



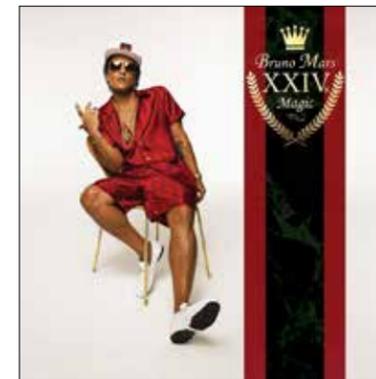
**CHILDISH GAMBINO**  
**"AWAKEN, MY LOVE!"**  
GLASSNOTE

Donald Glover is best known as a writer and actor. He's done amazing work for the likes of *30 Rock* and, of course, *Community*, and, now, *Atlanta*, which has become one of the most talked about shows of the last year. And, now, we have word that Glover is going to play a young Lando Calrissian in a future *Star Wars* film. So the guy is kind of crushing it. Glover has always made time for music under the **Childish Gambino** – his *nom de hip hop*. But his latest album, *Awaken, My Love!* travels beyond beats, rhymes, and life – trading cosmic territory that inspired by future funkists both past and present including Funkadelic, The Isley Brothers, and Flying Lotus. "I remember listening to songs my dad would play – albums by the Isleys or Funkadelic – and not understanding the feeling I was feeling," he says. "I remember hearing a Funkadelic scream and being like, 'Wow, that's sexual and it's scary.' Not having a name for that, though; just having a feeling." Tracks like "Me and Your Mama" explode burst forth from hip hop towards Black Sabbath fuzz grooves and a sense of space that recalls the soul space of *What's Going On* or the Alabama Shakes' sonic masterpiece, *Sound & Color*, while "Redbone" sounds like a future Dungeon Family classic. Dope.



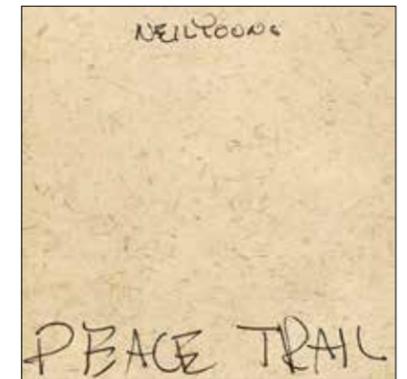
**THE ROLLING STONES**  
**BLUE & LONESOME**  
INTERSCOPE RECORDS

The **Rolling Stones** went into an unfamiliar studio - Mark Knopfler's British Grove in West London – to start working on original material for a new album – their first since 2005's *A Bigger Bang*. 2 days in and the band wasn't feeling it – the sound, according to Keith Richards – wasn't happening. As a pleasant diversion, the band decided to play Little Walter's "Blue and Lonesome." 2 takes later the band knew they were onto something. Over the course of 3 days the band continued to record cover after cover – all of them rooted in the Chicago Blues that inspired the band in the first place. The resulting album, *Blue & Lonesome*, radiates heat. The performances (which were recorded live with minimal overdubbing) is chock full of both atmosphere and grit – as if it was mostly recorded with Jagger's hot harmonica mic. Speaking of which, Jagger's harp playing, always underrated, sounds sublime here – as does his singing, with a voice that mostly belies his 70 years. Distorted, dirty, melodic, *Blue & Lonesome* is blessed with unwavering swagger. These are professionals playing fast and loose – free from expectation and doing just as they damn please. Whether it's a bookend or the shape of things to come, *Blue & Lonesome* is a career highlight. You need this.



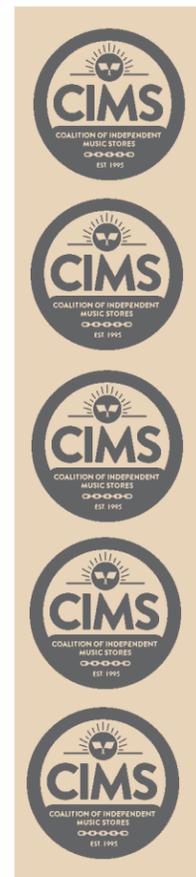
**BRUNO MARS**  
**24K MAGIC**  
ATLANTIC

**Bruno Mars** makes music that's more *Stranger Things* than *Purple Rain* – which is to say that he's more of a craftsman than an auteur. Not that it matters: Pastiche is often the jewelry of pop and **Mars** has excellent taste. He also knows his way around an infectious track – building in call-and-response moments that are perfect whether you're singing along in your car or at a concert. His time spent behind the scenes sharpened his skills long before he got a spotlight of his own – surprising given his wide array of talents as a singer, songwriter, musician, producer, arranger, dancer, and a straight-up charmer. The Purple One looms large over **Mars'** biggest success, the still unbelievable "Uptown Funk" – and the Minneapolis sound that Prince, along with Jam and Lewis, is spread throughout **24K Magic** – evident not only for the big funky cuts like "Perm" and the title cut, but Strawberry Champagne escapism of "Versace On The Floor" and "Calling My Lovelies" (which features a cameo from Halle Berry). But **Mars** isn't only fixated on the Mini Appl. **24K Magic** draws further inspiration from some of 80's and early 90's best, including sonic shout outs to Bobby Brown, Boys II Men, Marvin Gaye, and Gregory "Shake You Down" Abbott. **24K Magic** is aptly named.



**NEIL YOUNG**  
**PEACE TRAIL**  
WARNER BROS

**Neil Young** has many gifts, but chief among them is his ability to live in the moment. **Young's** fearlessness in chasing the muse has rewarded him with one of music's deepest – and greatest – catalogs. A surreal diarist, **Young** is never afraid of getting things off his chest, especially when it comes to political matters. Inspired by his environmental concerns as well as the political climate over the last several months, *Peace Trail* (**Young's** 2<sup>nd</sup> album of 2016) is billing itself as a largely acoustic album, which isn't untrue, but it also daisy chains some of **Young's** favorite modes: folksy troubadour, some Crazy Horse fuzz, and – something we haven't heard in a while – the auto-tuned vocals of his classic head-scratcher, *Trans*. As a result we get a classic **Neil Young** album in that it balances urgency with flights of fancy, all while subverting your expectations. It's also free of animal noises. *Peace Trail* was recorded at Rick Rubin's Shangri-la Studios (and features **Young** on vocals and guitar, the legendary Jim Keltner on drums, and Paul Bushnell on bass.



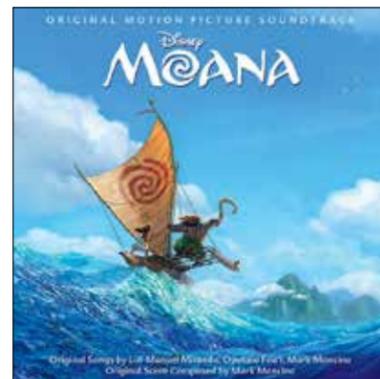
**LUMINEERS**  
**CLEOPATRA**  
DUALTONE

It took four years for **The Lumineers** to follow up their platinum-plus, multi-Grammy-nominated, self-titled debut. Three of those years found **The Lumineers** touring six of the seven continents, earning Grammy nods, stomping and hollering their way into millions of homes. Their new album, *Cleopatra*, is anything but a sophomore slump. With the help of producer Simone Felice (The Felice Brothers, The Avett Brothers), the band ensconced itself high atop a hill in rural Rhinebeck, N.Y., not far from Woodstock, and set about trying to make musical sense of their three-year-plus roller coaster ride. Their skill at setting a visual story to music comes through amidst the delicate, deceptively simple acoustic soundscapes remains intact, but *Cleopatra* is the sound of a group willing to take some chances. The band had total artistic freedom in writing and recording the album, so they pushed the envelope on experimental tracks like the stream-of-consciousness, purposely lo-fi "Sick in the Head," the yearning, piano buttressed "In the Light," or the closing orchestral instrumental, the aptly titled coda, "Patience."



**KATE BUSH**  
**BEFORE THE DAWN**  
CONCORD

**Kate Bush** announced plans to perform 15 shows in London in August and September 2014, her first live shows since 1979. The shows sold out so quickly that a further 7 were immediately added, with all shows selling out in 15 minutes. **Kate's** own website crashed with the demand. The first night of the shows prompted a complete media frenzy with the U.K.'s *Evening Standard* declaring that the show was "an extraordinary mix of magical ideas, stunning visuals, attention to detail and remarkable music – she was so obviously, so unambiguously brilliant, it made last night something to tell the grandchildren about." Later that year the show won the special Editor's award at the highly prestigious London Theatre Awards, the only contemporary music show to do so. *Before The Dawn* captures the magic of those shows across three CDs or, if it strikes your fancy, four gorgeous slabs of 180-gram vinyl. The conceptual heart of the show is reflected in the CD format, which is split around the two integral pieces – "The Ninth Wave" and "A Sky Of Honey." Nothing on *Before The Dawn* was overdubbed or fixed in post-production, thus presenting the listener with this one-of-a-kind artist in all of her raw beauty. You need this.



**SOUNDTRACK**  
**MOANA**  
WALT DISNEY RECORDS

Three thousand years ago, the greatest sailors in the world voyaged across the vast Pacific, discovering the many islands of Oceania. But then, for a millennium, their voyages stopped and no one knows why... From Walt Disney Animation Studios comes *Moana*, a sweeping, CG-animated feature film about an adventurous teenager who sails out on a daring mission to save her people. During her journey, Moana (voice of Auli'i Cravalho) meets the once-mighty demigod Maui (Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson), who guides her in her quest to become a master wayfinder. Together, they sail across the open ocean on an action-packed voyage, encountering enormous monsters and impossible odds, and along the way, Moana fulfills the ancient quest of her ancestors and discovers the one thing she's always sought: her own identity. Directed by the renowned filmmaking team of Ron Clements and John Musker (The Little Mermaid, Aladdin, The Princess & the Frog). And yes that's *Hamilton's* **Lin-Manuel Miranda** on "We Know The Way."



**RUSH**  
**TIME STAND STILL (DVD)**  
ZOE/ROUNDER

With more than 40 million records sold worldwide (with 24 gold, 14 platinum, and three multi-platinum albums to their credit), and countless sold-out tours, **Rush** – bassist Geddy Lee, guitarist Alex Lifeson, and drummer Neil Peart – remains one of the most popular, inventive and influential groups in rock history. In 2015, **Rush** embarked on 35-city tour to commemorate their 40th anniversary. At the time, the R40 tour was rumored to be their last – an end to **Rush's** life on the road together. *Time Stand Still* follows this farewell journey. Exclusive behind-the-scenes access to the band and crew throughout the tour provide the raw and vivid emotional undertones of this feature-length film, directed by Dale Heslip, and produced by Allan Weinrib, the team behind the band's live concert films, *Rush: R40 Live* (2015) and *Rush: Clockwork Angels Tour* (2013). At the film's core are **Rush's** ardent fans – and their personal stories highlight the importance **Rush** holds in their lives, and the lasting impressions of their extensive catalog. Candid interviews with Lee, Lifeson and Peart bring *Time Stand Still* to an emotional conclusion for a band that built their career the old-fashioned way: one show at a time.



**DREAMERS**  
**THIS ALBUM DOES NOT EXIST**  
FAIRFAX/HOLLYWOOD/DMG

After more than two years of hardcore nomadism – touring the country behind its two EPs – Los Angeles' **Dreamers** had finally unleashed its debut long-player, *This Album Does Not Exist*. The smart pop trio, comprised of Nick Wold (vocals/guitar), Nelson (bass/vocals), and Jacob Wick (drums), wrote much for the album in Brooklyn before moving to L.A. and tracking at Fairfax Recordings (formerly Sound City Studios – home to many a classic album including *Nevermind* and Fleetwood Mac's *Rumors*). Led by singles like "Drugs" and "Sweet Disaster," **Dreamers** pits the party and the paranoia of escapism in seemingly effortlessly tight, three-minute tunes. Album tracks like "Pain Killer" and "Lucky Dog" follow in this vein, swinging with handclaps and driving with sing-along choruses. Throughout *This Album Does Not Exist*, **Dreamers** toys with weighty existential themes, but it's easy enough to get sucked into their world and dance the big questions away... Which is its own kinda Zen. But whether or not this is dream, *This Album Does Not Exist* is, at least in the noumenal world, is a masterpiece that you "Kani" deny.

