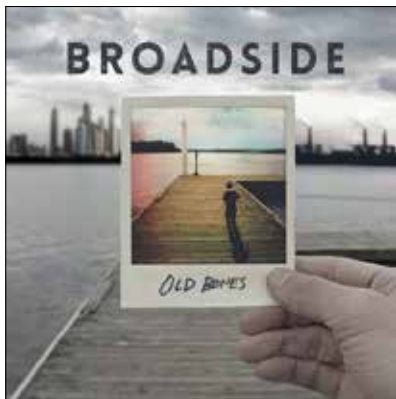
Early on, much was made of the young age of Bridie Monds-Watson — who performs as **SOAK** — but as her accomplished, wise-beyond-her-years songs and breathtakingly lovely voice reached more new listeners, the pixie-ish, tattooed skateboarder's appeal has transcended her youth. *Before We Forget How To Dream* is a beautifully-wrought album, full of musical turns that showcase Watson's uniquely sweet and haunting voice, as well as lyrics that marry a sunny and romantic sense of nostalgia with frank treatments of human failings, hopes, and — yes — dreams. Already a household name in the UK, with "Sea Creatures" in BBC Radio 1 A-list rotation and prominent festival bookings throughout the season, **SOAK's** debut appearances in NYC and SXSW this March found her playing before capacity crowds — "the only performer to stun the crowd into silence," noted Consequence of Sound. US press — including heavyweights like NPR, and the New York Times — have anointed her one of SXSW 2015's breakout performers. The stage is set for **SOAK** to win the hearts of US audiences, and we know she'll win yours, too, once you listen.



JEDI MIND TRICKS THE THIEF AND THE FALLEN

ENEMY SOIL

Forged in the indie rap Golden Era of the mid-90s, **Jedi Mind Tricks'** consistency has been unparalleled. For two decades, the name **Jedi Mind Tricks** has become synonymous with raw, gritty underground Hip Hop. From their debut album, *The Psycho-social*, in 1996 to their seminal sophomore release, "Violent By Design," to their musical expansion on "Servants and Heaven, Kings In Hell," **Jedi Mind Tricks** has made an indelible impression on the independent music scene, while arguably forming its own subgenre of rap. Now, after a six-year hiatus, the original **Jedi Mind Tricks** frontman, Vinnie Paz, and producer, Stoupe, have reunited to record the group's eighth studio album, *The Thief and The Fallen*. Not that it should be surprising given Paz's work with Army of the Pharaohs, but homie still spits nothing but fire on *The Thief and The Fallen* — and titles like "No Jesus, No Beast" suggest that Run The Jewels should be running for their notebooks. Guests include Yes Alexander, Lawrence Arnell, and Dilated Peoples.



**BROADSIDE
OLD BONES**
VICTORY

Emerging from a city known for "Give Me Liberty Or Give Me Death," Richmond, Virginia's **Broadside** is resurrecting that message with punk rock mastery. With danceable melodies and crunching sing-alongs, **Broadside** continues to push the boundaries blurring genres to ultimately make the sound that sets them apart. **Old Bones** is a record that will put **Broadside** at the ranks of All Time Low, The Wonder Years and Anberlin. Recorded by Kyle Black, known for his work with New Found Glory and Paramore, drummer Andrew Dunton says of the record's surprisingly inviting sound: "We thought it was going to be a heavier album, but we've actually gone pretty poppy." Blasting off with "A Place To Lay Your Head," the song immediately grips the listener with a never-looking-back call-to-arms. The infectious "Storyteller" was described by Alternative Press as "sugar-sweet pop-punk with just a hint of the Richmond punk legacy." The first video and single, "Coffee Talk," is driven forward with hints of the Descendants, while keeping their momentum contemporary. All in all **Old Bones** is a sugary blast of punk snot that's eager to please and hard to resist.



**THE MIKE + RUTHY BAND
BRIGHT AS YOU CAN**
HUMBLE ABODE MUSIC

This year marks **Mike + Ruthy's** 16th year of musical collaboration. From their humble start whacking ukuleles at the Sidewalk Café's "anti-hoop" open-mike on New York City's Avenue A to singing down fascism with Pete Seeger and Arlo Guthrie at Carnegie Hall with stringband revivalists, The Mammals, **Mike + Ruthy** show no sign of slowing down anytime soon. **Bright As You Can**, the rocking new album from **The Mike + Ruthy Band**, celebrates the grit and glory of kinship, blood and otherwise. As with previous **Mike + Ruthy** endeavors, the rootsy material covers much ground, but the through-line remains family. And this time out, the tempos are brisker, the playing more fervent than ever before. The atmosphere crackles with the excitement of a kick-ass, seasoned band of road warriors, a gang hunkered in the Catskill Mountains, laying down 14 road-tested tunes of radio-ready acoustic pop, broody rock, country soul, and boot-stomping porch folk. Says **No Depression**: "This is a record about what it is to be human. It's a record about what it is to have an inextricable allegiance to tradition, while feeling compelled to speak for oneself. It's a record that will grab you, that won't let you go."



**HIT THE LIGHTS
SUMMER BONES**
PURE NOISE RECORDS

Hit The Lights has been a pop punk mainstay for nearly ten years. **Summer Bones** is their fourth studio album and was recorded with engineer/producer Kyle Black (Paramore, Comeback Kids, Set Your Goals). **Summer Bones** is the album **Hit The Lights** fans have been waiting for, a true return to form chock full of pop punk bangers and ballads. "Summer Bones is the most self aware record **Hit The Lights** has made," says vocalist Nick Thompson. "We took what we feel we do best and pushed ourselves to take it further. We've never had a record that sounds the same and **Summer Bones** is no different. It stands on it's own, in our discography, it has it's own personality and is the most heavy, poppy, riffy **Hit The Lights** record to date. It's everyone in the band at their best."



**THE GRAHAMS
GLORY BOUND**
12 SOUTH RECORDS/CEN

The unique process that Americana group **The Grahams** employed in the writing of their debut album *Riverman's Daughter* resonated so well with the Nashville based band that they undertook a similar technique in the creation of their latest album, **Glory Bound**. With *Riverman's Daughter* **The Grahams** traveled the Mississippi-hugging Great River Road, winding up on a houseboat in the Louisiana swamp where their songs of the river came together. A similar process went into the writing **Glory Bound**, except this time, instead of following the lazy river, **The Grahams** rode streamlined rails, jumping aboard almost all the Amtrak cars including the Adirondack Line, the Texas Eagle, and the Sunset Limited, crisscrossing the country as the America that informs their songs whizzed by. Partners in both love and music, **Alyssa and Doug Graham** have been performing together since they were teenagers, and their unique approach to music allows them to explore past musical paths in the pursuit of something new... It's Americana that aims to innovate rather than imitate.



**ICKY BLOSSOMS
MASK**
SADDLE CREEK

Three years on from their Dave Sitek (TV on the Radio) produced debut, Omaha, Nebraska's **Icky Blossoms'** singular brand of mesmerizingly contradictory dance music has evolved. Blending avant-garde elements with catchy and danceable pop, threaded within dark, bass-heavy atmospheres, **Mask** nods to great music of the past, whilst firmly propelling them into the future. For **Mask**, **Icky Blossoms** continue with their study of synthesizers and drum machines, finding new focus by exploring the space between their background in basement rock shows and their newfound fluency in electronic music. They spent a year crafting the next evolution of their sound, maintaining their core of throbbing electronic grooves, but working to blend it with the drums, bass, and screaming guitars of their chaotic live show. The band experimented with making electronics sound organic and organic instruments feel electronic. Song skeletons were embellished with tuned 808's, hyper-effected mouth noises, screams as instruments, and guitars run through synthesizers. With the talent of longtime friend and collaborator Mike Mogis (Bright Eyes) these songs became fully realized. Lush, sexy, trippy, and extremely danceable, **Mask** is a perfect summer jam. Phantom fans should especially take note.



FAITH NO MORE SOL INVICTUS

IPECAC

The music of **Faith No More** has lived through five presidents, endless wars, economic boons and busts, global meltdown and revolutionary rebirths. Throughout the '80s and '90s, the hard-edged group's hybridized sound has scored the soundtrack to a time of change, and now in the 21st century, the legendary band has evolved once more to return with a powerful new album, **Sol Invictus**, and a new focus. Recorded in bassist Bill Gould's studio space in Oakland in 2014 and early 2015, **Sol Invictus** brings back the final lineup of the band, featuring founding members, drummer Mike Bordin and keyboardist Roddy Bottum, with guitarist Jon Hudson and fronted by explosive vocalist Mike Patton. Entirely self produced, the album is 100% **Faith No More**. Ideas were tossed around via email, and the new sounds began to congeal into a body of work powered with the same energy that defined **Faith No More**. "When we were kids, there was a producer in the room with us, but now it's just us doing it," Gould says, "We don't need anybody else, it's empowering." Without label interference, the unified sound is electrifying, from the soaring guitar-driven anthem "Matador" to the propulsive politically-charged single "Motherfucker."



THE DESLONDES THE DESLONDES

NEW WEST

Hailed by NPR as "deft assemblers of a sound that traverses decades and styles with humble grace," New Orleans band **The Deslondes** mine from the rich history of American music to craft their compelling and wholly unique eponymous debut album. Comprised of five distinct songwriting voices, **The Deslondes** endeavor to carry on the traveling troubadour tradition of their heroes Woody Guthrie, Hank Williams and Townes Van Zandt. Co-produced by the band and in-demand producer Andrija Tokic (Benjamin Booker, Alabama Shakes, Hurray for the Riff Raff) at his Nashville studio The Bomb Shelter, **The Deslondes'** 12 tracks are influenced by classic soul, rock 'n' roll, R&B, folk, roots country, swamp-boogie, honky-tonk and pre-war music and introduce a collective of gifted singer-songwriters with a deep love for the past and a palpable passion for the present. "They manage to resurrect a lost sound," exclaimed *Rolling Stone*, adding "Stax and Sun records are distinct touch points, as are upright-bass-driven melodies — while giving it a modern, vibrant swing, building on the foundations of old-time traditions without sounding like they're stepping out of a time machine."



HOLLY HERNDON PLATFORM

4AD

Holly Herndon has become a leading light in contemporary alternative and electronic music by fearlessly experimenting within the outer reaches of dance music and pop songwriting structures. A galvanizing statement, **Platform** cements **Herndon's** reputation as a unique musician with a singular voice. Born in Tennessee, but reared on music abroad, **Herndon** broke out from her formative years in Berlin's minimal techno scene to repatriate to San Francisco, where she currently lives and studies as a doctoral candidate at Stanford's Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA). **Herndon's** debut album *Movement*, released in 2012, showcased **Herndon's** fascination with trance and the disjunctive sampling techniques pioneered by avant-garde composition. Offering what **Herndon** describes as "a rupture, a paradisiac gesture", **Platform** is an optimistic breakthrough for **Herndon**, an appeal for progress, and a step toward new ways to love.



CIVIL TWILIGHT STORY OF AN IMMIGRANT

WIND-UP RECORDS

"What am I to build, if my hands are broken, if I'm not the chosen one?" sings Steven McKellar of **Civil Twilight** on "Story of An Immigrant," over a lush, dynamic beat that evokes the sounds of his native South Africa while steeped in the band's ever-evolving present. The foursome (Steven, his brother and guitarist Andrew, drummer Richard Wouters and Kevin Dailey on keys and guitar) are living proof of what happens when you stop worrying about being the chosen one and make music built on both the roots that grew you and the love that keeps you thriving every day. **Civil Twilight's** songs embrace every corner of human emotion, balancing delicate, poetic lyrics with sweeping arrangements that touch all the senses. Produced by Ben H. Allen (Gnarls Barkley, Bombay Bicycle Club, Cut Copy), **Story Of An Immigrant** is built on this vibrancy, on the permanent dust of a Cape Town youth; on the connection that unites them all as brothers beyond blood and on their new home in America where they pull from the innate, thriving musicianship of Nashville, where they live. We're all immigrants, in some way, and **Civil Twilight's** singing our national anthem.



SHAMIR RATCHET

XL

Shamir is Shamir Bailey, a 20-year-old Las Vegas native who grew up not on the strip but in the desert. His verve for life makes him almost impossible to categorize. As a young musician, he moves in and out of soul, R&B, house, disco, rap, and pop — in the tradition of artists like Prince, Grace Jones, David Bowie, and Madonna. Genre is a tool for **Shamir**, not a boundary. Or as **Shamir** would put it, "It doesn't matter what you sound like — you just have to be you." Led by an androgynous croon that recalls Nina Simone, **Ratchet** is an ecstatic dance-pop record that also has some dust and age to it, sparkling with the grit of a desert geode. The songs are about growing up in Vegas, though not the Vegas you think you know. The music is fun even when it's mostly introspective, introspective even when it's mostly fun. There's an obvious fluidity to **Shamir**. He transcends boundaries — genre, gender, age, geography, etc. If he feels solitary, it's because there's literally no one else like him.



MIKAL CRONIN
MCIII
MERGE

MCIII is the third album from Californian singer-songwriter **Mikal Cronin**. Marked by the lush arrangements, stunning melodies, and deeply personal lyrical work for which **Cronin** is now known, the album is also a deliberate attempt to simply "go big." Written and recorded over the course of 2014, between long bouts of touring, *MCIII* finds the **Laguna Beach** native splitting his latest full-length statement into two distinct halves. On Side A, behold a shimmering tsunami of furious, undeniable pop songs. On Side B, marvel at a beautifully wrought concept record in miniature, built around the radiant retelling of what **Cronin** calls his "coming-of-age" story: After leaving California to go to school in the Pacific Northwest, he found himself alone and adrift, struggling with debilitating back pain and a dissolving sense of self. "It's about a pivotal moment in my life that changed things, just within a couple of months," he says. "It was a shifting point that sent me on the path to doing what I'm doing right now." As he did on his self-titled 2011 debut and 2013's *MCII*, **Cronin** arranged and played nearly all of the record himself, including the tzouras, a traditional Greek string instrument he heard and subsequently bought while on tour in Athens. It's quite an achievement, right? So... How you gonna spend your summer?



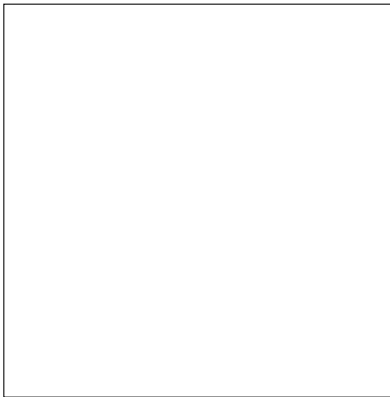
SUN KIL MOON
UNIVERSAL THEMES
CALDO VERDE

Universal Themes is the latest album from prolific misanthrope Mark Kozelek (You know: that guy who hates The War on Drugs), who's beautiful and unique approach to narrative songwriting has been reaching new heights beginning with last year's *Benji*. Like its predecessor, *Universal Themes* takes a gonzo approach to Kozelek's semi-autobiographical songwriting that is dizzy from intimate details, a strange bed of off-kilter rhythm guitars, and torrents of words that beckon your attention from each channel of your headphones – sorta like Lou Reed meets Modest Mouse. Recorded both in San Francisco and Hoboken, NJ *Universal Themes* benefits from the always-killer backbeat of Sonic Youth percussionist Steve Shelley, who has plenty of experience balancing metronomic grace against avant garde curveballs. Whether he's singing about possums, the industrial band Godflesh, or going to the bathroom, Kozelek's strength as a storyteller continues to astound. Whether or not you love The War on Drugs *Universal Themes* is the work of a master craftsman working at the height of his powers. It's brilliant... Ignore him at your peril.



MATT SKIBA AND THE SECRETS
KUTS
SUPERBALL MUSIC

A trooper, a vagabond, a minstrel and an artist - over the course of fifteen years and eight full-length albums as the lead singer/songwriter for Chicago's **Alkaline Trio**, **Matt Skiba** has been all of these things. Touring the world, heart on sleeve, Skiba has consistently penned some of the great dark pop anthems of the past decade. **Matt Skiba's** first album with the **Secrets**, 2012's *Babylon*, received adulation from both fans and press. Now, **Matt Skiba and his Secrets** (Hunter Burgan on bass, Jarrod Alexander drums) ready the release of *KUTS*. Says **Skiba** of *KUTS*: "The writing style and entire approach to this new one was a stronger desire to do something fairly different from my other band. We used sounds hugely influenced by early David Bowie stuff and took more chances. I knew that the playing of Hunter and Jarrod would bring entirely new elements to the songs that would help shape them in a huge way and influence ideas that I would never have thought of on my own. They did great stuff for the last record but had even more freedom on this one. It really shaped the way this record sounds." Produced by Rob Schnapf (Elliot Smith, The Vines)



ART OF ANARCHY
ART OF ANARCHY
ANOTHER CENTURY

Poised to become one of the biggest new bands of 2015, **Art of Anarchy** is redefining the rock supergroup – thanks, in no small part, to that it sort of features former Stone Temple Pilots singer and current Scott Weiland and the Wildabouts front man, **Scott Weiland!** Make no mistake: Weiland is on the album. He wrote lyrics, sang, and did a little production... But according to a recent press release he claims he was never in the band. But who cares?!? Lead guitarist Ron "Bumblefoot" Thal from Guns N' Roses, bassist John Moyer of Disturbed and twin brothers Jon Votta on lead guitar and Vince Votta on drums are all still definitely in **Art of Anarchy!** *Art of Anarchy* features over-the-top songs that break rock music boundaries with an all-or-nothing attitude, star power and bring-down-the-house performances. This mega band promises to transform a new generation into rock enthusiasts and die-hard "Anarchists" – e.g. Scott Weiland who (despite not his claims about not being a member of this band and, rather, performing sad renditions of Stone Temple Pilots hits that showcase only a modicum of his once great talent) delivers his finest performance in years. **Art Of Anarchy** is a heavy, glam kissed sleazy rock masterpiece – whether Weiland knows it or not.



WHILE SHE SLEEPS BRAINWASHED

RAZOR & TIE

For the last 5 years Sheffield, England's **While She Sleeps** have been turning heads with their unique blend of hard rock and metal. **While She Sleeps'** new album, *Brainwashed*, is a terrifying force to be reckoned with – a barrage of belligerent sound that straddles and combines a variety of genres the band would prefer you to just call "alternative rock." Musically, it's a sophisticated step up from their debut full-length, one that's catchy and confrontational in equal measure. More involved and intricate than anything they've done before, each song is a master craft in complex yet accessible writing, layer after layer of sound pummeling both your synapses and your heartstrings. The band explains, "Everything that we have been through these past years has become the main ingredient for the new record. On a subconscious level we have put our collective experiences into the silver lining of this music. If for once the saying good things come to those who wait was true, this is it: We have done our fans proud. This record will define **While She Sleeps**."



WHILE SHE SLEEPS BRAINWASHED

RAZOR & TIE

In May 2014 **Eels** embarked on an ambitious 53-show world tour. Starting in Phoenix, Arizona and crossing The United States and Canada before rolling through mainland Europe and Great Britain, the band eventually returned to London's legendary Royal Albert Hall for the first time in nine years. Filmed by 12 cameras in the gorgeously-lit Royal Albert Hall, the new film and album find the **Eels** dapperly dressed in suits and ties, and stretching their musical capabilities past new boundaries, playing songs from 2014's critically-acclaimed *The Cautionary Tales of Mark Oliver Everett* for the first time along with songs spanning the **Eels'** 19 year career. When they played Royal Albert Hall in 2005 they were accompanied by a string section. This time there are only the five core members of the band on stage throughout the concert, splitting their time between guitar, piano, pedal steel guitar, trumpet, upright and bowed bass, melodic, vibraphone, timpani, drums, concert chimes, glockenspiel, and – to Everett's eternal delight – The Royal Albert Hall's pipe organ. And the results are stunning. Package includes the CD, the DVD, and a whole buncha love.



WILLIE NELSON & MERLE HAGGARD DJANGO AND JIMMIE

LEGACY

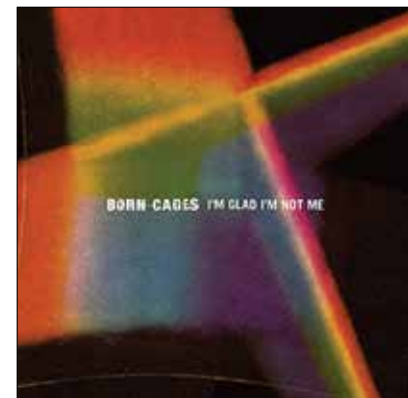
Willie Nelson. Merle Haggard. Two legends – one album. And, BOW HOWDY, is it a killer. Helmed by **Nelson's** longtime producer, collaborator and friend Buddy Cannon, *Django and Jimmie* features 14 brand-new studio recordings by the two Outlaw Country legends. Among the highlights are "Django and Jimmie" (a dual tribute to jazz guitarist Django Reinhardt and Jimmie Rodgers, country music's mythic "Singing Brakeman"), the reflective and meditative "Live This Long," "Missing Ol' Johnny Cash" (featuring guest vocals from Bobby Bare), a sublime interpretation of Bob Dylan's "Don't Think Twice, It's Alright"; and the future outlaw country classic "Unfair Weather Friend," written by rising songsmiths Marla Cannon-Goodman (Buddy Cannon's daughter) and Ward Davis. A legendary country music producer and songwriter in his own right, Buddy helped pen five of the album's tracks, including "It's All Going To Pot" – which is about exactly what you think it is. **Nelson and Haggard** each pay musical tribute to the other through heartfelt solo performances: **Willie** singing **Merle's** "Somewhere Between" and **Merle** covering **Willie's** "Family Bible." What's not to love?



SATAN'S HOST PRE-DATING GOD: PART 2

MORBUND RECORDS

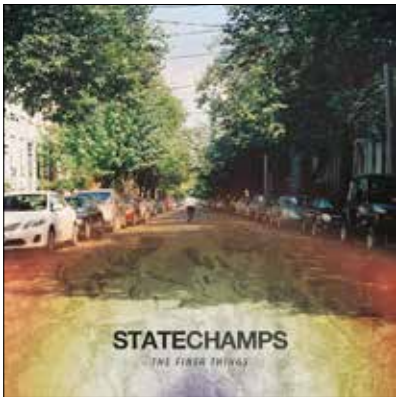
Satan's Host deliver their masterwork with *Pre-dating God Parts 1 & 2!* Striking while the iron's hot after 2013's critically acclaimed *Virgin Sails*, the two-disc *Pre-dating God* sees **Satan's Host** going from strength to strength, creating epic 'n' dynamic HEAVY METAL anthems that immediately stick in the brain. With a storied history that spans five decades, Patrick Evil's devilish warriors here bring together their two distinct periods the traditional / true metal of their early work, and the blasting black / death metal of their middle period - and tastefully modernize it into a sound that is totally all their own. With Harry 'The Tyrant' Conklin delivering his best vocal performance ever, in 2015, no one's able to touch **Satan's Host** for sheer mastery and uniqueness! A metal classic for time eternal!



BORN CAGES I'M GLAD I'M NOT ME

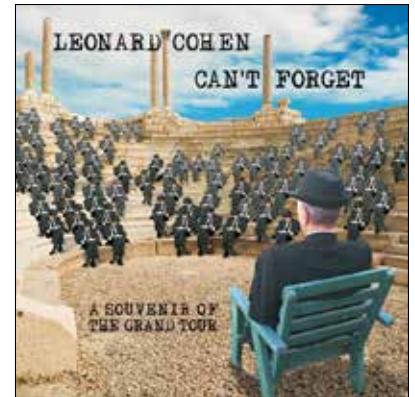
RAZOR & TIE

For **Born Cages**, freedom stands paramount. The New York-based alternative rock outfit thrives on creatively seeking that freedom, whether it's in the studio or on stage. There's no rulebook. There's no template. There's simply unhindered art in its purest form. As a result of that shared boundless mentality, a delicate alchemy of raw guitars and shimmering electronics powers for full-length debut, *I'm Glad I'm Not Me*. All boundaries and chains might just be broken in the process. "It's loud, ethereal, and fuzzy," exclaims frontman Vlad Holiday. "The perfect balance of electronic and guitar music has yet to be found. We're striving to achieve that balance." Everything comes alive on tracks like "Don't Look Back," which was literally plucked from a dream. **Born Cages** exist to capture those moments. "There's a line in Woody Allen's *Midnight in Paris* that I keep coming back to," says Holiday. "It goes, 'The artist's job is not to succumb to despair but to find an antidote for the emptiness of existence.' That's our attempt with this album. I want the listener to get inspired to live without fear. I want people to feel impetuous and free because that's what rock music should be about." Turn it up and get free.



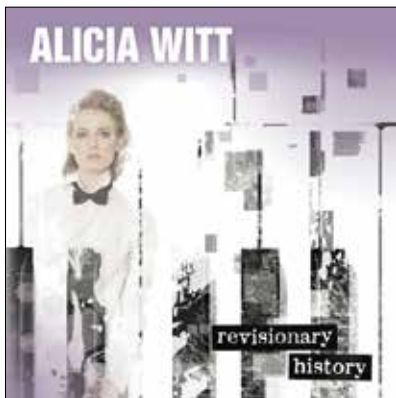
STATE CHAMPS
THE FINER THINGS
PURE NOISE RECORDS

You're not going to be a teenager forever. So **State Champs** wanna fill these years with all the requisite break-up songs, drunken mistakes, betrayal, and big ass pop punk hooks that you so rightfully deserve. Sure, you could find music that is far more deep and meaningful – searching for both personal and universal truths while pushing musical boundaries – but your phone is blowing up, finals are coming, and you haven't even begun to think about all of those damn standardized tests. So why not have **State Champs** distill all of these feelings for you. Wrapped in big riffs, slinky bass lines, and that snotty-yet-earnest voice that understands you better than yourself. The band's new album, **The Finer Things**, aims to give you a crash course in all the emotions you are feeling... Or, fail that, they're the emotions of that "artsy" boy you wanna hook up with but not get too seriously involved with. Look: Introspection takes time... And your phone is blowing up. **The Finer Things** lays it all out for you in one wonderfully realized blast. Absorb it and move on. It's a temporary solution but it sounds better than your parents' Americana albums... For now.



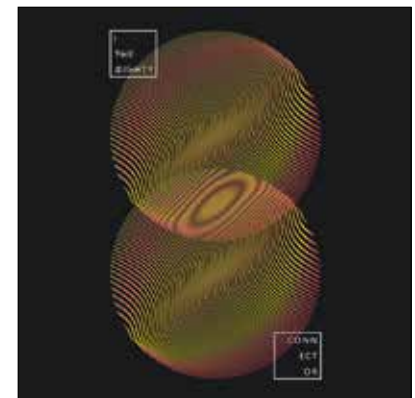
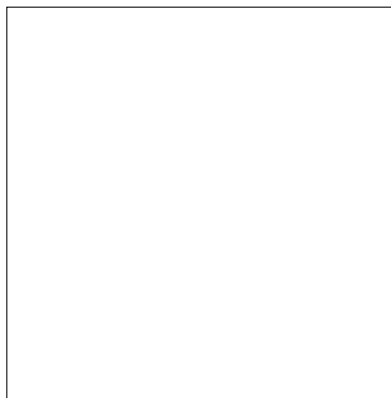
LEONARD COHEN
CAN'T FORGET: A SOUVENIR OF THE GRAND TOUR
LEGACY

The songs on **Can't Forget** have the immediacy, spontaneity, and thrilling intimacy of the best studio recordings made in the white heat of live performance and **Leonard Cohen's** legendary soundchecks, in which he brings the colors of his virtuoso band to full bloom in harmony with his voice, never more seductive. Here is a full range of **Cohen's** work – all recorded on his recent "Old Ideas" World Tour: new songs including, from the realm of blues, the wickedly funny "Got a Little Secret" and "Never Gave Nobody Trouble"; luxurious performances of such **Cohen** masterpieces as "I Can't Forget," "Light As a Breeze," "Night Comes On," and a sublime "Joan of Arc." **Cohen** also treats us to a gripping version of the Quebecois love song "La Manic," performed before a captivated audience in Quebec City, and a moving tribute cover of the late country master George Jones's "Choices." These are songs and performances of the first order that you can't forget. **Can't Forget** is an essential piece of the puzzle that is **Leonard Cohen**. The man is on a roll... But can someone find him a decent graphic designer?



ALICIA WITT
REVISIONARY HISTORY
COMPASS RECORDS

Singer, songwriter, classically trained pianist and acclaimed actor **Alicia Witt** (Justified, House of Lies, Dune – "My brother is here with many Fremmen warriors!") to produce **Revisionary History**, an album of songs that deal in themes of heartbreak, loyalty, and the amazing power that comes with finding one's own voice and using it. The album was years in the making, with some of 9 **Alicia Witt** originals dating back to the mid-00s. For all the autobiographical touches on **Revisionary History**, the collection is one of deeply relatable songs. The reflective piano ballad "Friend" opens the album with **Alicia** sifting through feelings of attraction for someone she knows should be just a pal and not a lover. The aching vocal showcase "Consolation Prize" pairs torchy piano with taut electric guitar accents as **Alicia** muses over the ways in which we edit our pasts to fit the present. With plenty of time spent selecting and honing each song in concert, **Alicia** headed to producer **Ben Folds'** Nashville studio where she recorded the album in two, week-long chunks in the spring and late fall of 2013. The album features Folds on backing vocals as well as on drums, bass, percussion, electric guitar and more.



I THE MIGHTY
CONNECTOR
EQUAL VISION

I the Mighty released their debut album *Satori* in 2013, and has grown immensely as a musical unit since then, creating new material that will undoubtedly propel them to the next level. The San Francisco band's new album, **Connector**, was produced by Mike Green (Paramore, Pierce The Veil, All Time Low) in Los Angeles. The band also brought Max Bemis of Say Anything into the studio to record guest vocals on their song, "Friends." **Connector** is **I the Mighty's** best work to date. Without a particular goal in mind, and effortlessly achieving a sound that combines pop, rock and heavy music into a flawless musical amalgamation, the band has brought an incredible new album that highlights their formidable skills as musicians and songwriters. **Connector** features soaring vocals with meaningful lyrics, and intricate guitar parts that are eloquently written and recorded with precision. "I took a 'story-telling' approach to song writing," says frontman Brent Walsh. "That's not to say there isn't some typical **ITM** angst or politically charged venting. I hope fans of our band see this record the way we see it...as a progression."