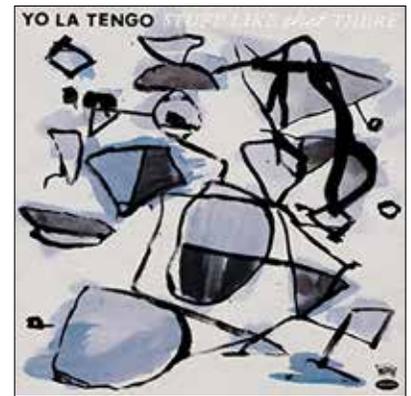


BEACH HOUSE DEPRESSION CHERRY

SUB POP

For over a decade **Beach House** – the Baltimore-based duo of Victoria Legrand and Alex Scally – have been creating some of the most gorgeous, intimate, and engrossing dream pop ever committed to tape. With every album **Beach House** has expanded both its sound and its popularity and their latest album, *Depression Cherry*, continues on that upward trend. *Depression Cherry* was fittingly recorded in boggy circumstances in Bogalusa, Louisiana (But, wisely, in the winter – besides, their music is humid enough) – a time period that crossed the anniversaries of both John Lennon's and Roy Orbison's death. In general, *Depression Cherry* shows a return to simplicity, with songs structured around a melody and a few instruments, with live drums playing a far lesser role. Says the band: "With the growing success of *Teen Dream* and *Bloom*, the larger stages and bigger rooms naturally drove us towards a louder, more aggressive place; a place farther from our natural tendencies. Here, we continue to let ourselves evolve while fully ignoring the commercial context in which we exist." Tracks like "Sparks" are certainly louder but no less enveloping – and that off-kilter organ grind is more evocative of recent releases by Medicine than MBV – a good thing, for sure.



YO LA TENGO STUFF LIKE THAT THERE

MATADOR

Fresh off celebrating its 30th anniversary as one of the most beloved and adventurous bands in rock history, **Yo La Tengo** move ever forward into the future by looking to one of the most beloved moments of its past. *Stuff Like That There* revisits the original concept of their beloved *Fakebook* (a mix of cover songs, "covers" of **Yo La Tengo** songs, and brand new originals) in honor of that album's 25th anniversary. *Stuff Like That There* finds the band exploring songs that are both immediately familiar as well as totally obscure – a total **Yo La Tengo** move performed in a uniquely **Yo La Tengo** way, which is to say inventive yet sugary sweet arrangements. Highlights include Hank Williams ("I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry"), The Cure ("Friday I'm In Love"), **Yo La Tengo** ("The Ballad of Red Buckets"), and everyone's favorite Jazz Alien, Sun Ra ("The Cosmic Rays of Love"). The band will be touring this album, too, with an unprecedented live set-up – Ira on acoustic guitar, Georgia up-front on a small kit, and James on upright bass. It marks the first occasion of this particular **Yo La Tengo** incarnation touring together (and since it took them 31 years to get around to doing so, could very well also be the last). Also available on VINYL!!!



AMY HELM DIDN'T IT RAIN

EONE MUSIC

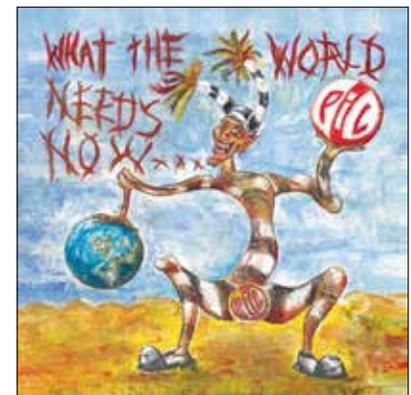
Although the personally charged, organically soulful *Didn't It Rain* is her first release under her own name, **Amy Helm** has been making music for most of her life. She's already won widespread praise as a singer, songwriter and live performer, first as a member of the celebrated alt-country collective Ollabelle and subsequently for her extensive work with her father, musical icon **Levon Helm**, who passed away in 2012. *Didn't It Rain* is a spellbinding, dozen-song set exploring universal themes of life, love and loss on such musically and emotionally resonant originals as the smoldering soul ballad "Rescue Me," the hushed, lilting "Deep Water," the meditative "Roll Away" and the stark, haunting "Wild Girl." Complementing **Helm's** originals are her personalized takes on the Sam Cooke classic "Good News" and the traditional title track, which she delivers with the heartfelt gospel urgency. *Didn't It Rain* also marks the final recording sessions of Levon Helm, who acted as the project's executive producer as well as adding his unmistakable drumming on three tracks, including a rousing take on Martha Scanlan's "Spend Our Last Dime."



POP EVIL UP

EONE MUSIC

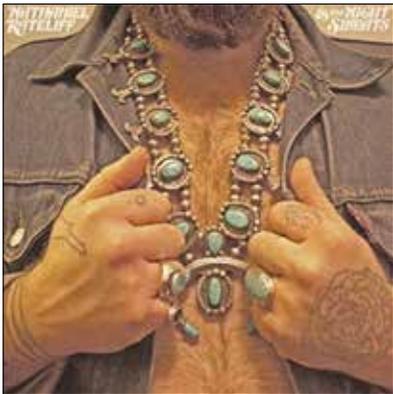
Pop Evil smashes through the odds like a battering ram, weathering the trials and tribulations of paying dues with a steadfast resilience owing much to their blue collar and middle class backgrounds, and building a worldwide audience one fan at a time. As the moniker promises when emblazoned on a CD or radio dial, **Pop Evil** conjures aggressive riffs and hard charging sing-a-longs with emotional heft and melodic power in equal measure. Simply put, **Pop Evil** is a larger-than-life true rock n roll band blending the earnestness of Pearl Jam and Soundgarden with the celebratory showmanship of Motley Crüe and KISS, capable of empathizing with the daily struggles of their fans while simultaneously offering the escapism a truly bombastic concert provides. It's music by the people, for the people. Helmed by producer Adam Kasper (Pearl Jam, Soundgarden, Foo Fighters), *Up* is the sound of **Pop Evil** cementing a powerful identity that's steadily materialized over the course of three prior full-lengths. The inspirational soon to be live staple "Footsteps," and the swaggering "Take It All," **Pop Evil** prove their burgeoning success is no accident.



PUBLIC IMAGE LTD WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS NOW...

PIL OFFICIAL

Widely regarded as one of the most innovative and influential bands of all time, **Public Image Ltd.'s** music and vision earned them 5 UK Top 20 singles and 5 UK Top 20 albums. With a shifting line-up and unique sound, **John Lydon** – who you know from the Sex Pistols as well some serious misadventures in television – guided the band from their debut album *First Issue* in 1978 through to 1992's *That What Is Not*. After a 17-year hiatus, **Lydon** reactivated **PiL** in 2009 by taking them back on the road worldwide, releasing a new album called *This Is PiL* a few years later to considerable critical acclaim. Last year the band returned to Steve Winwood's Wincraft studio in the Cotswolds' to record this new album, the appropriately-titled *What The World Needs Now...* The album is self-funded, self-released, and unsurprisingly pulls no punches when it comes to the music's blunt force and subject matter. Lead single "Double Trouble" (which also kicks off the album) comes at you with its fists out – it's a knotty, snarly thing that should have Mark E. Smith looking over his shoulder. *What The World Needs Now...* has what most rock records lack: attitude, guts, and pure fury. **PiL** are back with a vengeance!



NATHANIEL RATELIFF & THE NIGHT SWEATS NATHANIEL RATELIFF & THE NIGHT SWEATS

STAX/CONCORD

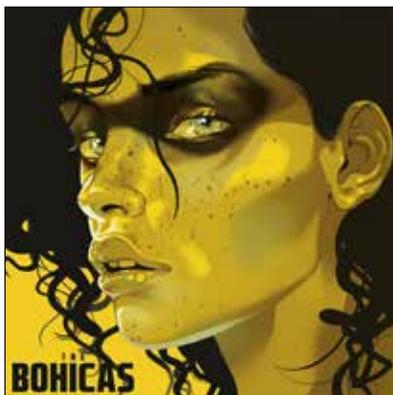
Nathaniel Rateliff & the Night Sweats practically explodes with deep, primal and ecstatic soulfulness. This stunning work isn't just soul stirring, it's also soul baring, and the combination is absolutely devastating to behold. You don't just listen to this record—you experience it. So it's entirely fitting that the self-titled album will bear the iconic logo of Stax Records, because at certain moments **Rateliff** seems to be channeling soul greats like Otis Redding and Sam & Dave. But as this gifted multi-instrumentalist honors the legacy of the legendary Memphis label, he's also setting out into audacious new territory. Those who were beguiled by *In Memory of Loss*, **Rateliff's** folksy, bittersweet 2010 album, will be in for a shock. But when you delve beneath the rawboned surface of the new album's wall-rattling presentation, with its deep-gut grooves, snaky guitars, churning Hammond and irresistible horns, you'll find that same sensitive, introspective dude, who bravely tells it like it is, breaking through his reticence to expose often harsh truths about the life he's lived. The difference between the two albums is that the *Nights Sweats'* funkiness insulates the starkly confessional nature of **Rateliff's** songs while at the same time underscoring their emotional extremes.



LANA DEL REY HONEYMOON

INTERSCOPE RECORDS

At press time there is scant information about the new **Lana Del Rey** joint, *Honeymoon*, but after taking a look at the new video for the album's first single, "High By The Beach," one might wonder if the honeymoon in question is over: I don't wanna spoil the video for those of you who've yet to see it, but let's just say she blows up a helicopter. The song, though, finds our hero sounding quite assured, singing on top of a juggled beat and a refrain that serves as her justification for getting rid of unwanted air traffic. The title offers a little more insight – a lushly orchestrated ballad that recalls the noir atmospheres of her early work. In fact, **Lana Del Rey** has hinted that *Honeymoon* sounds more like her early work than the Dan Auerbach produced, *Ultraviolence*. There are some familiar themes on "Honeymoon" – images of violence, roses, and a lover who seems to be reckoning with a troubled past. Not that she cares. "There's nothing left to loose / now that I've found you," she sings. Couple this bravado with her celebrated festival performances and a growing legion of fans, it shouldn't come as a surprise that **Del Rey** has a newfound sense of purpose. She's clearly comfortable in her own skin... And she's not taking any shit. Not that she ever did. These are the songs of a survivor.



THE BOHICAS THE MAKING OF

DOMINO

The Bohicas are rock and roll painted in vivid primary colors. Hi-def, loud, fast, shiny and above all fun. A barrage of killer hooks, razor blade riffs and choruses that slap you in the face, grab your hand and lead you onto the dance floor. All shot through with pulp imagery torn from the pages of a graphic novel. **The Bohicas** are Dominic McGuinness, drummer Brendan Heaney, guitarist Dominic John and bassist Ady Acolatse. **The Bohicas'** story began in East London where, as school-mates, McGuinness, Heaney and John first came together over a love of The Beatles, The Kinks, Ray Charles and the new wave of guitar bands that emerged at the start of the century after the scrag ends of Britpop had finally limped off. Even The Strokes and The Libertines are classic, yet retro, to this lot. As a result, *The Making Of* is a classic debut – brash, loud, and full of blustery swagger – acting like they've hung the moon either though they've merely knicked a record collection, not to mention your booze, drugs, and girlfriends. If you think you've heard it all before, well... You have. Fortunately they took the best bits. But once the chorus hits you'll be too busy scrambling for the volume knob to care. Play LOUD!



GHOST MELIORA

LOMA VISTA/CONCORD

Rock and roll exists in two worlds: the sacred and the profane. In the first, it harkens back to a time when people worshipped their gods by wearing masks, dancing, and often in the throes of ecstatic intoxication. In the second, rock exists in the here and now, as an expression of rebellion, sex, power, and even fame. In the realm of the sacred, the ego is destroyed when the god is seen face to face. In the profane, ego is the energy that get things done. This is the eternal spiritual conflict: the will of the gods versus human will. Those who can keep in a foot in both the sacred and the profane can change the world. **Ghost** live on that dividing line, and it's latest album, *Meliora*, finds the Swedish rockers finding inspiration in both classic rock and metal (particularly Iron Maiden) as well as the outlandish fantasy of its own gothic guise, which, for the uninitiated, finds the band – led by Papa Emeritus III, gussied up in grease paint like a bunch of papal zombies. But Metal has never been adverse to kitsch – hell, it's a huge part of its appeal – and **Ghost** has more than most. *Meliora* also has plenty of hooks, too – and the sturdy songwriting never falters under the weight of the complicated backstory, as tracks like "Circle" and "Majesty" clearly attest. It shreds, too!



THE WEEKND BEAUTY BEHIND THE MADNESS

REPLIC

When **The Weeknd** first appeared, he gave his music away and created an online frenzy. He got a deal, released new music, and folks wondered if he blew his musical load early. Now, after some high-profile collabos and a prominent placement in *Fifty Shades of Gray* ("Earned It"), **The Weeknd** has finally fulfilled his Superstar potential. **The Weeknd** recently achieved a Billboard first when he claimed the top three slots on the Billboard Hot R&B Songs as "Can't Feel My Face," "The Hills," and "Earned It" hit #1, #2 and #3 respectively. 2015 has been a breakout year for **The Weeknd**, as he is just the third artist to have two songs in the Top 10 of the Hot 100 simultaneously in 2015, and the first male. Only Taylor Swift and Meghan Trainor have previously held that honor this year! *Beauty Behind The Madness* has all these hit songs and more. It's an album that has something for everyone – big hooks, sexy vocals, and stunning production that hits the best of the underground and the top of the pops. And that voice: It's amazing how he can sound like Michael Jackson one minute and The Cure's Robert Smith the next (must be a Canadian thing). *Beauty Behind The Madness* is the commercial validation of critically-adored genius. Long may he reign! **Lana Del Rey** and **Ed Sheeran** guest.



ROB THOMAS THE GREAT UNKNOWN

ATL

Rob Thomas is one of modern music's most commercially successful artists. For 20 years, he has been the frontman and primary composer for **Matchbox Twenty**, leading the quintet to multiplatinum success over the course of four albums and a string of No. 1 hits. **Thomas'** two solo albums, 2005's platinum-certified No. 1 album *...Something To Be* and 2009's *cradlesong* generated the hit singles of their own but, of course, it's **Thomas'** 1999 collaboration with Santana, "Smooth" — the Latin-tinged blockbuster that earned him three Grammy Awards and spent 12 weeks atop *Billboard's* Hot 100 chart — that definitively proved he knows his way around a hit song. Says **Thomas** of his success: "can't fix your stereo. I'm not really that good at math. There's nothing else I do super well except for write songs." The majority of the tracks of his latest solo album, *The Great Unknown*, were produced by **Thomas'** longtime producer Matt Serletic but for this album **Rob** also chose to work with some big time pop songwriters, including Ryan Tedder (first single "Trust You"). The result is a pop album as big and bold as anything in **Thomas'** extraordinary career. Besides, he seems so nice, unlike that sleazeoid Robin Thicke...



FAMILY OF THE YEAR FAMILY OF THE YEAR

NETTWERK

Recorded in Berlin and back home in Los Angeles' **Family Of The Year** delivers an exciting musical progression with a more electric sound than previous releases. Taking on new subject matters, the band's assorted instrumentation and lyrical arc are emblematic of the last three years on the road and finding success here and abroad. **Family Of The Year** gained notoriety with "Hero" from 2012's *Loma Vista* and its featured appearance in the Oscar-nominated, Golden Globe winning film *Boyhood* and became a Top 10 hit in Austria, Belgium, Germany and Switzerland. "With the success of "Hero," we knew that more people were going to hear the new album," says lead singer/guitarist Joe Keefe. "We were all about moving forward and making something new. We didn't try to make a reactionary record or try to recreate anything we'd done in the past... We went into the studio and recorded songs that were dear to us and pushed ourselves to make something that was different." That's readily apparent on tracks like "Make You Mine" and "Facepaint," which push the band's nostalgic lyrics into the stratosphere with gigantic guitars and soaring choruses. It's the **Family** you know and love, just bigger and better! 2015 is looking like **Family of the Year's** year.



DISTURBED IMMORTALIZED

REPRISE

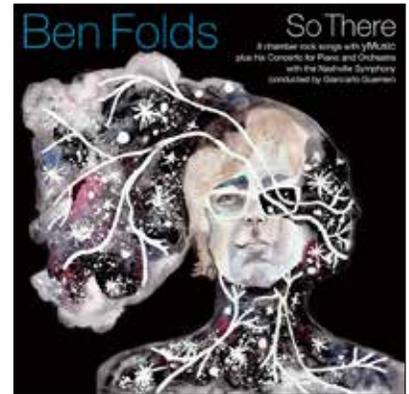
A calm precedes every storm. The reprieve remains necessary for the right energy to eventually re-ignite the elements at the appropriate time for a storm to gather. After announcing a "hiatus" in 2011, Grammy Award-nominated, multiplatinum hard rock titans **Disturbed** knew that their imminent return would happen during such a moment. In 2010, the group's gold-certified fifth offering, *Asylum*, became their fourth consecutive #1 on the *Billboard* Top 200, an accolade shared only with Metallica and Dave Matthews Band. They had sold out arenas everywhere on the subsequent tour, and it was time for that calm to commence. "The idea was to leave when we were at our peak, which we were, and to come back when we felt reinvigorated," says vocalist David Draiman. "We wanted to give ourselves a chance to breathe, give the fans a chance to breathe, and give the culture a chance to evolve. Now is the time... We're ready." *Immortalized* is the best-kept secret of the group's career. Rather than rely on technology, the band met up in secret and wrote collectively for the first time since 2001, making for a collection of songs that have a palpable energy. And, yes, that is a cover of Simon and Garfunkel's "Sound of Silence." *Immortalized* was certainly worth the wait.



HOLLYWOOD VAMPIRES HOLLYWOOD VAMPIRES

UME

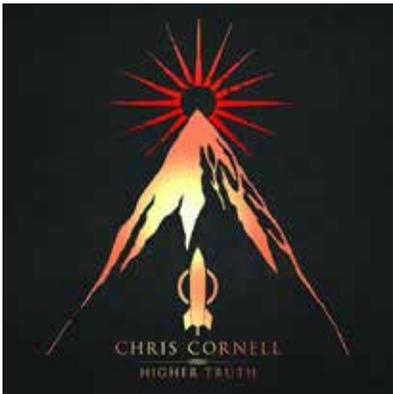
The **Hollywood Vampires** were a loose collective of rockers, including Cooper, John Lennon, Harry Nilsson and Keith Moon, who got together in the early Seventies and drink on the Sunset Strip at the Rainbow. Three years ago, Alice and good friend Johnny Depp got together and decided the spirit of the **Hollywood Vampires** should live again. Alice and Johnny were joined by Joe Perry, producer Bob Ezrin and an amazing group of guests including Perry Farrell, Dave Grohl, Sir Paul McCartney, Joe Walsh, Slash, Robbie Krieger, Zak Starkey, Brian Johnson and Kip Winger. As for the **Vampires'** music, the crew plays a mix of cover songs by members of the original **Hollywood Vampires**, including the Who's "My Generation," the Doors' "Five to One" and "Break on Through," Nilsson's "Jump Into the Fire," Lennon's "Cold Turkey" and Jimi Hendrix's "Manic Depression," among others, along with some original tunes. Befitting a band called **Hollywood Vampires**, the music seems drained of life thanks to Ezrin's production. Fortunately, the album is saved by the gonzo performances that often hark back to Alice's heyday when he seemed scary but, really, was having a laugh. *Hollywood Vampires* is way more fun and, yes, RAWK than you'd expect. Dig it!



BEN FOLDS SO THERE

NEW WEST

So There is **Ben Folds'** debut collaboration with celebrated New York City-based chamber ensemble, yMusic. Produced by **Folds** with yMusic's Rob Moose and CJ Camerieri, the album flourishes in the overlap between the pop and classical worlds, pairing eight brand new pop songs written, arranged, and recorded by **Folds** & yMusic with the eagerly awaited debut recording of **Folds'** critically-acclaimed "Concerto For Piano and Orchestra." Songs like "Long Way To Go" and the ebullient title track are marked by forward-thinking studio craft and creative spontaneity, combining **Folds'** vaunted knack for hook and harmony with yMusic's talent for exciting interpretation. **Folds** suggests the concerto is not all that dissimilar from his previous work, noting a direct path from **Ben Folds Five's** 1999 milestone, *The Unauthorized Biography of Reinhold Messner*. "If you knocked the vocals off that record and string together all the instrumental parts, you'll hear something that sounds a lot like the concerto," he says. "It's something I've been doing since the start of my career, it's part of my voice. The best compliments I receive on the concerto are when someone says, 'Man, I knew it was you after eight bars...' That to me, in the context of what I'm trying to do, is success."



CHRIS CORNELL HIGHER TRUTH

UME

Soundgarden frontman **Chris Cornell's** attempts at a solo career have been mixed as best... But you can't blame the guy for taking chances. Since leaving the band he was known for he tried on a variety of sounds – softening things up with *Euphoria Morning*, going back to rock by fronting Audioslave, and taking a crack at RnB with the Timbaland produced *Scream*. The latter was a WTF move for sure, but when you're an artist as talented as **Cornell** you find that challenges – even strange ones – only strengthen your art. But it seems that his time with the reunited Soundgarden has recalibrated his artistic compass, and by coming full-circle he's ready to branch out by stripping things back. Produced by Brendan O'Brien (Bruce Springsteen, Pearl Jam, Neil Young), *Higher Truth* showcases **Cornell's** constant evolution as a master songwriter, lyricist and musical craftsman – telling human stories, which transcend musical genres. Inspired by the stark arrangements of musicians like Nick Drake, Daniel Johnston and White Album-era Beatles, **Cornell** creates a musical universe all its own. It's sincere, direct, and puts his amazing voice and melodic gifts at the fore. It's gimmick free – a portrait of an artist with plenty left to give.



JASON ISBELL SOMETHING MORE THAN FREE

THIRTY TIGERS

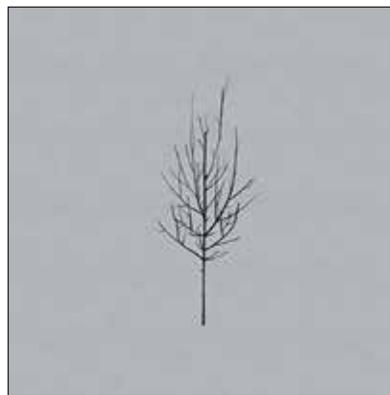
The personal story surrounding **Jason Isbell's** last, breakthrough album, *Southeastern*, is widely known and easily reprinted. A troubled young troubadour, newly married, stepped away from the darkness of addiction into a new, uncertain life of clarity and commitment, reflecting ruefully on his hard won victories and the price he paid attaining them. It was an album of aching elegance, marked by the sort of lyrical precision that brought to mind certain literary masters of the melancholy American scene, from Flannery O'Connor to Raymond Carver – an album of memorably infectious empathy. With *Something More Than Free*, he stretches himself further, greatly expanding the boundaries of **Isbell** country, that territory of the heart and mind where people strive against their imperfections, and simultaneously against their circumstances, in a landscape that's often unfriendly to their hopes. The album deepens as it goes along, offering some of the pleasures of a fine novel, including a collection of sharp vignettes that stick in the mind, impossible to shake. This isn't an album of easy certainty, but what makes his songwriting so rich and gripping, besides its observational precision, is the honesty of his inquiries. He doesn't flinch.



GARY CLARK JR. GARY CLARK JR. LIVE (2CD)

WARNER BROS.

There is an inherent magic that occurs when **Gary Clark Jr.** and his band take the stage each night. They do not use set lists, preferring to be guided by the energy that flows from the audience. It is an organic, spontaneous, and almost mystical experience to witness. That magic was on display during **Clark's** recent live performances in New York City, which included the band's first-ever Summer Stage show in Central Park, which was sold-out. For an encore, G. Love joined **Clark** onstage and accompanied him on the harmonica for a cover of "In the Evening" by Leroy Carr and "Shame Shame Shame" by Jimmy Reed. Before the show, **Clark** ran into 11-year-old fan, Brandon Niederauer, whom he first met at Crossroads Guitar Festival last year, where he claimed to know all of **Clark's** songs and indeed did. He joined **Clark** onstage for the final song of the night, "Bright Lights" and turned out to be a guitar prodigy, performing **Clark's** solo. The blistering performances collected on *Gary Clark Jr. Live* span his gigs at clubs, theatres, arenas, and festivals from the past 18 months of non-stop touring. Each track was captured as purely and spontaneously as it was performed on the night with absolutely no overdubs.



LOW ONES AND SIXES

SUB POP

"In our 20+ years of writing songs, I've learned that no matter how escapist, divergent, or even transcendent the creative process feels, the result is more beholden to what is going on at the moment. It's hard to admit that one is so influenced by what is in front of us. Doesn't it come from something magical and far away? No, it comes from here. It comes from now." These are the words of Alan Sparhawk, singer and guitar player of indie stalwarts **Low**, about his band's 11th record, *Ones and Sixes*. For a band who made their name on their starkly minimalist instrumentation and the otherworldly harmonies between Sparhawk and his wife, drummer Mimi Parker, **Low** have never been static – each record provides a subtle (and occasionally drastic) shift in its sound without ever abandoning the elemental beauty at the band's core. So while most bands worry about whether they have anything new to offer after two decades in the game (a subject "What Part of Me" touches on), **Low** continue to innovate by finding inspiration in the by living in the present rather than being haunted by the past. Working with cool producers helps, too, and this time around **Low** worked with BJ Burton at Justin Vernon's April Base Studios in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. And, as usual, it's heartbreakingly beautiful.



JESS GLYNNE I CRY WHEN I LAUGH

ATL

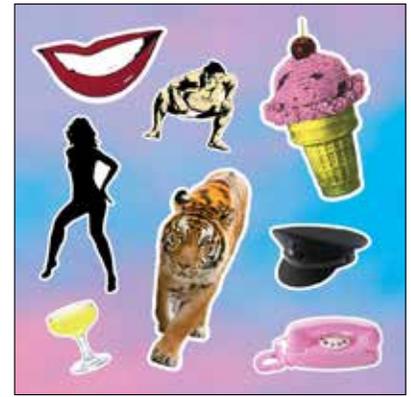
Jess Glynne is a woman in possession of a rather fantastically distinctive vocal herself. You've already heard the UK muse's richly evocative voice featured on the GRAMMY award winning No.1 classical-dance smash "Rather Be" with Clean Bandit. Fresh off a second smash collaboration with Clean Bandit, "Real Love," it's time for **Jess** to introduce her own sound, a distinguished mix of Hip Hop with a soul voice and a sprinkling of pop. Her solo debut, *I Cry When I Laugh* features the single, "Hold My Hand," which is already receiving acclaim as "a stunningly smart pop track with the smokiest, most honest vocals this side of the Atlantic" by SPIN, doubled by VULTURE as a "powerful piece of pop" and furthered by SPIN as a "breath-taking display of swooning acrobatics." **Jess** ain't worried about being dismissed as another "New Adele" either: "I'm confident in who I am. What makes me different is my experiences, my personality, my songwriting. I've had different life experiences, like we all have, and all of that makes me who I am – me." Which is probably why her latest single "Don't Be So Hard On Yourself" sounds monumentally empowering summer jam. *I Cry When I Laugh* is a smoldering slab of British soul that sounds as cathartic as the title implies.



**PARIS
PISTOL POLITICS**

GUERRILLA FUNK RECORDINGS

Paris hails from the San Francisco Bay Area and was catapulted onto the national hip-hop scene in 1990 with his hit single and album *The Devil Made Me Do It*, after earning a degree in economics from the University of California at Davis. Originally released on Tommy Boy Records, his first single from that album, "Break The Grip of Shame," was banned by MTV. Since then, his uncompromising stance on political issues and biting social commentary have become his trademark, endearing him to legions of supporters who rightly feel messages of positivity are underrepresented in hip-hop. When his second album, *With The Enemy* was ready for release in 1992, **Paris** was dropped from now-defunct Tommy Boy Records when they discovered its incendiary content, which included fantasy revenge killings of then-President Bush and racist police officers. Rather than buckle under pressure, he released the LP himself major to and national acclaim. **Paris** has been keeping it indie ever since, even working with acts as varied at Public Enemy and Insane Clown Posse. His latest, *Pistol Politics*, continues to address unity in black and brown communities as well as resisting police brutality. He ain't for the faint of heart but **Paris'** still demands to be heard.



**DURAN DURAN
PAPER GODS**

WARNER BROS.

How many bands can you think of that, almost four decades into their career, are still capable of springing surprises, of blazing fresh trails, creating new music that is up there with the imperishable songs that first propelled them to fame, fortune and critical acclaim? Not many. With *Paper Gods*, **Duran Duran** have secured their place in that pantheon of greats. *Paper Gods* starts the next chapter in the history of the band, with a host of A-list collaborators – including Nile Rodgers, Mark Ronson, Mr Hudson, Janelle Monáe, John Frusciante – joining the party. "We found a whole new level of inspiration on this album," says the band's keyboardist and aesthetic overlord, Nick Rhodes. *Paper Gods* finds the band once again perfecting it's balance of pop thrills with art school experimentalism – recalling the Kraftwerk / Roxy Music / Bowie nose-thrills of its seminal early work with a distinctively modern soundscapes that never pander. The title track is a thing of beauty – destined for dancefloor glory – while "You Kill Me With Silence" has one of the most amazingly weird guitar solos of the year. "Pressure Off" – featuring both Monáe and Rodgers – is a triumph for all involved. That said, *Paper Gods* is worthy of worship... And you need it.



**SHANNON AND THE CLAMS
GONE BY THE DAWN**

HARDLY ART

Gone by the Dawn, the newest **Shannon and the Clams** album, is their best work to date. The music is complex, the lyrical content is emotionally raw and honest, and the production is the strangest it's ever been. The album was written as one member was recovering from a serious breakup and another was deep in one. The lyrics reflect it, and the entire album is dripping with sadness, pain, and introspection. Shannon and guitarist Cody Blanchard have not written generic songs about love or the lack of it. Instead they have written about their very own specific heartbreak, mistreatment, and mental trials. For *Gone by the Dawn*, the Oakland trio hooked up with studio wizard and renaissance man Sonny Smith – best known as the driving force behind San Francisco's beloved Sonny and the Sunsets, who created an engaging sonic landscape without compromising **the Clams'** signature Lou Christie-meets-The Circle Jerks sound. **The Clams** have evolved: their skills are sharper, their chops are tighter and weirder and they've added new instruments to the mix. A whole new dimension of **The Clams** has emerged. Ain't love grand?



**FATHER JOHN MISTY
I LOVE YOU HONEY BEAR**

SUB POP

"*I Love You, Honeybear* was recorded all through 2013 to 2014 in Los Angeles with producer Jonathan Wilson, who I also recorded and produced 2012's *Fear Fun* with. There's a case to be made that it sounds and acts a bit like solo-era John Lennon, Scott Walker, Randy Newman, Harry Nilsson, and Dory Previn, while taking more than a few cues from Woody Allen, Kurt Vonnegut, Alejandro Jodorowsky and Muhammad Ali. Blammo. It has a decidedly more soulful presence than *Fear Fun*, due in no small part to the fact that I am truly singing my ass off all over this motherfucker. The album is really characterized by the scope and ambition of the arrangements. Nearly every tune is augmented by something special, be it orchestral strings, a mariachi band, questionable electronic drum solos, ragtime jazz combos, soul singers, or what have you. I'm pretty sure there's a sitar in there somewhere. Blammo. My ambition, aside from making an indulgent, soulful, and epic sound worthy of the subject matter, was to address the sensuality of fear, the terrifying force of love, the unutterable pleasures of true intimacy, and the destruction of emotional and intellectual prisons in my own voice. Blammo." – **Father John Misty**



**JEWEL
PICKING UP THE PIECES**

SUGAR HILL/CONCORD

Spending the past several years alternating between penning her memoir, *Never Broken* - in stores September 15th - and recording a pair of children's albums, **Jewel** is back with her first proper album of new music since 2010's *Sweet and Wild*. *Picking Up The Pieces*, which serves as a "bookend" to the Alaskan-born singer's landmark, multi-platinum-selling debut, 1995's *Pieces Of You*, features some of **Jewel's** most striking work yet. Front and center is the iconic singer-songwriter's world-renowned vocals, laser-sharp songcraft and intricate guitar work. "It was time in my life to do this," says **Jewel**, "My mission was to try and make a record where I didn't feel diluted." Over the course of the album, **Jewel** conveys the emotional turmoil of life during it's most difficult and challenging moments, with genuine emotional pain fueling her vocals and reaching a new intensity level with her music in the process. *Picking Up The Pieces* was recorded in Nashville features road-tested fan favorites ("Carnivore," "Boy Needs A Bike") alongside groundbreaking new tracks ("Love Used To Be") and a stunning collaboration with country legend Dolly Parton ("My Father's Daughter").