



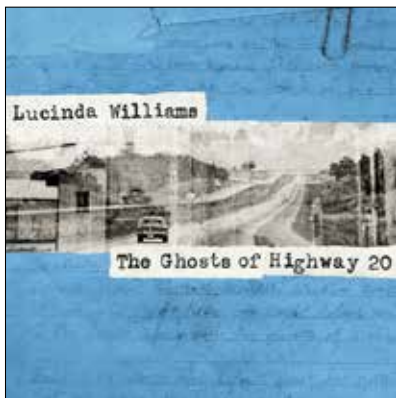
COLDPLAY
A HEAD FULL OF DREAMS
 ATLANTIC/PARLOPHONE

A Head Full Of Dreams is the widescreen follow-up to 2014's fragile and lovelorn *Ghost Stories*, **Coldplay's** sixth consecutive worldwide chart topper, award winner and multi-million seller. The band chose not to tour *Ghost Stories* and headed straight back into the studio to record **A Head Full Of Dreams**. Revitalized, they've made an album that's bursting with energy, color and big, life-affirming moments such as the ebullient disco-inflected (yes: you read that correctly) first single "Adventure Of A Lifetime" and the rocket-powered "Hymn For The Weekend." **A Head Full Of Dreams** has the infectious energy and heart-on-the-sleeve sincerity you've come to expect from **Coldplay** but with plenty of pleasant surprises (e.g. the WTF guitar solo of "True Love"). The album, recorded in Malibu, Los Angeles and London, was produced by Norwegian duo Stargate together with the band's long-time collaborator Rik Simpson. It features more guests than any previous **Coldplay** album, with Beyoncé, Noel Gallagher, Tove Lo and Merry Clayton among those appearing across its 11 tracks. **Coldplay** have never enjoyed making a record more than this one. Nor have they been happier with the results. And, this time, they plan to take it around the world.



SHEARWATER
JET PLANE AND OXBOW
 SUB POP

Jet Plane and Oxbow is **Shearwater's** career-defining album. Lush, powerful, and grand, with a confident edge heard more often in their live shows than on record, it feels like the musical statement they've been working toward through five albums and a decade on the road. It's an album that captures the light and darkness of our time through the lens of one of our most unique and treasured bands. Frontman Jonathan Meiburg has never sounded more *present* on record. His voice is urgent, angry, and tender by turns, and the songs are as multi-layered as the production. "Quiet Americans", the obvious single, wraps a deep ambivalence inside a call to arms; "Only Child", perhaps the most straightforward song Meiburg's ever written, is shot through with warmth even as it describes a life fracturing under pressure. And though the album begins in close-up (and *you were lying on your back in the grass/counting backward from a thousand*) it ends wide, as "Stray Light at Clouds Hill" evokes the dark side of the earth—luminous, eerie, and vast. **Shearwater** have always worked on a huge canvas, but with *Jet Plane and Oxbow*, their reach finally equals their grasp.



LUCINDA WILLIAMS
THE GHOSTS OF HIGHWAY 20
 HIGHWAY 20 RECORDS

We've all heard about the iconic vibe of Route 66, the neon lights on Broadway and the ocean air of the Pacific Coast Highway. But there are untold stories emanating from Interstate 20, which cuts a 1500-mile swath from South Carolina to Texas, and cuts deep into the spirit of those who've spent their lives traversing it. **Lucinda Williams** is one of those people, and with the expansive, enveloping *The Ghosts of Highway 20*, she brings those stories to life and gives listeners a remarkably vivid look at how the highway has been a literal and figurative backdrop throughout her entire life. The thread of *Highway 20* connects those songs, mirroring the winding route of the road itself, a street that cleaves close to **Williams** childhood homes, the final resting place of her mother, the sites where signposts of her formative years are forever planted. The connection runs deep here, particularly on the dark and moody tones of the album's poignant title track, on which **Lucinda** ponders the lives that were lived, the legacies that were left and the imprints that remain on her own soul. *The Ghosts of Highway 20* may be the most deeply felt, deeply affecting work of Lucinda Williams illustrious 35-plus-year career – which, of course, is really saying something.



VARIOUS ARTISTS
STRAIGHT OUTTA COMPTON
 UME

Straight Outta Compton is a film about **N.W.A.** – a scrappy, upstart hip hop group driven to share their feelings on the police, ladies, and all the fun they had growing up in sunny Compton. Their uplifting tunes resonated with young people around the world. Like all great stories of Youth, parents (and the government) just didn't understand and tried to, in the words of Public Enemy, "Shut 'Em Down." But don't worry: Our heroes one in the end and now bring happiness to the world in the form of children's movies and headphones. The takeaway: Never give up on your dreams. But it was a love of music that fueled those ambitions, and *Straight Outta Compton: The Soundtrack*, from our "gangsta rap" heroes as well as choice solo cuts from **Eazy-E**, **Ice Cube**, and **Dr. Dre & Snoop Dogg**, along with some old school funk and soul courtesy of **Parliament**, **Funkadelic**, **Steve Arrington's Hall of Fame**, and **Roy Ayers Ubiquity**. Also available on double vinyl!



BENJI HUGHES
SONGS IN THE KEY OF ANIMALS
 MERGE

North Carolina's **Benji Hughes** counts fronting a 90s rock band, writing commercial jingles ("Got a Little Captain in You?" for Captain Morgan rum), and making music for film and television (*Walk Hard, Eastbound & Down*), and an excellent double-album, *A Love Extreme*, count among his myriad musical accomplishments. But these ventures aren't different hats **Hughes** wears. They're not different paths traveled. This is **Hughes** playing in different keys. Now **Hughes** is playing *Songs in the Key of Animals*. Recorded over two years mostly at Frisbie studios in New York, the record is 41 minutes of pop-music exploration. The album has summertime immediacy but an evergreen resonance (see "Longshot"). It's clever but too deep for punchlines (check the excellent back and forth of "Picnic"). It is sincere ("Girls Love Shoes") yet heartbreaking ("Song for Nancy"). It's eccentric but never forced in its strangeness. It's the kind of record that reminds us music can be fun without being empty. It's an album full of peacocks and sharks and zebras and tigers, but ultimately, it's about us. *Songs in the Key of Animals* taps into something beyond just intellect or trend or taste. It's all about the feel, the connection between the player, the music, and the listener.



ELTON JOHN WONDERFUL CRAZY NIGHT

ISLAND

Lately **Elton John** has been looking to the past to find the inspiration that continues to drive him into the future. As his recent collaboration with Leon Russell indicated, **John** still has lots of stride in his step. So **Wonderful Crazy Night** keeps the party going by reconnecting with the friends and musicians that fueled **John's** best work. First and foremost, **Wonderful Crazy** marks the continuation of **Elton's** incredible, inexhaustible songwriting partnership with Bernie Taupin. The ten outstanding and evocative new co-writes represent the latest fruits of a friendship that dates back 48 years. **Wonderful Crazy Night**, signals **Elton's** reunion with other trusted allies, too. Drummer Nigel Olsson, with whom he's been working since his late 1960s breakthrough, and guitarist Davey Johnstone (who first played with him in 1971 and became a full band member the following year) are both on board, for the first time since *The Captain & the Kid* in 2006. Five tracks feature appearances by another time-honored associate, percussionist Ray Cooper. Last but not least, **T Bone Burnett** produced the thing. Simply put, **Wonderful Crazy Night** is as fun as the title implies.



SAVAGES ADORE LIFE

MATADOR

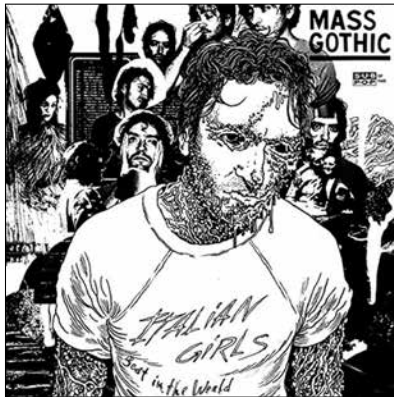
It's about change and the power to change. It's about metamorphosis and evolution. It's about sticking to your guns and toughing it out. It's about now, not tomorrow. It's about recognizing your potential. It's about self-doubt and inaction. It's about you. It's about me. It's about you and me and the others. It's about the choices we make. It's about finding the poetry and avoiding the cliché. It's about being the solution, not the problem. It's about showing weakness to be strong. It's about digging through your dirt to look for diamonds. It's about claiming your right to think unacceptable thoughts. It's about boredom and the things we do to drive it away. It's about being on your own so you can be with people. It's about knowing what it means to be human and what it might mean one day. It's about the parts and the sum of the parts. It's about the music and the message: together, one and the same. It's about bass, guitars, drums, and vocals. It's about opening-up and never, ever dying. But most of all it's about love, every kind of love. Love is the answer. It's **Savages'** second album. It's **Adore Life**.



MEGADETH DYSTOPIA

T-BOY RECORDS/UME

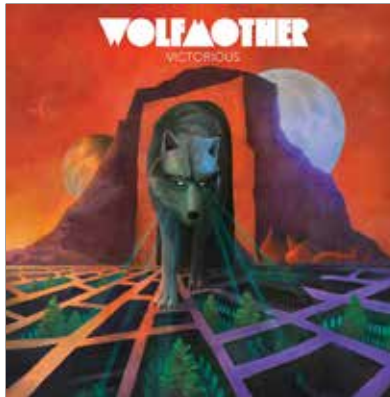
Megadeth burst onto the scene thirty years ago, virtually inventing a genre with their debut album *Killing Is My Business... And Business Is Good!* Now **Megadeth** have come storming back with their 15th studio album, **Dystopia**. With musical architect and band visionary Dave Mustaine at the helm, **Dystopia** was recorded in Nashville, TN, and mixed by Josh Wilbur (Lamb of God, Gojira, Avenged Sevenfold). The rest of the **Megadeth** lineup is comprised of David 'Junior' Ellefson on bass, new member Kiko Loureiro (formerly of Angra) on guitar, and drummer Chris Adler, who took time away from Lamb of God to record **Dystopia**. The result marks a true return to form – the band's new blood infusing a new burst of creative energy into this long-running institution. Featuring 11 brand new tracks, **Dystopia** weaves together Mustaine's intricate and unique songwriting style (which may or may not include a few crackpot conspiracy theories), trademark leads and lightning riffs with harmonious precision, paying homage to **Megadeth's** influential roots while continuing to break new and heavy ground.



MASS GOTHIC MASS GOTHIC

SUB POP

After nearly ten years as the creative force behind much-loved New York rock outfit Hooray For Earth, Noel Heroux had lost his way. But hope was around the corner: "When I realized that I needed to end the band and just try again, my head cleared and the clouds parted. I'd been derailed somehow," he adds. "So I allowed myself to return to the beginning." This year marks the release of **Mass Gothic** was recorded at home over four months during the winter of 2014-2015, it's a stunning reminder of not just Heroux's own remarkable talents as singer and songwriter, but how unbridled creativity can both sound and feel as well: Before Hooray For Earth had quickly become a fully-functioning band, it began as a solo project. No pressure or compromises — just Heroux, a four-track, and an irrepressible urge to "jot down all of the noise and music floating around in my head. The result is an expansive, often exhilarating set of guitar-driven pop that required very little editing when it was done. From the iridescent doo-wop of "Every Night You've Got To Save Me" to the skyward crescendo of "Mind Is Probably" to the falsetto-streaked clatter of "Want To, Bad," it's a radiant retelling of Heroux's starting over, with "Nice Night" as its cathartic, electrifying centerpiece.



WOLF MOTHER VICTORIOUS

T-BOY RECORDS/UME

Wolfmother's new album, **Victorious**, is an electrifying testament to the range and depth of songwriter/vocalist/guitarist Andrew Stockdale's artistry. Recorded at Henson Studios in Los Angeles with two-time Grammy-winning producer Brendan O'Brien (Pearl Jam, AC/DC, Bruce Springsteen), the songs are edgy, inventive and uncompromising and rank among the band's best ever. Stockdale began working on the record in 2015, writing on every instrument and embracing the same creative approach he used on the band's debut album a decade ago. "Back in the early days, I'd play guitar, bass, and drums and then present the ideas to the band and we'd work on the arrangement together," he says. "I thought it would be cool to get back to demoing ideas by myself and playing everything. It's a good way to do things because it can make the style more cohesive." In addition to vocals, Stockdale played guitar and bass and brought in Josh Freese (Nine Inch Nails, Bruce Springsteen, A Perfect Circle) and Joey Waronker (BECK, R.E.M.) to split drum duties. "We wanted to get back to that big sound," says Stockdale. "The album is a balance of garage-y energy and big production. It's wild, energetic and," he muses, "perfect for a festival main stage."



JACK GARRATT PHASE

INTERSCOPE RECORDS

Phase is the debut album from British singer, multi-instrumentalist, and producer **Jack Garratt**. **Phase** follows the release of **Garratt's** acclaimed EPs *Remnants* (which racked up over a million plays and led to several sold-out shows in London) and *Synthesiac*. Both EPs, received a host of critical acclaim: *Complex* wrote that the singer "is about to explode in a big, charHopping, unable to miss kind of way," while London's *Evening Standard* called **Garratt** "one of our most inventive new stars." The *Sunday Times'* Culture section noted that "**Jack's** songs thrum with the dynamics and textures of after-hours electro-blues, dubstep and alt-R&B," while *Entertainment Weekly* said **Garratt** "sprinkles dance-floor glitter over crooning analog soul" on "Weathered." **Phase** finds **Garratt** making boldly crafting music of a uniquely British vintage – gigantic, soulful vocals layered over jazzy chords, modern Rn'B propulsion, and skittery, low frequency ambiance that drapes the tracks in a mysterious blanket of bass before cathartically exploding into a rousing chorus. **Phase** is a sound that feels both intimate and extroverted, sometimes recalling the mysterious lover man vibes of Sanders Bohlke crossed with dark sonics James Blake. It's a gorgeous in headphones, too.